

Campus Administrative Policy

Policy Title: Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Review

Policy Number: 1004 Functional Area: **Academic & Faculty Affairs**

Effective: July 1, 2018
 Date Last Amended/Reviewed: February 26, 2018
 Date Scheduled for Review: July 1, 2025
 Supersedes: Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Review, July 1 2015

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Applies to: University of Colorado Denver
 University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

A. INTRODUCTION

Consistent with the Laws of the Regents and University of Colorado Administrative Policy Statements, the Denver Campus of the University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver) has adopted policies and procedures designed to provide a thorough and fair review of all tenure-track and tenured faculty for reappointment, tenure, and promotion. Reviews occur at various levels: primary unit; first-level review (dean and dean’s advisory/review committee within the college/school/library); second-level review (Vice Chancellor’s Advisory Committee or VCAC, provost and chancellor); president; and Board of Regents.

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C. POLICY STATEMENT

All evaluations of tenure track faculty at all levels for comprehensive reappointment review and for tenure and promotion must be conducted in accordance with the [University of Colorado's APS #1022 Standards, Processes, and Procedures for Comprehensive Review, Tenure, Post-Tenure Review and Promotion.](#)

1. Primary Unit Criteria
 - a. Each college or school and the library have primary unit criteria that are

made available to all tenure-track faculty at the time of the initial appointment and at the beginning of any year in which a tenure-track faculty member is to be considered for comprehensive reappointment, tenure, or promotion review.

- b. Should the primary unit revise its tenure criteria during the tenure probationary period, affected faculty members may, at that time, elect to be evaluated on either the basis of the criteria at time of hiring or the revised criteria. The faculty member is required to make a formal, written request to the dean if they wish to be evaluated under Primary Unit criteria in effect at the time of the tenure review rather than the criteria in place when they entered the track. The dean is required to respond in writing to the faculty member's request. The faculty member's request and the dean's approval must be placed in the dossier.
- c. Primary unit criteria must to be included in the candidate's dossier to assist personnel committees in understanding the criteria and standards by which the candidate is being evaluated.

2. Schedule for Reviews

a. *Appointment Length*

Faculty on the tenure track typically undergo comprehensive review in their fourth year; faculty with successful comprehensive reviews undergo review for tenure in their seventh year.

- i. Prior Service Credit. [Regent Law Article 5.B.4.D\(3\)](#) states: "Up to three years of full-time service in the ranks of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor at other institutions may be included in the probationary period." Years of prior service credit must be negotiated at the time of hiring and must be included in the letter of offer. See the [CU Denver | CU Anschutz Policies and Guidelines](#) website for further information.
- ii. Faculty Members Hired without Terminal Degrees. As stated in Regent Law, [Article 5.B.4.D\(3\)](#): "A faculty member appointed to the rank of assistant professor without a terminal degree may decide at the time of the initial appointment whether the probationary period will begin at the time of the initial appointment or upon receipt of the terminal degree. Such a decision shall be made in writing and must be approved by the dean and the chancellor."
- iii. Alterations to the seven-year Probationary Period. As stated in Regent Law, [Article 5.B.4.D\(1\)](#): "Unless waived by the faculty member and approved by the dean and chancellor, a decision upon a tenured appointment as a member of the university faculty shall be made after a maximum probationary period of seven years of continuous full-time service as a professor, associate professor, or assistant professor."

b. *Requirements for Comprehensive Review*

- i. Assistant professors are required to undergo comprehensive

reappointment review before they may be considered for tenure and promotion to associate professor.

- ii. For associate professors on the tenure-track, the hiring process may constitute the comprehensive review. When this occurs, it needs to be documented in the letter of offer.

c. *Timing of Reviews*

- i. Reappointment and tenure reviews normally take place in the last year of the current appointment.
- ii. The comprehensive reappointment review is typically conducted in the fourth year of the initial four-year appointment. If the comprehensive reappointment review is unsatisfactory, the fifth year is the terminal year.
- iii. Regent rules regarding tenure provide for review in the seventh year and, if tenure is approved, the award of tenure at the beginning of the eighth year. For candidates denied tenure, the eighth year is the terminal year.

d. *Failure to Submit a Dossier*

A faculty member failing to submit a dossier for review at the scheduled time or submitting a dossier missing required material is deemed not to have applied for reappointment or tenure.

