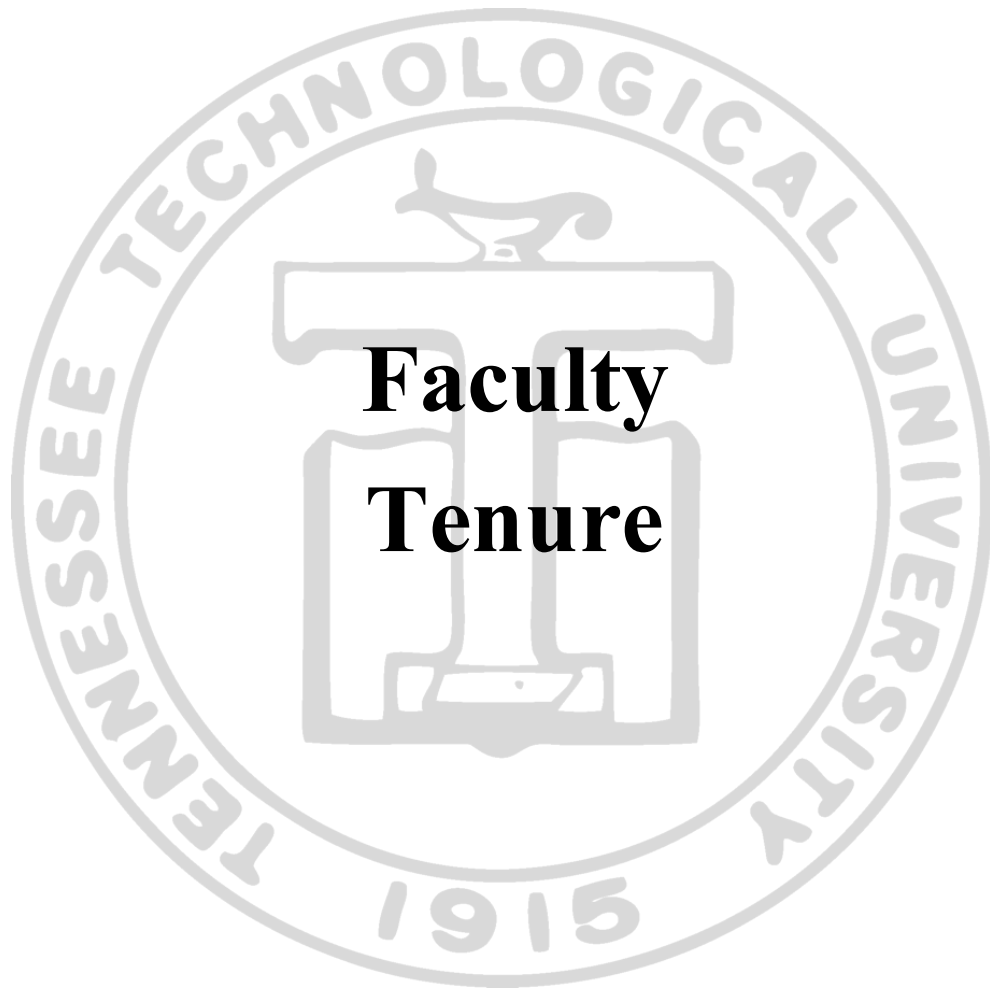


Tennessee Technological University
Policy No. 205



Faculty
Tenure

Effective Date: July 1, 2018

Policy No.: 205
Policy Name: Faculty Tenure
Date Revised: July 1, 2019

I. Purpose

This policy addresses the process of obtaining tenure.

II. Relevance of Tenure

The tenure process is essential for building and maintaining the highest quality faculty at any university. Faculty quality is built, monitored, and maintained through the appraisal, by competent faculty and administrative officers, of each candidate for tenure. Tenure for faculty at a university is not a “job for life.” It is a guarantee of academic freedom and due process built on a rigorous credentialing process and peer review. Tenure is only granted when earned, and only revoked as described in TTU Policy 207 (Tenured Faculty). Tenure protects the reputation of the university and the pursuit of knowledge and truth. University faculty must be allowed to pursue knowledge and truth as a public good, without fear of reprisal, coercion, or undue outside influence. The awarding of tenure is recognition of the merit of a Faculty Member and of the assumption that he/she meets the long-term staffing needs of the Academic Department/Unit and Tennessee Tech. Tenure is awarded to members of the faculty who have exhibited professional excellence and outstanding abilities sufficient to demonstrate that their future services and performances justify the degree of permanence afforded by Academic Tenure.

