

Academic Affairs Manual (ACD)

ACD 506–03: Faculty Probationary Appointments

Effective: 7/1/1982

Revised: 7/1/2011

Purpose

To describe faculty probationary appointments

Sources

Arizona Board of Regents Policy Manual - 6–201

Office of the Provost of the University

Applicability

Tenure-eligible faculty

Policy

Faculty appointed at the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor may receive a probationary appointment. The purpose of probation is to provide the tenure-eligible faculty member with an opportunity to develop and demonstrate the ability to meet the criteria for tenure at the institution and to provide the institution with the opportunity to evaluate the abilities of the faculty member.

Except as provided below, the probationary period begins with the initial appointment. If an individual’s appointment begins in the spring semester; the tenure clock begins in the following fall semester.

The [schedule of personnel actions](#) is available on the Web site of the Office of the Provost of the University.

Individuals hired for assistant professor positions who have not completed their dissertation or other terminal degree requirements by the start of employment will be appointed at the rank and salary of instructor, ABD and must complete the degree requirements within the first year of employment. If they fail to do so, they may be terminated at the end of the first year of appointment. If they complete the degree requirements during the fall semester of the first year, the instructor, ABD may choose one of two options:

1. rank and salary change to that stated in the initial offer letter and prorated to the date of degree completion; this becomes the first year of the probationary period

or

2. remain as an instructor, ABD for the fall semester, with rank and salary changing at the beginning of the spring semester; the first year of the probationary period starts with the following fall semester.

Duration of the Probationary Period

All 100 percent FTE faculty appointed at the assistant professor rank have a maximum of six years in which to apply for tenure. Appointments at the associate or full professor rank have a maximum of four years in which to apply for tenure unless the offer letter specifies an alternative time frame, not to exceed six years. An individual working in a tenure-eligible position at less than 100 percent FTE for one or more years may have the probationary period extended. In such

a case, the quality of contributions should be the same as those for individuals with a regular probationary period, but the quantity of contributions should be proportional to the FTE effort.

At the time that approval for less than a 100 percent FTE appointment is given, an agreement must be prepared and signed by the faculty member, chair/director of the academic unit, and the supervising dean, and the Office of the Provost of the University stating the individual is working for tenure as a specific FTE appointment, the expectations for tenure and promotion, the time limit for the probationary review (if appropriate), and the maximum time limit for the tenure review.

Faculty members who desire to be considered for tenure earlier than the year designated in their offer letters should consult with their chair/director and/or deans about the possibility of being reviewed and recommended for tenure prior to their final probationary year. If an application for early tenure is denied, the faculty member may remain in probationary status with a regular contract until the mandatory tenure review is completed, or may receive a conditional contract, or may not be renewed per the provisions of [ACD 508-01](#), "Nonreappointment."

See [ACD 506-04](#), "Tenure" for information about tenure reviews.

Extension of the Probationary Period

Under special circumstances, the president or the president's designee may extend the probationary period. Faculty members may request, no later than the fall semester of the year prior to the year their tenure review is scheduled, an extension of the probationary period. If such a request is granted, the faculty member shall not be subject to additional requirements at the time of the tenure decision. The request typically will be made in writing to the chair/director of the academic unit and supervising dean, who may consult with relevant personnel committees (if specified in bylaws) and forward the request, with recommendations, to the provost of the university. The approval process must include an agreement for the timing of the probationary review (if appropriate) and the tenure review.

The request for an extension could be based on the following circumstances:

1. a one-year or one-semester unpaid leave of absence granted for personal reasons and having no significant relationship to the professional activity of the faculty member may be exempted from the probationary period
or
2. a one-year, good-cause extension of the probationary period granted while continuing employment. Good cause includes, but is not limited to, serious illness, or other disability and/or exceptional family care responsibilities such as pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, or being the primary caregiver of a minor child or other individual who requires extraordinary care and depends upon the employee for that care, or in case of extraordinary university-wide emergencies.

A one-year leave granted for professional reasons such as fellowships, visiting appointments, and research grants will not interrupt the sequence of probationary years, unless an exception is requested and approved by the Office of the Provost of the University. Individuals may apply for more than one extension and a leave may be extended upon approval of the president or president's designee.

Review of Probationary Faculty

Annual Feedback on Progress Toward Tenure

The chair/director of the academic unit, after consulting with unit faculty, is responsible for annually meeting with and providing feedback to each tenure-eligible faculty member about his or her professional development and progress toward earning tenure. The chair/director of the academic unit will provide a written summary of the feedback to the

faculty member. This feedback will typically occur at the same time as and be based upon the same materials submitted for the annual performance evaluation. However, feedback on progress toward tenure for probationary faculty is distinct from the annual performance evaluation. The former addresses the academic unit's estimates of future promise. The annual performance evaluation summarizes performance over the prior evaluative period (usually one to three years).

