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# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING REGULATIONS

**Subject:** Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion and Fixed-Term

**Number:** UW Regulation 2-7

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## I. PURPOSE

To define university-level standards and procedures for reappointment, tenure, fixed-term and promotion for faculty.

## II. DEFINITIONS

**Academic Unit of Record:** The academic department that serves as the tenure and fixed-term home for the faculty member. In the case of a joint appointment, the academic unit of record is the academic unit to which the largest share of the workload is distributed. For School of Energy (SER) faculty, the unit of record is the academic department, school or college.

**College Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee:** A committee composed of faculty from multiple Academic Units who will review reappointment, tenure, fixed term, and promotion cases following reviews at the level of individual Academic Units.

**Performance Expectations:** Performance expectations that make explicit the standards of the unit and discipline and incorporate the individual's workload distribution, which may change through time.

**University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee:** A committee to review reappointment, tenure, fixed term, and promotion cases and advise the Provost about these decisions. The committee will be composed of faculty representative of the different colleges and schools as well as types of activities conducted on campus.

## III. REAPPOINTMENT, TENURE, FIXED-TERM AND PROMOTION POLICY

The University is committed to retaining and promoting faculty whose work achieves a high standard of excellence and who demonstrate through the performance of their duties a commitment to professionalism and to the core university mission.

One of the purposes of academic *tenure* is to retain a faculty best qualified to help execute the core university mission of advancing knowledge and educating students. The purpose of *promotion* is to recognize and reward faculty with records of sustained professional accomplishment that contribute to that mission. *Fixed-term appointments* provide stable,

long-term employment with opportunities for promotion for non-tenure track faculty and other academic personnel who support specific aspects of the teaching, research, extension and service missions of the University.

Candidates for reappointment, tenure, promotion and fixed-term appointments are evaluated on the academic functions they are expected to perform and the evaluations will appropriately recognize the proportion of time allocated and expected for the particular functions by the candidates at each academic rank. Evaluations will account for changes in expected functions over time. In addition, the programmatic needs and directions of the University will also be considered for reappointment, tenure, and fixed-term.

The main criteria for reappointment, tenure, promotion, and fixed-term decisions are creative development, advancement of knowledge, and dissemination of knowledge. These criteria may be demonstrated in the University's functions of teaching, research, creative contributions, extension, outreach/engagement, service to the state of Wyoming, professional service, and other University-related activities and services.

Academic Units and colleges have the authority and responsibility to develop College or Unit Policy and Procedures that specify performance standards for their tenure track Faculty and non-tenure track faculty and other academic personnel. These standards shall be consistent with UW Regulations and Standard Administrative Policies and Procedures.

All judgments and recommendations about reappointment, tenure, promotion, and term contracts rest upon objective and transparent evaluation of the faculty member's performance of his or her teaching, research and creative activity, extension and service responsibilities. The function of the University's systematic, multi-phased review process, is to:

- A. Ensure quality of faculty performance,
- B. Protect faculty against dismissal without cause, due process, or peer evaluation,
- C. Prevent intrusion of inappropriate influence into the review and decision-making processes, and
- D. Provide actionable, formative feedback to faculty as they advance through their careers at the University.

#### **IV. REAPPOINTMENT, TENURE, FIXED-TERM AND PROMOTION REVIEW PROCESS**

Decisions about reappointment, tenure, fixed-term and promotion are reached through a comprehensive and rigorous peer and administrative review of achievements and promise. The review process begins in the candidate's Academic Unit of Record. Each case moves

through a sequence of reviews, from the Academic Unit to the college and then to the university level, whereby at each level a duly appointed officer of the University as defined in UW Regulation 1-1 is to make a recommendation after having been advised by an appropriate faculty committee or group. All performance reviews will consider faculty activities in accordance with the Performance Expectations and allocation of effort and accounting for potential changes in the allocation over time.

Specific procedures for reappointment, tenure, fixed-term and promotion processes, including timelines, duties and responsibilities of the candidate, faculty and administrators, and procedures for external expert review, shall be specified in Standard Administrative Policy and Procedures.

