

Northeastern State University

Post Tenure and Tenure Policy from [Current NSU \(2017\) Faculty Handbook](#)

3.3.2 Review of Tenured Faculty

The academic and professional performances of each tenured faculty member at each institution must be formally reviewed at least every three (3) years. (RUSO 3.3.5b) The post-tenure review is intended to determine whether the faculty member continues to meet expectations in Effective Classroom Teaching, Scholarly or Creative Achievement, and Contributions to the Institution and Profession.

a. Post-Tenure Review Committee

A post-tenure review committee of at least three tenured members at or above the rank of the faculty member will be selected by the faculty member in consultation with the department chair. Committee members can come from outside the program or department. The department chair will serve as the chair of the Post-Tenure Review committee. The committee will determine if the faculty member meets expectations in Effective Classroom Teaching, Scholarly or Creative Achievement, and Contributions to the Institution and Profession areas via a majority vote. Faculty must meet expectations in all areas in order to receive an adequate review.

b. Post-Tenure Review Procedure

The period of consideration for post-tenure review begins immediately after the awarding of tenure, regardless of the faculty member's decision to seek or not seek promotion. The formal post-tenure review takes place in the fall semester of the faculty member's third year after the awarding of tenure and in the fall semester of every third year thereafter.

The tenured faculty member will prepare an extended curriculum vita that includes accomplishments for the committee of his/her progress/ accomplishments since the last review in the areas of Effective Classroom Teaching, Scholarly or Creative Achievement, and Contributions to the Institution and Profession. If the faculty member does not meet expectations in all areas, the Committee's recommendations for improvement will be communicated in writing to the faculty member and to the dean. The results of the vote, and any recommendations for improvement, will be communicated by the committee chair to the dean. The dean will meet with the faculty member, discuss the committee's findings and recommendations (if any), and write a summary of the meeting. If the dean believes that progress in any of the areas does not meet expectations, suggestions for improvement will be communicated in writing to the faculty member in the written summary.

When the review results in a finding that a tenured faculty member's academic and professional performance is unsatisfactory, the faculty member shall be notified of the deficiencies in performance through the written summary and must be formally reviewed again within one (1) year. The results of each review will be placed in the personnel record of the tenured faculty member. The tenured faculty member should be given a copy of the review and an opportunity to respond. Two consecutive unsatisfactory post-tenure performance evaluations may be grounds for dismissal or suspension. (RUSO 3.3.5b)

3.4 Academic Tenure

Confidentiality is an integral part of all evaluation and review processes. Any individual participating in these processes shall hold all deliberations, votes, recommendations or any other information in strictest confidence, subject only to the appeals process as outlined in the *Faculty Handbook* or subpoena.

Tenure is granted to non-tenured faculty whose work has satisfied university and department standards of quality and significance in Effective Classroom Teaching, Scholarly or Creative Achievements and Contributions to the Institution and Profession following the Boyer Model, as laid out in Appendix C. Tenure represents the university's long-term commitment to a faculty member, and is only granted when there is evidence that the individual will continue to make increasingly distinguished contributions to the university and its instructional program, her/his discipline, and the community.

Tenure is normally considered after the fifth year of a non-tenured appointment. Credit toward tenure may be granted at time of appointment and any such credits would reduce the length of the probationary period. Early tenure shall not normally be considered until the candidate has completed at least one full retention review, after which s/he may request consideration for early tenure. To receive a favorable recommendation for early tenure, a candidate shall have achieved, before the normal probationary period, a record of accomplishment that meets the standards and level of performance for tenure indicated in these guidelines. Prior to the final decision, candidates for early tenure may withdraw without prejudice from consideration at any level of review.

To be recommended for tenure, candidates shall receive performance ratings that reflect that the candidate meets or exceeds the department's criteria in the areas of Effective Classroom Teaching, Scholarly or Creative Achievements and Contributions to the Institution and Profession.

It is the responsibility of departments to establish clearly the expectations for tenure consistent with college and university expectations. Departments are also responsible for establishing clear requirements for documenting the quality and significance of faculty achievements. In the event that there are no approved department tenure criteria and standards, college or university criteria and standards will be applied.

Departments and colleges will submit a copy of approved RTP requirements to the Faculty Council and the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs every two years, at the time of the *Faculty Handbook* revision. The Faculty Council Ad Hoc Faculty Handbook Committee and the Provost/VPAA shall have the responsibility to review the RTP requirements for consistency with the *Faculty Handbook*. The Faculty Council will submit a letter of findings and may make recommendations to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs regarding inconsistencies with the *Handbook*. Once approved by the Provost's Office, the RTP guidelines will be posted publicly on the college website and a copy will be given to each faculty member.

Department criteria shall remain sufficiently flexible to allow for and recognize individual uniqueness and creativity in performance. Department criteria encourages equitable performance and commensurate quality for promotion and tenure considerations.

