

III.D.9. Process for Tenure and Advancement in Rank

The criteria for promotion are based on the General Criteria for Faculty Review listed in section III.D.5. Criteria for promotion and tenure are to be articulated and supplemented by criteria developed at the department, school, and/or college level to emphasize goals and objectives. Evaluation of performance for promotion and tenure should consider changes in workload allocation during the relevant review period.

The Instructions and Forms on Tenure and Promotion are distributed by the Office of the Provost in the spring, and the process will continue through the following academic year.

The initial dossier, prepared by the candidate, should include a context statement, curriculum vitae, and material relevant to their workload, such as teaching, research, or service portfolios and supporting materials (see III.D.8).

Appropriate references are solicited by the chair of the department or director of the school and added to the dossier. At least four *external* letters are required for tenure and tenure-track promotion considerations. At least four review letters are also required for career-track promotions and may be from either internal or external reviewers. See the Guidelines from the Office of the Provost for additional information.

The chair should also add the annual reviews for the period since hire (for tenure or promotion to associate professor) or the last promotion (for promotion to professor) to the dossier for internal consideration.

All faculty in the department who are in the same track as the candidate and at or above the rank sought (tenured faculty for tenure considerations) are expected to review the candidate's dossier and fill out the recommendation forms provided by the Office of the Provost. Department bylaws should specify whether additional tracks or sub-tracks at or above the rank sought also participate in making recommendations. At least five (5) persons who are thoroughly familiar with the attainments of the candidate must participate in filling out the recommendation form(s). When there are fewer than five (5) faculty in the department eligible to submit recommendations, the eligible recommenders will propose additional faculty to include in the process to the principal administrative officers. The Office of the Provost will determine which of these persons will complete the recommendation form.

The candidate's dossier, including the chair's recommendation, the faculty recommendation forms, available review letters, and the materials provided by the candidate, must be forwarded from the chair to the dean and, depending on the campus, the VCAA, on the schedule determined by the Office of the Provost. The candidate for promotion or tenure will be provided a minimum of five (5) business days to review the dossier (excluding the review letters) from the department and may attach up to two (2) additional pages of information to be reviewed by the Office of the Dean and the Office of the Chancellor, if appropriate, prior to the dean making their recommendation and forwarding the updated dossier to the Office of the Provost.

In consultation with the chair and the relevant college committees on promotion and tenure, the dean will decide which promotion cases are to be forwarded to the Office of the Provost and will notify each candidate of the decision in writing within ten (10) business days. All tenure cases must be forwarded to the Office of the Provost. The

candidate for promotion or tenure will be provided with a minimum of five (5) business days to review the additions to the dossier made by the Office of the Dean (excluding the review letters) and attach up to two (2) additional pages of information to be considered by the Office of the Provost prior to a final recommendation being made. At this time, a candidate for promotion can choose whether to have their dossier forwarded to the provost, regardless of the dean's recommendation.

The promotion packet is due in the Office of the Provost by the date specified in the provost's Instructions for Tenure and Promotion. Final decisions are normally made by the middle of the spring semester, and letters notifying faculty of the decision are sent immediately thereafter. Promotion or tenure becomes effective July 1 for annual appointments and August 16 for academic-year appointments.

Promotion to Associate Professor or Professor

Only under extraordinary circumstances will a person be considered for promotion to the next rank prior to the end of their fifth year of service in rank, with the promotion, if granted, awarded at the end of the sixth (6) year. Faculty may also remain at their current rank and be reappointed to subsequent terms at that rank after their sixth (6) year of service, provided satisfactory performance continues. Satisfaction of minimum criteria at the department level is not sufficient to ensure promotion. Some successful faculty members may need more than six (6) years of service at a given rank to achieve the credentials necessary for promotion to the next rank.

For pre-tenured faculty, an evaluation for promotion to associate professor is frequently carried out at the same time as the tenure consideration. In all other instances, candidacy for promotion to associate professor or professor may be initiated by the faculty member, one or more departmental professors, or the chair.

