

6. TENURE

6.1 DEFINITION OF TENURE

Tenure is the right of full-time faculty who hold academic rank to continuous full-time employment with the University without reduction in academic rank until separation from the University as defined in Section 10, Separation, of this Handbook, including such forms of separation as resignation, retirement, medical termination, program reduction, financial exigency, and termination for cause.

6.2. GRANT OF TENURE

Tenure at NKU is granted in accordance with the provisions of the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the Bylaws of the Board of Regents and is normally granted after satisfactory progress during an appropriate probationary period. Tenure may be granted only by the Board of Regents. Tenure is granted in the department(s)/school(s) to which the faculty member or administrator is assigned at the time tenure is granted, and can be granted only after formal review by that department's/school's RPT committee as specified in Section 3.2.

6.3. PURPOSE OF TENURE

The Board of Regents of NKU grants tenure to full-time faculty members in order to:

- Create an atmosphere favorable to academic freedom and responsibility;
- Provide faculty members reasonable expectation of security so that the University is able to attract and retain a competent faculty; and
- Promote institutional stability by creating a faculty with a strong, long-term commitment to the University.

6.4. ELIGIBILITY

Unless tenure is received with an initial appointment, only full-time, tenure-track faculty who hold probationary appointments are eligible to receive tenure. Non-tenure-track faculty are not eligible to receive tenure.

6.5 CRITERIA FOR TENURE DECISIONS

In order to be eligible for tenure, the faculty member must hold the appropriate terminal degree or its equivalent, and must be judged effective as a teacher, in scholarly and creative activity, and in institutional and public service. The criteria set forth in Section 3.1 and in the department/school and college RPT guidelines shall be applied to applications for grant of tenure.

6.6 PROCEDURE

The procedures specified in Section 3, Evaluation, apply to applications for grant of tenure.

6.7 TIME

Normally a faculty member will be considered for grant of tenure during the faculty member's sixth year of probationary appointment, including University-recognized credit for prior service, upon the faculty member's application. A faculty member may request grant of tenure in a non-mandatory year, and they will be evaluated according to the criteria in Sections 6.5 and 3.1. Denial of tenure in a non-mandatory year is not a basis for non-reappointment.

A faculty member may be allowed to pause the RPT process for up to two years and extend the probationary period under some circumstances with or without taking a full or partial leave of absence by making a formal request to the department chair/school director.

Acceptable reasons for extending the probationary period include, but are not limited to, care for a newborn or adopted child, care for an elder or dependent, and serious and prolonged illness. Other circumstances not mentioned above may be reviewed and the candidate awarded an extension if deemed appropriate by the Provost.

The RPT process may be paused and the probationary period may be extended in one-year increments. An individual may request to extend the RPT process for a second time (for a separate or the same reason as the first request), but the total extension during the probationary period may not exceed two years. If an initial extension is granted, a reduction in productivity during the period of time addressed in the request should not prejudice a subsequent decision regarding the request for a second extension.

Applications for reappointment are reviewed biennially as described in Section 3.2.1. A year in which the RPT process is paused does not count toward a two-year term for reappointment. Thus, the candidate is not required to submit an application for reappointment during a year in which the RPT process is paused.

A formal request in writing must be given to the department chair/school director clearly stating reasons for pausing the RPT process. The application will then proceed to the Dean

and to the Provost. If possible, the request should occur substantially prior to the scheduled submission of the tenure application so that due consideration to the request may be given. Once the application has been submitted, the Chair/Director, Dean, and Provost are asked to review the request as expediently as possible with special regard for the RPT calendar.

Despite the pause of the RPT process and extension of the probationary period, candidates granted an extension are expected to meet only the criteria stated in Sections 6.5 and 3.1. The candidate will continue to participate in the annual review process for merit but not for tenure evaluation. The RPT evaluation following the extension should consider all work submitted by the candidate using the established criteria. The candidate's accomplishments over the extended probationary period should be evaluated as if they had been accomplished in the shorter standard probationary period. The additional time due to the extension should not be a factor in the evaluation. Should a candidate be denied an extension of the probationary period by either the Chair/Director, Dean, or Provost, the appeals process shall follow the guidelines put forward in this Handbook, Section 14, Grievances, as defined in Section 14.3, Complaint Process.

In colleges where there is no department or school, the dean will function as department chair in these processes.