



**Policy Chapter:** Chapter 6 Academic Affairs

**Policy Number and Title:** 06.004 Faculty Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion, and Reduced Appointments

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**I. Policy Statement**

UNT is committed to recognizing and rewarding faculty whose work demonstrates sustained excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service through the tenure and promotion process. This policy provides the framework for the development and implementation of unit-level criteria, procedures, and communication processes that support reappointment, tenure, and promotion.

**II. Application of Policy**

Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty Members.

**III. Policy Definitions**

**A. Abstain**

"Abstain," in this policy, is a voluntary decision not to cast an aye or nay vote. Abstentions are considered non-votes.

**B. Academic Administrator**

"Academic Administrator," in this policy, means a UNT official in the position of unit administrator, associate dean, dean, provost, or that official's designee.

**C. Advocate**

"Advocate," in this policy, means a tenured UNT faculty member who is well-versed with UNT tenure and promotion processes. The role of the advocate is to clarify aspects of the tenure and promotion process and/or answer questions regarding the candidate's case. An advocate is preferably an expert in the candidate's field. Academic Administrators cannot serve as advocates.

**D. Business Day**

"Business Day," in this policy, means Monday through Friday during regular university business hours (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.), when university offices are open.

**E. College Review Committee**

"College Review Committee," in this policy, means a group of faculty members who review the tenure and promotion personnel actions within a college.

**F. Eligible Faculty Member**

"Eligible Faculty Member," in this policy, means a faculty member who may vote on faculty reappointment, tenure, and promotion personnel actions in years 4, 5, and 6 of the tenure-track. Faculty are eligible to vote on personnel actions of faculty with the same or lesser rank, e.g., an associate professor can vote on tenure/promotion personnel actions involving

associate/assistant professors and non-tenured faculty members. The term does not include a person who holds faculty rank but who spends the majority of time engaged in managerial or supervisory activities (for example the provost, a dean, unit administrator, or person in an associate or assistant academic administrator position), or a student who teaches as part of an educational program.

**G. *Electronic Dossier***

“Electronic Dossier,” in this policy, is a collection of digital tenure and promotion documents housed in the university’s faculty information system.

**H. *Expedited Tenure***

“Expedited Tenure,” in this policy, means a tenure review that takes place out-of-cycle for hiring or counter-offer purposes.

**I. *Faculty Member***

“Faculty Member,” in this policy, means a person employed by UNT as a member of the university's tenure/tenure-track faculty, whose duties include teaching, scholarship, and service. The term does not include a person who holds faculty rank but who spends the majority of time engaged in managerial or supervisory activities (e.g., provost, dean, unit administrator, or associate/assistant academic administrator positions), or a student who teaches as part of an educational program.

**J. *Faculty Information System (FIS)***

“Faculty Information System,” in this policy, means the electronic system that officially houses faculty productivity information, including teaching, research, and service production. FIS data is used to facilitate personnel actions such as tenure, promotion, and annual review processes.

**K. *Full-Time Faculty Member***

“Full-Time Faculty Member,” in this policy, is a faculty member who works a 100% workload in time and effort.

**L. *Mandatory Fifth-Year Review***

“Mandatory Fifth-Year Review,” in this policy, is an additional review period for a tenure-track faculty member that did not fully meet their unit’s tenure and promotion criteria in one of the three (3) domains (teaching, scholarship, service) during their midterm review. Mandatory fifth-year review requires the faculty member to repeat the full midterm review process in the fifth-year in place of the regular fifth-year reappointment review.

**M. *Maximum Probationary Period***

“Maximum Probationary Period,” in this policy, means the maximum amount of time a faculty member may be appointed in probationary ranks at UNT.

***N. Midterm Reappointment Review***

“Midterm Reappointment,” in this policy, means the fourth-year reappointment review of tenure-track faculty.

***O. Part-Time Faculty Member***

“Part-Time Faculty Member,” in this policy, is a faculty member who works less than a 100% workload in time and effort.

***P. Personnel Affairs Committee***

“Personnel Affairs Committee,” in this policy, means an elected group of faculty who make recommendations regarding unit decisions, such as annual merit, to the unit administrator and/or dean.

***Q. Simple Majority***

“Simple Majority,” in this policy, means 51% of the committee must vote aye or nay for a tenure/promotion candidate to receive the corresponding affirmative or negative recommendation. A tie is not a simple majority and yields a negative recommendation.

***R. Stop-the-Clock Period***

“Stop-the-Clock Period,” in this policy, means a one-year extension of the tenure-track probationary period for qualifying circumstances.

***S. Tenure-Track Appointment***

“Tenure-Track Appointment,” in this policy, means an appointment that includes a period of probationary employment preceding determination of tenure status. Appointment may be made to the rank of assistant professor or, in some cases, associate professor without tenure.

***T. Tenured Appointment***

“Tenured Appointment,” in this policy, means an appointment awarded to a faculty member after successful completion of the probationary period during which stated criteria are met. Appointment may be made to the rank of associate professor or full professor.

***U. Terminal Contract***

“Terminal Contract,” in this policy, means a contract constituting notice that employment ends at the conclusion of the contract period and that continued employment will not be offered at the end of the contract year. A terminal contract can be issued at the end of the first, second, third, midterm (fourth), fifth, or sixth-year of the tenure-track.

***V. Unit***

“Unit,” in this policy, means an academic department/division under the administration of a UNT official with responsibilities for personnel actions.

#### **W. Unit Administrator**

“Unit Administrator,” in this policy, means the person responsible for the unit and the personnel actions within the unit. A department chair is an example of a unit administrator.