e. *Request for Early Consideration for Tenure*

Tenure-track faculty members seeking early tenure are required to have undergone comprehensive review as specified in C.2.b (above) before they may apply for tenure consideration. The standards of performance that apply to faculty on the seven-year tenure schedule apply to faculty members who come up for early tenure. Additional criteria or higher standards cannot be applied to candidates for early tenure. An unsuccessful candidate for early tenure may reapply within the existing tenure clock.

f. *Deadlines*

- i. Dossiers and related materials for candidates under review are due in the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs by January 15th. For mid-year appointments, consult with the [Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs' Office](#).
- ii. Deans who wish to submit dossiers after the due date (see preceding paragraph) must submit a written request for a delay to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

3. Standards for Review

a. *Tenure*

- i. Tenure-track faculty members must have undergone comprehensive review as specified in 2b, above, before applying for tenure consideration.
- ii. Tenure may be awarded only for demonstrated meritorious performance

in each of teaching, research/creative work, and leadership and service and demonstrated excellence in either teaching or research/creative work.

b. *Promotion*

- i. *Associate Professor*: Review for promotion to associate professor occurs at the same time as the tenure review. There is no consideration for promotion to associate professor separate from consideration for tenure. Promotion to associate professor requires considerable successful teaching experience and accomplishment in research/creative work, and leadership and service; occasionally, experienced individuals are hired as tenure-track associate professors.
- ii. *Professor*: Promotion to professor requires: (a) a record that, taken as a whole, is judged to be excellent; (b) a record of significant contribution to both graduate and undergraduate education, unless individual or departmental circumstances require a stronger emphasis or singular focus on one or the other; and (c) a record, since receiving tenure and promotion to associate professor, that indicates substantial, significant, and continued growth, development, and accomplishment in teaching and working with students, research/creative work and leadership and service.

4. Limitations on Reviewer Participation

a. *Confidentiality*

Discussion at all levels of the personnel process is confidential. Individual reviewers may not have any communication with the candidate or with anyone else about the review process, the details of deliberations, or the outcomes of meetings or votes. Although it may seem counterintuitive not to share positive outcomes, even information relayed with good intention damages the integrity of the process.

b. *Conflict of Interest*

A member of the primary unit, the Dean's Review/Advisory Committee, or the campus-level VCAC should recuse him/herself from the deliberations when he/she believes that there is a conflict of interest with the candidate.

A conflict of interest exists when an individual's prior relationship with a candidate for promotion or tenure, whether positive or negative, would adversely impact his/her ability to participate objectively in meetings or deliberations related to a recommendation regarding promotion or tenure. Professional disagreements or conflicts that are a natural extension of academic discourse or organizational processes are not considered conflicts of interest that would preclude an individual from participating in a promotion or tenure decision.

A candidate for promotion or tenure may object to the participation of a colleague in the review process only if a conflict of interest has been documented previously via an official complaint made to the appropriate

administrative office. A written request to prevent an individual from participating in the review process should be made by the candidate to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs by September 1 of the review year. If the Associate Vice Chancellor agrees to the candidate's request, he/she exclude the colleague in question from the personnel review and inform the appropriate parties.

c. *Participation at only one level of the process*

A faculty member may speak to and vote at only one level on a case undergoing review and may not be present during or contribute to or influence in any way discussion and vote on the case at any other levels of the process. For example, a faculty member who votes on a case in his/her primary unit may not participate in discussions or vote on the case when it is reviewed by the Dean's Review/Advisory Committee or the VCAC.

5. Candidate Responsibilities

a. *Dossier*

The candidate for reappointment, tenure, or promotion is responsible for a clear, accurate, and detailed presentation of the record. The primary unit head shall advise the candidate on compiling the dossier. Reviewers at all levels will review and judge the record of accomplishments in teaching, research/creative work and leadership and service only as represented in the dossier.

b. *Additional materials*

The candidate may add materials to the dossier after the review process has begun. Most often those materials confirm a recent addition to the candidate's record: confirmation of an article accepted, a grant awarded, a book contract signed, etc. Materials added during a higher level of the review process shall also be provided to all other bodies who already reviewed the candidate, who may take them into account and/or respond.

