

NUMBER: ACAF 1.31
SECTION: Academic Affairs
SUBJECT: Extension of Faculty Tenure-Track Probationary Period
DATE: May 28, 2001
REVISED: August 16, 2007
Policy for: All Campuses
Procedure for: Columbia and Regional Campuses
Authorized by: Mark P. Becker
Issued by: Provost's Office

I. Policy

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.

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.

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 granted automatically 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 one-year extension of the maximum probationary period may be requested by a faculty member for the following reasons:

- a. a serious illness of the faculty member and/or the faculty member's spouse/partner, child, or parent; or
- b. the death of the faculty member's parent; or
- c. the placement of a foster child; or
- d. other relevant circumstances, as approved by the academic unit head and those involved in the review and approval process.

3. Provost/Chancellor-Approved Extension

A one-year to three-year extension of the maximum probationary period may be granted by the Provost for Columbia and regional campuses or by the Chancellor for senior campuses 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 must be submitted on the Tenure Clock Extension form and forwarded through the appropriate chain of approval for each campus as outlined below.

1. Columbia Campus

On the Columbia campus, the forms must be reviewed and/or approved by the faculty member's department or unit chair (in departmentalized units), the college/school dean, the vice president for research and health sciences where appropriate, and the vice provost for faculty development.

2. Senior Campuses

On the senior campuses, the forms must be reviewed and/or approved by the faculty member's academic unit head and the executive vice chancellor for academic affairs.

3. Regional Campuses

On the regional campuses, the forms must be reviewed and/or approved by the faculty member's academic unit head, the campus dean, and the vice provost for system affairs.

C. Timing

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

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 vice provost for faculty development, the executive vice chancellor for academic affairs, or the vice provost for system affairs as appropriate by campus.

D. Notification and Records

As appropriate by campus, the offices of the vice provost for faculty development, the executive vice chancellor for academic affairs or the vice provost for system affairs 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 forward copies of the signed forms to the USC Division of Human Resources in Columbia for the official personnel file.

On the Columbia and regional campuses, 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 or tenure timeline. On the senior campuses, these changes will be monitored by the office of the executive 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 file.

E. Denials and Appeals

All Tenure Clock 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 Extension form.

If the request is ultimately denied, the faculty member may submit a written letter of appeal to the Provost for Columbia and regional campuses or to the Chancellor for senior campuses 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 Provost or Chancellor

must reply within 20 working days. The decision of the 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 before the end of the second semester of the faculty member's third year will also extend the timeline for the tenure progress review (third year review) for the same period of time. 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 extension 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.

I. Effective Date of Policy

This policy will be effective as of August 16, 2007.

In addition, faculty members who experienced life events covered under this policy between August 16, 2006 and December 18, 2006 may notify or request an extension of the probationary period on or before December 18, 2007.

II. Procedure

A. Procedure for Senior Campuses

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

B. Procedure for Columbia and Regional Campuses

The following procedure should be followed on the Columbia and Regional Campuses.

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 should notify the academic unit head by completing the Tenure Clock Extension form and submitting the appropriate certification 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.

a. Tenure Clock Extension Form

In all cases, a Tenure Clock 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 Section C). The form is available on the Provost Office website at www.sc.edu/provost/forms.

b. Documentation

In addition to the form, in all cases the faculty member must submit documentation or certification of the relevant event or circumstances. 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.

III. Related Policies

See also:

University Policy 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 Regional Campuses & Continuing Education Faculty Manual, Section C-1: Regulations and Policies

IV. Reason for Revision

This revision makes the granting of a one-year extension of the probationary period for the above-mentioned reasons automatic in some cases and by approval in others. A provost or chancellor-approved extension was added and a ten-year limit was placed on a faculty member's probationary term of appointment. The eligible reasons for an extension were expanded to include the death of a spouse/partner, child or parent, and procedures were added including campus based chains of approval and reference to the Tenure Clock Extension form.

Send comments to: [Elise Ahyi](#)