

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

SRSU Policy: Tenure

SRSU Policy ID: FH 2.06

Policy Reviewed by: Executive Vice President and Provost

Approval Authority: President of the University

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Tenure must be viewed from the standpoint of the general good of the university. It signifies not only the entitlement to continuing appointment as a member of the faculty but also presumes a corresponding commitment by the faculty member to the goals and mission of the university and acceptance of the responsibilities as set forth in the *Rules and Regulations, Texas State University System*, in the *Faculty Handbook* of the University, and the statements by the American Association of University Professors on academic freedom, tenure, and due process.

A. General Qualifications and Criteria for Tenure

Employment by the university for the period of time required before tenure can be considered does not imply that a faculty member has met all criteria required for tenure. The faculty member must demonstrate, at the time tenure is considered, a significant contribution to the mission of the university during the probationary period and show potential for continued significant contributions to that mission.

1. See 2.04, C 1-7.

2. Earned terminal degree.

The earned doctorate or designated terminal degree is a prerequisite to consideration for tenure. The only exception is in those instances in which the initial letter of appointment or a subsequent reappointment letter clearly waives the requirement of a terminal degree as an ultimate condition of eligibility for tenure consideration.

3. Regular evaluation.

Beginning with appointment to a tenure-track position, each non-tenured faculty member will be observed and evaluated in the classroom by the department chairperson and the college dean. The chairperson shall maintain the departmental file of these annual evaluations with a summary of the university-sponsored student evaluations along with anything else the faculty member may wish to submit.

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4. Documented conferences.

After consultations with the tenured faculty of the department, the chairperson shall hold a conference with the tenure-track faculty member and enter into the departmental file all notes from this conference. A copy of these notes shall be given to the faculty member. This process shall be repeated each successive spring semester until the probationary faculty member has been granted tenure. After the faculty member has been granted tenure, this process shall continue as part of the Performance Evaluation of Tenured Faculty Members.

5. Probationary Period.

The probationary period is five years from the date of employment indicated on the original letter of appointment. The letter of appointment to the sixth year shall state that the appointment is terminal or that tenure has been awarded.

6. Third-Year Review.

During the third year of the probationary period, the department chairperson shall convene the Third-Year Review Committee to review and consider the faculty member's progress toward tenure and promotion. The committee will consist of the departmental chairperson and the members of the Promotion and Tenure Departmental Review Committee. The Third-Year Review Committee will provide a narrative explaining the applicant's strengths and weaknesses in the areas relevant to promotion and tenure and provide suggestions for improvement.

The department chairperson will meet with the third-year review candidate to discuss the findings of the Third-Year Review Committee. After this meeting, the department chair will provide a copy of the narrative to the college dean and provost.

7. Credit for previous experience.

A maximum of three years of credit toward fulfillment of the required probationary period may be awarded, at the time of employment, for previous college- or university-teaching experience. The initial letter of appointment shall indicate the years of credit awarded for previous college- or university-teaching experience as well as the date when the individual shall be considered for tenure.

8. Tenure at the time of employment.

Tenure may be granted at the time of employment in exceptional situations under the current provisions of the *Rules and Regulations* of the board of regents.

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9. Leave of absence.

Time spent on leave of absence will not apply toward the minimum years of experience at Sul Ross State University which are required for eligibility for tenure.

B. Eligibility of Administrators for Tenure

1. Teach part-time.

An administrator who teaches part-time may be eligible for tenure in a department offering instruction for which that administrator is academically prepared. To become eligible for tenure, the administrator must have taught on a part-time basis for a period of time at least equivalent to that required for the granting of tenure to full-time faculty of the same academic rank.

2. Tenured position only in academic department.

A tenured appointment for an administrator will apply only for the faculty (teaching) position. The privilege of returning to a full-time teaching appointment with tenure will be contingent upon the availability of a full-time position in the appropriate academic department, and the decision for such a change will be at the discretion of the president and the board of regents.

C. Procedure for Tenure (See FH 2.04 C Procedure for Tenure and Promotion)

D. Special Considerations

1. Withdrawing an application.

An applicant may withdraw an application for tenure at any time in the review process.

2. Hearing Conditions.

A faculty member shall not be entitled to a statement of reasons for denial of tenure beyond the rationales provided throughout the process or to a hearing to review or appeal such denial, unless he or she submits in writing to the president factual allegations that the denial constitutes a violation of a right guaranteed by the laws or Constitution of the State of Texas or of the United States and requests an administrative hearing to review these allegations. The allegations shall be heard under the same procedures as in the case of dismissal for cause (Chapter V, Subsection 4.44 of the *Rules and Regulations, Texas State*

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University System) with the exceptions applicable to non-tenured faculty who are not reappointed (Chapter V, Subsection 4.28).

E. Return of Tenure Applications

When the review procedure is complete, the executive vice president and provost shall retain all applications for retrieval by all applicants.