

# Academic Affairs Manual (ACD)

## ACD 507–05: Academic Professional Probationary Appointments

Effective: 1/9/2006

Revised: 7/1/2011

### Purpose

To describe academic professional probationary appointments

### Sources

*Arizona Board of Regents Policy Manual - 6–301, 302*

Office of the Provost of the University

### Applicability

Probationary academic professionals

### Policy

Academic professionals with the rank of assistant librarian, associate librarian and librarian may receive a probationary appointment. The president upon recommendation from the Office of the Provost of the University may approve other ranks/titles eligible for a probationary appointment. The purpose of probation is to provide the academic professional an opportunity to develop and demonstrate the ability to meet the criteria for continuing appointment at the institution and to provide the institution with the opportunity to evaluate the abilities of the academic professional.

### Duration of the Probationary Period

The probationary period and the year for the continuing appointment review will be specified in the offer letter. All 100 percent FTE academic professionals appointed at the assistant, associate or full rank have a maximum of six years in which to apply for continuing appointment. An individual working at less than 100 percent FTE shall have a probationary period proportional to the FTE effort. At the time that approval for less than a 100 percent FTE appointment is given, an agreement must be signed by the academic professional, the academic unit administrator, the supervising dean/university librarian, and the provost of the university stating the individual is working for continuing appointment at a specific FTE appointment, the expectations for continuing appointment and promotion, the time limit for the probationary review, and the maximum time limit for the continuing appointment review.

Academic professionals who wish to be considered for continuing appointment earlier than the date listed in their appointment letter should consult with their academic unit administrator. An individual may remain in a probationary appointment until the mandatory continuing appointment review when continuing appointment is denied at an early review. See [ACD 507–06](#), “Continuing Appointment for Academic Professionals” for information about continuing appointment reviews.

## **Extension of the Probationary Period**

Extensions of the probationary period may be granted by the president or president's designee. Academic professionals may request, no later than the fall semester of the year prior to the year their continuing appointment review is scheduled, an extension of the probationary period. If such a request is granted, the academic professional shall not be subject to additional requirements at the time of the continuing appointment decision. The request should be made in writing and should be forwarded through the academic unit administrator and dean/university librarian to the provost of the university. The approval process must include an agreement for the timing of the probationary review (if appropriate) and the continuing appointment 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 academic professional may be exempted from the probationary period.
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.

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 Academic Professionals**

### **Annual Feedback on Progress toward Continuing Appointment**

The academic unit administrator is responsible for annually meeting with and providing feedback to each probationary academic professional about his or her professional development and progress towards earning a continuing appointment. The academic unit administrator will provide a written summary of the feedback to the academic professional and the supervising dean/university librarian. 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 continuing appointment for probationary academic professionals is distinct from the annual performance evaluation. The former addresses the academic unit's estimates of future promise. The annual performance evaluation should generally summarize performance over the previous 36 months with substantial emphasis on the current year.

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

### **Probationary Review**

In addition to the annual feedback on progress towards continuing appointment, all probationary academic professionals must receive a formal probationary review midway through their probationary period (e.g., third year of a six-year probationary period; second year of a four-year probationary period; or as noted in an agreement). The purpose of the review is to give the university and the academic professional an appraisal of the progress being made toward earning continuing appointment and assess whether retention is appropriate.

The review will be based on the academic professional's progress toward meeting the criteria for continuing appointment in three areas: position effectiveness; professional contributions; and institutional, professional, and community service. Individual academic professionals may have different percentages of effort in each category.

The probationary review should closely resemble the actual continuing appointment review except that external letters of review are not sought. The academic unit personnel review committee, academic unit administrator, college peer review committee, and supervising dean/university librarian all review materials prepared according to instructions received from the provost of the university. For information about university probationary review requirements for academic unit by-laws, see [P8](#), “University Academic Professional Probationary, Continuing Appointment, and Promotion Requirements for Academic Unit Bylaws.” For information about probationary review file content requirements, see [P9](#), “Probationary or Conditional Review for Academic Professionals Process Guide.”

The review process is confidential. Reviewers at each level write formal, independent assessments. Academic professionals under review prior to their final probationary year shall be informed orally by the academic unit administrator of the recommendations being made to the next level of review. Upon completion of the probationary review, the dean/university librarian will notify each unit administrator in writing whether the academic professional will be retained, retained conditionally, or given a terminal appointment for the succeeding year. The dean/university librarian 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 academic professionals until all decisions, including terminal appointments approved by the Office of the Provost of the University, have been made.

Academic professionals who undergo probationary reviews will be informed of the results in writing by their academic unit administrator after receipt of written notification of retention decisions from the dean/university librarian. Within 30 days after academic professionals 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., academic unit personnel review committee, academic unit administrator, college/Library peer review committee, and college dean/university librarian.

### **Conditional Retention**

An academic professional who is recommended for a conditional appointment must be notified by his or her dean/university librarian no later than April 10 for an academic year appointment and May 10 for a fiscal year appointment. The dean/university librarian must send a list of academic professionals given conditional appointments and the specific conditions for each academic professional to the Office of the Provost of the University. The academic professional will have 30 calendar days to petition the dean/university librarian for a review of the decision to give a conditional appointment. If the petition is not received by May 10 for an academic year appointment or June 10 for a fiscal year appointment, the conditional contract will not be reconsidered.

If a conditional appointment is offered to an academic professional, the dean/university librarian must provide a written statement to the academic professional 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.

When a conditional appointment is offered to an academic professional, a conditional review must be conducted at or near the end of the period specified in the statement of conditions to determine if the conditions have been met. If the conditions have been met, the academic professional will receive a probationary appointment for the following year. If the conditions have not been met, the academic professional will receive a terminal appointment for the following year. See [P9](#) “Probationary or Conditional Review for Academic Professionals Process Guide” for information about materials that must be submitted for the review.

### **Notification of Termination**

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

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

The schedule noted below is not applicable to releases of academic professionals for financial emergency or reorganization, as specified in [ACD 508-05](#).

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

1. Not later than March 1 of the first academic or April 1 of the first fiscal year of service if the appointment expires at the end of that year; or, 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 or April 1 depending on appointment period, the academic professional will be compensated for the 90-day period immediately following the date of the notice but shall not be entitled to another appointment.
2. Not later than December 15 of the second academic or February 1 of the fiscal year of service if the appointment expires at the end of that year. If the notice is given after December 15 or February 1 depending on the appointment period, the academic professional will be compensated for the 150-day period immediately following the date of the notice but shall not be entitled to another appointment.
3. At least 12 months before the expiration of an appointment after two or more years in the institution. If the notice is given after May 15 for an academic year appointment or June 30 for a fiscal year appointment, the academic professional will be compensated for the next academic or fiscal year (depending on the appointment) but will not be entitled to another appointment beyond that year. If the decision is not to give an academic professional continuing status, the individual should be notified by May 12 for an academic year appointment or June 15 for a fiscal year appointment 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 their probationary review in accord with [ACD 509-03](#), "Grievance Policy for Academic Professionals."

## **Cross-References**

1. [ACD 507-06](#), "Continuing Appointment for Academic Professionals"
2. [ACD 507-08](#), "Annual Performance Evaluation of Academic Professionals"
3. [ACD 509-03](#), "Grievance Policy for Academic Professionals."