**A. Annual review**

The university recognizes that people are the university's most important resource for achieving and sustaining excellence in teaching, research and creative activity, service, extension, and outreach. With the exception In-Residence, Adjunct, Visiting or Emeritus Faculty, all academic personnel, regardless of rank, tenure status or fixed-term status, shall be reviewed annually by the Academic Unit head and approved by the Dean in accordance with guidelines and procedures established by the Office of Academic Affairs as well as the unit and college. Annual reviews are conducted in parallel with other performance reviews during the probationary period and for promotion. The first-year, mid-probationary, tenure, fixed term, and promotion reviews may replace the annual evaluation providing that the evaluation of annual performance can be disaggregated from the comprehensive review.

The annual review procedures shall be fair and impartial and shall incorporate the Performance Expectations and the allocation of effort. To ensure consistency over time, each Academic Unit shall publish its annual review guidelines. The guidelines shall address when and how peer review is incorporated into the annual review process for the purpose of providing advice to the Academic Unit head for annual performance evaluation. Annual review guidelines for the units shall be approved by the respective Dean (or Director of college-like unit) and shall be reviewed by the Vice Provost for consistency with University Regulations and Standard Administrative Policies and Procedures. The creation and modification of the annual review guidelines shall be a product of joint deliberation by faculty members and the Academic Unit head.

**B. Probationary Period for Tenure Track Faculty and Progress to Tenure and Promotion**

Tenure is normally obtained after a six-year period of successful probationary service. The length of the probationary period is based on written terms and

conditions indicated in the faculty member's letter of appointment to a tenure track rank.

- 1. First-year review.** All tenure track faculty shall have their first year review after they have been employed through a fall semester.
- 2. Mid-probationary review.** All Academic Units shall have in place procedures for a mid-probationary review, generally in the third year, which is to include a written assessment and recommendation regarding the faculty member's progress toward tenure. This review is an opportunity for academic personnel to receive feedback on their performance and progress toward tenure and promotion.
- 3. Mandatory tenure and promotion review.** Mandatory tenure and promotion reviews shall be conducted in accordance with the schedule specified in the initial appointment letter or in a subsequent letter from the Office of Academic Affairs modifying the time to tenure or promotion (see section V below). Generally, review for promotion occurs simultaneously with the mandatory tenure review.
- 4. Promotion to professor review.** Review for promotion to professor shall be consistent with the mandatory tenure and promotion review.

**C. Probationary Period for Non-Tenure Track Faculty and Progress to Fixed-Term, Rolling Contract, and Promotion**

Fixed-term is normally obtained after serving a probationary period of three consecutive years. The length of the probationary period is based on written terms and conditions indicated in the faculty member's letter of appointment to a fixed-term-track rank.

Decisions regarding fixed-term with rolling contract and promotion in rank shall follow a thorough performance review as described in Standard Administrative Policies and Procedures.

- 1. First-year review.** All non-tenure track faculty shall have their first year review after they have been employed through a fall semester.
- 2. Fixed-term review.** Mandatory fixed-term review shall be conducted in accordance with the schedule specified in the initial appointment letter or in a letter modifying the schedule (see section V). Procedures for fixed-term review shall be conducted in accordance with Standard Administrative Policies and Procedures and the Academic Unit's tenure and promotion procedures.