III. Review

This policy will be reviewed every four years or whenever circumstances require review, whichever is earlier, by the provost, with recommendations for revision reviewed by the Faculty Senate and approved by the Academic Council, Administrative Council, University Assembly, and the Board of Trustees.

IV. Scope

The Faculty Tenure Policy governs aspects of the tenure process and rights and responsibilities for tenure-track faculty at Tennessee Tech. This policy is only applicable to those full-time Faculty Members who are on a Tenure-Track Appointment.

V. Definitions

- A.** Academic Appointment: a personnel status (as distinct from an assignment of responsibilities) in an Academic Department/Unit pursuant to which professional services in the areas of teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity, and service/outreach are retained by Tennessee Tech from a Faculty Member.
- B.** Academic Department/Unit: an academic organizational unit (e.g., a department or school) or program, including the Library, within Tennessee Tech, in which a Faculty Member holds Academic Rank.

- C. Academic Rank:** an element of faculty status limited to individuals who meet the minimum criteria that distinguish between academic ranks as established in TTU Policy 206 (Faculty Promotion).
- D. Academic Tenure:** a personnel status in an Academic Department/Unit pursuant to which the academic or fiscal year appointments of full-time faculty who have been awarded tenure are continued at Tennessee Tech unless removed pursuant to TTU Policy 207 (Tenured Policy).
- E. Board:** the Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees.
- F. Candidate/Candidate for Tenure:** a Faculty Member who meets the minimum eligibility requirements for consideration for tenure.
- G. Departmental/Unit Chair:** the chairperson of an academic department or the director of an academic unit of the university designated by some name other than department.
- H. Committee of the Whole:** a committee consisting of every Faculty Member in a department/unit who is qualified to vote on a particular tenure consideration.
- I. Financial Exigency:** the formal declaration that Tennessee Tech faces an imminent financial crisis, that there is a current or projected absence of sufficient funds for the campus as a whole to maintain its current programs and activities at a level sufficient to fulfill its educational goals and priorities, and that the budget can only be balanced by extraordinary means, which include the termination of existing and continuing academic and non-academic appointments.
- J. Faculty Member:** for the purpose of this policy, a Faculty Member is an employee holding Academic Rank as instructor, senior instructor, master instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor.
- K. Immediate Family Member:** a spouse, domestic partner, cohabitant, child, stepchild, grandchild, parent, stepparent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent, great grandparent, brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, stepsibling, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, or first cousin (that is, a child of an aunt or uncle) of a Faculty Member.
- L. Peers or Departmental/Unit Peers:** regular, full-time tenured members of the departmental/unit faculty whose professional responsibilities to Tennessee Tech lie in the areas of teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity, and service/outreach. The terms do not refer to those whose primary responsibilities are administrative, such as Departmental/Unit Chairs, directors of Centers of Excellence, assistant and associate deans, deans, assistant and associate vice presidents, vice presidents, the president, and any others in similar situations.
- M. Probationary Employment:** a period of full-time professional employment by a Faculty Member for whom an appointment letter denotes a Tenure-Track Appointment in which he/she does not have tenure and in which he/she is evaluated by Tennessee Tech

for the purpose of determining his/her satisfaction of the criteria for a recommendation for tenure.

- N. Tenure-Track Appointment: an academic or fiscal year appointment for regular full-time faculty with Academic Rank who are in a probationary period of employment before consideration for tenure.

VI. Consideration for Tenure

A. Probationary Employment

1. Faculty may be employed on annual tenure-track appointments for a period that may not exceed six years. The Faculty Member may apply for tenure at the beginning of the fifth, but no later than the beginning of the sixth year, except as provided in this policy or by law. A Faculty Member may apply for tenure only once.
2. A Faculty Member may receive a reduction of the probationary period in the following circumstances:
 - a. Reduction of the minimum probationary period may be made for a Faculty Member who shows exceptional accomplishment during the probationary period. Such requests for probationary period reductions are made upon recommendation of the departmental/unit peers to the Departmental/Unit Chair, then to the dean, the provost, and the president. The application for tenure does not occur until after the president's approval.
 - b. Credit toward completion of the probationary period may, upon the recommendation of the peers to the Departmental/Unit Chair and then to the dean, the provost, and the president, may be given for a maximum of two years of (a) previous full-time service at other colleges, universities, or institutes, provided that the prior service is relevant to Tennessee Tech's own needs and criteria, (b) previous full-time service in a temporary faculty appointment at Tennessee Tech, or (c) previous full-time service in an earlier Tenure-Track Appointment at Tennessee Tech that has been followed by a break in service. Any credit for prior service that is agreed upon must be recognized and confirmed in writing in the letter of appointment. Years of credit for prior service will be accepted in lieu of the final, not the initial, year(s) of the probationary period. Faculty Members who have received prior service credit may not subsequently request that the credit not be applied to their probationary period.

