

Report of the Faculty Senate ad hoc Joint Committee on Tenure

Final Report
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Summary of Recommendations

1. The “Tenure When Ready” policy currently in practice should be maintained.
2. The University of Florida should adopt a **SIX** year maximum probationary period for tenure candidates.
3. A “Tenure Clock Stopping” policy with specific procedures for doing so should be adopted. The detailed recommended policy is described in Section 4.3.
4. A tenure midterm review policy should be maintained, and it is recommended that the review be **completed by the end of the third year**. Other detailed recommendations are described in Section 4.4.
5. The junior faculty mentoring program recently initiated should be maintained and given a chance to work.
6. The University of Florida tenure criteria should be maintained, although it is recommended that the tenure and promotion guidelines do not explicitly define “distinction.” Instead, each discipline is encouraged to outline guidelines for scholarly achievement that constitutes distinction among peers.
7. At least half of the faculty members serving on college tenure and promotion boards should be selected via peer voting.
8. College level tenure and promotion boards should provide recorded individual assessments to the college deans as part of their fact finding and consultative role in the review of promotion and tenure cases. At a minimum, an individual assessment should indicate whether or not the candidate meets the necessary standards required for tenure and that assessment is to become part of the tenure and promotion packet.
9. The minimum number of outside peer evaluation letters required for tenure review should be **five**.

1. Introduction

In accordance with the University of Florida's aspirations to be recognized among the elite top ten public Universities, it is imperative that the University implement and maintain a tenure policy that facilitates attracting the most outstanding scholars. We also wish to retain those who have demonstrated a body of scholarly contribution that reflects academic excellence which places them at the forefront in their chosen field of expertise. It is in this spirit that the Faculty Senate ad hoc Joint Committee on Tenure (from hereon referred to as the Committee) aims to analyze the current tenure policy, documented in University Rule 6C1-7.019, to determine whether its provisions are commensurate with the University's aspirations to achieve an ascending status among its peer institutions. Specifically, the Committee has chosen to address the following issues:

- 1) Should the University of Florida's "Tenure When Ready" policy be affirmed? If so, how can the University culture be encouraged to abide by the spirit of the policy?
- 2) What should be the maximum probationary period prior to the granting of tenure?
- 3) Should a formal mechanism be instituted to stop the tenure clock when a faculty member encounters extraordinary personal or professional circumstances, *i.e.* child bearing, severe lengthy illness, caring for a severely ill family member, etc.?
- 4) Should the midterm review policy for junior faculty that was instituted last year be formalized in the University rules? What is the appropriate time frame to conduct a midterm review? What documentation should be required of junior faculty at a midterm review? What outcomes should be expected from a midterm review?
- 5) Should a mentoring program for junior faculty be instituted? If so, should it be mandated or encouraged?
- 6) Are the criteria for tenure and promotion cited in 6C1-7.019(4) appropriate?
- 7) How should unit representatives be selected for college tenure and promotion boards?
- 8) Should the fact finding outcomes from college tenure and promotion boards be included as part of the tenure packet?
- 9) What measures should be utilized in assessing teaching performance?
- 10) What is the minimum number of peer evaluation letters that should be required for tenure review?

Prior to discussing the merits and shortcomings of the University of Florida's current Tenure Policy, the Committee engaged in a fact finding exercise in order to study the tenure practices at peer institutions. The data are presented and discussed in Section 2. For the comparison, the Committee limited itself to studying a sample of AAU *public* institutions of which the University

of Florida considers its peers. Since private institutions typically have tenure policies that differ significantly from public institutions, they were not considered in the survey. The exception is Brown University. Brown was chosen because a member of the Committee believed the debate on tenure policy within the University of Florida originated out of a discussion on the tenure practices at Brown University. The peer institutions chosen for comparison are listed below.

Universities for Comparison

University of California System (Berkeley, UCLA, Santa Barbara...)

