

University of South Carolina Aiken

POST TENURE REVIEW POLICY

I. Policy Statement

A. Tenure

Tenure is awarded to a faculty member who has demonstrated over time and to the satisfaction of peers and administrators, a sufficiently high level of performance in teaching, scholarship, and service to warrant a permanent position on a university faculty. Tenure protects academic freedom, the right of faculty to pursue original research or study ideas that are new, unpopular or misunderstood. Such freedom of thought is of inestimable benefit to society. The awarding of tenure has been a practice integral to the proper functioning of the university. It has provided an essential safeguard for society by ensuring that a faculty member's primary loyalty can be to the discovery, advancement, and dissemination of knowledge, and not to ideological or social agendas or commercial enterprises.

The typical path to tenure begins with a lengthy, demanding, and expensive education with no guarantee of employment at the end. The typical recipient of a doctoral degree, which is required by universities for most teaching positions, has spent between nine and twelve years in university study. Many have spent additional years working in their chosen fields or in post doctoral study, so the typical new hire is often well beyond the entry age of those in other professions. A six-year probationary period follows before tenure is awarded.

Compared to other professions, academic careers involve considerable financial and personal sacrifice. Most academics receive a salary for only nine months of the year, and it is much lower than they would receive in the marketplace for their level of education and ability. Faculty accept lower salaries for the "life of the mind," academic freedom, and the security of tenure. Society has traditionally encouraged that trade-off and has received great economic benefit from it. Any significant erosion in the institution of tenure will cause long-term deterioration of the professorate and ultimately the university. Worthy faculty may be forced out and many bright young people will be discouraged from entering the academic world.

B. Post Tenure Review

In its commitment to maintaining faculty excellence, USCA has developed a Post Tenure Review Policy which recognizes and rewards faculty for achievements in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service commensurate with the standards of the rank earned. USCA is committed to the tenure of its faculty and views post tenure review as a means of supporting the professional development of the faculty.

Post tenure review is a periodic review of tenured faculty. It provides feedback on the faculty member's continuing commitment to the University as demonstrated by the kinds of productive activities specific to each faculty member's discipline. It is through this productivity that the excellence of USCA is affirmed and sustained. Through this process faculty should receive a greater measure of the reward they deserve.

The overall goal of the post tenure review process is to conserve and enhance one of USCA's greatest strengths, its dedicated and talented faculty. In every stage of the review, the principles of academic freedom and due process will be protected. This includes the freedom to pursue self-directed lines of inquiry, including those that may be novel, unpopular, unfashionable, or of extended duration.

II. Benefits

A periodic review of tenured faculty offers three major benefits. First, it provides the opportunity to reward faculty for the sustained professional performance typical of tenured professors. Second, it provides a periodic occasion to examine broader patterns of career development than those visible in the annual report and to assess directions for the future. Finally, the process also provides an opportunity for those few faculty whose contributions have fallen below acceptable levels to find ways to re-engage their interests, talents, and energies.

III. Relation to Annual Evaluations

Faculty at the University of South Carolina Aiken undergo a systematic annual evaluation in order to assure that they are prepared to remain highly productive for the balance of their careers. Because the annual review is an administrative review, the process provides feedback only from that perspective. The post tenure review process strengthens faculty assessment by providing the opportunity for peer feedback on faculty performance at regular six-year intervals. The post tenure review, like the annual review and the promotion and tenure review, covers the three traditional areas of faculty responsibility: teaching, scholarship, and service. The review will be sufficiently flexible to accommodate faculty with differing disciplines, responsibilities, professional interests, and career profiles. The review will acknowledge that faculty members may contribute to the institution's mission in different ways at different points in their careers.

IV. Post Tenure Review Files

The post tenure review process should be rigorous and thorough, but it must not be allowed to inadvertently undermine faculty productivity by its demands. To that end, the process will build upon the annual reports that faculty prepare for submission to their unit heads. After being notified that they are scheduled for post tenure review by the Executive Vice Chancellor's Office, faculty members will prepare a folder that includes the following and only the following items:

- (1) a summary statement of no more than two pages (also twelve point font, one inch margins) that highlights major accomplishments and helps the committee establish a clear and coherent profile of the candidate's career since the last career evaluation, and which projects future activities and career directions;
- (2) a current vita, not to exceed ten pages (twelve point font, one inch margins);
- (3) a set of all annual activity reports since the faculty member's last career evaluation (without supporting documentation) in chronological order, each followed by a copy of the annual supervisory evaluation and the final performance review memo for that year from the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

In addition, the faculty member may provide a copy of any rejoinder submitted as part of the annual evaluation process. If a rejoinder is included, the faculty member will also submit the official response to the rejoinder. Moreover, the faculty member may provide a written rebuttal, with supporting evidence, to any supervisory evaluations or administrative responses.