B. Calculating the Probationary Period

1. Only full-time continuous service at a university will be included in determining completion of the probationary period, except where a break in service was pursuant to an approved leave of absence.

- a. A period of approved leave of absence shall be excluded from the requisite period for completion of the probationary period unless the president specified in writing before the leave of absence that it shall be included in the probationary period. Absent good cause, leaves of absence may not be granted retroactively.

2. Stopping the Tenure Clock

- a. A Faculty Member in a Tenure-Track Appointment may request to stop the tenure clock during his/her probationary period when circumstances exist that interrupt the Faculty Member's normal progress toward building a case for tenure. In such cases, the Faculty Member may request to stop the tenure clock for one year if he/she demonstrates circumstances that reasonably warrant such interruption. Reasons for approving a request to stop the tenure clock will typically be related to a personal or family situation requiring attention and commitment that consumes the time and energy normally addressed to faculty duties and professional development. Examples of events that may warrant stopping the clock include, but are not limited to, childbirth or adoption, care of dependents, medical conditions or obligations, physical disasters or disruptions, or similar circumstances that require a fundamental alteration of one's professional life. The intent of this policy is to serve the best interests of Tennessee Tech while providing neither preference to nor adverse effect on a Faculty Member's process of developing a case for tenure. If approved, the "stop the tenure clock" year is not counted in the probationary period accrual.
- b. Discretion for stopping the tenure clock rests with Tennessee Tech and requires supervisory approval. A Faculty Member seeking a leave of absence and/or a stoppage of the tenure clock must submit his/her request in writing, and addressing the considerations described above, to his/her Departmental/Unit Chair for consideration and recommendation. If the request is based on the Faculty Member's health or care for an immediate family member, the Department/Unit Chair must forward the request to the Office for Human Resources and consult with Human Resources about the request. The Departmental/Unit Chair's recommendation is forwarded to the dean of the Faculty Member's college for consideration and recommendation; then to the provost for consideration and recommendation; and finally, to the president for approval or denial. Within one month of receiving the request, absent good cause, the president will notify the Faculty Member, in writing, of the decision to approve or deny such exceptions.

3. Administrative Appointments Before Tenure

A Faculty Member who is appointed to an administrative position prior to a tenure award remains eligible for tenure under two considerations: (1) the Faculty Member must qualify for tenure under Academic Department/Unit, college, and university policies, procedures, and/or guidelines; and (2) the Faculty Member must maintain a significant involvement in academic pursuits including teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity, and service/outreach. The time (or prorated portion of time) spent in the administrative position may be credited toward completion of the probationary period.

4. Department Transfer Before Tenure

Where a Faculty Member is serving a probationary period in an Academic Department/Unit and is subsequently transferred to another Academic Department/Unit, the Faculty Member may elect, with the approval of the president, to begin a new probationary period on the date that the transfer occurs. If he/she does not so elect, and confirm in writing to the president within one month of the transfer, absent good cause, time spent in the first appointment shall count toward establishing the minimum and maximum probationary period.

C. Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Consideration for Academic Tenure

1. Academic Tenure may be awarded only to full-time Faculty Members who: (a) have been employed pursuant to tenure-track appointments and have completed a probationary period of service as defined in this policy or as agreed upon in writing and signed by the appropriate academic officers; and (b) have been determined by Tennessee Tech to meet the criteria for recommendation for tenure and have been so recommended pursuant to this policy.
2. No Faculty Member shall be eligible for tenure unless the employee's contract specifies his/her tenure-track status.
3. A Faculty Member qualified for tenure under this policy who holds a non-faculty position may be awarded tenure in the faculty position only.