For the purposes of this policy, "department" refers to an academic unit in which faculty participate as their main assignment. In most cases, "department" refers to a degree-granting academic unit, but in certain cases a more flexible definition is necessary.

3.4.1 Criteria and Policies

- a. Tenure is a privilege and a distinctive honor. Tenure is defined as continuous reappointment which may be granted to a faculty member in a tenure-track position, subject to the terms and conditions of appointment. The tenure decision shall be based on a thorough evaluation of the candidate's total contribution to the mission of the University. While specific responsibilities of faculty members may vary because of special assignments or because of the particular mission of an academic unit, all evaluations for tenure shall address at a minimum whether each candidate has achieved excellence in:
 1. Effective classroom teaching;
 2. Scholarly or creative achievement;
 3. Contributions to the institution and profession; and
 4. Performance of non-teaching semi-administrative or administrative duties.

Each University may formulate standards for this review and determine the appropriate weight to be accorded each criteria consistent with the mission of the academic unit. (RUSO 3.3.3a) All members

of the faculty at Northeastern State University are expected to be involved in scholarly activities that contribute to the multifaceted mission of a community of scholars whose primary responsibility is teaching.

- b. Tenure is granted by the Board of Regents of RUSO upon recommendation of the University president. Determination of merit and recommendation for granting tenure shall comport with the minimum criteria and policies and procedures contained in this chapter. (RUSO 3.3.3b)
- c. The terms and conditions of every appointment or reappointment shall be stated in writing and be in the possession of both the institution and faculty member before the appointment is consummated. Tenure shall be granted only by written notification after approval by the Board. Only full-time faculty members holding academic rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor may be granted tenure. Qualified professional librarians shall be considered faculty members if they are given academic rank. (RUSO 3.3.3c)
- d. Tenure does not apply to administrative positions, but a tenured faculty member appointed to an administrative position retains tenured status as a member of the faculty. (RUSO 3.3.3d)
- e. The Board intends to reappoint tenured personnel to the faculties of the institutions under its control within existing positions that are continued the next year. The Board reserves the right to terminate tenured faculty at the end of any fiscal year if the Legislature fails to appropriate or the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education fails to allocate sufficient funds to meet obligations for salaries or compensation. (RUSO 3.3.3e)
- f. The Board recommends that not more than sixty-five percent (65%) of the full-time faculty at a university receive tenure. (RUSO 3.3.3f)

3.4.2 Procedures

- a. Faculty members holding academic rank above the level of instructor (assistant professor, associate professor, or professor) shall be on probation for a minimum of five (5) years after date of first being employed by the university in a tenure-track position. Years of experience in any position other than a tenure-track position may be used for the probation only if approved by the university president. Seven (7) years shall be the maximum probationary period for the eligible faculty member to become eligible for tenure. If, at the end of seven (7) years, any faculty member has not attained tenure, there will be no renewal of appointment for the faculty member unless a specific recommendation for waiver of policy from the president to the contrary is approved by the Board each year. (RUSO 3.3.4.a)
- b. For the purpose of determining probationary employment of faculty members for tenure consideration, sabbatical leave counts as a part of the period of probationary employment, and a leave of absence is not included as part of the probationary period. (RUSO 3.3.4.b)
- c. During the probationary period, each non-tenured faculty will receive counsel from a tenured-faculty mentor. Prior to each academic year, the department chair and/or dean and non-tenured faculty member shall discuss, and agree to, a broad outline of duties the faculty member will perform during the year. The performance of non-tenured faculty members shall be evaluated annually by the appropriate college administrators and the results of the evaluation placed in the personnel record of the non-tenured faculty member. The non-tenured faculty member shall be given a copy of the evaluation before it is placed in the personnel folder. (See section 3.3 Evaluation and Review of Faculty)
- d. Although seven years is the maximum probationary period defined by the Regional University System of Oklahoma, the norm for NSU will be five years in tenure-earning status in accordance with RUSO policies. Accordingly, consideration for tenure will occur in the fall of the sixth employment year (excluding temporary employment and years in non-tenure-earning or non-tenure-track positions, unless addressed in 3.2.2.b). By September 30, the candidate will provide to the department chair a

completed professional portfolio, showing evidence of excellence in each of the criteria listed in 3.41. At this time, the candidate will be evaluated for tenure in accord with RUSO's policies.