#### **X. Unit Review Committee**

“Unit Review Committee,” in this policy, means a group of faculty members who review the tenure and promotion personnel actions within an academic unit.

### **IV. Policy Responsibilities**

#### **A. Probationary Periods for Tenure-Track Appointments**

The probationary period for a Tenure-Track Appointment allows UNT to consider carefully whether a faculty member is able to meet the teaching, scholarship, and service expectations of the job. During the probationary period, a faculty member does not have tenure. This policy outlines the specific guidelines for the initiation, duration, and extension of the probationary period.

##### **1. Initiation of Probationary Period**

The probationary period begins at the start of the fall semester of the appointment. For a faculty member appointed for the spring semester, the probationary period begins in the fall semester of the following academic year.

##### **2. Length of Probationary Period for Assistant Professors**

The maximum probationary period for a faculty member appointed as an assistant professor is the equivalent of six (6) years of full-time service. The fourth year normally will be the midterm review year. The sixth-year normally will be the mandatory tenure-review year. If deemed appropriate by the unit administrator and dean, or as noted in a candidate’s offer letter, a candidate for tenure and promotion may be reviewed early in the probationary period. If the early review process is unsuccessful, the candidate may be reviewed again during the sixth-year.

##### **3. Length of Probationary Period for Associate Professors**

The maximum probationary period for a faculty member appointed at the rank of associate professor, but without tenure, is equivalent of five (5) years of full-time service. The third-year normally will be the midterm review year. The fifth-year normally will be the mandatory tenure review year. If deemed appropriate by the unit administrator and dean, or as noted in a candidate’s offer letter, a candidate for tenure may be reviewed early in the probationary period. If the early review process is unsuccessful, the candidate may be reviewed again during the fifth-year.

##### **4. Extending the Probationary Period**

In qualifying circumstances, a tenure-track faculty member may request that the probationary period be extended, also referred to as stopping the clock. With the exception of assigned teaching workload, the stop-the-clock period will be excluded

from the probationary period and the probationary period will be extended accordingly. A request to extend the probationary period during the year in which a mandatory review is required will not be granted except when required to comply with other university policies.

a. Qualifying Circumstances

Circumstances that may warrant extending the probationary period include, but are not limited to: (a) the birth/adoption of a child; (b) responsibility for managing the illness/disability of a family member; (c) serious, persistent personal health issues; (d) death of a spouse/domestic partner or child; (e) military service; and (f) significant delays in fulfillment of UNT resources committed in an appointment letter. Not having met teaching, scholarship, and service expectations during a previous review period does not qualify as an extenuating circumstance for extension of the probationary period.

b. Length of Extension

A typical extension is one (1) year. In extraordinary circumstances, the dean and provost may grant a second one-year extension of the probationary period.

c. Timing

Faculty members who intend to request an extension of the probationary period are encouraged to do so as early as the qualifying circumstance arises. Except under extraordinary circumstances, extension requests will be made no later than: a) prior to the beginning of the fifth-year of the probationary period for assistant professors; b) prior to the beginning of the fourth year for associate professors; and c) during the year preceding the extension year for all other cases.

d. Performance Criteria and Evaluation

The faculty member with the extension of the probationary period will be evaluated using the same tenure criteria as those faculty members who were evaluated following the standard probationary periods. Teaching, scholarship, and/or service activities/products resulting during the stop-the-clock period will be counted towards tenure. A faculty member will not be penalized for lack of progress towards scholarship and service activities during the stop-the-clock period.

e. Faculty Responsibilities

Resources allocated by UNT for scholarship and/or service activities/products that have deadlines for use within the stop-the-clock period will have their deadlines for use extended as well, within UNT policy.

f. Approval Process

The faculty member is responsible for providing appropriate documentation to demonstrate why the stop-the-clock request should be granted. To initiate the process, the faculty member must complete and forward the [Stop-the-Clock Form](#)

to the faculty member's unit administrator. Upon receipt of stop-the-clock request, the unit administrator will submit a written recommendation to the dean, including the reasons for supporting or not supporting the request. The dean will review the stop-the-clock request provided by the unit administrator and make a written recommendation to the provost, who may approve or deny the request. The provost will document in writing the reasons for approval or denial of the request. The provost's decision is final. The evaluation of the request will be based on the individual case recognizing that each case is unique.

## ***B. General Guidelines for Review***

Tenured and tenure-track faculty members are responsible for developing clear unit criteria and applying these criteria in a review process that maintains high standards in teaching, scholarship, and service and ensures a fair and comprehensive review of candidates. Tenure and promotion personnel actions are facilitated electronically through the university's FIS. The university's tenure and promotion review guidelines apply to all UNT academic units.

### **1. Unit Criteria**

The tenured and tenure-track faculty of each unit, in collaboration with the unit administrator, will develop clearly written criteria and procedures for reappointment, tenure, and promotion. The unit's procedures must be consistent with those of the college and the university. The dean and provost must approve all unit performance criteria and procedures. The dean will make these criteria and procedures publicly available and provide said criteria/ procedures to each faculty member at the time of appointment. The unit administrator and dean are responsible for ensuring that the criteria/procedures are followed.

#### **a. Choice of Unit-Level Tenure Criteria**

A faculty member on a Tenure-Track Appointment may, unless otherwise specified in writing at the time of appointment, choose the unit-level tenure guidelines in effect at the time of initial appointment or the unit-level guidelines at the time when the candidate prepares the tenure dossier.