VII. Criteria to be Considered in Tenure Recommendations

A. General Tenure Criteria

1. The Faculty Member is expected to maintain professional levels of performance with the weightings agreed upon in a written agreement on responsibilities and consistent with the expectations established by the department/unit.
2. While the relative importance of the criteria for recommendation for tenure depends upon the nature, missions, and goals of the college and the Academic Department/Unit, all Faculty Members considered for tenure will be evaluated with respect to their performance in (a) teaching, (b) research/scholarship/creative activity, and (c) service/outreach. They are expected to demonstrate excellence in all areas. Specifically, demonstrated excellence in teaching is required for tenure.
3. Any Faculty Member whose duties require an unusual amount of professional activity not adequately covered by this policy, or librarians who are judged on performance of professional responsibilities, should prepare a document that will describe the expected performance to allow clear evaluation in relation to assigned and expected responsibilities.

B. Teaching

1. A candidate for tenure must present evidence of teaching excellence as indicated by: ability to organize and present subject matter in a logical and meaningful way; and, ability to motivate and stimulate creativity, intellectual curiosity, and learning in undergraduates and/or graduate students.
2. Performance Criteria. All Faculty Members are expected to demonstrate excellence in teaching. Faculty Members will be evaluated on the following teaching criteria based on the significance assigned by the Department/Unit:
 - a. Performance in teaching of students as evaluated by students and peers;
 - b. Performance in the advisement and mentoring of students;
 - c. Improvement of the courses they teach and also the curricular offerings of the department/unit, college, and university;
 - d. Effectiveness in teaching methods, including efforts to improve pedagogy with new techniques and integration of new instructional technologies;
 - e. Supervision of specialized instructional activities (student research/scholarship/creative activity, service learning, experiential learning, thesis and dissertation direction, internships, student teaching, etc.);
 - f. Honors received and recognition for teaching;
 - g. Currency and continued intellectual development in the field of specialization;
 - h. Seeking internal and external funding for instructional activities. Whether funded or unfunded, the quality of such proposals will be stressed in the evaluation. Other factors may include the reputation of the funding source and the competition for funding; and
 - i. Contributions to the scholarship of teaching (for example, textbooks, articles, workshops, presentations, instructional technology resources, etc.) may be included here or under research/scholarship/creative activity.

3. Documentation

- a. Documentation of excellence in teaching must include, at minimum, course materials and student evaluations for every course evaluated during the probationary period; and evidence of student projects or other forms of student mentorship.
- b. Other supporting material may include, but is not limited to: additional student input; evidence of evaluation by faculty peers; statement of teaching philosophy; teaching recognition; teaching scholarship; evidence of professional

development in teaching; evidence of disciplinary or interdisciplinary program or curricular development; alumni surveys and student exit interviews; and other evidence of excellence in teaching or mentoring, or both.

C. Research/Scholarship/Creative Activity

1. A candidate for tenure must present evidence of research/scholarship/creative activity when applying for tenure. Research/scholarship/creative activity includes those professional activities designed to discover, create, or disseminate greater knowledge, appreciation, or understanding of an academic discipline, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Pure research: seeking new knowledge, investigating realms not covered by current understanding or challenging current understanding.
 - b. Applied research: the application of known methods or theories to specific circumstances.
 - c. Pedagogical research: the development of pedagogical techniques and the application in the classroom or laboratory that furthers the dissemination of knowledge.
 - d. Artistic creativity and performance: the creation and exhibition of works of art or crafts, or the composition and/or performance of plays, music, etc.
 - e. Faculty development: formal and informal activities primarily directed to maintain and enhance faculty research, scholarship, or creative capabilities or performance.
2. Performance Criteria: Faculty Members will be evaluated on the following criteria based on the significance assigned by the Department/Unit:
 - a. Direct participation in research, scholarship, and/or creative activity. Faculty collaboration with undergraduate and/or graduate students may be included here.
 - b. Seeking internal and external funding for research, scholarship, and/or creative activity. Whether funded or unfunded, the quality of the proposal will be stressed in the evaluation. Other factors may include the reputation of the funding source and the competition for funding.
 - c. Scholarly publications in peer-reviewed journals and/or peer-reviewed creative activities.
3. Documentation
 - a. Documentation of excellence in research/scholarship/creative activity must include evidence of peer review of the candidate's record of research/scholarship by qualified peers. Such evidence should cite books, journal articles, monographs, or media of similar quality; externally-funded research; scholarly

presentations before one's professional peers at regional, national or international meetings/conferences; inventions, disclosures, and/or patents; and/or creative activities, performances, or exhibitions that have undergone appropriate peer review.

- b. Other supporting materials may include, but is not limited to: written reviews and evaluations by qualified peers of performances, compositions, and other artistic creations; and evidence of internal/external funded grants. Unfunded proposals for internal/external grants, where documentation supports the quality of the proposal.

