



## Tenure Guidelines

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### I. Purpose

The institution approves faculty for tenure in accordance with *Section 8.3.7.2, Board of Regents Policy Manual*, which includes a comprehensive statement of tenure policies in the University System. Tenure ensures academic freedom for faculty and protection against improper restrictions of the freedom of inquiry in teaching, scholarship, and service. It protects the right to publish or otherwise present scholarly work publicly without the threat of political or other confining orthodoxies. Academic freedom and tenure sustain and support the transmission and advancement of knowledge and understanding, which are central to the mission of the University. Tenured faculty have the responsibility to engage in continuous professional growth; to remain vital and contributing members of the faculty; to present accurate information in teaching; and to facilitate, support, defend, and preserve an environment of academic integrity.

### II. Policy Statement

Tenure applications are considered and recommendations made at the department/school, college, and Provost's levels, culminating in an institutional decision at the President's level. Tenure at Georgia Southern University may be awarded after five years of full-time service at the institution at the rank of assistant professor or higher. Probationary credit, which must be granted at the time of initial appointment, may be used to reduce this time requirement. Meeting the minimum time requirement does not guarantee the award of tenure. A faculty member initially appointed at the rank of lecturer at a University System of Georgia institution may be awarded tenure after five years, provided that the individual has served at least three years at the rank of assistant professor at Georgia Southern University. A tenure timeline must be completed for each non-tenured, tenure-track faculty member in the department and placed in the faculty member's personnel file.

Recommendations for probationary credit will typically be initiated at the departmental level subject to approval by the dean and Provost at the time of appointment and will be subject to the following guidelines.

- Persons who have previously earned tenure at a regionally accredited institution may be granted up to three years of probationary credit.
- Persons who served in tenure-track positions may be granted up to two years based upon evaluation of years of prior service and professional credentials.
- Persons who were initially appointed as a lecturer at a University System of Georgia institution may be granted probationary credit for up to two years of service as a lecturer.
- The decision whether to use any or all probationary credit should be made by the applicant in consultation with his or her department chair and dean. When such application is made and the individual has combined probationary credit and Georgia Southern full-time service years to equal an

“on time” application, the application shall not be viewed as early by any party involved in the process.

- According to *Section 8.3.7.4, Board of Regents Policy Manual*, in exceptional cases tenure may be granted to “an outstanding distinguished senior faculty member [...] upon the faculty member’s initial appointment [...]. Each such recommendation shall be granted only in cases in which the faculty member, at a minimum, is appointed as an associate or full professor, was already tenured at a prior institution, and brings a demonstrably national reputation to the institution.”

Faculty who apply and are not recommended for tenure in minimum time or who use probationary credit and are not recommended may apply for tenure only once more. The maximum number of years to earn tenure is seven years. Individuals are not required to include probationary credit in the calculation of this maximum. Typically, individuals are considered for tenure in their fifth or sixth year, including any probationary credit.

In considering the tenure of an academic administrator (vice president, dean, department chair), the immediate supervisor must obtain the appropriate input from the academic department involved. Decisions regarding tenure of an academic administrator will be based upon the criteria outlined above and below and will be independent of administrative performance.

### III. Procedures

Departmental tenure committees shall consist of three or more tenured faculty members and shall seek input from all tenured faculty in the department. In instances where departments do not have enough tenured faculty members to serve, the existing tenured faculty members shall work with the dean of the college to establish an appropriate committee. Tenure committees at the college level shall be made up of tenured faculty members.

Areas for evaluation for the award of tenure and annual renewal at Georgia Southern University include the following [also see § 205.01 of the *Faculty Handbook*]:

- teaching;
- service (institutional and/or professional);
- scholarship;
- needs of the institution;
- ability of the professor to function within the Georgia Southern academic community; and
- length of service as described in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 above.

Tenure-track faculty serve a probationary period as described above in a series of one-year appointments. The offer of a one-year contract in no way implies a commitment or obligation on the part of the University to offer contracts for subsequent years. Notice of the intention not to renew a non-tenured faculty member shall be furnished in writing according to the following schedule:

- at least three months before the date of termination of an initial one-year contract (February 1);
- at least six months before the date of termination of a second one-year contract (November 1);
- at least nine months before the date of termination of a contract after two or more years of service at the institution (August 1).

This schedule of notification does not apply to faculty holding temporary/visiting or part-time positions.

Tenure resides at the institutional level. Only assistant professors, associate professors, and professors are eligible for tenure. Faculty members with part-time appointments shall not acquire tenure, nor does tenure apply to honorary (adjunct) appointments.

#### Procedure for Appeals

Since promotion and tenure decisions are made at the president’s level, appeals can only be filed following the President’s decision (in late January or early February). Faculty may write a letter responding to a negative recommendation received at an earlier level of review and ask that this letter be included in their promotion and/or tenure dossier as it proceeds through the various levels of review, but the letter is not considered a formal appeal. Formal appeals must be made to the President through the Provost’s Office

within 14 days of notification of the decision.