### **2. Reappointment Review and Eligible Faculty Vote**

Each unit administrator must provide a reappointment review (separate from annual review) annually to all tenure-track faculty members during their probationary period. This written review provides an evaluation of the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service; and specifically addresses progress toward tenure. Reappointment reviews are based on contributions that are documented and/or can be verified. Further, the reappointment review must provide an explicit statement of the quality of the faculty member's achievements, not simply an enumeration of the documented accomplishments of that faculty member. The unit administrator will provide a written reappointment review to the faculty member and discuss the evaluation as a part of the mentoring process.

Unit eligible faculty members vote on the reappointment recommendation of probationary faculty members in the fourth (midterm), fifth, and sixth-years of the tenure-track. Eligible faculty members are responsible for reviewing the candidate's electronic dossier before voting. The unit administrator will record each year's eligible faculty reappointment vote and note the votes in the fourth (midterm) and sixth-year electronic dossiers. Faculty on development leave, other types of leave, or modified service are not permitted to vote on reappointment actions. The eligible faculty vote is separate from the unit review committee vote. Academic administrators who have a formal role in the reappointment, tenure, and promotion process do not participate in the eligible faculty vote and the reason for the absence of their vote should be noted in the unit administrator's recommendation letter.

The yearly reappointment review process for tenure-track faculty is as follows:

a. First-, Second-, and Third-Year Reappointment Review

The basis of the first-, second-, and third-year reappointment review is the annual review. The annual review of first, second, and third-year tenure-track faculty members is used by the: (a) Personnel Affairs Committee (PAC) to write the annual review PAC recommendation, (b) unit review committee to write the unit review committee reappointment recommendation, and (c) unit administrator to write the annual and reappointment reviews. The unit review committee votes on first, second, and third-year reappointment reviews. College review committee and dean recommendations are only required if the unit review committee and/or unit administrator confer a negative reappointment recommendation. If the dean makes a negative decision, the decision is automatically forwarded to the provost. The faculty member may enact the due process procedures stated in IV.F.1.a upon a negative decision by the dean. The outcome of a first-, second-, and third-year reappointment review is either an affirmative or negative reappointment.

b. Midterm Reappointment Review

The midterm reappointment review begins at the end of the spring semester in the third-year of the tenure-track and uses the same criteria of evaluation as the sixth-year tenure and promotion review (further elaborated on in Section IV.E), minus the external review letter process. The eligible faculty vote will be facilitated by the unit administrator. The outcome of a midterm reappointment review is either an affirmative or negative reappointment or a mandatory fifth-year review. Midterm faculty members participate in the annual review process in addition to the midterm reappointment review process.

c. Fifth-Year Reappointment Review

The basis of the fifth-year reappointment review is the annual review. The annual review of fifth-year faculty members is used by the: (a) PAC to write the annual review PAC recommendation, (b) unit review committee to write the unit review committee reappointment recommendation, and (c) unit administrator to write the annual review and the reappointment review. The eligible faculty vote is facilitated

by the unit administrator for fifth-year reviews. College review committee and dean recommendations are only required if the unit review committee and/or unit administrator confer a negative reappointment recommendation. If the dean confers a negative recommendation, a provost's recommendation is required. The outcome of a fifth-year review is either an affirmative or negative reappointment.

d. Sixth-Year Tenure and Promotion Review

The sixth-year review process (further elaborated on in Section IV.E), includes receipt of external review letters. The eligible faculty vote will be facilitated by the unit administrator. The outcome of a sixth-year tenure and promotion review is either an affirmative or negative tenure and promotion decision. Sixth-year faculty participate in the annual review process in addition to the sixth-year review process.

3. Mentoring and Support

UNT is committed to a culture of mentoring and support for faculty throughout the reappointment, tenure, and promotion process as evidenced by the following activities.

a. Annual Workshops

To communicate and provide guidance on tenure and promotion policies and procedures, the Office of the Provost will conduct annual workshops for tenure-track faculty.

b. Mentors

The candidate, in consultation with the unit administrator, will select a mentor as early as the appointment date, but no later than the end of the first semester of the probationary period. A unit administrator cannot serve as a mentor for a faculty member within their unit.

c. Advocates

Sixth-year candidates may select an advocate up to the dossier deadline date. The candidate may request the assistance of the Office of the Provost, dean, or unit administrator in the selection of an advocate. The role of the advocate is to clarify aspects of the tenure and promotion process and/or answer questions regarding the candidate's case. An advocate is preferably an expert in the candidate's field. Academic administrators cannot serve as advocates.

**C. Review Committees**

Units will establish review committees for the purpose of reappointment, tenure, and promotion. The following guidelines apply to both unit and college review committees.

1. Composition

Committees must consist of no fewer than five (5) and no more than all eligible faculty members within the unit. Only tenured faculty members may serve on the committee



when evaluating probationary candidates. Only full professors may serve on the committee when considering candidates for promotion to full professor.

2. Request for Committee Member Exclusion

Sixth-year tenure and all promotion candidates have the right to request, in writing to the dean, that a limited number of individuals whom they believe are not able to provide a fair and unbiased assessment, be excluded from service as reviewers. The candidate must also list the reasons for the requested exclusion(s). The dean, in consultation with the unit review committee and unit administrator, will make the final decision.

3. Exceptions for Smaller Units

Units that do not have the sufficient number of members for a unit review committee will identify, with assistance from and consent of the dean, tenured faculty from outside of the academic unit to serve on the unit review committee. External members serve one-year terms. Depending upon unit need and with mutual agreement between the external review committee member and the academic unit, the one-year term may be renewed twice.

