

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION ACAF Academic Affairs		POLICY NUMBER ACAF 1.18
POLICY TITLE Change of Status between Tenure Track and Professional Track		
SCOPE OF POLICY USC Columbia and Regional Palmetto College Campuses	DATE OF REVISION June 3, 2021	
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost	ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE Office of the Provost	

PURPOSE

This policy governs the change in faculty appointment status between the tenure track and professional track.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Professional Track: designation for faculty members who are engaged in research, instruction both inside and outside the classroom, service and/or administration but who are not eligible for tenure.

Tenure track: designation for faculty who are engaged in research, instruction both inside and outside the classroom, service and administration and who are eligible for tenure (pre-tenure) or tenured.

POLICY STATEMENT

Tenure-track and professional-track faculty members are defined in policies [ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions](#) and [ACAF 1.16 Professional-track Faculty](#).

This policy governs the change in faculty appointment status between tenure track and professional track. This policy does not govern changes in tenure track status in the event of an administrative appointment or changes to the calculation of the probationary period for tenure (tenure clock extensions). See also policies [ACAF 1.00 Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-track and Professional-track Faculty](#) and [ACAF 1.31 Extension of Faculty Tenure-track Probationary Period](#).

A. Transfer from Tenure Track to Professional Track

Changing the appointment status of a full-time faculty member to a faculty position not on tenure track is an administrative decision and does not require a new search. However, this change does require the approval of the tenured and tenure-track faculty of the affected unit if a tenure-track faculty member withdraws from the tenure track during the penultimate year

without applying for tenure to move to professional track. See also USC Columbia *Faculty Manual*, Section 2.

Additionally, tenured faculty members at any rank who change their employment status from full-time to part-time relinquish their tenure. See also policy [ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions](#).

The administrative unit must consult with the Office for International Scholars on possible immigration restrictions or implications for non-U.S. citizen faculty changing to professional track.

B. Transfer from Professional Track to Tenure Track

Changing the appointment status of a full-time faculty member who is on professional track to tenure track is also an administrative action, not governed by procedures for promotion within the tenure track, and does not require a new search, provided a proper search was conducted initially. However, this change does require the approval of the tenured and pre-tenure faculty of the affected unit unless a competitive search is conducted and the professional-track faculty member is the candidate of choice for a tenure-track position. See also USC Columbia Faculty Manual, Section 2.

The academic unit must consult with the Office for International Scholars on possible immigration restrictions or implications for non-U.S. citizen faculty.

Such a change in status may occur under two circumstances:

1. After having served as a full-time faculty member for not less than two academic years, a faculty member may be considered for reappointment at the appropriate tenure-track rank if the unit criteria for appointment at that rank have been met, and if the faculty member was hired as a result of a proper search; or
2. The official offer letter sent pursuant to a proper search may specify that a tenure-track appointment is contingent upon satisfaction of contingencies; e.g., documented completion of a terminal degree; otherwise, the initial appointment will be as a faculty member on professional track (e.g., instructor, research professor, lecturer, etc.).

PROCEDURES

A. Transfer from Tenure Track to Professional Track

1. The dean will submit a written request to the provost along with the candidate's curriculum vita.
2. The Provost may approve, disapprove, or defer a decision on the change of appointment status.

3. The change in appointment takes effect on the date specified in the written approval from the Provost.

B. Transfer to Tenure Track Following Two Years' Service

1. The unit faculty should vote, providing a recommendation for or against the change of status.
2. The dean and department chair (in departmentalized units) provide written recommendations to the provost, including date, outcome, and vote of the unit faculty.
3. The dean certifies that a proper search was conducted at the time of the initial appointment.
4. The provost may approve, disapprove, or defer a decision on the change of status.
5. If the transfer includes appointment at the rank of professor, the appointment must be approved by the president. If the transfer includes appointment with tenure, the president and Board of Trustees must approve the tenure. The letter of appointment may include Board approval as pending.
6. The change in appointment takes effect on the date specified in the provost's approval letter. The tenure start date will also be specified in the provost's approval letter.

C. Transfer to Tenure Track for Satisfying Contingency

1. The change in appointment follows when the contingency has been met, provided the faculty member's performance has been satisfactory. The change in the appointment must be approved by the Office of the Provost.
2. The change in appointment takes effect on either January 1 or August 16 whichever date is first following the date the contingency was satisfied.

D. Notification of Change

The Division of Human Resources must be notified regarding any changes in tenure or appointment status, following the required approvals outlined above.

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES

[USC Columbia Faculty Manual](#)

[Regional Campuses Faculty Manual](#)

[ACAF 1.00 Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-Track and Professional Track Faculty](#)

[ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions](#)

[ACAF 1.16 Professional-Track Faculty](#)

[ACAF 1.31 Extension of Faculty Tenure-Track Probationary Period](#)
[EOP 1.00 Equal Opportunity Policy](#)
[EOP 1.03 Prohibition of Unlawful Discrimination and Harassment](#)
[HR 1.90 Job Reference and Background Checks](#)

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
February 1, 1995	New policy approval
October 31, 2016	Policy reviewed October 2016. No substantive changes needed
June 3, 2021	Reformatting to new template; change non-tenure-track to professional track; clarify procedures for transfer to tenure track.