- 3. Review for rolling a contract forward.** Annual performance procedures are integrally related to the decision to grant a Fixed-Term Rolling Contract and to roll forward on an annual basis. A fixed-term will roll forward one year after each satisfactory (meet expectations) annual review. The programmatic needs and directions of the University and available funding will also be considered when determining if the contract will roll forward.
  - a. In the event of an annual review that results in an overall rating below “Meets Expectations,” the rolling nature of the contract is suspended and deemed not to roll. The rolling nature of the contract can be restored only after obtaining two successive years of satisfactory (meets expectations) annual reviews.
  - b. If the individual receives an overall rating below “Meets Expectations” for two years within a four year period, then the contract is deemed not to roll and the faculty member is ineligible for a rolling contract. All compensation and benefits and requirements of the contract will remain in effect until the expiration of the then current term of the contract.
  - c. Units may have additional review procedures such as faculty rolling term evaluation committees to ensure objective and transparent evaluation.
- 4. Promotion review.** Review for promotion in rank shall be consistent with the mandatory fixed-term review.
- 5. Replacement of Extended-Term Positions:** All current academic personnel on extended-term appointments will retain their current designation and rank for the duration of their extended-term. A request for change in designation may be made concurrent with the next fixed-term decision (i.e., at the end of their current extended term). Faculty in an extended-term probationary period may be considered for a fixed-term with rolling contract according to the review schedule for fixed-term appointments. The probationary period review for fixed-term with rolling contract shall be waived for academic personnel previously appointed to an extended-term.

**D. Review of Faculty Holding Joint Appointments**

- 1.** Joint appointments within or between colleges (or college-type units such as the American Heritage Center) require special considerations insofar as time allocations derived from monetary or other administrative concerns may not correspond to a description of the faculty member’s total role in the University; such a role may include responsibilities that are not specific to any one of the supporting administrative units. In the evaluation of candidates holding joint appointments, close attention shall be given to the candidate's total job description.

2. In the case of a joint appointment involving two Academic Units within one college (or college-type units) the candidate's materials will be reviewed by both Academic Units, beginning with the Academic Unit of record. The materials will then be reviewed by the College Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Dean, before being submitted to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.
3. In the case of a joint appointment involving two or more colleges (or college-type units), the candidate's materials will be reviewed by each Academic Unit head, beginning with the Academic Unit of record. If appropriate, the college level review will be conducted by a subcommittee made up of one or more members from each College Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committees and the Deans from the respective colleges, before being submitted to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

**E. Review of Faculty Holding Appointments in the School of Energy Resources (SER)**

Review will begin with the SER faculty (excluding any faculty member in the candidate's Academic Unit of Record), who will discuss the candidate's reappointment, tenure and promotion materials and contributions to the SER mission, followed by the Executive Director of SER. Review materials will then be reviewed by the candidate's academic department, Unit Head, College Tenure and Promotion Committee, and Dean, before being submitted to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

**V. FLEXIBILITY IN TENURE TRACK**

**A. Extension of the Probationary Period**

In exceptional cases, it is possible to increase the length of the probationary period from that specified in the official letter of appointment, via a hiatus in the schedule toward tenure (a "clock stop"). A clock stop postpones, by one year, the next scheduled reappointment review and the date for the tenure or a fixed-term decision. An extension may be granted up to two times. Exceptions to this limit can be made under extraordinary circumstances if approved by the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. Candidates must be held to the same standards of performance when the probationary period has been extended as candidates whose probationary period was not extended.

**B. Faculty Hired with Tenure Track Experience**

The length of the probationary period may be shortened. Credit for prior experience that reduces the six-year probationary period must be specified in the letter of offer and approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**C. Faculty Request for Early Tenure Review**

A faculty member must be considered for reappointment, tenure and/or promotion after having served the time period required by existing regulations. A faculty member with an exceptional record in all the major dimensions of the candidate's professional responsibilities may apply for early tenure. The determination of an exceptional record is grounded in the performance standards and expectations of the discipline as evaluated by departmental colleagues, external expert reviews, the Unit Head, the college committee, the Dean, and the university committee. A tenure decision is considered to be early if it takes place before the probationary period has come to conclusion. If early tenure is not granted and reappointment is approved, the candidate shall continue on the original timetable.

**VI. TENURE, ROLLING TERM AND PROMOTION DECISIONS**

**A. Tenure Decisions**

The reappointment procedures are integrally related to the tenure and promotion decisions of those tenure track faculty serving probationary appointments. A tenure decision is normally based on rank at the time of initial appointment to the University of Wyoming (with the exceptions of Section V) as set forth below:

1. For untenured assistant professors, including those who were initially designated as instructor, the tenure decision will be made no later than the sixth year.
2. For untenured associate professors, the tenure decision will be made no later than the fourth year.
3. For untenured professors, the tenure decision will be made no later than the third year.
4. Tenure decisions will be considered "early" if the candidate has served fewer years than specified above as described in Section V.C.