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

University of Virginia

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

University of Wisconsin, Madison

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

University of Minnesota

Ohio State University

Georgia Institute of Technology

University of Texas, Austin

University of Maryland

Purdue University

Penn State University

Texas A&M University

Iowa University

Brown University

The Committee holds the view that in order for the University of Florida tenure policies to be uniformly practiced there should be a consensus among the college units. Therefore, a survey of the UF College Deans was conducted that sought their opinion on the tenure issues being considered by the Committee. Many of the responses that we gathered in the Deans Survey were very detailed and provided significant insight to the committee deliberations. For ease of presentation and comparison, the Deans' feedback has been organized in tabular format and discussed in Section 3 of this report.

The Committee recognizes that the success of the University of Florida depends on the strength of its faculty. The policies governing the granting of tenure must be geared toward strengthening the faculty. To that end, the tenure policies should be fair, explicitly communicated, accepted by the faculty body, and sufficiently flexible to accommodate the diverse academic cultures within the college units. The remainder of this report is dedicated to the analysis of the tenure issues, listed as 1-10, and the recommendations the Committee believes will lead to a strengthening of the faculty body and ascending stature of the University of Florida.

2. Tenure Policies at Peer Institutions

In order to study the tenure policies at our peer institutions, the Committee examined the tenure policies from 16 AAU institutions listed in Section 1. Our main sources of information were the published tenure policies at the institutions' web sites. In cases where the published documentation was ambiguous, an official knowledgeable with the institution's tenure policies

was contacted for clarification or additional information. The data are accurate to the best of our interpretation of published documentation and accuracy of information provided by institutional officials. In studying the tenure policies of our peer institutions we were particularly interested in established practices addressing the following issues.

a) Does the institution have a “Tenure When Ready” policy?

In order to discriminate between a variety of different practices we have defined “Tenure When Ready” to mean that a tenure candidate can apply for tenure at ANY time during the probationary period, and tenure would be granted to a tenure candidate who has met the USUAL expected tenure criteria for his/her discipline, without any consideration given to time in service. Some institutions allow a faculty member to apply for tenure any time during the probationary period, but tenure candidates must demonstrate accomplishments beyond the USUAL expected tenure criteria when applying earlier than the maximum probationary period. In such circumstances, such a practice does NOT meet our definition of “Tenure When Ready.”

b) What is the maximum probationary period prior to the granting of tenure?

Deciphering the maximum probationary period of different institutions gave us the most difficulty because institutions ascribe a different meaning to the maximum probationary period. In order to make a comparison on an equal basis, we define the “maximum probationary period” to mean the amount of time a tenure candidate remains in service prior to being GRANTED tenure. In the case of a six year probationary period, a candidate must submit his/her application for tenure at the beginning of the sixth year and a tenure decision must be made by the end of the sixth year. In all cases that we studied, a candidate is entitled to at least one year of additional employment following a denial of tenure.

c) Does the institution have a “Tenure Clock Stopping” policy?

Any institution that 1) has established a formal procedure for allowing a tenure candidate to remain in service for a specified period without having that time counting as part of the probationary period and 2) has well defined scenarios that qualify for “clock-stopping” is considered to have a “Tenure Clock Stopping” policy.

d) Does the institution have a midterm review policy?

Any institution that has a formal policy for reviewing a candidate’s progress toward tenure prior to the completion of the maximum probationary period is considered to have a midterm review policy.

e) How many years of service does a candidate complete prior to the midterm tenure review?

In the case of a 3 year midterm review policy, a candidate would be reviewed by the end of the third year in service.

f) Does the institution have a junior faculty mentoring program?

Any institution that has some type of published peer mentoring procedures is considered to have a junior faculty mentoring.

- g) What is the minimum number of external peer review letters required to be submitted with the candidate's tenure packet?

The results of the tenure policy fact-finding exercise among peer institutions are summarized in Table 1. There is a clear split between institutions that support a "Tenure When Ready" policy and those that don't. A clear majority of institutions has a six year maximum probationary period. The three institutions that have a seven year maximum probationary period also support a "Tenure When Ready" policy. The institutions that allow different college units to set different maximum probationary periods include: Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. A clear majority of institutions has a "Tenure Clock Stopping" policy, and a clear majority of institutions conducts some type of review prior to the end of the probationary period.