Attainment of the rank of associate professor shows that a faculty member has demonstrated a record of achievement and growth, showing evolution and innovation in areas of the faculty member's workload assignment. Documented evidence of the quality and quantity of the accomplishments of the candidate is needed.

Promotion to the rank of professor is an indication that, in the opinion of colleagues, an individual has made, and continues to make, outstanding contributions to a major area of the individual's work assignment. Candidates for promotion to professor must show clear and convincing evidence of consistently high attainment in the criteria appropriate to their work assignment and to the mission of their departments, including increased service to the institution, professional organizations, and/or society. Documented evidence that the quality and quantity of the accomplishments of the candidate are at a significantly higher level than that expected of an associate professor is required. National, and preferably international, prominence must be demonstrated through some form of recognized achievement reviewed by appropriate professionals for promotion to professor.

Promotion to Regents Professor or Regents Librarian

Faculty with the rank of regents professor or regents librarian are tenured faculty who have reached the highest levels of achievement in their discipline and who are thoughtful and committed in all areas in their workload, including teaching and service to Washington State University. The title of "regents" is used in honor of the dedicated efforts made by

the members of the WSU Board of Regents, but this title should not be construed to mean there is a privileged relationship between regents professors or the regents librarians and the Board of Regents.

Promotion to regents requires service to the university at the rank of professor or librarian 4 for at least seven (7) years. Each college may nominate up to two (2) eligible faculty as candidates each year. The nomination process for promotion to regents is initiated by a chair or dean, and nominees are evaluated by a review committee following processes outlined by the provost. Faculty recommendations from the department are not necessary for this nomination. Those who are not selected for promotion may be nominated again.

The regents rank can be held by no more than 35 active Washington State University faculty members (0.5 FTE or higher) at any one time, with no more than three (3) newly promoted in any given year. Those awarded the regents rank receive a 10% base salary increase. They are reviewed every five (5) years (based on the calendar year of initial appointment) following a process outlined by the provost for either continuation or appointment to professor rank with the working title of “past regents professor.” Faculty with the regents rank effective before January 1st, 2026, will begin their five-year review period with the 2026 calendar year.

Continuation of the regents rank at the time of a five-year review depends on continued excellence in performance. If the rank is continued, there is no further salary increase associated with this decision. If the rank is changed to professor or librarian 4, the faculty member retains the 10% base salary increase awarded with the original appointment as regents professor or regents librarian. Use of the working title past regents professor or past regents librarian is discretionary and can be used while employed and during retirement. The number of past regents faculty does not count towards the cap on the number of active regents faculty. When the regents rank is not renewed, the individual is not eligible for promotion to regents professor or regents librarian a second time. The rank regents (or title past regents) and salary increase associated with promotion to regents may be revoked if a faculty member is subject to disciplinary action with major sanctions (Section II.F.11).

Promotion to Laureate Professor or Laureate Librarian

Faculty with the rank of laureate professor and laureate librarian are career-track faculty who perform at a very high level in all domains within their workload (which may include teaching, scholarship and creative activity, service, clinical work, and/or outreach). The title of “laureate” is used to designate the highest faculty rank in the career-track.

Promotion to laureate requires service to the university at the rank of career-track professor or librarian 4 for at least seven (7) years. Each college may nominate up to two (2) eligible faculty as candidates each year. Career-track professors from any sub-track are eligible for promotion to laureate professor. The nomination process for promotion is initiated by a chair or dean, and nominees are evaluated by a review committee following a process determined by the provost. Those who are not selected for promotion may be nominated again.

The laureate rank is held by no more than 25 active Washington State University faculty members (0.5 FTE or higher) at any one time, with no more than three (3) newly promoted

in any given year. Those awarded the laureate rank receive a 10% base salary increase. The awarding or continuation of the rank does not alter the duration of pre-existing or subsequent employment contracts. Those awarded the laureate rank are reviewed every five (5) years (based on the calendar year of initial appointment) following a process outlined by the provost for either continuation or appointment to professor or librarian 4 rank with the discretionary working title of “past laureate professor” or “past laureate librarian.”