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June 26, 2003 (B.O.T.)
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V. Eligible Faculty

The full-time teaching faculty, non-full time administrative faculty and librarians will be subject to the post tenure review process. (See Section 5.6 - 16 of the Faculty Manual for the definition of full-time administrators.) Those faculty who move into full-time administrative positions will not be subject to the post tenure review process until they move back into a teaching or less than full-time administrative position and have accumulated a total of six years of service since their last positive promotion or tenure review by the Promotion and Tenure Committee, or since their last post tenure review. These may be non-consecutive years.

VI. Definitions of Standards

A. Maintaining Professional Performance at Rank

Maintaining professional performance at rank means that during the post tenure review period, the faculty member has continued at the level of performance outlined by the criteria used for his/her promotion to his/her present rank. It should be noted that, as stated in the USCA Faculty Manual, 5.6 - 12, IV 4, "Criteria for promotion and/or tenure must allow for individual uniqueness and creativity in performance and must value differences within and between disciplines. (Faculty members should not be expected to perform alike or to be equally strong in all three areas.)" (See Section 5.6, Promotion and Tenure Policy in the USCA Faculty Manual, specifically sections III - V.)

B. Not Maintaining Professional Performance at Rank

Not maintaining professional performance at rank is understood to mean that during the post tenure review period, the faculty member has substantial and chronic deficiencies in maintaining the level of performance outlined by the criteria used for his/her promotion to his/her present rank.

VII. Application Process

1. In January of each year, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will notify all faculty who are to be candidates for post tenure review during the following academic year. Candidates will include all tenured teaching and tenured non-full time administrative faculty who have completed six years since either a tenure, promotion or previous post tenure review. Should the pool be larger than twenty candidates, candidates with the longest time since their last review will become candidates that year. Others will be postponed for consideration until the following year. Post tenure review will be waived for any faculty member who notifies the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in writing of retirement within three years of the next scheduled review. The notification of retirement within three years and the request for waiver of post tenure review during that period is the option of the faculty member. It is preferred that retirement notification and request for post tenure review waiver be submitted to the Executive Vice Chancellor by August 16 of the year of the scheduled review.

2. In September of each academic year, the Post Tenure Review Committee will prepare and distribute to all faculty the post tenure review calendar, including the deadlines for each step, and will make forms available as needed.
[Reference: Post Tenure Review Committee, 8.1 - 12.]
3. The candidate for post tenure review will complete the required post tenure review form and prepare a supporting file, as described in section IV, above.
4. The candidate will submit his/her file to the Post Tenure Review Committee by the published deadline. No file will be accepted after the deadline.
5. The Post Tenure Review Committee members will review and discuss each file. Each committee member will then mark a confidential ballot indicating whether or not he/she believes the faculty member has maintained professional performance at the earned rank. Votes will be taken in the presence of the committee, and two members will count the votes.
6. The Post Tenure Review Committee will forward its findings with written rationale and the files to the Executive Vice Chancellor.
7. The Post Tenure Review Committee will communicate its findings and the written rationale to each candidate, but not the numerical vote which will be treated as confidential.
8. The Post Tenure Review Committee will then announce its positive findings to the faculty.
9. In the event of a finding that a candidate needs to re-engage his/her energies to regain the level of professional performance expected at that rank, the candidate may forward in writing to the Executive Vice Chancellor the reason(s) why he/she believes the Post Tenure Review Committee's finding should not be supported.
10. The Executive Vice Chancellor will review each file and add a written recommendation. All files will then be sent to the Chancellor for action within thirty calendar days.
11. The Chancellor will make a decision and notify the candidate and the Post Tenure Review Committee in writing within fifteen calendar days.
12. In the event the Chancellor decides that the faculty member has not maintained professional performance at rank, the candidate may appeal the decision to the USCA Grievance Committee. Such appeals will follow the published grievance procedures. (See Section 5.9.) In the event the USCA Grievance Committee

supports the candidate's case, the file is forwarded to the Chancellor for a second review. The Chancellor will notify the candidate of the final decision. In the event that the Chancellor decides that a faculty member has not maintained professional performance at rank, the faculty member will be required to carry out a professional development plan.