4. Exceptions for Smaller Colleges

For smaller colleges, a college review committee may be used rather than a unit review committee. The college review committee will be composed of no fewer than five (5) eligible tenured faculty members from the college. With consent of the dean, faculty members can be from outside of the college. If possible, the committee chair should be from the tenure/promotion candidate's home academic unit.

5. Recusal

Faculty members who serve on a tenure/promotion candidate's unit and college review committee must recuse themselves from voting on one of the committees. Committee members also participate in the eligible faculty vote within their unit.

6. Votes

Committee members have three (3) voting options: (a) aye, (b) nay, and (c) abstain. A simple majority of votes is required for a tenure/promotion candidate to receive an affirmative recommendation.

***D. Criteria for Promotion and Granting of Tenure***

UNT is committed to supporting a strong faculty dedicated to the mission and strategic goals of the institution through the tenure and promotion process. The diligent application of unit-level criteria should result in a strong reputation of academic excellence and national prominence. In addition to the criteria listed below, faculty members are expected to conduct teaching, scholarship, and service activities in accordance with [UNT Policy 06.035, Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibility](#); and [UNT Policy 06.007, Full-Time Faculty and Academic Administrator Annual Review, and Academic Administrator Reappointment](#).

1. Criteria for Granting Tenure and Promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor

a. Overarching University Criteria

Tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor requires evidence of sustained excellence in the domains of teaching and scholarship along with evidence of sustained effectiveness in the domain of service. Local units are responsible for defining the discipline-specific standards of excellence and effectiveness. Sustained excellence or extraordinary quality in any one domain does not compensate for lack of sustained excellence and/or sustained effectiveness in other domains. A recommendation for tenure will consider evidence in the context of, and consistent with, levels expected at peer and/or aspirational peer programs. Any recommendation for tenure, based on evidence of excellence, also should be based, so far as possible, on compelling indications that the individual will continue to grow and develop professionally.

b. Scope of Review

Evaluations and recommendations will place emphasis on academic work accomplished during the probationary period at UNT, although previous achievements will be considered in the course of a holistic review, as stated in one's employment offer letter.

c. Concurrence of Granting of Tenure and Promotion

Assistant professors will be promoted to the rank of associate professor concurrent with the granting of tenure. Assistant professors may not be awarded tenure without also being awarded promotion.

2. Criteria for Granting Tenure and Promotion for Associate Professors Hired Without Tenure

a. Overarching University Criteria

The granting of tenure for associate professors hired without tenure requires evidence of sustained excellence in the domains of teaching and scholarship along with evidence of sustained effectiveness in the domain of service. The granting of tenure and promotion to full professor requires sustained excellence in the domains of teaching, scholarship, and service. A recommendation for tenure will consider evidence in the context of, and consistent with, levels expected at peer and/or aspirational peer programs.

b. Scope of Review

Evaluation and recommendations will emphasize academic work accomplished during the appointment at UNT, focusing primarily on accomplishments during the time as associate professor. However, previous accomplishments as an associate professor at other institutions may also be considered in the holistic review, as stated in one's employment offer letter.

c. Timing

An associate professor will submit the electronic dossier by the date stipulated in the appointment letter.

d. Approval Exception

Tenure may be recommended without departmental approval in very extraordinary circumstances when institutional priorities outweigh departmental priorities, as long as the faculty member meets the tenure criteria for that department. The provost must approve exceptions.

3. Criteria for Promotion from Associate Professor to Full Professor

a. Overarching University Criteria

Promotion to the rank of full professor requires evidence of sustained excellence in each of the three (3) domains of teaching, scholarship, and service consistent with criteria outlined in this policy for attainment of tenure. Balance among teaching, scholarship, and service is expected to vary somewhat from one discipline to another and as a matter of departmental need. Contributions exclusively in one area do not qualify an individual for promotion. Sustained excellence or extraordinary quality in any one domain does not compensate for lack of sustained excellence in any other domain. Any recommendation for promotion, based on evidence of excellence, should also be based, so far as possible, on compelling indications that the individual will continue to grow and develop professionally.

b. Scope of Review

Evaluation and recommendations will emphasize academic work accomplished during the appointment at UNT, focusing primarily on accomplishments during the time as associate professor. However, previous accomplishments as an associate professor at other institutions may be considered in the holistic review, as stated in one's employment offer letter.

c. Timing

An associate professor may undergo the promotion process when, in consultation with the unit administrator and/or unit review committee chair, the faculty member believes their record warrants consideration for promotion. If unsuccessful, the faculty member may repeat the process without prejudice.

***E. Midterm Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion, and Promotion-to-Full-Professor Processes***

This section serves as a guide for the processing of midterm reappointment, tenure and promotion, and promotion-to-full-professor documents. The Office of Academic Resources oversees the FIS and sets the deadlines for the annual tenure and promotion cycle. The tenure/promotion candidate in consultation with the unit administrator is responsible for preparing the electronic dossier. All participants in the process share the responsibility of

meeting specified tenure and promotion deadlines.