Continuation of the laureate rank at the time of a five-year review depends on continued excellence in performance. If the rank is continued, there is no further salary increase associated with this decision. If the rank is changed to professor or librarian 4, the faculty member retains the 10% base salary increase awarded with the original appointment as laureate professor. Use of the working title past laureate professor or past laureate librarian is discretionary and can be used while employed and during retirement. The number of past laureate faculty does not count towards the cap on the number of active laureate faculty. When the laureate rank is not renewed, the individual is not eligible for promotion to the laureate rank a second time. The laureate rank (or title past laureate) and salary increase associated with promotion to the laureate rank may be revoked if a faculty member is subject to disciplinary action with major sanctions (Section II.F.11).

Tenure

The final tenure review for faculty members initially appointed full-time at the level of assistant professor or equivalent shall normally occur no later than the sixth (6) year of appointment. All tenure review cases for pre-tenured must be submitted by year six (6) unless there is an approved extension. The final tenure review may occur earlier in especially meritorious cases at the request of the faculty member, with support from the appropriate chair, dean, and campus VCAA (dependent on the college and WSU campus) and with the approval of the provost. Tenure consideration for faculty members initially appointed full-time at the level of associate professor or professor, or other comparable ranks, ordinarily will be considered for tenure no later than during the third year of service or during the first year of service, respectively, at WSU. The timing of tenure consideration is a negotiable condition of employment. Tenure review shall result in either the granting of tenure to become effective at the beginning of the academic year following the year in which tenure consideration is conducted or the denial of tenure and the offering of a one (1) year terminal appointment. The decision to deny tenure must be communicated to the faculty member by no later than May 15 of the review year.

Tenure Clock Extensions

The tenure period is negotiated at the time of hire; however, under certain circumstances, an extension of the tenure period and/or the intensive (i.e., 3rd year) review may be granted under certain circumstances as described below.

- (a) Pre-tenured faculty may request a one-time term extension for extraordinary circumstances, such as an unanticipated lack of available resources, serious illness, family emergency, and/or elder or dependent care when the faculty member is a caregiver. In addition, faculty who assume a significant leadership role may request an extension of the tenure clock; however, in this instance, the role that the leadership position will play in the tenure assessment should be clearly articulated by the dean

of the appropriate college and conveyed to the Office of the Provost. Requests for an extension should be in writing in the form of a memo signed by both the petitioning faculty member and the department chair, school director, or program director.

All such requests will be granted at the discretion of the appropriate dean with the approval of the provost. Approved extensions will be one (1) year in duration for full-time faculty, with part-time faculty receiving an extension commensurate with appointment level.

- (b) Pre-tenured faculty who become a parent of a child or multiples by birth, adoption, or fostering (i.e., 12 months of foster care, but not necessarily contiguous) will automatically be granted a one (1) year extension of the tenure clock when the faculty member is a caregiver. For each subsequent child, a faculty member may request an additional extension for a maximum of two (2) separate extensions of the tenure period. When both parents are members of the faculty and share equally in caregiving responsibilities, each parent will be granted a one (1) year extension. Extension periods cannot be combined (e.g., one (1) child with a single three (3) year extension).

Faculty may elect to opt out of the automatic extension of the tenure period granted for childbirth, adoption, or fostering. It is recommended that the faculty should notify the appropriate dean, director, or department chair of the birth, adoption, or fostering via memo, preferably six (6) months prior to the arrival of the child. Faculty electing to take advantage of the one (1) year extension are also required to take parental leave and apply for family medical leave (*see section III.E.8*), which is counted towards the one (1) year extension. The dean should notify the Office of the Provost immediately so the proper records for the promotion case are maintained.

An extension for the tenure candidacy period or postponement of the intensive review will be available regardless of the number of weeks of annual leave taken by the faculty member. The standards for tenure and promotion remain the same for faculty who have been granted a tenure clock extension and/or an intensive review deferral. Even though a faculty member may be given a longer period of time in which to meet these standards, the faculty member should be held to the same performance standards as a faculty member who has not received an extension. However, when the chair, director, or dean requests materials for consideration of promotion and/or tenure by external reviewers, it should be made clear that the length of time between milestones should not be taken into consideration.

