



Part 9 – Promotion and Tenure Guidelines

2-3-901 Promotion.

(For Promotion Stipend see 3-3-701)

Promotion provides a mechanism for the recognition of contributions of faculty members to the mission of the institution and its reputation as well as professional contributions to the advancement of the state of the art and to society at large. While judgment of potential contributions must necessarily be based on past performance, it is expected that persons achieving a given rank shall continue to take initiatives which are valued by the institution.

Although the administration of promotion policies at the University must be equitable, it must not be perceived as implying identical standards for types of contributions by each individual faculty member. The promotion policy must facilitate the recognition of diverse potentials which harmonize individual competence and initiative with institutional needs and values. The promotion policy attends to both qualitative and quantitative contributions.

Promotion decisions are based only on the outcomes of comprehensive review as described in 2-3-801.

Academic or professional qualifications shall satisfy the minimum qualifications for each rank as established in 2-3-302 Rank Requirements and 2-3-901(1) Academic and Professional Qualifications.

Relevant promotion criteria shall be discussed by the unit leader with each faculty member in their unit periodically to ensure that each member is cognizant of program area performance expectations. A unit leader shall engage in this process as follows:

- (1) If the unit leader is in the same discipline as the program area, they shall discuss these matters with each faculty member; or
- (2) If the unit leader is not in the discipline of a program area, they together with someone from that program area, shall discuss relevant promotion criteria with each faculty member.

2-3-901(1) Time Guidelines.

- (a) Instructors are eligible for consideration for promotion to the rank of assistant professor after completion of four years of successful academic performance, regardless of rank as long as they have met the minimum requirements necessary for appointment to the rank of assistant professor [See 2-3-302 Rank Requirements].
- (b) Assistant professors are eligible for considerations for promotion to the rank of associate professor after completion of four years of successful academic performance in rank, as long as they have met the minimum requirements necessary for appointment to the rank of associate professor [See 2-3-302 Rank Requirements].
- (c) Associate professors are eligible for consideration for promotion to the rank of professor after completion of four years of successful academic performance in rank, as long as they have met the minimum requirements necessary for appointment to the rank of professor [See 2-3-302 Rank Requirements].
- (d) Lecturers are eligible for consideration for promotion to the rank of senior lecturer after completion of six years of successful academic performance in rank, (or an analogous rank elsewhere, if negotiated), as long as they have met the minimum requirements necessary for appointment to the rank of senior lecturer.

2-3-901(2) Promotion Criteria.

The approved program area evaluation criteria (see 2-3-801) for the relevant promotion shall be the sole basis for promotion decisions.

2-3-901(3) Promotion Decisions.

The decision to promote or not to promote is determined by the outcomes of evaluation in the comprehensive review (see 2-3-801). In what follows the requirements are individually necessary and jointly sufficient. That is, the evaluatee must satisfy all of the requirements listed in order to get a positive promotion decision and must get a positive promotion decision if they satisfy all of the requirements listed.

- (a) Promotion of tenure track/tenured faculty
 - (I) Promotion to Associate Professor: Exceeds expectations or higher (level IV

or level V) in either teaching or professional activity and meets expectations or higher (level III, level IV or level V) in the other two areas.

- (II) Promotion to Professor: Exceeds expectations or higher (level IV or level V) in both teaching and professional activity and at least meets expectations (level III) in service.

(b) Promotion of contract renewable faculty

- (I) Promotion of Instructor to Assistant Professor: Exceeds expectations or higher (level IV or level V) in primary area of responsibility and at least meets expectations (level III, level IV or level V) in the other areas of responsibility, if any.
- (II) Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor: Exceeds expectations or higher (level IV or level V) in primary area of responsibility and at least meets expectations in the other areas of responsibility, if any.
- (III) Promotion from Associate Professor to Professor: Excellent (level V) in primary area of responsibility and at least meets expectations (level III, level IV, or level V) in the other areas of responsibility, if any.
- (IV) Promotion from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer: Exceeds expectations or higher (level IV or level V) in primary area of responsibility and at least meets expectations (level III, level IV or level V) in the other areas of responsibility, if any.

2-3-901(4) Eligibility.

Eligibility for consideration for promotion shall be based upon academic years in which the individual is contracted with the University to a full-time position. It shall be the responsibility of the individual who is eligible for consideration to initiate the review through a formal request to the appropriate department chair/school director/program coordinator.