1. The Dossier

- a. Midterm reappointment, sixth-year tenure and promotion, and promotion-to-full-professor reviews involve review of an official, electronic dossier. Additionally, individual units or colleges may require supplemental materials stipulated at the time of appointment to be included within the dossier. The dean must stipulate these materials in written, publicly available unit/college guidelines. Tenure and promotion candidates may include additional unit/college supplemental documentation in support of their dossier.
- b. Any additions to or deletions from the dossier, as it moves through the electronic review process, will be communicated to the tenure/promotion candidate by the Office of Academic Resources, in writing, at the time when such additions/ deletions are made.
- c. The electronic dossier for midterm reappointment, tenure and promotion in the sixth-year, and promotion to full professor must contain:
  - i. Complete, current CV (*provided by the candidate*): The candidate provides a CV that is formatted as specified by the unit. In addition to published/accepted works, the CV should include items that are in *submitted for review* status;
  - ii. Self-evaluation, personal narrative (*provided by the candidate*): The candidate's opportunity to evaluate and put into context their contributions over the specified timeframe. This evaluation may include, but is not limited to: (a) goal/objective achievement, (b) course development/instruction, (c) scholarly activity, (d) community relations/service, and (e) future career direction. The self-evaluation, personal narrative is restricted to 750 words;
  - iii. Unit tenure and promotion criteria (*provided by the candidate*);
  - iv. Results of annual evaluations (*provided by the candidate*): The candidate provides their annual evaluations for the reporting timeframe;
  - v. Evidence of mentoring and support throughout the reappointment, tenure, and promotion process (for sixth-year faculty ONLY, *provided by the candidate*): The candidate's opportunity to note any mentoring activities that they participated in over the reporting timeframe in the domains of teaching, scholarship, and service. Mentoring can be in the form of formal or informal activities;
  - vi. Reappointment reviews (for sixth-year faculty ONLY, *provided by the candidate*): The candidate provides their reappointment reviews for the reporting timeframe;
  - vii. Quantitative student evaluation of teaching results summary (*provided by the Office of Academic Affairs*): The Office of Academic Affairs provides a summary table of the candidate's quantitative, university-approved student evaluations

of teaching scores for the specified timeframe. For comparison purposes, average student evaluations of teaching scores for the unit's faculty are also provided;

- viii. External reviewer information (sixth-year and promotion-to-full-professor candidates, *provided by the unit administrator*). The unit administrator provides the [VPAA-172, External Reviewer Form for Tenure and/or Promotion Reviews](#), and external reviewer CVs;
- ix. External referee letters (sixth-year and promotion-to-full-professor candidates, *provided to the unit administrator by the external reviewer*). External review letters should be on the official letterhead of the reviewer's institution or organization;
- x. Recommendation of the unit review committee and unit review committee vote (*provided by the unit review committee chair*): The recommendation must include the names of the committee members. Committee member signatures on the recommendation are not required;
- xi. Recommendation of the unit administrator, including eligible faculty reappointment vote for fourth- (midterm), fifth-, and sixth-year candidates (*provided by the unit administrator*);
- xii. Recommendation of college review committee and college review committee vote (*provided by the college review committee chair*): The recommendation must include the names of the committee members. Committee member signatures on the recommendation are not required;
- xiii. Recommendation of dean (*provided by the dean*);
- xiv. Dissenting Recommendation, if applicable (*provided by the applicable committee member(s)*): Dissenting recommendation must name the author(s) of the dissenting opinion(s).

## 2. External Reviewers

External reviewers provide an independent assessment of the tenure/promotion candidate's scholarship, creative activity, and professional standing. This policy section includes the requirements, timing sequence, selection process, and qualifications for external reviewers.

### a. Requirements

For sixth-year and promotion-to-full-professor reviews, the dossier will contain a minimum of five (5) letters from separate external reviewers. The unit administrator will ask the reviewers to provide a professional assessment of the candidate for tenure and/or promotion purposes. The unit will include all duly solicited external letters that are received in the dossier. Under extraordinary circumstances, and with prior approval of the dean and provost, fewer letters may

be accepted. To the extent possible, provided by Texas state law, UNT will attempt to protect the reviewers' identities.

b. Timing

Prior to the candidate's tenure/promotion year, the unit administrator will distribute the dossier to the external reviewers with the goal of having the external review letters received by the end of the summer semester. For assistant professors, this is the spring before the sixth-year. For associate professors without tenure, this is the spring before the fifth-year.

c. Selection Process

The candidate will provide a list of up to five (5) potential external reviewers to the unit administrator and the unit review committee chair. External reviewers cannot have been a past mentor, dissertation advisor, or a frequent or current collaborator in the last five (5) years, nor have a personal relationship with the candidate. External reviewers are to be from peer or aspirational peer institutions. In collaboration, the unit administrator and unit review committee chair will select no more than three (3) of the external reviewers from the candidate's list and identify/select the remaining reviewers. Sixth-year and promotion-to-full-professor candidates have the right to request in writing to the unit administrator that certain individuals be excluded from service as reviewers whom they believe are not able to provide a fair and unbiased assessment, along with the reasons for the requested exclusion. The dean must approve the unit administrator's external reviewer list and then it is final.

d. Qualifications

An external reviewer must hold the rank at or above the rank to which the candidate aspires, or have demonstrably equivalent qualifications and a position in a non-academic organization. External reviewers should be experts in the candidate's discipline. For each external reviewer, an explanation must be given regarding the: (a) author's relevant expertise to serve as a reviewer, and (b) author's relationship, if any, to the candidate under review.

e. Documentation

At a minimum, external reviewers will receive the unit's tenure and promotion criteria and the candidate's CV, scholarly work sample(s), and self-evaluation narrative. Units may require additional documentation in addition to the aforementioned University-required documentation.

3. Deadlines

The Office of Academic Affairs will publish tenure and promotion deadlines approximately six (6) months in advance of the reappointment, tenure, and promotion cycle. Deviation from a published deadline must be approved by the provost.