Table 1 Survey of AAU University Tenure Policies

University	Tenure When Ready Y or N	Maximum Probationary Period Prior To Tenure	Stop Tenure Clock Policy Y or N	Midterm Review Policy Y or N	Number of Years in Service For Midterm Review	Junior Faculty Mentoring Program Y or N	Minimum Number of External Peer Review Letters
California System	Y	7	Y	Y	2	Y	5-8
Michigan, Ann Arbor	Y	6 or 7 [‡]	Y	Y	Annually	N	5
Virginia	N	6 [‡]	Y	Y	Any	Y	8
North Carolina	N [‡]	6	Y	Y	3	N	4
Wisconsin	Y	7 [‡]	Y	Y [†]	Annually	Y	5
Illinois-UIUC	N	6	Y	Y	3	N	4
Minnesota	Y	6*	Y	Y [†]	Annually	Y	
Ohio State	Y	6	Y	Y	4	N	5
Georgia Tech.	N	6**	Y	Y	3	N	4
Texas	N	6	N	N	N/A	N	4
Maryland	Y	6		Y	1 & 2 or 3	Y	4
Purdue	Y	6**	N	N	N/A	N	
Penn State	N	6**	Y	Y	2 and 4	Y	4
Texas A&M	N [#]	6**	Y	N [#]	N/A	N	3
Iowa	Y	6	N	Y	3	N	
Brown	N	6	Y	Y	2	Y	5

*An individual college or individual unit within the college may vote to extend the maximum probationary period to no more than 9 years.

** Faculty candidates are evaluated for tenure review during the sixth year although published guidelines indicate a seven year probationary period. The extra year provides a buffer in cases where tenure is not granted.

[‡] Faculty candidates are evaluated for tenure review during the sixth or seventh year although published guidelines indicate an eight year probationary period. The extra year provides a buffer in cases where tenure is not granted.

[†]Each faculty receives an annual review from the tenured faculty during the probationary period.

[‡]Maximum probationary period may be decreased by mutual consent at time of appointment.

[#]A minimum of 18 months employment is required prior to tenure review

[‡]Tenure review occurs during the 6th year; if candidate is not successful, candidate can re-apply during the 7th year.

[#]The Medical School is the exception which has this policy (3 year midterm review for the medical school).

3. Deans Survey

In an attempt to understand the diversity of academic culture within the different colleges at the University of Florida, college Deans were surveyed for their viewpoints on the tenure policies under consideration. The following queries were made:

- a) Do you support a “Tenure When Ready” policy?
- b) What should be the length of the maximum probationary period prior to tenure?
- c) Do you support a “Tenure Clock Stopping” policy?
- d) What should be the number of years in service for a midterm review?
- e) Do you support a junior faculty mentoring program?
- f) Do you support the inclusion of the college tenure board fact finding report in the candidate’s tenure package?
- g) What should be the minimum number of external peer review letters required to be submitted with the candidate’s tenure packet?
- h) Do you support faculty voting for the composition of the college tenure and promotion boards?

The responses from the Deans Survey are summarized in Table 2. There exists a consensus of support for the “Tenure When Ready” policy, “Tenure Clock Stopping” policy, and midterm review policy. A majority of Deans believe six years is the appropriate maximum probationary period for the University of Florida, although there is a considerable variation of opinion among colleges that support a longer maximum probationary period. There is a consensus of opinion that the appropriate time period for a midterm review is 3 years. There exists support for junior faculty mentoring, although many colleges do not believe it should be mandated. There is not much support to include fact finding results in the tenure packets. There is a split of opinion on whether the Tenure and Promotion Boards at the college level should be determined through voting.