6. Primary Unit Responsibilities

a. *Department Chair/Primary Unit Head*

The department chair/primary unit head is responsible for: (a) fully advising candidates of the areas of performance that will be examined, the standards of performance that must be met, and the primary unit criteria used in making decisions about performance; (b) ensuring that dossiers are reviewed and submitted to the college, school or library dean's office in a timely fashion; and (c) re-reviewing cases, if required. The department chair/primary unit head is also responsible for overseeing the process by which external reviewers are selected.

b. *Dossier*

The primary unit head is responsible for including the primary unit criteria, the previous VCAC and personnel action letters, subcommittee reports, and letters of evaluation from external reviewers.

c. *Primary Unit Summary, Vote and Recommendation*

- i. For the purpose of assisting the primary unit in making its recommendations on reappointment, tenure, and promotion, each primary unit will elect or appoint (having previously voted on the method to be followed) from among its members an evaluation committee for each candidate being considered during an academic year. The committee may consist of both tenured and non-tenured members, but usually consists of tenured faculty members. In a small primary unit, all members of the unit may constitute the evaluation committee.
- ii. The primary unit provides a thorough and careful evaluation of the candidate in the three areas of teaching, research/creative work, and leadership and service, using the primary unit's written criteria. The primary unit's role is to evaluate, not to advocate for the candidates. It is essential that these evaluations carefully and thoroughly assess the candidate's strengths and weaknesses. While program requirements of the primary unit may be considered at the time of reappointment, only the merit of the candidate may be considered in recommending the award of tenure.
- iii. Only members of the primary unit holding tenure shall vote on tenure. The vote must specify the number of faculty members present and the actual votes. A unanimous vote is not required. Negative comments or votes or split votes should be explained and a minority report may be submitted. A statement such as "we do/do not recommend tenure" is not sufficient. The recommendations shall record the primary unit's evaluation of and votes on the candidate's teaching (not meritorious, meritorious, or excellent), research/scholarship or creative work (not meritorious, meritorious, or excellent) and leadership and service (not meritorious, meritorious, or excellent) as well as the overall recommendation and vote.
- iv. Following its bylaws, the primary unit must vote on the action under consideration, prepare a summary of the evaluation including a statement describing the procedures followed, and make a recommendation for action including the reasons for the recommendation and any dissenting statements from the recommendation and the results of any vote taken, and include this information in the dossier.
- v. For assistant professors, the issue of tenure and promotion is one action requiring one recommendation.
- vi. The department chair/head of the primary unit promptly informs the candidate orally of the primary unit's recommendation and provides the candidate with a copy of the primary unit recommendation letter and the chair's letter (if applicable) at the time the letters are inserted in the candidate's dossier.
- vii. Form UCD-7. This form is completed and signed by the department chair/primary unit head and placed in the appropriate section of the

candidate's dossier.

7. Letters of Evaluation from External Reviewers

a. *Responsibility of the External Reviewers*

External reviewers are asked to evaluate the research/creative work record and to measure that record against that of others in the field at the same career stage. Reviewers are asked to evaluate both the quality and quantity of the research/creative work.

b. *Affiliation and Location of External Reviewers*

External reviewers should be faculty members at institutions outside the University of Colorado system, preferably at "peer" or higher-ranked institutions.

c. *Rank of External Reviewers*

- i. External reviewers for comprehensive (reappointment) review and promotion/tenure review should be tenured associate professors or professors.
- ii. For promotion to professor, the external reviewers should be tenured professors.
- iii. Exceptions may be made when external reviewers have specialized expertise.
- iv. External reviewers must provide a biographical sketch or short vita to be included in the dossier.

d. *Candidate Nomination of External Reviewers*

- i. The candidate supplies a list of potential external reviewers to the primary unit from which one or two reviewers should be chosen (see section 7.g below).
- ii. Persons recommended by the candidate to write evaluation letters must not be relatives or close personal friends. Also, professional colleagues who may be biased (for or against) the candidate, or not able to give a fair, honest assessment of the candidate's accomplishments, should not be asked to serve as external reviewers.
- iii. The candidate may also indicate specific reviewers to exclude from consideration because their evaluations might be prejudiced.

e. *Confidentiality*

- i. The names and institutional affiliations of external reviewers and their letters of evaluation are confidential and must not be divulged to or provided to the candidate.
- ii. The external evaluators' letters and their vitae are retained only by the Human Resources Office and copies must not be retained in the department, division, or dean's office.

f. *Nature of the External Letters*

- i. External Letters for the Comprehensive Review. At least three external reviewers are required, with at most one selected from the candidate's list, and at least two selected outside the candidate's list.
- ii. External Letters for Promotion and Tenure. At least six external letters of evaluation are required, with at most two selected from the candidate's list.