#### 4. Internal Review of Dossier

For each tenure/promotion candidate, the unit review committee, unit administrator, college review committee, dean, and provost must (a) complete a comprehensive review of the electronic dossier, (b) yield a professional judgment, and (c) make a recommendation regarding a candidate's electronic dossier. With concurrence from the president, the Board of Regents awards tenure and promotion.

##### a. Dossier Closure

For sixth-year candidates and candidates for promotion to full professor, the dossier is considered closed once it has been sent to the external reviewers. For midterm candidates, the dossier is considered closed on the candidate's midterm submission deadline. Additional information can be added to a closed dossier if the unit administrator and vice provost for academic resources, with unit tenure and promotion criteria in mind, deem the following criteria have been met: (a) the scholarly/creative work was submitted for review prior to the closing of the dossier and the work was listed in the tenure/promotion candidate's CV, (b) the scholarly/creative work received unconditional acceptance and such acceptance has the potential to change a tenure and/or promotion recommendation from negative to affirmative, and (c) the provost has yet to render a recommendation. If new material is added to a dossier, all internal reviewers will reconsider any prior recommendation, based upon the new material. At every level, in the event of a negative recommendation, the tenure/promotion candidate may decide to have the dossier moved to the next level or to withdraw the dossier from consideration, accepting that withdrawal from consideration means that tenure and/or promotion will not transpire.

##### b. Candidate Dossier Access After Dossier Submission

With the exception of external reviews, tenure/promotion candidates have access to each electronic dossier recommendation and all accompanying documentation after each tenure/promotion recommendation submission. Although candidates may request to review their dossiers, including any external reviews, at any point during the review process, to the extent possible, provided by Texas state law, UNT will attempt to protect the reviewers' identities.

##### c. Review of the Dossier by the Unit Review Committee

- i. The unit review committee will review the tenure/promotion candidate's electronic dossier and prepare a written recommendation to the unit administrator. The unit review committee will not merely review/summarize the dossier but must speak to the value, impact, and importance of the contributions made by the faculty member. The recommendation and unit review committee vote, as determined by simple majority vote, will be added to the electronic dossier by the unit review committee chair. Said recommendation must provide a succinct rationale for their professional judgment. The unit review committee recommendation may include a

dissenting opinion report.

- ii. If the unit review committee is considering writing a negative recommendation, the unit review committee chair must notify the candidate within ten (10) business days of the start of the unit review committee's step in the tenure/promotion schedule. The unit review committee's concerns must be explicitly specified in writing to the candidate along with the committee chair's notification. The candidate has a right to meet with the unit review committee chair within five (5) business days of the notification to discuss the negative recommendation consideration and the committee's concerns. The meeting between the candidate and the unit review committee chair provides the candidate the opportunity to clarify their dossier's content. A faculty advocate may accompany the candidate to this meeting. Any person present at this meeting may request that it be recorded with the approval of all participants present. Responsibility for arranging the recording of the meeting lies with the party making the request. Any recordings made during the meeting are official university records and must be maintained in accordance with the record-retention policy.
  - iii. If the information provided at the meeting does not address the unit review committee's concerns, a negative recommendation will be transmitted. The candidate may write a response to the unit review committee disputing the negative recommendation and this response will be added to the candidate's electronic dossier by the unit review committee chair. The candidate's deadline to submit this response to the unit review committee chair is three (3) business days before the dossier moves to the unit administrator.
- d. Review of the Dossier by the Unit Administrator
- i. The unit administrator will review the tenure/promotion candidate's electronic dossier, including the recommendation from the unit review committee and the candidate's response to a negative consideration (if applicable). The unit administrator must speak to the value, impact, and importance of the contributions made by the faculty member. Based on the electronic dossier, the unit administrator will make a written affirmative or negative recommendation to the college review committee. This recommendation will provide a succinct rationale for the unit administrator's professional judgment regarding the recommendation.
  - ii. If the unit administrator is considering writing a negative recommendation, the unit administrator must notify the candidate within ten (10) business days of the start of the unit administrator's step in the tenure/promotion schedule. The unit administrator's concerns must be explicitly specified in writing to the candidate along with the notification. The candidate has a right to meet with the unit administrator within five (5) business days of the notification to discuss the negative recommendation consideration and the unit administrator's concerns. The meeting between the candidate and the unit administrator



provides the candidate the opportunity to clarify their dossier's content. A faculty advocate may accompany the candidate to this meeting. Any party present at this meeting may request that it be recorded with the approval of all parties present. Responsibility for arranging the recording of the meeting lies with the party making the request. Any recordings made during the meeting are official university records and must be maintained in accordance with the record-retention policy.