Table 2 Survey of University of Florida Deans

College	Support Tenure When Ready Y or N	Max. Prob. Period Prior To Tenure	Support Stop Tenure Clock Policy Y or N	Support Mid. Rev. Policy Y or N	Num. Years Srvc. For Mid. Rev.	Support Jun. Fac. Mentoring Prog. Y or N	Support Board Fact Finding In Tenure Packet Y or N	Min. Num. Peer Rev. Letters For Tenure Packet	Vote for T&P Board Memb.
Business Administration	Y	9 or 10 \ddagger	N	Y	3 or 4	N			Y
CLAS	Y	7	Y	Y	3	Y	N	5 or 6	Y
Dentistry	Y	6	Y	Y	3	Y	N	3 or 5	Y
Design, Construction, & Planning									
Education	Y	6	Y	Y	3	Y	N	4	Y
Engineering	Y	6	Y	Y	3	Y	Y*	6	Y \ddagger
Fine Arts									
Health and Human Performance	Y	6	Y	Y	3	Y		3	Y
Public Health & Health Professions	N**	\dagger	Y	Y	3	Y		3	
IFAS (Acad. Prog.)	Y	6	Y	Y	3	Optional	Y \ddagger	5	N
IFAS (Research)	Y	7	Y	Y	More Freq.	N		5	N
IFAS (Extension)	Y	6	Y	Y	3	Optional		3-5	N
Journalism & Communications	Y	6(7)#	Y	Y	3	Optional	\ddagger	5	Y
Law	Y	6 or 7	Y	Y	3	Y		5-6	N
Medicine	Y	6	Y	Y	3	Y	N		N
Nursing	Y	6	Y	Y		Y \ddagger	Y		Y
Pharmacy	Y	8	Y	Y	3	Y	Y	5	Y
Veterinary Medicine	Y	6	N	Y	3	Y	N	5	N
Provost	Y	6	Y	Y	3	Y	N	3	N

*Supports inclusion of fact finding report provided faculty body is involved in determining the composition of the T&P board.

**Would support "Tenure When Ready" for a time frame from 7-10 years but not for a shorter time

\dagger As long as needed; supports a university standard

\ddagger As long as diversity of the committee is addressed

\ddagger Prefer to have the option for promotion to Associate Professor without tenure after 3 or 4 years

\ddagger Not mandatory

#Candidate could choose 7 rather than 6, but non-renewal notice would go out at the end of 6 years

\ddagger Need clarification on possibility of written fact-finding reports vis-à-vis Sunshine Law

4. Analysis of Tenure Issues and Recommendations to the Senate

4.1 “Tenure When Ready” Policy

As described in Section 2, the committee defines “Tenure When Ready” to mean that a tenure candidate can apply for tenure at ANY time during the probationary period, and tenure would be granted to a tenure candidate who has met the USUAL expected tenure criteria for his/her discipline, without any consideration given to time in service. The AAU peer institutions are split on their “Tenure When Ready” practices. “Tenure When Ready” is the current practice at the University of Florida, and the committee suggests that UF maintain this policy.

The committee recognizes that there are a number of highly talented faculty candidates who choose to pursue careers in industrial organizations, government agencies, and non-profit organizations prior to pursuing academic careers. During their time in service to these other organizations they often produce high quality creative works that boost their professional standing. We believe that the “Tenure When Ready” policy gives the University of Florida a competitive advantage in recruiting outstanding faculty who come from such a background by recognizing their prior accomplishments.

Likewise, the University of Florida aims to recruit highly productive faculty who produce works of excellence that raise their standing in their chosen field of study. We believe that rewarding the outstanding achievements of tenure candidates, without regard to time in service, will boost morale and encourage excellence and high productivity. The end result should be better retention of the best faculty and a rise in the prestige of the University as a whole.

When the University of Florida grants tenure to a candidate, it wants to ensure that the candidate will continue to produce excellent creative and scholarly works and maintain high standards for classroom instruction. We do have some concern that if a candidate applies for tenure at a very early stage of the probationary period, it may be difficult to extrapolate his performance into the future. We also think it is appropriate to expect a candidate to demonstrate collegiality. Therefore, it is important for home departments and college Tenure and Promotion boards to scrutinize each individual case to insure there is a reasonable likelihood that the candidate will maintain high standards and collegiality in his future UF career.

