

Resolution 2020-3. On Amending the *Trustee Policies* to Eliminate the “Eighteen-Month Rule” for Awarding Tenure.

The Faculty Council supports the recommendation of the Task Force on Promotion and Tenure that §§ 2.b.3 and 2.c.4 of the *Trustee Policies and Regulations Governing Academic Tenure* be amended to allow tenure to be awarded less than eighteen months after the start of active employment, if the appropriate conditions are met. We ask the Board of Trustees to make the following changes (with proposed additions underlined and deletions struck out):

[2.b.3.] *Assistant Professor.* Initial appointment to the rank of assistant professor is ordinarily for a probationary term of four years.

[2.c.4.] *Timing of permanent tenure actions.* ~~No recommendation for a promotion or reappointment which under the provisions hereof will confer permanent tenure may be initiated until the faculty member has been in the active employment of the University for at least 18 months. No such recommendation may be initiated which would have an effective date more than 18 months after its initiation.~~ Except as thus expressly limited, promotions in rank may be made at any time during a faculty member’s employment.

[Submitted by the Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure.]

Rationale (from the “Report of the UNC-Chapel Hill Task Force on Promotion and Tenure Policies and Practices,” pp. 6-8)

The “Eighteen Month Rule” appears in the *Trustee Policies and Regulations Governing Academic Tenure* in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In Section 2.c.4, “Timing of permanent tenure actions,” it states: “No recommendation for a promotion or reappointment which under the provisions hereof will confer permanent tenure may be initiated until the faculty member has been in the active employment of the University for at least 18 months. No such recommendation may be initiated which would have an effective date more than 18 months after its initiation. Except as thus expressly limited, promotions in rank may be made at any time during a faculty member's employment.”

There are valid reasons for requiring an individual to work at the University for 18 months before awarding tenure. This was articulated in a memo by Provost Carney in 2010. That memo asserted tenure would only be considered after 18 months at UNC-Chapel Hill for persons who are untenured at their current institution or who arrive at UNC-Chapel Hill with tenure from a less competitive university.

The Task Force understood the need to assess a new faculty member, especially as an educator, but also did not believe the “Eighteen Month Rule” to be currently viable. Their rationale was that this rule impedes our ability to hire and promote outstanding faculty members from other institutions. In addition, Provost Carney’s memo proposed that the awarding of tenure differs between tenured faculty from peer and non-peer institutions. The Task Force felt that the designation of “peer university” was flawed, discriminating

against faculty members recruited from minority serving institutions and non-AAU (Association of American Universities) universities.

[The Task Force's specific recommendations follow.]

21. Newly recruited associate professors coming with tenure from another university should be assessed by the dean, chair and/or division head for whether to recommend tenure at the time of offer to UNC-Chapel Hill. Based upon this recommendation, the vote of the tenured professors is required to extend the offer of tenure at UNC-Chapel Hill at the time of the offer. In these cases, UNC-Chapel Hill will generally award tenure with the new appointment or as soon as possible thereafter if there is compelling evidence the individual meets UNC-Chapel Hill's expectations in terms of scholarship and creative endeavor, teaching, and service. The recommendation to award tenure will be reviewed by the APT Committee, the Provost and the Board of Trustees. This assessment will consider:
 - a. The entire body of scholarly, creative, service and educational accomplishment prior to coming to UNC-Chapel Hill.
 - b. Evidence that the new faculty member will contribute to the multiple missions of the school.
 - c. External letters from reviewers who may be familiar with the body of work at the previous university.
 - d. In the unusual case of the associate professor arriving with that rank from another university which does not grant tenure at the associate professor level, the faculty member will be considered for tenure at UNC-Chapel Hill based upon UNC-Chapel Hill's criteria.
 - e. In cases where a faculty member has been approved for tenure at another university but is waiting for tenure there to become final and official, the faculty member will similarly be considered for tenure at UNC-Chapel Hill at the time of offer, as described above.
 - f. For a faculty member who was tenured at a previous university with clearly less-demanding criteria than at UNC-Chapel Hill, but who still wishes to move to UNC-Chapel Hill, they may be offered a position at a lower rank or without tenure.

22. Newly recruited associate professors coming without tenure from another university or having been assistant professors at the previous university will not be extended the offer of tenure consideration at UNC-Chapel Hill at the time of the offer unless they clearly and compellingly demonstrate that they have already met the promotion and tenure standards of the UNC-Chapel Hill school.

If it is the judgment of the dean, chair and/or division head and the school's tenured professors, that the untenured associate professor has demonstrated compelling evidence of meeting UNC-Chapel Hill's criteria for tenure in terms of scholarly and creative activity, teaching and service, they may initiate formal consideration for tenure during the initial probationary appointment.