g. *Solicitation of External Letters*

- i. The primary unit or the dean must solicit external letters of evaluation. Primary unit bylaws should describe the process used in selecting external reviewers. The primary unit may offer external reviewers a modest stipend for their work.
- ii. The department chair, division coordinator, associate dean, or dean of the college, school, or library must approve the letters requesting external evaluation before the primary unit sends them out.
- iii. The external evaluators should be informed that their names, institutional affiliations, and letters are confidential and every effort will be made to insure they remain confidential.
- iv. All letters received must be included in the candidate's dossier.

h. *Documentation of External Evaluations*

In the confidential external letters section of the candidate's dossier, the primary unit provides:

- i. a copy of the approved letter requesting external reviewer evaluation letters;
- ii. full and complete documentation concerning:
 - a. the selection of external reviewers;
 - b. each evaluator's biographical sketch or short vita;
 - c. whether the candidate or the primary unit recommended the evaluator;
 - d. the relationship, if any, of the evaluator to the candidate or to a member(s) of the primary unit.

8. Dean's Responsibility

a. *First Level Review, Summary, Vote, and Recommendation*

- i. The Dean's Review/Advisory Committee, as defined in the bylaws of the college, school, or library, reviews the candidate's dossier, votes on the proposed action, and forwards to the dean an evaluation and a

recommendation for action. The first level review is a thorough assessment of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses.

- ii. A member of the Dean's Review/Advisory Committee may not be present during and must not contribute in any way to or influence the discussion, and must recuse themselves from and not be present during voting on the case, where s/he has a conflict of interest with the candidate. (See section C.4.b for the definition of conflict of interest.)
- iii. The vote must specify the number of members present and the actual vote. A statement such as "we do/do not recommend tenure" is not sufficient. A unanimous vote is not required. The recommendation shall record the Dean's Review Committee evaluation of and votes on the candidate's teaching (not meritorious, meritorious, or excellent), research/scholarship or creative work (not meritorious, meritorious or excellent) and leadership and service (not meritorious, meritorious, or excellent) as well as the overall recommendation and vote.
- iv. The dean's office will provide the candidate with a copy of the review committee's recommendation at the time the letter is inserted in the candidate's dossier.

b. Dean's Recommendation

- i. The dean prepares an evaluation and recommendation for action that discusses the earlier reviews and points out areas of concern or disagreement.
- ii. If the first level review committee and/or the dean disagree with the recommendation of the primary unit, the dean must discuss the nature of the disagreement with the chair of the primary unit. The primary unit reconsiders its original recommendation and reports the reconsidered judgment, in writing, to the dean and the review committee. If the reconsideration process will lead to a delay in the submission of the dossier, the dean should notify the Associate Vice Chancellor's Office in writing and provide a probable time for submission.
- iii. Where differences of opinion between the primary unit, the Dean's Review/Advisory Committee, and/or the dean have occurred and have not been resolved, each party in the disagreement shall submit a brief statement outlining the areas of disagreement and the reasons for its recommendation.
- iv. The dean must promptly inform the chair of the primary unit orally of the dean's recommendation. The chair of the primary unit must promptly inform the candidate orally of the dean's recommendation. The dean

provides the candidate with a copy of the dean's letter to the provost at the time the letter is inserted in the candidate's dossier.

- v. The dean reviews the dossier to ensure all relevant information has been included, completes and signs Form UCD and forwards the complete dossier to the Provost's Office by January 15.

9. Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee (VCAC)

The provost/vice chancellor for academic affairs has an advisory committee of faculty to assist in the review of recommendations; the provost determines whether the committee will be elected or appointed. (See [APS#1022 Standards, Processes, and Procedures for Comprehensive Review, Tenure and Promotion](#)). Every effort should be made to ensure that the VCAC is as diverse as the constituency it represents.

a. *Membership*

- i. Faculty of the colleges, schools, and library elect or nominate representatives to the VCAC. Each of the colleges, schools, and the library has one representative, except for CLAS, which has three representatives, who must be from different departments
- ii. Faculty members of the VCAC must be tenured and hold the rank of associate professor or professor. Associate professors may participate in considering and voting on applications for promotion to professor.
- iii. Faculty members may not serve on both the first level review committee (the Dean's Review/Advisory Committee) and the VCAC.
- iv. Faculty members who serve on the VCAC may not be considered for promotion to professor while they are on the committee.
- v. Associate deans and department chairs are not eligible to serve on the VCAC.
- vi. Members of the VCAC must not be advocates for any candidate for reappointment, tenure, and/or promotion.
- vii. Candidates for reappointment, tenure, and/or promotion must not discuss the candidate's case with the chair or members of the VCAC.
- viii. When a member of the VCAC has a conflict of interest with a candidate he/she may not be present during and must not contribute in any way to or influence the discussion, and must be recused from and not be present during voting on the case. (See Section C.4.b for the definition of conflict of interest.)
- ix. When faculty members agree to serve on the VCAC, they are required to attend all committee meetings except under unusual circumstances.