General

The decision to offer a tenure-track position rests with the dean of the college. This decision must be made when the job description is developed. Tenure is granted only for academic rank or professional status within departments or schools. Department chairs, school directors, program directors, deans, academic directors, and other administrative officers do not acquire tenure in administrative positions. To qualify for tenure, the faculty member is expected to observe all policies applying to faculty in Section II: Freedom, Responsibility, and Discipline. Except in extraordinary circumstances, such as financial exigencies or elimination of function, these tenure provisions apply.

The acquisition of tenure requires action by the president of the University by delegation of authority from the Board of Regents. Tenure, once granted, is retained by the faculty member until they retire or cease to be an employee of the University.

When a former faculty member with tenure is reemployed in a comparable position within two (2) years, tenure may be granted immediately, provided the usual procedures are followed. Departments may consider prior academic appointments elsewhere in the tenure process; however, all pre-tenured assistant professors will be allowed up to six (6) years prior to tenure consideration.

If a tenured person takes a different faculty position within the institution on a permanent basis, the receiving department must assume the tenure obligation accompanying the transfer. In the special case of the formation of a new unit, the prior tenure of each faculty member will be transferred to the new unit.

A faculty member whose appointment is budgeted on a continuing basis in more than one (1) unit may be granted tenure, provided that the positions are permanent and if tenure is granted in all units simultaneously. Such tenure implies no obligation for one (1) unit to increase the employment of the person beyond the budgeted portion if duties should cease to exist in another unit. This policy applies to a person holding a joint appointment in instructional units as well as to a person with duties divided between teaching and non-teaching responsibilities in a position having faculty status.

In special circumstances involving a joint appointee, one (1) unit may request permission to assume an additional portion or all the tenure responsibility for the faculty member, and in this case the other unit or units accept no responsibility for continuation of the position.

If the duties of a non-tenured faculty member change to result in a shift between units in the budgeted appointment on a continuing basis, the date of eligibility for tenure consideration remains based on the original appointment to the faculty.

A person who is appointed to a temporary position, whether part-time or full-time, is not eligible for tenure. If a person in a short-term or career-track appointment is subsequently moved to a tenure-track position, past service may be counted toward eligibility for tenure.

Denial of Tenure

Tenure must be granted or denied. Granting of tenure becomes effective on August 16 for academic-year appointees and on July 1 for annual appointees. Upon denial of tenure, notification of non-reappointment will be given at least twelve months in advance of the appointment termination.

Notification of the granting or denial of tenure shall be given in writing to the faculty member by the provost within three (3) business days after a decision has been made. While notification of the final tenure decision will be communicated by the provost, the dean, campus VCAA (dependent on college and WSU campus) or relevant area administrator will provide more detailed analysis.

If the Faculty member resigns within ninety (90) calendar days after notification of denial of tenure, no reference will appear in their personnel file that tenure was denied or that a recommendation to deny tenure was made. The effective date of such resignation shall

be the date upon which the appointment would have been terminated if tenure had been denied, or earlier, if mutually agreed to by both parties.

A faculty member who has been denied tenure may, within thirty (30) calendar days after notification of non-reappointment by the provost, petition the Faculty Status Committee to review the decision, based upon an allegation of inadequate consideration, an allegation of violation of academic freedom, or an allegation of substantial procedural irregularity that had the effect of prejudicing the faculty member's application for tenure. If a review by the Faculty Status Committee is requested, the committee shall determine its own procedures for hearing the matter, in a manner consistent with federal and state law, shall conduct its review as expeditiously as possible, and shall report its findings to the president, or designee, and to the faculty member requesting review within the next ninety (90) calendar days after the request is made. The committee may elect to count only days of the academic year in the ninety (90) day period. The president shall notify the faculty member requesting the review of their decision within thirty (30) calendar days after receiving the report of findings. The president is under no obligation to accept findings by the committee as binding.

A tenured person whose position has been eliminated also has the right of appeal to the Faculty Status Committee.