Only those tenure track faculty who successfully complete the probationary period and are approved by the Trustees, will receive tenure. An individual who is not offered tenure at the end of the probationary period shall not be retained as a tenure track faculty member.

## **B. Rolling Term Decisions**

The reappointment procedures are integrally related to the decision to grant a fixed-term contract and to roll it forward on an annual basis. A fixed-term decision is made regardless of rank at the time of initial appointment to the University of Wyoming as set forth below:

1. Three-year rolling contracts are issued to non-tenure track faculty who have successfully served three one-year term contract appointments. Full-time faculty members appointed to a three-year rolling contract have a three-year term of employment, which is eligible to be renewed annually.
2. Upon promotion to the highest rank, a non-tenure track faculty member is eligible for a rolling five-year contract. Only those non-tenure track faculty recommended by the President of the University and approved by the Board of Trustees will be promoted and receive a rolling five-year contract.

Only those non-tenure track faculty who successfully complete the probationary period and are approved by the President, will receive a fixed-term. An individual who is not offered a fixed-term at the end of the probationary period for reasons other than job performance may be reappointed to an annual appointment.

## **C. Promotion Decisions**

The promotion of faculty shall also be initiated in accordance with the procedures specified in UW Regulations and criteria outlined in Standard Administrative Policies and Procedures. Only those faculty recommended by the President of the University and approved by the Board of Trustees will receive promotion. The promotion in rank salary increase shall be 10 percent of the base salary. The promotion increases are not contingent upon or related to any other regular salary increases.

### **1. Tenure Track and Tenured Faculty**

Promotion decisions for assistant professors being considered for associate rank will normally occur during the sixth year of service; decisions prior to the sixth year will be considered "early." Promotion decisions for associate professors being considered for the rank of professor are not tied to years of service. Instead, they hinge on the depth, level, and national or international scope and recognition of the candidate's contributions to the discipline and the University's mission. Associate professors seeking promotion to professor normally undergo a period of additional growth that results in a greater level of accomplishment and intellectual leadership.

## **2. Non-Tenure Track Faculty**

Non-tenure track faculty will normally be considered for promotion after six years. However, nothing shall prevent a faculty member from seeking promotion at an earlier time. Promotion to the highest rank is not tied to years of service. Instead, promotion decisions hinge on scope and recognition of the candidate's contributions to the discipline and the University's mission. Non-tenure track faculty seeking promotion to the highest academic rank normally undergo a period of additional growth that results in a greater level of accomplishment and intellectual leadership.

### **D. Decisions Regarding Administrators**

#### **1. Administrators Holding Tenure**

Administrative and academic officers do not have tenure in their administrative positions and shall serve in such capacity at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the President. If they hold concurrent faculty appointments, they may be granted tenure in the faculty position at the discretion of the Board of Trustees upon recommendation by the President. Procedures outlined in Section IV shall be followed when an administrator is being considered for tenure. However, the schedule for review may be expedited when the tenure decision is associated with the administrative appointment. No one shall forfeit tenure by reason of appointment to an administrative position.

#### **2. Promotion in Rank of Administrators**

Administrative duties included in the faculty job description shall be considered when a decision about promotion is made. Promotion may be granted at the discretion of the Board of Trustees usually upon recommendation by the President of the University.

## **VII. OUTCOMES**

### **A. Notification of Reappointment and Tenure**

- 1.** If the decision is to reappoint during the probationary period or award tenure, the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs will send an appointment letter to the candidate, with a copy to Dean or comparable administrator and the Academic Unit Head.
- 2.** If the decision is to not reappoint during the probationary period or award tenure, the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs will provide written notice to the candidate.

**B. Notification of Promotion**

1. If the decision is in favor of promotion, the effective date is at the beginning of the next contract term (i.e., July 1 for fiscal year appointments, September 1 for academic year appointments).
2. If the decision is in favor of promotion, it shall be the policy of the university that all promotions shall include a salary increase of 10 percent of the base salary, irrespective of other salary increases.
3. If the decision is not in favor of promotion, the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs will inform the candidate in writing.