The probationary review may serve the purpose of the annual feedback on progress toward tenure for the year it is scheduled.

Probationary Review

In addition to the annual feedback on progress towards tenure, all probationary faculty must receive a formal probationary review midway through their probationary period (e.g., third year of a six-year probationary period, or as noted in an agreement). The purpose of the probationary review is to give faculty members multiple appraisals of their progress toward earning tenure and assess whether retention is appropriate. The review process is confidential.

The probationary review should closely resemble the actual tenure review, except that external evaluation letters are not sought. The academic unit personnel committee, the academic unit chair/director, the college personnel committee, and the supervising dean all review materials. For information about university probationary review requirements for academic unit bylaws, see [P3](#), "University Faculty Probationary, Tenure, and Promotion Requirements for Academic Unit Bylaws." For information about probationary review file content requirements, see [P2](#), "Probationary or Conditional Review for Tenure-Eligible Faculty Process Guide."

Reviewers at each level write formal, independent assessments. Faculty members under probationary review may be informed orally by the chair and/or dean of the recommendations being made. Upon completion of the probationary review, the dean will notify chair/director in writing whether the faculty member will be retained, retained conditionally, or given a terminal appointment for the succeeding year. The dean must forward the reviews of individuals recommended for a terminal appointment to the Office of the Provost of the University for approval; notification of retention decisions shall not be communicated to faculty until all decisions, including terminal appointments approved by the Office of the Provost of the University, have been made.

Faculty who undergo probationary reviews will be informed of the results in writing by their academic unit chairs/directors no more than 30 days after the chairs/directors have received written notification of retention decisions from the dean. At the time that faculty members are informed of the retention decisions, they must also be given a copy of the written reviews submitted by each level in the probationary review process, e.g., faculty personnel committee, academic unit chair/director, college personnel committee, and college dean.

Conditional Retention

A faculty member who is recommended for a conditional appointment must be notified by his or her dean no later than April 10. The faculty member will have 30 calendar days to petition the dean with reasons for a review of the decision. If the petition is not received by May 10, the conditional contract will not be reconsidered.

If a conditional appointment is offered to a faculty member, the dean must provide a written statement to the faculty member of the conditions that must be met within a specified period of time (generally one year) in order to return to probationary status following the conditional year. The dean must send a list of faculty given conditional appointments and the specific conditions for each faculty member to the Office of the Provost of the University.

When a conditional appointment is offered to a faculty member, a review must be conducted at or near the end of the period specified in the statement of conditions to determine if they have been met. If the conditions have been met, the faculty member will receive a probationary appointment for the following year. If the conditions have not been met, the faculty member will receive a terminal appointment for the following year.

See [P2](#), “Probationary or Conditional Review for Tenure-Eligible Faculty Process Guide” for information about materials that must be submitted for the review.

Notification of Termination

Faculty who will not be retained or who receive a terminal appointment will be notified in writing by the provost of the university or designee.

Note: Decisions of nonretention are not restricted to the years of the probationary reviews; they may be made in any year during the probationary period.

Faculty who receive a notification of termination or terminal appointment are not permitted to apply for tenure.

Notice of termination or terminal appointment shall be given in writing in accordance with the following schedule:

1. First academic year of service: not later than March 1 if the appointment expires at the end of that year. If a one-year appointment terminates during an academic year, at least 90 days notice will be provided. If the notice is given after March 1, the faculty member will be compensated for the 90-day period immediately following the date of the notice but shall not be entitled to another appointment.
2. Second academic year of service: not later than December 15 if the appointment expires at the end of that year. If the notice is given after December 15, the faculty member will be compensated for the 150-day period immediately following the date of the notice but shall not be entitled to another appointment.
3. Two or more years in the institution: at least 12 months before the expiration of an appointment. If the notice is given after May 15, the faculty member will be given a terminal year appointment and compensated, while employed at ASU, for the next academic or fiscal year (depending on the appointment) but will not be entitled to another appointment beyond that year. The contract for this year should read “terminal contract.” If the decision is not to give tenure, the individual should be notified by May 15 of the sixth year of 100 percent equivalent full-time service. The contract for the seventh year will read “terminal contract.”

Grievance

Individuals may file a complaint regarding the probationary review in accord with [ACD 509-02](#), “Grievance Policy for Faculty.”

Cross-References

1. [ACD 505-04](#), “Faculty Membership, Ranks, Titles, and Appointment Categories”
2. [ACD 506-04](#), “Tenure”
3. [ACD 506-05](#), “Faculty Promotion”
4. [ACD 506-10](#), “Annual Evaluations of Faculty.”