13. The ultimate decisions regarding post tenure review are made by the Chancellor of USCA.

[NOTE: Documentation may be requested from the candidate at any time during this procedure for further clarification.]

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April 27, 2006 (Assembly)
June 29, 2006 (B.O.T.)

VIII. Reward for Maintaining Professional Performance at Rank

When the candidate receives a positive decision from the Chancellor, the faculty member will be eligible to receive an increase in his/her base salary equal to two-thirds of the amount that would currently be awarded for promotion to his/her present rank. In the case of tenured assistant professors, the reward will be equal to half the current value of promotion to associate professor.

IX. Improvement Opportunities

A. The Professional Development Plan

A faculty member whose post tenure review reveals that he/she has not maintained professional performance at rank by having substantial and chronic deficiencies will participate in a Professional Development Plan designed to fit the individual's circumstances. The Professional Development Plan will describe how specific deficiencies in a faculty member's performance will be remedied. The plan will be developed collaboratively by the faculty member, the faculty member's supervisor, and a tenured colleague of the faculty member's choice, and will be approved by the Post Tenure Review Committee. The Plan should reflect the aspirations of the faculty member, the department, and the University. All faculty and administrators involved in the plan must be committed to its successful completion and must provide reasonable support. The re-engagement of faculty interests and energies provides a positive outcome for the entire University community. The Faculty Development Plan will: (1) define specific goals and outcomes; (2) outline activities to achieve the goals and outcomes;

(3) provide a schedule for accomplishing the activities, including intermediate as well as final outcome assessment; (4) define the criteria by which progress will be measured. The Plan must be completed in no more than three years.

B. The Process

When the faculty member is notified that development is required and any appeal process is exhausted, the faculty member will have thirty calendar days to develop, with his/her supervisor and another tenured faculty member, the Faculty Development Plan. The supervisor will be responsible to oversee the process of plan development and send the Development Plan within these thirty calendar days to the Post Tenure Review Committee for its approval. An extension for extenuating circumstances may be granted by the committee upon written request from the faculty member and/or the supervisor. In the event that the faculty member and the supervisor (with the help of the tenured faculty member) cannot agree on a development plan, the faculty member may send a separate development plan to the committee.

Within thirty calendar days of receipt (excluding summer months) the committee must inform the faculty member, the supervisor, and the EVCAA of whether the development plan has been accepted. In the event that two plans are submitted, the committee may choose between them, or it may devise a third plan from the two submitted as a compromise. If the committee does not approve the development plan or requests changes in it, the committee chair will notify the faculty member, the supervisor, and the EVCAA. Within fifteen calendar days (excluding summer months) of receipt of the committee's announcement that the plan has not been approved, the faculty member must submit a revised plan to the committee. The committee will render a decision on the revised plan within fifteen calendar days (excluding summer months) of receiving it. If the plan is approved, the committee will notify the faculty member, the supervisor, and the EVCAA, and the three-year clock will begin. If the revised plan is not approved, the committee will notify the faculty member, the EVCAA, and the supervisor that no satisfactory development plan has been submitted. Failure to submit an approved plan within the prescribed time will be deemed as failure to have completed the Post Tenure Review process, and the three year time period will no longer apply.

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During the development period, the faculty member and the supervisor will meet periodically to review progress toward meeting the goals stated in the development plan. When the faculty member and the supervisor agree that the goals have been met, or at the end of the three year period, the supervisor will send a report to the Post Tenure Review Committee. This report will include

sufficient information regarding the faculty member's activities and accomplishments for the Post Tenure Review Committee to determine whether or not the goals of the Plan have been met. This report must be signed by both the faculty member and the supervisor, and it may include a statement from the faculty member providing additional information or perspectives. The Committee will communicate its decision to the faculty member, the supervisor, the Executive Vice Chancellor, and the Chancellor within thirty calendar days. The Executive Vice Chancellor will review the Committee decision and add a written recommendation. The ultimate decision regarding whether the faculty member has successfully met the goals of the plan will be made by the Chancellor of USCA within thirty calendar days of receipt of the Committee decision. Failure to meet the goals of the plan in the three year time period will make the faculty member ineligible for the reward specified in section VIII of this plan, and the University may take further action under Section 5.5 of the USCA Faculty Manual. A faculty member who successfully meets the goals of the Professional Development Plan will be eligible to receive the same reward as specified in section VIII and will be eligible for post tenure review six years after meeting the goals of the Professional Development Plan or six years after the last promotion review with a positive result, if another such review takes place during that six year period.

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May 24, 1998 (PTR Policy)