The committee has concerns that the “Tenure When Ready” policy is not uniformly practiced by college Tenure and Promotion boards. Two possible reasons are that the policy is not well known to or understood by some faculty members. Another possible reason is that some faculty members do not agree with the policy and choose not to follow it. In order to encourage college Tenure and Promotion boards to abide by the policy, the following recommendations are offered:

- a) Summarize the UF tenure policies in an easy to read stand alone document
- b) Disseminate the UF tenure policies to the administrators and faculty at large on an annual basis
- c) Encourage faculty and administrators to debate the merits and shortcomings of the policies
- d) Reiterate the UF tenure policies to college Tenure and Promotion boards each year they meet
- e) Educate new faculty hires on details of the UF tenure policies

4.2 Maximum Probationary Period

During the past year there has been considerable debate within the University of Florida regarding the length of the maximum probationary period. As cited in Section 2, the committee defines the “maximum probationary period” to mean the amount of time a tenure candidate remains in service prior to being GRANTED tenure. In the case of a six year probationary period, a candidate must submit his/her application for tenure at the beginning of the sixth year and a tenure decision must be made by the end of the sixth year.

Around 1999, the University of Florida revised its tenure policy, and the maximum probationary period was increased from five to six years. In book publishing disciplines there have been instances where a publishing house went into bankruptcy and a faculty candidate could not get his/her manuscript published during the maximum probationary period. In order to accommodate such circumstances, the prior administration instituted a rule and the 2003 UF Faculty Senate voted, in principle, to extend the maximum probationary period from 6 to 7 years. Certain colleges (Engineering and Medicine) were very strongly opposed to the increase from 6 to 7 years. President Machen asked the Board of Trustees to postpone consideration of any further rule changes until the faculty has had an opportunity to further debate the issue. Once the faculty has had an opportunity to formulate a recommendation to the President, we anticipate he will propose a rule change to the Board of Trustees to clarify the probationary period.

The Committee recommends that the maximum probationary period should remain at SIX years.

A review of public AAU peer institutions, as shown in Table 1, indicates that the typical tenure practice is to have a maximum probationary period of six years. If the University of Florida were to deviate from the typical maximum probationary period of its peer institutions it could result in unintended negative consequences. In the case of the maximum probationary period, the committee maintains that UF should only deviate from typical practices of peer institutions when there are overwhelming compelling reasons to do so. Several hypothetical examples of unintended negative consequences are given below.

- a) If the maximum probationary period were raised from six to seven years, it may result in a natural tendency for tenure candidates to take the full seven years for tenure. As more candidates use the full amount of time, there will be a natural tendency for increased tenure expectations in journal driven fields.
- b) Should the typical time for tenure at the University of Florida drift toward seven years it will put UF at a distinct disadvantage in recruiting the most outstanding new faculty compared with our peer institutions.
- c) Female faculty sometimes put off child-bearing until they are granted tenure. Should the typical time for tenure at UF drift toward seven years, UF would realize a disadvantage in recruiting top female faculty.

Although these examples are hypothetical, the consequences are sufficiently severe to give pause to deviating from the norm of our peer institutions.

The Committee gathered data on the average time a new faculty member resides at the University of Florida prior to being granted tenure. The data are displayed in Figure 1 and are grouped in the categories of E&G, IFAS, and the Health Science Center. There exists a clear increasing trend for all three units from 1990 to 1994. From 1995-2000 there is not much

variation in E&G and Health Sciences, while there is significant variation in IFAS (Note: the IFAS data sample is relatively small). From 2000-2004 there is not much variation in E&G, with the exception of 2003, where there is a significant decline. IFAS and the Health Science Center data are slightly scattered during this time period without any convincing trend.