b. *Role and Responsibilities*

- i. The VCAC assists with the campus level review of candidates for reappointment, tenure, and promotion and is advisory to the provost;
- ii. The VCAC is responsible for reviewing and evaluating dossiers and making recommendations for all tenure-track candidates for reappointment, tenure, and promotion, and all tenured candidates for promotion to professor. The committee is guided by the standards, criteria, and guidelines for reappointment, tenure, and promotion specified in Regent laws, policies and administrative policy statements and is governed by its [specific bylaws](#).
- iii. All members of the VCAC, including the chair, review, vote on, and make recommendations on the following VCAC actions:
 - comprehensive reappointment review required of each tenure-track assistant professor prior to eligibility for tenure;
 - promotion to associate professor and professor;
 - award of tenure;
 - appointments of new faculty members if they are requesting tenure and/or promotion at the time of the hiring;
 - Committee deliberations and votes are confidential;
 - After confidential deliberation and vote, the committee prepares a written recommendation to the provost. The chair of the VCAC is charged with drafting the recommendation to the provost. If the vote is not unanimous, the judgments of the minority are summarized and included in the written recommendation.

10. Provost's Recommendation

- a. The provost reviews each case and makes a recommendation to the chancellor.
- b. If the provost disagrees with the recommendation from the first level review, the provost transmits to the dean the nature of the disagreement. The Dean's Review/Advisory Committee and the dean reconsider their original recommendations and report their reconsidered judgment to the provost who then makes a final recommendation to the chancellor.
- c. The provost communicates directly with the dean about all negative decisions.
- d. The provost sends each candidate a copy of the VCAC's recommendation, which specifies strengths and weaknesses identified in the evaluation process. The provost informs the candidate of his/her recommendation. The provost usually notifies each candidate of the recommendation in writing by the end of the academic year.

11. Decision by the Chancellor

- a. The chancellor reviews the tenure recommendations of the provost and makes a final decision about which candidates are forwarded to the President and

Board of Regents for consideration for tenure. The chancellor does not forward negative decisions on tenure to the President's Office.

- b. The chancellor makes the final decision on reappointments and promotions. These decisions do not require approval by the Board of Regents.
- c. If the chief academic officer (chancellor or their designee, such as the provost) finds significant procedural errors that may have affected the outcome of the case, he/she returns the case to the primary unit to repeat the process. The chief academic officer may at her/his discretion appoint a responsible party to oversee the process to ensure procedural integrity and fairness to the candidate. If it is determined that the repetition of the process will carry forward into the next academic year, the chief academic officer may extend the contract of the candidate for one year. The re-evaluation process shall focus on the record as it existed at the time of the first review.

12. Grievance Procedures

- a. In the case of a negative decision on reappointment or tenure, the candidate—within ten working days of receipt of written notice of the negative recommendation—may request review by the president. This review will be granted only on the grounds that the process had (i) procedural errors, (ii) substantive errors; or (iii) evidence of discrimination.
- b. Following a negative decision, the candidate may choose to file a grievance with the university's Privilege and Tenure Committee. There is an allowable time frame for such a grievance. [See Regent Policy 5-H](#)

Notes

1. Dates of official enactment and amendments:

July 8, 2005: Adopted by the Provost

July 1, 2010: Revised

July 1, 2015: Revised

July 1, 2018: Revised

2. History:

July 1, 2018: Corrected to: (i) reflect the current policy numbering and indexing process and (iii) to reflect the process requiring tenure track faculty members to make a formal written request to the Dean if they wish to be evaluated under Primary Unit Criteria in effect at the time of the tenure review rather than the criteria in place when they entered the track.

3. Initial Policy Effective Date: July 8, 2005.

4. Cross References/Appendix:

- [APS # 1022: Standards, Processes and Procedures for Comprehensive Review, Tenure, Post-Tenure Review and Promotion](#)
- [Faculty Affairs and Undergraduate Enrichment Faculty Assistance Webpage](#)

- [CU Denver Official Campus Administrative Policies Website](#)
- [Regent Law, Article 5: Faculty](#)
- [CU Denver Hires with Tenure Official Campus Policy](#)
- [General and Specific Criteria for Evaluating Auraria Library Faculty for Promotion, Reappointment, and Tenure](#)