D. Service/Outreach

1. A candidate for tenure must present evidence of excellence in university, professional, and/or community/public service.
2. Performance Criteria. Participation in university service is expected of every Faculty Member. Although it is recognized that differences in emphases may exist, evaluation of service will be based on an appraisal of the Faculty Member's performance in all three (3) areas: university service, professional service, and community/public service. Evaluation will be based on the following criteria, with the department/unit to which a Faculty Member is assigned determining the degree of weight for each criterion. These criteria should include: community service programs; public service consultation; university committee and administrative responsibilities; and active contributions to professional associations.
3. Documentation of excellence in service/outreach includes evidence of a Faculty Member's activities in the following areas:
 - a. University service refers to work other than teaching and research/scholarship/creative activity done at the department/unit, college/school, or university level. A certain amount of such service is expected of every Faculty Member. University service includes, but is not limited to, serving on department/unit, college/school, and university committees. Some Faculty Members may accept more extensive citizenship functions, such as a leadership role in the Faculty Senate, membership on a specially appointed task force, service as advisor to a university-wide student organization, and/or membership on a university search committee.
 - b. Professional service refers to the work done for organizations related to one's discipline or to the teaching profession generally. Service to the profession includes association leadership, journal editorships, article and grant proposal review, guest lecturing on other campuses, and other appropriate activities. More is required than organizational membership and attendance. Examples of significant service would be that done by an officer of a professional organization or a member of the editorial staff of a journal.

- c. Community/public service has a major emphasis on the application of knowledge for the solution of societal problems. Outreach primarily involves sharing professional expertise and should directly support the goals and mission of Tennessee Tech.

VIII. Tenure Review Process

A. Administration of Tenure Review

1. The tenure process is for use by an Academic Department/Unit in the case of a candidate for tenure who is not the Departmental/Unit Chair. However, if a Departmental/Unit Chair is a candidate for tenure, he/she shall be omitted from the administrative chain, and the Dean of the college shall perform all tenure duties normally performed by the Departmental/Unit Chair. Likewise, in an academic division of the university designated by some name other than “department” or “unit,” the director of that division shall fulfill the role of the Departmental/Unit Chair (and if the director is a candidate, then the role is assumed by the person to whom he/she reports at the next higher administrative level).

B. Assessment of Satisfactory Progress Toward Tenure

1. As part of the annual evaluation of faculty on tenure-track appointments, the Departmental/Unit Chair, in consultation with the departmental/unit peers, shall assess whether or not the Faculty Member is making satisfactory progress toward achieving tenure. Deadlines for this assessment vary according to the Faculty Member’s years of service on Tenure-Track Appointment and are published on Tennessee Tech’s web site.
2. To complete this assessment, the Departmental/Unit Chair shall notify each tenure-track Faculty Member of the deadline to compile and submit a dossier of information similar to that required for tenure review. Once submitted, the dossier is reviewed by departmental/unit peers. The Departmental/Unit Chair or his/her designee shall then call a meeting of the departmental/unit peers to discuss the tenure-track Faculty Member’s progress. During this meeting, each peer will complete an annual evaluation form, thereby conveying to the Departmental/Unit Chair her/his assessment of the Faculty Member’s progress toward tenure. The chair of the department/unit shall then provide written results of the assessment to the Faculty Member.
3. In the event the Faculty Member’s performance is such as to justify non-renewal during the probationary period, the decision not to renew the appointment shall be made by the Departmental/Unit Chair in consultation with the tenured departmental/unit peers and with the approval of the appropriate administrative officers in accordance with this policy.

C. Membership of Tenure Review Committee

1. Departmental/unit peers qualified to vote in consideration of tenure are full-time Faculty Members with tenure appointments at Tennessee Tech who are not members of the candidate’s immediate family.