- iii. If the unit administrator's concerns are not addressed at the meeting, a negative recommendation will be transmitted. The candidate may write a response to the unit administrator disputing the negative recommendation and this response will be added to the candidate's electronic dossier by the unit administrator. The candidate's deadline to submit this response to the unit administrator is three (3) business days before the dossier moves to the college review committee.
- e. Review of the Dossier by the College Review Committee
  - i. The college review committee will review the tenure/promotion candidate's electronic dossier, including the recommendations from the unit review committee and unit administrator, and any faculty responses to negative considerations. The college review committee will write a recommendation to the dean. The college review committee will not merely review/summarize the dossier, but must speak to the value, impact, and importance of the contributions made by the faculty member. The college review committee recommendation and vote, as determined by simple majority vote, will be added to the electronic dossier by the college review committee chair. This recommendation must provide a succinct and evidence-based rationale for their professional judgment. The college review committee recommendation may include a dissenting opinion report in addition to the majority recommendation.
  - ii. If the college review committee is considering writing a negative recommendation, the college review committee chair must notify the candidate within ten (10) business days of the start of the college review committee's step in the tenure/promotion schedule. The college review committee's concerns must be explicitly specified in writing to the candidate along with the committee chair's notification. The candidate has a right to meet with the college review committee chair within five (5) business days of the notification to discuss the negative recommendation consideration and the committee's concerns. The meeting between the candidate and the college review committee chair provides the candidate an opportunity to clarify their dossier's content. A faculty advocate may accompany the candidate to this meeting. Any party present at this meeting may request that it be recorded with the approval of all parties present. Responsibility for arranging the recording of the meeting lies with the party making the request. Any recordings made during the meeting are

official university records and must be maintained in accordance with the record-retention policy.

- iii. If the information provided at the meeting does not address the college review committee's concerns, a negative recommendation will be transmitted. The candidate may write a response to the college review committee disputing the negative recommendation and this response will be added to the candidate's electronic dossier. The candidate's deadline to submit this response to the college review committee chair is three (3) business days before the dossier moves to the dean.

f. Review of the Dossier by the Dean

- i. The dean will review the tenure/promotion candidate's electronic dossier, including the recommendations from the unit review committee, unit administrator, and college review committee; and, if appropriate, candidate dispute responses. The dean will not merely review the dossier but must speak to the value, impact, and importance of the contributions made by the faculty member. Based on the electronic dossier, the dean writes a recommendation to the provost and adds the recommendation to the candidate's electronic dossier. Said recommendation must provide a succinct and evidence-based rationale for their professional judgment. If the dean does not concur with previous recommendations, the reasons for non-concurrence must be stated in the recommendation.
- ii. If the dean is considering writing a negative recommendation, the dean must notify the candidate within ten (10) business days of the start of the dean's step in the tenure/promotion schedule. The dean's concerns must be explicitly specified in writing to the candidate along with the dean's notification. The candidate has a right to meet with the dean within five (5) business days of the notification to discuss the negative recommendation consideration and the dean's concerns. The meeting between the candidate and the dean provides the candidate an opportunity to clarify their dossier's content. A faculty advocate may accompany the candidate to this meeting. Any party present at this meeting may request that it be recorded with the approval of all parties present. Responsibility for arranging the recording of the meeting lies with the party making the request. Any recordings made during the meeting are official university records and must be maintained in accordance with the record retention policy.
- iii. If the dean's concerns are not addressed at the meeting, a negative recommendation will be transmitted. The candidate may write a response to the dean disputing the negative recommendation and this response will be added to the candidate's electronic dossier by the dean. The candidate's deadline to submit this response to the dean is three (3) business days before the dossier moves to the provost.

g. Review of Dossier by the Provost

- i. The provost will review the electronic dossier of midterm, sixth-year, and promotion-to-full professor candidates, reviewing each deliberative body as having an independent input to the decision-making process. The provost will make a decision on whether to recommend: (a) reappointment for a midterm candidate, (b) tenure and promotion for a sixth-year candidate, (c) tenure for an associate professor without tenure candidate, or (d) promotion for a tenured associate professor candidate. The provost may request a meeting with the dean and/or request further information about aspects of the faculty member's dossier before making a decision.
- ii. If the provost is considering writing a negative recommendation, the provost must notify the candidate within ten (10) business days of the start of the provost's step in the tenure/promotion schedule. The provost's concerns must be explicitly specified in writing to the candidate along with the provost's notification. The candidate has a right to meet with the provost within five (5) business days of the notification to discuss the negative recommendation consideration and the provost's concerns. The meeting between the candidate and the provost provides the candidate an opportunity to clarify the candidate's dossier's content. A faculty advocate may accompany the candidate to this meeting. Any party present at this meeting may request that it be recorded with the approval of all parties present. Responsibility for arranging the recording of the meeting lies with the party making the request. Any recordings made during the meeting are official university records and must be maintained in accordance with the record retention policy.
- iii. If the provost's concerns are not addressed at the meeting, a negative recommendation will be transmitted. The candidate may write a response to the provost disputing the negative recommendation and this response will be added to the candidate's electronic dossier by the provost. The candidate's deadline to submit this response to the provost is three (3) business days after the meeting with the provost.
- iv. In cases where midterm, sixth-year, and promotion-to-full candidates have received negative recommendations at any previous level, the provost may commission an ad hoc advisory committee of five (5) tenured faculty to review said dossiers and provide an affirmative or negative recommendation to the provost.
- v. If the provost does not concur with previous recommendations, the reasons for non-concurrence must be stated in the recommendation. If the provost's recommendation is negative, the recommendation must indicate the reasons for this recommendation. The provost must notify candidates of tenure/promotion outcomes.

h. Review of the Dossier by the President

The president reviews tenure and promotion dossiers of fourth-year (midterm) and sixth-year candidates, and candidates for promotion to full professor. Affirmative sixth-year tenure candidate recommendations are sent to the Board of Regents. The award of tenure is official upon affirmative action by the Board of Regents and tenure and promotion by the president are effective at the beginning of the academic year following approval. Negative tenure and promotion recommendations follow the guidelines for negative decision for granting tenure and promotion.

***F. Guidelines for Negative Decisions***

The process for appealing negative decisions and issuing terminal contracts are outlined below.