**C. Notification of Non-Renewal**

1. Tenure track faculty and non-tenure track faculty in their first year whose probationary contract is not renewed shall be notified not later than March 15 of that academic year.
2. Tenure track faculty and non-tenure track faculty on *extended* term in their second year through final year of the probationary period whose contract is not renewed or when tenure is not awarded shall be notified at least 12 months before the expiration of an appointment, which for academic year appointments is typically the end of May.
3. Non-tenure track faculty on *fixed* term with rolling contracts will be notified that his/her appointment will not be renewed and the faculty member will be allowed to finish the remainder of the rolling contract or given a 12-month notice of non-reappointment, whichever is longer.

**VIII. WITHDRAWAL OF PACKET BY CANDIDATE FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

Candidates not recommended for reappointment, tenure, or promotion at the department and college level shall be notified of the decision. Their materials will be forwarded to the University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee or the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs for review, unless the candidate concerned requests the packet be withdrawn from consideration. If the candidate makes such a request, the decision will be final. A faculty member turned down for reappointment or tenure will have the right at this time to resign and the personnel file will state only that he/she resigned.

**IX. RIGHT TO REVIEW AND HEARING FOR VIOLATION OF EVALUATION, PROMOTION OR TENURE PROCEDURES**

A faculty member who believes that the university, college or department's tenure and promotion policy or procedures have been violated, adversely affecting the faculty member's tenure or promotion may file a grievance pursuant to University Regulation 2-2.

**X. CORE MATERIALS**

In accordance with Academic Unit, college and university guidelines, the candidate and unit head are responsible for submitting a core set of reappointment, tenure and promotion materials by the required deadline, including:

- A. Curriculum vitae;
- B. Job description(s);
- C. Self-reflection essay; and
- D. Supporting documents for teaching, research and/or creative contributions, extension, professional services, and University-related activities.

External letters of recommendation are required for all tenure and promotion cases for tenure track faculty and tenured faculty.

**XI. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

In addition to the roles and responsibilities described herein, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs shall have the authority and responsibility to:

- A. Initiate directives to deans and department/division heads providing for the development of all procedures necessary for the complete and uniform implementation of the annual review, reappointment, tenure and promotion procedures specified in UW Regulations.
- B. Establish the calendar for the submission of reappointment, tenure and promotion materials; the meetings of the University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee to consider the candidates for reappointment, tenure and promotion; the submission of the recommendations of the University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee to the President of the University for the President's review and consideration.

- C. Take any and all action necessary to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the annual review, reappointment, tenure and promotion procedures specified in this UW Regulation at the University.

## **XII. UNIVERSITY REAPPOINTMENT, TENURE AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE**

In addition to reviewing reappointment, tenure, fixed term, and promotion cases for which it is assigned, a second function of the University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee shall be to determine if the standards enumerated in Section III above are being consistently applied campus-wide by examining the procedures and general eligibility qualifications of candidates recommended and not recommended by the college committees for promotion, tenure, or reappointment. In order to make this determination, the University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee shall consider the recommendations from colleges. Apparent policy inconsistencies will be described in writing, and returned to the college committee and the dean for future assessment, and/or the Committee may make recommendations to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs for other appropriate action.

Further, the reappointment, tenure and promotion committees of the college and University should be alert to possible irregularities at whatever level in following these procedures and should investigate and make appropriate recommendations wherever procedural integrity is not maintained. Should this procedure not lead to corrections the committees should make a full report of violations to the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Academic Standards, Rights, and Responsibilities Committee.

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**Responsible Division/Unit:** Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Source:** None

**Links:** <http://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies>

**Associated Regulations, Policies, and Forms:** None

**History:**

University Regulation 803; adopted May 6-8, 2009 Board of trustees meeting  
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Reformatted 7/1/2018: previously UW Regulation 5-803, now UW Regulation 2-7  
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