2. Once the tenure review process is initiated, a tenure committee of at least five members shall be formed. The committee may act as a Committee of the Whole or consist of (a) a smaller number of qualified departmental/unit peers acting as a separate committee, or (b) of qualified departmental/unit peers and/or others as specified below.
 - a. The tenure committee shall consist of no fewer than five persons. In the event there are fewer individuals in the department/unit who meet the definition of departmental/unit peers, the departmental/unit tenure committee must be expanded to include individuals outside the department/unit who are tenured members of the university faculty and who shall be considered peers for all purposes of this process. The selection of these additional members of the tenure committee shall be done by those members of the department/unit who meet all the stated criteria, in consultation with the Departmental/Unit Chair, at the convening stipulated in Section VIII.D.4.
 - b. Even when there are five or more departmental/unit peers who meet all the required criteria for membership on the tenure committee, it may be desirable to incorporate into that committee either non-departmental/unit members or tenured members of the department/unit who do not meet all required criteria. This flexibility shall be left to the professional judgment of those members of the department/unit who meet all required criteria, acting in consultation with the Departmental/Unit Chair. However, all members of the committee must be tenured members of the faculty. This decision shall be made at the convening stipulated in Section VIII.D.4.
 - c. Members of the candidate's immediate family will not be counted in the plenum of departmental/unit peers. No evaluation and/or recommendation shall be submitted by peers (either within or outside one's department/unit) or administrators who are members of the candidate's immediate family.
3. Once constituted, the tenure committee shall elect its own chairperson, who shall not be the Departmental/Unit Chair.
4. The Departmental/Unit Chair shall not vote with the departmental/unit peers and shall not be counted in determining the plenum on which a majority is to be determined, but may submit material to the Faculty Member's tenure dossier, and may participate in the meeting at which the recommendation of the peers is determined.

D. Procedures for Tenure Recommendations

1. General Provisions

- a. Consideration for tenure originates in the department/unit to which the Faculty Member has been assigned.
- b. Administrators and committees involved in the review process (departmental/unit committee, Departmental/Unit Chair, dean, and provost) shall only submit those materials, forms, letters, and other documentation required by the review process outlined below. This includes letters of recommendation which should specify the

performance criteria used and explain how the candidate has or has not met those criteria.

- c. Except for the forms/letters added by administrators in the review process in accordance with this policy, no material can be added to the dossier once the departmental/unit review process has formally begun.
 - d. Members of the departmental/unit tenure review committee shall not make individual recommendations concerning candidates to administrators or others in the review process outside committee procedures.
- 2. Early in the academic year, the Departmental/Unit Chair shall determine whether a Faculty Member is eligible to be considered for tenure and notify eligible Faculty Members in writing that they must (a) respond in writing of their intent to be reviewed, and (b) compile their tenure dossiers for review in consideration for tenure.
- 3. The eligible Faculty Member will initiate the tenure process by written notification to the Departmental/Unit Chair.
- 4. The Departmental/Unit Chair shall compile a list of departmental/unit peers qualified to vote in consideration of tenure. This body of departmental/unit peers shall convene and vote to determine whether it wishes to act as a Committee of the Whole or to establish a departmental/unit tenure committee to conduct the tenure procedures.
- 5. After the departmental/unit tenure committee has been established and its chairperson selected, responsibility for directing the process transfers to the chair of the tenure committee. This committee is an agent of the tenured members of the departmental/unit faculty, and gathers and summarizes information.
- 6. The eligible Faculty Member will compile the dossier and submit it to the chair of the departmental/unit tenure committee.
- 7. The chair of the departmental/unit tenure committee shall ensure that the candidate's tenure dossier is properly assembled and will send letters to all departmental/unit peers requesting evaluative information for the candidate's tenure dossier.
- 8. In consultation with all the members of the committee, the departmental/unit tenure committee chair shall prepare a report on the contents of the tenure dossier and submit the report to the departmental/unit peers.
- 9. The chair of the departmental/unit tenure committee will then send the letters inviting the peers and the Departmental/Unit Chair to review the dossier, and schedule a meeting for a discussion of the merits of the candidate and a vote by secret ballot which will determine which type of recommendation the peers wish to make concerning the tenure status of the candidate.
 - a. At the departmental/unit meeting, the qualifications of the candidate, should be candidly and professionally discussed. The candidate will not be present at this

meeting. The Departmental/Unit Chair may participate in the initial phases of this discussion, sharing with the peers his/her professional judgment concerning the materials submitted to the dossier. At an agreed upon point, the Departmental/Unit Chair shall withdraw from the meeting, after which discussion may continue.

