

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION	ACAF Academic Affairs
POLICY NUMBER	ACAF 1.31
POLICY TITLE	Extension of Faculty Tenure-Track Probationary Period and Scheduled Post-Tenure Review
SCOPE OF POLICY	USC System
DATE OF REVISION	May 2, 2019
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	Office of the Provost

PURPOSE

The Extension of Faculty Tenure-Track Probationary Period and Scheduled Post-Tenure Review policy sets forth the guidelines and procedures for requesting extensions to the tenure clock for faculty review.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Probationary period: length of time allowed for a tenure-eligible faculty member to earn tenure. The maximum probationary period is defined in the respective *Faculty Manual*.

Post-tenure review: review of tenured faculty that includes a comprehensive review of teaching, scholarship and service productivity since the last promotion or post-tenure review.

POLICY STATEMENT

In order to provide additional time to demonstrate fully their professional qualifications for reappointment or tenure, faculty members holding a probationary term of appointment may be granted an extension of the maximum probationary period with no resulting change in employment obligations. Additionally, a similar extension may be granted to faculty prior to undergoing a scheduled post-tenure review, upon request.

The maximum probationary period may not be extended more than three times. Additionally, a faculty member’s probationary term of appointment may not exceed ten years.

A scheduled post-tenure review may not be extended more than three times.

Campus, academic unit, and school/college leaders and administrators are encouraged to identify situations when use of this policy is appropriate.

A. Types of Extensions

1. Automatic Extension

A one-year extension of the maximum probationary period will be automatically approved for the following reasons:

- a. the birth or adoption of a child; or

- b. the death of the faculty member's spouse/partner or child.

The extension is automatic in the above cases, but notification is required through the submission of the Tenure Clock Extension form and accompanying documentation. If the academic unit head has not been notified in this manner, the probationary period remains unchanged.

A faculty member who is granted an automatic extension of the tenure clock has the right to request to be considered for tenure and promotion prior to the penultimate year, in accordance with the tenure and promotion guidelines for his/her campus.

2. Requested Extension

- a. A one-year extension of the maximum probationary period may be requested by a faculty member for the following reasons:
 - i. a serious illness of the faculty member and/or the faculty member's spouse/partner, child, or parent;
 - ii. the death of the faculty member's parent;
 - iii. the placement of a foster child; or
 - iv. other relevant circumstances, as approved by the academic unit head and those involved in the review and approval process.
- b. A one-year extension of a scheduled post-tenure review may be requested by a faculty member for the following reasons:
 - i. the birth or adoption of a child;
 - ii. the placement of a foster child;
 - iii. the death of the faculty member's spouse/partner, child or parent;
 - iv. a serious illness of the faculty member and/or the faculty member's spouse/partner, child, or parent; or
 - v. other relevant circumstances, as approved by the academic unit head and those involved in the review and approval process.

3. Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost/Chancellor Approved Extension

A one-year to three-year extension of the maximum probationary period or of a scheduled post-tenure review may be granted by the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost for USC Columbia, chancellor for the regional Palmetto Colleges, or by the chancellor for each comprehensive university in very unusual circumstances as deemed appropriate and necessary.

B. Review and Approval Process

All notifications and requests for an extension of a faculty member's probationary period or of a scheduled post-tenure review must be submitted on the Tenure Clock/Post-Tenure Review Extension form and forwarded through the appropriate chain of approval for each campus as outlined below.

1. USC Columbia

For USC Columbia, the form and supporting documentation must be reviewed and/or approved by the faculty member's department or unit chair (in departmentalized units), the college/school dean, and the senior vice provost.

2. Comprehensive Universities

For the comprehensive universities, the form and supporting documentation must be reviewed and/or approved by the faculty member's academic unit head and the senior vice chancellor for academic affairs.

3. Regional Palmetto Colleges

For the regional Palmetto Colleges, the form and supporting documentation must be reviewed and/or approved by the faculty member's academic unit head, the campus dean, and the chancellor for Palmetto College.

C. Timing

The Tenure Clock/Post-Tenure Review Extension form must be submitted within twelve months of the related event.

In the case of tenure review, the form will normally be submitted prior to the beginning of the decision year. The form must be submitted prior to submission of the faculty member's tenure and promotion file, except in extraordinary cases as approved by the senior vice provost, the senior vice chancellor for academic affairs, or the chancellor as appropriate by campus.

In the case of post-tenure review, the form will normally be submitted prior to the beginning of the year when the post-tenure review is scheduled.