- (a) Newly hired tenure-track faculty members who, at another institution of higher education, have been tenured, or who have held tenure-track appointments, or who possess a record of outstanding achievement in the area in which they are being hired may request up to three years of credit toward promotion and tenure. When granted by the Chief Academic Officer, only the most recent year or years' accomplishments that occurred during the number of credited years, as well as the faculty member's accomplishments at UNC, shall be counted toward promotion and tenure. For contract-renewable faculty whose position is

converted to tenure-track, see 3-3-201(1).

- (b) Lecturers and instructors may request up to three years of credit toward promotion. Such credit may come from prior relevant experience. When granted by the Chief Academic Officer, only the most recent year or years' accomplishments that occurred during the number of credited years, as well as the faculty member's accomplishments at UNC, shall be counted toward promotion.
- (c) Under exceptional circumstances, faculty may become eligible for early consideration for promotion and/or tenure.
- (d) Time in which the individual is on leave for academic purposes, with or without pay, shall be counted as if the individual had not been on leave.

2-3-901(5) Consideration.

At the time of the formal request for consideration for promotion it shall be the responsibility of the candidate to document satisfactory fulfillment of the appropriate areas of consideration for promotion as defined within the program area criteria for the relevant promotion.

2-3-901(6) Review.

Professional ethics require that decisions regarding promotion be conveyed to the candidate. It is also important that professionals judging fellow professionals accept the responsibility to review appropriate and applicable supporting material to ensure that decisions are fair and based upon the approved criteria. [See also 1-1-307 Faculty Evaluation, 2-3-801, et seq., Faculty Evaluations and 3-3-801, et seq., Implementation of Faculty Evaluation Procedures.]

Promotion and tenure become effective upon BOT approval.

2-3-902 Tenure.

2-3-902(1) Purpose.

The purpose of tenure is to create an environment in which academic freedom is protected.

2-3-902(2) Eligibility.

Eligibility shall be calculated on full academic years in which the individual was

contracted to a full- time position. This may include years negotiated as credit toward tenure [See 2-3-801(3) (c) (I)]. Time that the individual has spent on non- paid leave shall not be calculated as applicable toward eligibility for tenure. [See 2-3-1004 Unpaid Leave].

2-3-902(3) (a) Tenure Guidelines.

Unless extended by the provisions of 2-3-902(3) (b), tenure-track faculty become eligible for tenure consideration in their fifth year at UNC but must receive tenure consideration in their sixth year. If tenure is denied in the fifth year, faculty may reapply in their sixth year. If tenure is not granted before the end of the sixth year, the seventh will be the terminal year.

- (i) Promotion and tenure become effective upon BOT approval. Tenure shall reside at the university level.
- (ii) In unusual circumstances, immediate tenure may be granted to faculty being hired from outside the University as associate and full professors.
- (iii) Up to three years credit toward tenure may be negotiated by newly hired faculty who have been tenured, or who have held tenure-track appointments at another institution of higher education, or who possess a record of outstanding achievement in the area in which they are being hired. When such credit is granted it must be the most recent year or years' accomplishments that will be counted toward promotion/tenure.
- (iv) Under exceptional circumstances, faculty may become eligible for early consideration for promotion and/or tenure.
- (v) Applications for promotion to the rank of associate professor by tenure-track faculty must always be accompanied by an application for tenure, so that the two decisions may be considered at the same time. In these cases, tenure and promotion to the associate rank must be granted at the same time.

2-3-902(3) (b) Tenure Clock Extension. A tenure-track faculty member shall be eligible for an extension of the tenure probationary period for events that may markedly delay the ability to meet the requirements for tenure.

- (i) A maximum of two (2) separate extensions of the tenure probationary period shall be granted for reasons described in subsections (ii)(A) through (ii)(E), below. Any tenure clock extension granted for the reason described in subsection (ii)(F), below shall be in addition to the two (2) separate extensions

limit stated in the immediately preceding sentence.

- (ii) Each extension shall be for a one (1) year period. When an extension to the tenure clock occurs, the total body of the work required for tenure shall not change because of the extension. Notification of the intent to take an extension shall be made by the faculty member within thirty (30) days of the event, or as soon as practicable once the event has been identified given the facts and circumstances in the individual case which, in most cases, should be the same day the faculty member becomes aware of the need for an extension or the next business day thereafter. Events that may markedly delay the ability to meet the requirements for tenure are:
 - (A) A serious health condition as defined in the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of a parent, child, spouse or domestic partner that persists for a substantial portion of the period for which the extension is sought, and the faculty member is required to act as the primary caregiver for that person;
 - (B) A serious health condition as defined in the FMLA of the faculty member that persists for a substantial portion of the period for which the extension is sought and renders the faculty member unable to perform the functions of their position;
 - (C) The birth or adoption of a child into the faculty member's household (and in such case each parent in the household who is tenure-track faculty is eligible for an extension;)
 - (D) The death of a parent, child, spouse or domestic partner of the faculty member;
 - (E) A catastrophic residential property loss of the faculty member (and in such case each tenure-track faculty member in the household is eligible for an extension;)
 - (F) A complete or partial campus closure caused by a "force majeure event" (defined as a war, fire, flood, epidemic, pandemic, accident, government regulation or other occurrence beyond the control of the University.)
- (iii) Notification of the intent to take an extension for the reasons described in subsections (ii)(A) and (ii)(B), above, shall be submitted in writing by the faculty member to the Director of Human Resources, who shall notify the chair/director that a tenure clock extension notification under the FMLA has been submitted. Notification of the intent to take an extension for the reasons described in subsections (ii)(C) through (ii)(F), above, shall be submitted in writing by the faculty member to the chair/director.