- b.** The chair of the departmental/unit tenure committee shall conduct the vote by secret ballot. In this vote, peers who, for compelling professional (such as leave of absence or attendance at professional meetings) or personal (such as hospitalization, being snow-bound) reasons cannot be physically present at the meeting may submit to the chair of the tenure committee an absentee vote. This privilege should not be lightly invoked, and shall not be extended to peers who are able to be physically present, inasmuch as participation in the discussion of the merits of the candidate is a significant element in the decision-making process. Should a peer who cannot be present at the meeting, due to compelling professional or personal reasons, believe that his/her absence destroys his/her ability to render a professional judgment, he/she may so inform the chair of the departmental/unit tenure committee in writing, in which case the absent peer shall not vote and shall not be counted in determining the plenum on which a majority is to be determined. Failure to vote counts as a negative vote.
 - c.** Following the vote, each peer present shall complete an anonymous evaluation giving reasons for his or her vote.
- 10.** The chairperson of the tenure committee shall then summarize the discussion held at the meeting and compile the results of the evaluations. Copies of this summary and compilation shall be sent to the candidate and shall be included with the ballots and the results of the vote in the tenure dossier. The chairperson of the tenure committee shall then transmit the complete dossier to the Departmental/Unit Chairperson.
- 11.** When the Departmental/Unit Chairperson receives the tenure dossier with the departmental/unit peers' votes, he/she shall review the complete dossier and write a letter explaining his/her tenure recommendation. The Departmental/Unit Chair shall then transmit a copy of the letter to the Faculty Member being considered for tenure and to the administrator to whom the Faculty Member immediately reports (if other than the Departmental/Unit Chair), add a copy of the letter to the tenure dossier, and transmit the complete tenure dossier to the Dean.
- 12.** The Dean of the college shall review the complete dossier and write a letter explaining his/her tenure recommendation. The Dean shall then transmit a copy of the letter to the Faculty Member being considered for tenure and to the Departmental/Unit Chair (or supervisor) to whom the Faculty Member immediately reports, add a copy of the letter to the tenure dossier, and transmit the complete tenure dossier to the provost.
- 13.** The provost shall review the complete dossier and write a letter explaining his/her tenure recommendation. The provost shall then transmit a copy of the letter to the Faculty Member being considered for tenure, the dean of his/her college, and the Departmental/Unit Chair (or immediate supervisor) to whom the Faculty Member reports;

add a copy of the letter to the tenure dossier; and transmit the complete tenure dossier to the president.

14. Upon receipt of the dossier from the provost, the president shall review the complete dossier and make a recommendation.
 - a. If the recommendation is affirmative, the president will submit it to the Board.
 - b. If the recommendation is negative, the president will inform the candidate by letter of his/her decision and transmit a copy of the letter to the provost, the dean of his/her college, and the Departmental/Unit Chair (or immediate supervisor) to whom the Faculty Member reports.
15. For those candidates recommended to the Board for tenure, the president shall inform the candidate by letter of the action of the Board.
 - a. Tenure is awarded only by positive action of the Board, pursuant to the requirements and procedures of this policy. No Faculty Member shall acquire or be entitled to any interest in a tenure appointment at Tennessee Tech without approval pursuant to this policy. No other person shall have any authority to make any representation concerning tenure to any Faculty Member.
 - b. When the Board has taken action, the president shall return the completed dossier to the department/unit.

IX. Changes in Tenure-Track Status

A. Transfer of Tenure-Track Status

1. Faculty on probationary tenure-track appointments may have their Academic Appointments transferred within the institution to accommodate the changing needs of Tennessee Tech. Before implementing any such transfer, the tenure-track Faculty Member and the Academic Department/Unit in which his/her new Academic Appointment is to be located shall be consulted and informed of the reasons for the proposed transfer.
2. The information compiled in the Faculty Member's former Academic Department/Unit, including tenure-track reviews, shall be transferred to the receiving Academic Department/Unit.

B. Non-Renewal of Probationary Tenure-Track

1. When a tenure-track appointment of a Faculty Member is not to be renewed, the Faculty Member shall receive notice of non-renewal per the timeline in the published tenure track schedule.
 - a. For Faculty Members who are in their first academic year of service, termination is at the end of that year.

