

MEMORANDUM

To: Faculty Senate
From: PCC
Re: Proposal For Biennial RPT Review
Date: February 2, 2017

Faculty Senate Voting Item [PASSED] 03-27-2017

At its meeting of Feb 2, 2017, PCC voted to recommend that the frequency of RPT review should generally be changed from annual to biennial. Accordingly, PCC recommends that Faculty Senate adopt the following amendments to the NKU Faculty Handbook, which would implement such a change. Also attached to this document is a statement from the Provost clarifying that tenure-track faculty members currently in their second, third, or fourth probationary year would each be provided the individual option of continuing with annual—rather than biennial—review, should these amendments be adopted.

Current Faculty Handbook

At present, Title 2 of the NKU Faculty Handbook (on “Contracts”) requires that RPT review must be annual. Specifically, Section 2.2 of the Faculty Handbook states that “Ordinarily an initial appointment will be for one year for all ranks. If a person is appointed to the faculty during an academic year, the term of his/her contract will end at the end of that academic year.” Similarly, for reappointment of probationary tenure-track assistant professors, Section 2.3.2 of the Faculty Handbook states that “Reappointments of an assistant professor will be for one-year terms, provided, however, that the total time in probationary appointments, including university-recognized credit for prior service, does not exceed seven years.” Section 2.5 of the Faculty Handbook then clarifies that upon expiration of each one-year term, a probationary tenure-track faculty member may not be reappointed for another term except via the ordinary RPT Process. Accordingly, RPT must take place each year for a probationary tenure-track faculty member to be reappointed to a subsequent one-year term. Finally, Section 2.5 implicitly reaffirms that RPT review must be annual for probationary tenure-track faculty members by conflating “contracts” with “years.” (“If a person does not receive tenure before the end of the sixth year of probationary contracts, including university-recognized credit for prior service, the seventh contract shall be a terminal contract.”). The pertinent handbook provisions, in full, currently read as follows:

2.2. INITIAL APPOINTMENT—PROBATIONARY

Ordinarily an initial appointment will be for one year for all ranks. If a person is appointed to the faculty during an academic year, the term of his/her contract will end at the end of that academic year.

2.3. REAPPOINTMENT—PROBATIONARY

2.3.1. INSTRUCTOR

An instructor who is reappointed shall receive a one-year contract, which may be renewed. No person shall hold the rank of instructor for more than seven years. If an instructor does not qualify for promotion before the end of his/her sixth year in rank, including any University-recognized credit for prior service, the contract for the seventh year shall be a terminal contract (see Section 2.5, Probationary Contracts). Non-tenure-track, renewable faculty holding the rank of instructor before the adoption of this Handbook (1994) may be reappointed at this rank beyond the seven year limit.

2.3.2. ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Reappointments of an assistant professor will be for one-year terms, provided, however, that the total time in probationary appointments, including university-recognized credit for prior service, does not exceed seven years. If an assistant professor does not receive tenure before the end of the sixth year of probationary appointments, including university-recognized credit for prior service, the contract for the seventh year shall be a terminal contract (see Section 2.5, Probationary Contracts).

2.4. PART-TIME FACULTY

The term of employment for part-time (non-tenure-track or non-tenured) faculty shall not exceed one academic year.

2.5. PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS

Faculty who have probationary contracts do not have tenure. Reappointment to a probationary contract is conditioned upon successful performance and recommendation for reappointment as specified at Sections 3, Evaluation; 4, Reappointment; 5, Promotion; 6, Tenure, and 7, Appointment, Promotion and Tenure for Librarians. A person may not hold a probationary appointment for more than seven years, including university-recognized credit for prior service. If a person does not receive tenure before the end of the sixth year of probationary contracts, including university-recognized credit for prior service, the seventh contract shall be a terminal contract.