- e. Each faculty member applying for tenure shall submit a professional portfolio consistent with the format contained within "The Professional Portfolio: Tenure and Promotion Review" in Appendix C and available online, in college offices, and on the Faculty Council website. The definition of scholarship and performance criteria applicable to all University faculty considered for tenure are the same as for promotion (refer to Section 3.3.3). Examples for these categories are provided in the professional portfolio. Examples of acceptable scholarly activities within the individual academic units are available at department and college offices.
- f. When a faculty member is to be considered for tenure, the department chair shall call a meeting of the tenured members of the department for a discussion of the case. In the event that the department chair is applying for tenure, the senior, tenured faculty member in the department will be asked to serve as the chair of the tenure committee and forward the recommendation to the dean. If the number of tenured faculty members in a department is fewer than five (5), the actual tenured members in that department, plus additional tenured faculty members appointed by the chief academic officer or his or her designee to form a group of at least five (5) tenured faculty members, shall act as an ad hoc committee for tenure recommendation. In some areas, a candidate's NSU colleagues are well qualified to provide the requisite objective review. In other instances, colleagues or community partners outside the university may be needed to provide additional expertise not available within the NSU community. The candidate, department chair or dean may request approval to solicit additional external evaluators to provide local, regional, national, and/or international perspectives on a candidate's achievements and activities. Such a request shall be directed to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and shall document (1) the special circumstances which necessitate an outside reviewer, and (2) the nature of the materials needing the evaluation of an external reviewer. The request must be approved by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs with concurrence of the faculty member. In such cases, the candidate may be asked to submit the names of potential external evaluators to the department chair or dean. In accordance with these guidelines, the department chair or dean is responsible for soliciting letters of evaluation from appropriate colleagues or community partners in a timely manner. An external evaluator shall be asked to evaluate the quality and significance of a candidate's achievements only in those scholarship areas where s/he has first-hand knowledge of the candidate's scholarly work. External evaluators shall not be asked to conduct evaluations of the candidate's full portfolio.
- g. No less than one week prior to the first tenure committee meeting date, the department chair notifies the committee of the meeting day, date, and time of the first meeting, to be scheduled in October. This official notice will contain the names of the candidates for tenure. At the first committee meeting, the department chair shall explain tenure policies and procedures, review the performance of each candidate for tenure, and provide a copy of each candidate's tenure professional portfolio to the assembled committee (tenured faculty).
- h. Based on data provided in the professional portfolio; by the department head, alumni, current students, and non-tenured colleagues; and from personal observation of the candidate's performance in relevant areas (see 3.4.1), the tenured faculty will review and evaluate each tenure candidate. The result of the review shall be a written recommendation that summarizes strengths and areas needing development, gives ratings of activity in all areas, and makes a formal recommendation regarding tenure. If the applicant is being considered for promotion at the same time, the recommendation document may address both situations. The format and process for the report shall follow that outlined for the promotion report. (See 3.3.3.d)
- i. At a second meeting, held on or before October 31, the committee for tenure recommendation shall reconvene. The faculty member's contributions to the mission of the university shall be reviewed and evaluated by the tenured members of his or her department (who shall constitute the committee for tenure recommendation). The committee for tenure recommendation shall then cast one secret

ballot for each candidate to determine whether a recommendation for the granting of tenure will be made. Once cast, a ballot cannot be changed. Absentee ballots are valid if presented to the committee chair within the two days before the scheduled vote. After the votes have been cast, the ballots will be counted in the presence of the tenured members present with the results announced for each candidate as number for, number against, and number abstaining. A simple majority rule shall prevail. The results of all balloting will be confidential and will not be included in the faculty member's personnel file.

A written report of this vote, in the form of a memo, is delivered to the department chair by the committee chair. The chair shall report the results of the vote, separate from his or her recommendation, to the dean who will forward that recommendation as well as the dean's recommendation to the chief academic officer on or before December 1. The dean and department chair recommendations become part of the faculty member's personnel file. The chief academic officer will report these recommendations as well as his or her recommendation to the president. (RUSO 3.3.5)

- j. The chief academic officer will report these recommendations as well as his or her recommendation to the president. A recommendation for tenure may also come directly from the chief academic officer or from the president of the University without prior recommendation from the department. If the president determines to recommend granting of tenure, he or she will make the recommendation to the Board. (RUSO 3.3.5)
- k. Only the President or her/his designee may disseminate information to the campus about tenure decisions. All deliberations and written comments from the committee regarding retention, tenure, and promotion shall be kept confidential.
- l. Faculty granted tenure by the Board of Regents for the RUSO will be notified in writing prior to July 1 by the president of the University. A candidate who believes there has been a procedural error during the tenure process may appeal the recommendations to the University Grievance Committee (See Section 3.6).

3.4.3 Denial of Tenure

If the faculty member is not recommended for tenure, the candidate will be notified in writing that his/her current year appointment (in tenure-earning status) is a terminal contract. In extremely rare cases, circumstances might make it advisable to notify a failed candidate that he/she will be extended an additional one-year probationary contract. In this rare case, the candidate will be reviewed again during the fall semester of the seventh probationary year. A failure to secure a recommendation for tenure during this probationary period will result in no renewal of appointment for the faculty member unless a specific recommendation for waiver of policy from the President to the contrary is approved by the Board of Regents for the RUSO for each year thereafter. A faculty member not recommended or approved for tenure will be notified in writing by the chief academic officer.