D. Notification and Records

As appropriate by campus, the offices of the senior vice provost, the senior vice chancellor for academic affairs or chancellor will be responsible for communicating the decision or result to the faculty member, the academic unit head and all others in the chain of approval. These offices will also keep a record of all extensions of the probationary period and scheduled post-tenure review and forward copies of the signed forms to the USC Division of Human Resources in Columbia for the official personnel file.

For USC Columbia and the regional Palmetto Colleges, the office of the school/college dean or campus dean will be responsible for maintaining the official record of any changes to a faculty member's probationary period, tenure timeline or scheduled post-tenure review. For the comprehensive universities, these records will be maintained by the office of the senior vice chancellor for academic affairs.

The faculty member will be responsible for placing a copy of the completed form and any accompanying documentation in his/her tenure and promotion or post-tenure review file.

E. Denials and Appeals

All Tenure Clock/Post-Tenure Review Extension forms should be submitted and forwarded through each level of the appropriate campus-based chain of approval. If the faculty member's request for an extension is denied at any point in the process, the reasons for denial must be outlined in an attachment to the Tenure Clock/Post-Tenure Review Extension form.

If the request is ultimately denied, the faculty member may submit a written letter of appeal to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost for USC Columbia; the chancellor of Palmetto College ; or, to the chancellor for the comprehensive university for review and final decision. The written appeal must be submitted within 20 working days of the date of denial. After receipt of the appeal, the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost or chancellor must reply within 20 working days. The decision of the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost or chancellor shall be the final decision of the university.

F. Tenure Progress Review

An extension of the probationary period approved under this policy at any time prior to submission of the tenure progress file will also extend the timeline for the tenure progress review (third year review) for the same period of time, if requested. For example, if a faculty member receives a one-year extension of his/her probationary period under this policy, the tenure progress review timeline is also extended for one year and the progress review should occur during the fourth year, rather than the third.

G. Tenure Review

In cases where faculty members have been in probationary status for more than seven years due to extensions of the probationary period for any of the above reasons, they shall be

evaluated as if they had been in probationary status for the normal probationary period, not longer.

H. Reappointment

Faculty members within the probationary period who have received a notice of non-reappointment for the following year are not eligible to extend the probationary period under this policy.

PROCEDURES

A. Procedure for Comprehensive Universities

Each comprehensive university should develop individual campus-based procedures to implement this policy.

B. Procedure for USC Columbia and the regional Palmetto Colleges

The following procedure should be followed at USC Columbia and the Palmetto Colleges.

1. Required Form and Documentation

A tenure-track faculty member who is eligible for an automatic extension of his/her probationary period for tenure or who would like to request an extension of his/her probationary period for tenure or a scheduled post-tenure review should notify the academic unit head by completing the Tenure Clock/Post-Tenure Review Extension form and submitting the appropriate certification/ documentation of the relevant event or circumstances. In the case of a requested extension, the faculty member must also submit a letter of request in addition to the form and accompanying documentation.

In accordance with federal law, please note that letters of request and certification documents should not include any specific information regarding medical history of faculty member or family member, including specific manifestation of diseases or disorders.

a. Tenure Clock/Post-Tenure Review Extension Form

In all cases, a Tenure Clock/Post-Tenure Review Extension form should be completed by the faculty member and signed by the faculty member's academic unit head followed by the appropriate individuals delineated in the review and approval process for that campus (see Policy Section B). The form is available on the Provost Office website at [Documents and Forms - Office of the Provost](#).

b. Documentation

In addition to the form for all options (i.e., automatic, requested, adjustment), the faculty member must submit documentation or certification of the relevant event or

circumstances. As outlined above, documentation or certification should not include specific information regarding medical history. Examples of documentation include:

- i. a copy of the birth certificate, adoption papers, or letter from the attorney or agency handling an adoption or foster placement;
- ii. a copy of the death certificate;
- iii. certification from the health care provider in the case of a serious health condition of the faculty member or family member; or
- iv. documentation of other situations as appropriate.

c. Letter of Request

In the case of a requested extension, the faculty member should also attach a letter addressed to the academic unit head outlining the reasons for the request. As outlined above, the letter of request should not include any specific information regarding medical history.

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES

[ACAF 1.05 Tenure Progress Review of Faculty: Third Year Review](#)

[USC Columbia *Faculty Manual*, Section 2: Regulations and Policies, under heading Probationary Period and Reappointment Procedures](#)

[USC Palmetto College Campuses *Faculty Manual*, Section C-1: Regulations and Policies](#)

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
May 28, 2001	New policy approval
November 11, 2014	Policy revised to update name changes for system campuses.
May 2, 2019	Policy revised to update campus nomenclature and clarify timeline for extension of tenure progress review.