1. Negative Decision for Reappointment for Tenure-Track Faculty in Years 1, 2, 3, and 5

a. Due Process

In the event of a decision by the dean not to renew a probationary appointment in years 1, 2, 3, and 5 of the tenure-track, the faculty member will be informed of the decision in writing and be advised of the reasons. The faculty member may request a review of the decision by a college-level faculty grievance committee. The faculty member must submit the request to the committee, in writing, no later than ten (10) business days after written receipt of the dean's decision for review in accordance with the college/school bylaws. The dean will review the committee's recommendation in reconsidering the original decision. In the event of a negative decision, the dean's decision and the committee's recommendation will be forwarded to the provost for a final decision. The final decision is not grievable at the University Faculty Grievance Committee (UFGC) level.

b. Terminal Contract

In the event of a decision not to renew a probationary appointment, the faculty member will receive a terminal contract for the academic year immediately following the academic year in which the review was conducted.

2. Negative Decision for Midterm Reappointment and the Granting of Tenure and Promotion

a. Due Process

i. Upon notification by the provost of a negative recommendation regarding midterm reappointment or granting of tenure and promotion, the candidate may grieve the recommendation to the president. The faculty member must submit the grievance to the president, in writing, no later than ten (10) business days after written receipt of the recommendation.

ii. Pursuant to [UNT Policy 06.051](#), the president will forward grievances related to processes and procedures to the UFGC for a recommendation. The UFGC's

recommendation will be communicated in writing to the president, with a copy provided to the provost and the faculty member.

- iii. The president reviews the: (a) recommendation of the provost, (b) dossier, (c) the UFGC recommendation (if applicable), and (d) any information the president deems necessary. The president may call a committee of senior tenured faculty members or other qualified consultants to provide advice. The candidate will have the opportunity to respond to any new information or advice considered by the president.
- iv. The president must notify the candidate in writing of the decision, with a copy to the provost, within thirty (30) business days. A negative decision by the president is final.

b. Terminal Contract

A faculty member receiving a final negative decision on tenure will receive a terminal contract for the academic year immediately following the decision on any appeal.

***G. Expedited Tenure and Promotion***

On rare occasions, the university may need to expedite the tenure/promotion process. Examples of said occasions include: (a) an incoming faculty member/administrator who holds tenure or has held tenure at a peer or aspirant university, (b) an incoming faculty member/administrator who has not held tenure at a peer or aspirant university but whose record and reputation warrant tenure, or (c) in cases of counteroffers when the faculty member has been offered tenure/promotion at a peer or aspirant university. The expedited tenure process includes:

1. The applicable department notifies the dean of its intention to make an offer of employment (or retention in the case of a counter-offer) to a candidate using the expedited review process;
2. With dean approval, a request is made to the provost for an expedited review;
3. With provost approval, an internal faculty offer letter is created;
4. In cases where the candidate has not previously held tenure at a peer or aspirant university, five (5) external letters shall be obtained. External letters are not required for candidates that have held tenure at a peer or aspirant university;
5. In cases of expedited promotion, external letters are not required;
6. The department's unit review committee votes on the tenure/promotion action and provides a written recommendation;
7. The unit administrator provides a written recommendation;
8. The college review committee votes on the tenure/promotion action and provides a written recommendation;

9. The dean provides a written recommendation;
10. All recommendations are to accompany the offer letter and be forwarded to the provost who reviews the documentation. In cases of expedited promotion, the provost approves or disapproves the recommendation. In cases of expedited tenure, the provost makes a recommendation to the president; and
11. In cases of tenure, if the candidate receives a positive recommendation from the president, the action is forwarded to the Board of Regents.

#### ***H. Reduced Appointments***

1. If a Full-Time Faculty Member desires a temporary or permanently reduced appointment (less than full-time but not less than 50%), the faculty member must obtain approval from their unit administrator and dean for the FTE reduction. Faculty compensation will be reduced proportionately to the FTE reduction. If a faculty member reduces their appointment, an appointment increase back to 100% will be unit-need dependent. A request by a tenured faculty member to drop below 50% FTE would constitute a resignation of tenure status. A reduction in FTE does not involve an automatic extension of the probationary period. A probationary faculty member, whose appointment is less than full-time but not less than 50%, may request an extension of the probationary period in accordance with this policy.
2. A reduction in FTE will have a corresponding reduction in sick leave hours accrued each month (e.g., a 75% FTE appointment will accrue 6 hours of sick leave per month). In addition, a reduction in FTE below 75% will result in an increase in insurance premiums for those individuals enrolled in ERS health insurance. It is recommended that faculty consult with Human Resources to determine the increase amount. Faculty who have an FTE reduction below 50% will no longer be eligible for ERS health insurance, sick leave, or retirement.

#### **V. Resources/Forms/Tools**

[Stop-the-Clock Form](#)

[VPAA-172, External Reviewer Form for Tenure and/or Promotion Reviews](#)

#### **VI. References and Cross-References**

[Texas Education Code § 51.948](#)

[UNT Policy 06.007, Full-Time Faculty and Academic Administrator Annual Review, and Academic Administrator Reappointment](#)

[UNT Policy 06.027, Academic Workload](#)

[UNT Policy 06.035, Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibility](#)

[UNT Policy 06.051, University Faculty Grievance](#)

#### **VII. Revision History**

Policy Contact:	Asst. Vice Provost, Faculty Success
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Approved Date:	02/27/2017
Effective Date:	05/05/2017
Revisions:	06/01/2020, 09/08/2023, 07/30/2025