Proposed Amendments to Implement Biennial Review

To implement biennial review, the one-year terms in Sections 2.2 and 2.3.2 would need to be changed to two-year terms, and the language in Section 2.5 would need to be amended to clarify that a person who does not receive tenure by their sixth year shall receive a terminal contract in her seventh year, rather than in her seventh contract. (Because non-tenure-track instructors and part-time faculty members are not subject to RPT, Sections 2.3.1 and 2.4 would not need to be amended). Thus, to implement biennial RPT review, the following amendments to the 2016 Faculty Handbook would be needed:

- (1) On Faculty Handbook Page 24, Section 2.2, the phrase “one year” is replaced by the phrase “two years,” and the phrase “at the end of that academic year” is replaced by the phrase “at the end of the following academic year.”
- (2) On Faculty Handbook Page 24, Section 2.3.2, the phrase “one-year terms” is replaced by the phrase “two-year terms,” and the phrase “shall be a terminal contract” is replaced by the phrase “shall be a one-year terminal contract.”
- (3) On Faculty Handbook Page 25, Section 2.5, the phrase “the seventh contract shall be a terminal contract” is replaced by the phrase “the contract for the seventh year shall be a one-year terminal contract.”

If these amendments were made, the language quoted above would then read as follows:

2.2. INITIAL APPOINTMENT—PROBATIONARY

Ordinarily an initial appointment will be for ~~one-year~~ two years for all ranks. If a person is appointed to the faculty during an academic year, the term of his/her contract will end at the end of ~~that~~ the following academic year.

2.3. REAPPOINTMENT—PROBATIONARY

2.3.1. INSTRUCTOR

An instructor who is reappointed shall receive a one-year contract, which may be renewed. No person shall hold the rank of instructor for more than seven years. If an instructor does not qualify for promotion before the end of his/her sixth year in rank, including any University-recognized credit for prior service, the contract for the seventh year shall be a terminal contract (see Section 2.5, Probationary Contracts). Non-tenure-track, renewable faculty holding the rank of instructor before the adoption of this Handbook (1994) may be reappointed at this rank beyond the seven year limit.

2.3.2. ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Reappointments of an assistant professor will be for ~~one-year~~ two-year terms, provided, however, that the total time in probationary appointments, including university-recognized credit for prior service, does not exceed seven years. If an assistant professor does not receive tenure before the end of the sixth year of probationary appointments, including university-recognized credit for prior service, the contract for the seventh year shall be a one-year terminal contract (see Section 2.5, Probationary Contracts).

2.4. PART-TIME FACULTY

The term of employment for part-time (non-tenure-track or non-tenured) faculty shall not exceed one academic year.

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for prior service, ~~the seventh contract~~ the contract for the seventh year shall be a one-year terminal contract.

ADDENDUM

Provost's Answer To PCC Question About Transition To Biennial RPT

From: Sue Ott Rowlands
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 6:51 PM
To: Kenneth Katkin <katkink@nku.edu>
Subject: Re: PCC Question About Biennial RPT

Thanks, Ken. Great question. Please see my answer in ALL CAPS below. Sue

From: Kenneth Katkin <katkink@nku.edu>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 6:44 PM
Subject: PCC Questions About Biennial RPT
To: Sue Ott Rowlands <sottrowlands@nku.edu>

After you left today's PCC meeting, we took up the proposal to change the frequency of RPT from annual to biennial. While I had been optimistic that we might bring that proposal to a vote today, it got derailed by a question that some members were hoping to have answered before they vote. I am forwarding this question to you, in hopes that you can address it, either at the next PCC meeting or by return email.

- (Q) For untenured faculty members already in their second, third, or fourth tenure-track years now: would such faculty members have the option to continue with annual—rather than biennial—RPT review during the next three years, if they so choose? (This option was not contemplated in the language I drafted for PCC's consideration today, but some PCC members would like it to be available).
- (A) YES, I COULD ISSUE A FORM TO ALL TENURE TRACK FACULTY ASKING THEM TO STATE THEIR PREFERENCE: 1) CONTINUE UNDER THE ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS UP THROUGH THE 6TH YEAR TENURE REVIEW, 2) SWITCH TO THE BIENNIAL REVIEW SCHEDULE (WE WOULD NEED TO SPECIFY MANDATORY REVIEW YEARS FOR EACH FACULTY MEMBER CHOOSING THIS OPTION). THESE DECISIONS WOULD THEN BE COMMUNICATED TO CHAIRS AND DEANS AND PLACED IN THE FACULTY MEMBER'S OFFICIAL FILE.**