- (iv) In all cases, the chair/director shall forward the notification to the dean and shall state the reason(s), if any, that the chair/director believes the notification is not proper under the provisions of this policy. The dean shall forward the notification to the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and shall state the reason(s), if any, that the dean believes the notification is not proper under the provisions of this policy. Unless the CAO determines that the notification is not proper under the provisions of this policy, the extension shall be given. The chair/director, dean, and CAO shall each have ten (10) working days in which to complete their responsibilities under this policy as described in subsection (iv).

2-3-902(4) Tenure Criteria.

The approved program area evaluation criteria (see 2-3-801) for tenure will be the sole basis for tenure decisions.

2-3-902(5) Tenure Decision.

The following requirements are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for a positive tenure decision. That is, the evaluatee must fulfill all of the requirements in order to receive a positive tenure decision and must get a positive tenure decision if they do fulfill all of the requirements. The requirements are:

Exceeds expectations or higher (level IV or level V) in either instruction or professional activity and meets expectations or higher (level III, level IV or level V) in the other two areas.

2-3-902(6) Administrators with Tenure.

Tenure is granted in the university by its Board of Trustees. An administrator who is a faculty member having tenure at UNC shall retain their tenure while holding an administrative position, and the right to return to their academic unit. An administrator who does not have tenure at UNC prior to their administrative appointment, and who also receives tenure as a faculty member upon administrative appointment, may only be assigned to an academic unit with the approval of the unit's faculty.

2-3-902(7) Tenure Appeals Committee.

- (a) The tenure appeals committee shall consist of two faculty representatives from each college, excluding University College, and one from the University

Libraries. Representatives shall serve a two-year term. Elections shall be held annually so that one member of each college is elected each year. Elections will be conducted by the Faculty Senate and will be held during the spring semester. Terms of office will begin with the next academic year. The Committee shall select its own chair and establish its own bylaws which must be approved by the Faculty Senate.

- (b) The function of the tenure appeals committee is to review appeals from a faculty member who believes that the evaluation by their program area faculty was not consistent with the program area's approved criteria or evaluation process, which resulted in a negative recommendation for tenure.
- (c) Appeals must be filed within ten working days of notification of the program area's decision. The Committee shall conclude its deliberations within twenty working days after receipt of an appeal. [See also 1-2-101 General Provisions.]
- (d) If the committee finds by majority vote that the program area faculty's evaluation is consistent with its approved criteria and evaluation process, tenure is denied. The appellant as well as the department chair/school director/program coordinator will be notified. In all other cases the committee's decision, accompanied by reasons, will be forwarded to the department chair/school director/program coordinator, as well as to the evaluatee, and the evaluation process will resume as described in 2-3-801.

Policy History

2-3-901 PROMOTION GUIDELINES.

Section 2-3-901(1)(2)(3)(4)(5) Promotion and Tenure Guidelines amended (Jul 2016)
Section 2-3-901 unnumbered paragraph six amended (Nov 2014)
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Subsection 2-3-901(4) Promotion Criteria unnumbered paragraph two deleted (Dec 2010)
Subsection 2-3-901(5) Eligibility amended (Dec 2010)

2-3-902 TENURE.

Section 2-3-902(1)(2)(3)(4)(5)(6)(7) Tenure Guidelines amended (July 2016)
Subsection 2-3-902(3)(a) Tenure Guidelines amended (Jun 2013)
Subsection 2-3-902(3)(b) Tenure Clock Extension added (Jun 2013)
Subsection 2-3-902(1) Purpose amended (Dec 2010)
Subsection 2-3-902(5) Voting amended (Dec 2010)
Subsection 2-3-902(3)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(A)(B)(C)(D)(E)(F)(iii)(iv) amended (Jun 2020)