- b. For Faculty Members in their second academic year of service and beyond, the Faculty Member may remain at Tennessee Tech one more academic year, but on a temporary appointment, not a Tenure-Track Appointment.
- 2. Faculty Members on tenure-track appointments shall not be terminated during the term of the annual appointment as stated in the employment contract except for reasons which would constitute adequate cause which includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Incompetence or dishonesty in teaching or research.
 - b. Willful failure to perform the duties and responsibilities for which the Faculty Member was employed or refusal or continued failure to comply with the policies of the Board, Tennessee Tech, or his/her Academic Department/Unit; or his/her willful failure to carry out specific assignments, when such policies or assignments are reasonable and non-discriminatory.
 - c. Conviction of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude.
 - d. Improper use of narcotics or intoxicants, that substantially impairs the Faculty Member's fulfillment of his/her department/unit and University duties and responsibilities.
 - e. Capricious disregard of accepted standards of professional conduct.
 - f. Falsification of information on an employment application or other information concerning qualifications for a position.
 - g. Failure to maintain the level of professional excellence and ability demonstrated by other members of the faculty in the Academic Department/Unit in which he/she holds Academic Appointment.
- 3. A tenure-track Faculty Member who is dissatisfied with the reasons given for the non-renewal of his/her probationary Tenure-Track Appointment may appeal that decision through the Faculty Affairs Committee or through a committee specifically empowered by the president to hear such appeals. The committee shall make a recommendation to the president, and the president's decision shall be final.
- 4. A tenure-track faculty appointment may not be renewed as a result of Financial Exigency in compliance with TTU Policy 648 (Financial Exigency) or for curricular reasons.

X. Appealing Denial of Tenure

- A. A Faculty Member denied tenure may appeal the decision following Tenure Appeal Procedure in X.B.

1. The provost will set up a Tenure Appeals Committee to review the original dossier and the formal letter of appeal prepared by the appellant.
2. The chair of Academic Council will serve as the chair of the Tenure Appeals Committee unless he/she is not a tenured Faculty Member, or cannot serve due to conflict of interest in which case the provost will appoint a past chair of the Academic Council who is a tenured Faculty Member, unless similarly disqualified.
3. The Tenure Appeals Committee will consist of five Faculty Members appointed by the provost in consultation with the chair of the Tenure Appeal Committee. One of the committee members must be from the same college/school as the appellant, unless there is conflict of interest. Any Faculty Member who may have a conflict of interest (including but not limited to, an Immediate Family Member, a peer of the appellant, or anyone who may have participated in the tenure process for the appellant) may not be appointed to serve on the Tenure Appeals Committee. Tenured Faculty Members from any department/unit or college/school within Tennessee Tech may serve on the committee. The Faculty Members must each be from a different department/unit, and at least three colleges/schools from the university must be represented on the committee.

B. Tenure Appeal Procedure

1. A Faculty Member who disagrees with a negative tenure decision may file a letter of intent to appeal the decision to the provost within 10 days of receiving notification of denial of tenure, absent good cause. The Faculty Member will also notify his/her chairperson and dean of the intent to appeal.
2. The provost will establish a Tenure Appeals Committee within 10 days of receiving the letter of intent, absent good cause.
3. The appellant will provide a formal letter of appeal to the provost within 10 days of filing his/her letter of intent, absent good cause. The formal appeal letter will include detailed evidence substantiating the Faculty Member's reasons for disagreeing with the tenure denial.
4. The Tenure Appeals Committee shall review the appellant's written appeal and the original tenure dossier. The committee may also conduct interviews with those involved in the tenure process, including the dean, the appellant's Departmental/Unit Chair, and any key Faculty Members who the committee may deem crucial, excluding the appellant. Members of the Tenure Appeals Committee will then deliberate and decide on the merits of the appeal. Absent good cause, the process will take place over 30 business days from the date the Tenure Appeals Committee forms and receives the mandate from the provost. The Tenure Appeals Committee shall vote on whether to uphold or deny the appeal, and the majority vote will become the recommendation of the committee; individual votes will be confidential to the extent allowed by law.
5. The chair of the Tenure Appeals Committee shall communicate in writing the committee's decision to the provost within 10 days of the Committee's decision, absent

good cause. The provost will provide copies of the Tenure Appeals Committee's decision to the president and to the Dean and the Departmental/Unit Chair of the appellant.

6. Within a reasonable time, the president may accept the recommendation of the Tenure Appeals Committee, reject it, or request that the committee conduct more deliberations on matters warranting further investigation before making a final decision. If the president affirms the original decision of denial of tenure, the process is concluded. If the president overturns the original decision of denial of tenure, president will submit the new recommendation for granting tenure to the Board at its next meeting.
7. The president's decision will be communicated to the appellant via letter within 60 days of the appellant's filing the letter of intent to appeal, absent good cause.

XI. Interpretation

The president or his/her designee has the final authority to interpret the terms of this policy.

XII. Citation of Authority for Policy

T.C.A. § 49-8-301

XIII. Approved by:

Academic Council: April 4, 2018; February 20, 2019

Administrative Council: April 4, 2018; February 20, 2019

University Assembly: April 18, 2018; April 17, 2019

Board of Trustees: June 22, 2018; June 20, 2019