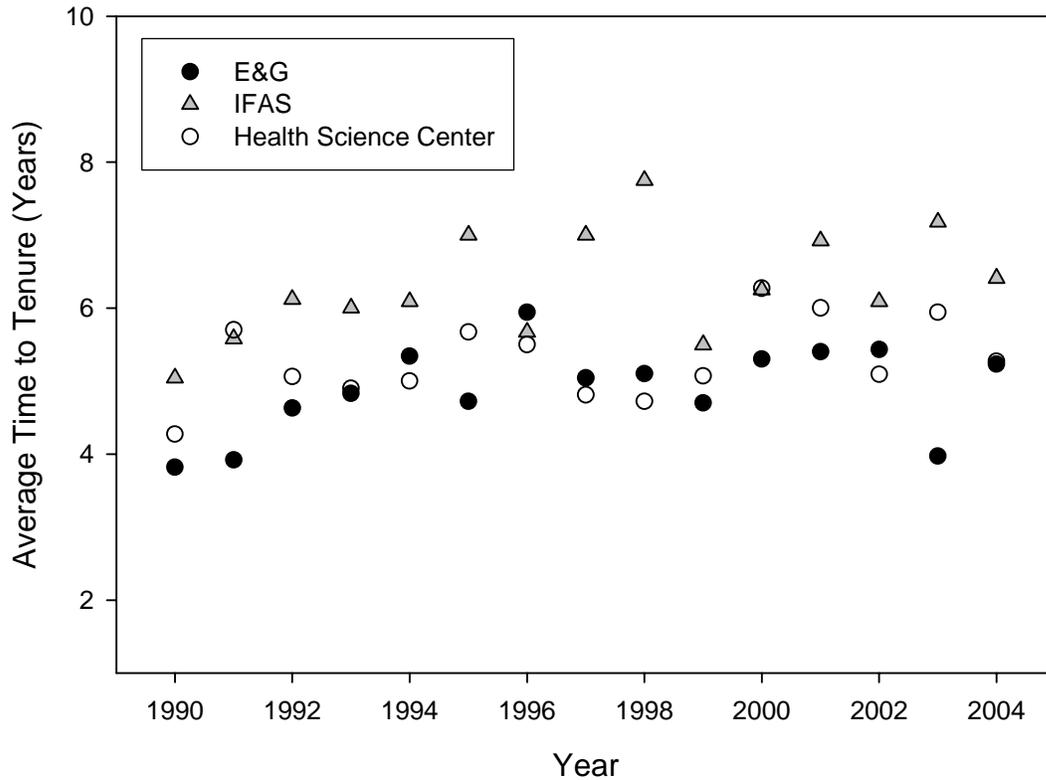


Figure 1 Average Time a Faculty Member Resides at the University of Florida Prior to Being Granted Tenure, Excluding Those Granted Tenure Upon Arrival.

The counter argument given for endorsing a seven year maximum probationary period relates to delays encountered with book publishing. Due to financial difficulties encountered by many publishing houses in recent years, book driven fields may require a longer probationary period. The Committee sympathizes with tenure candidates whose book was not published because of corporate decisions that created a printing delay. However, in such instances there already exists an administrative process in which a tenure candidate can request an extension of the maximum probationary period by petitioning the Provost through the Department Chair and College Dean. The Committee recommends that when a tenure candidate encounters extraordinary adverse circumstances beyond his/her control he/she use the administrative appeal process to request an extension to the maximum probationary period. Further details on this process are described in Section 4.3.

The Committee also recommends that the book driven fields continue sending candidates up for tenure when their manuscript has been accepted for publication and is in preparation for

print by a publishing house. Even though the manuscript may not yet be in print, the manuscript can still be sent out for external and internal peer review. This is a common practice in the journal driven fields.

With the above considerations, the Committee recommends sustaining the SIX year maximum probationary period at the University of Florida.

4.3 “Tenure Clock Stopping” Policy

It is understood by the Committee that many people experience events in their lives that are beyond their control or which, because of the nature of the event, necessarily disrupt or delay the ability to perform at the high level of productivity necessary to earn tenure during the maximum probationary period. At the same time, these people may be able to continue significant portions of their assigned job responsibilities unhindered and will, with a release of the immediate pressure of high productivity, be able to tend to these events and then resume appropriate levels of productivity. Other people may choose, for whatever professional reasons, to focus all attention on meeting the criteria for tenure as soon as possible and postpone such important events as childbirth or experimental scholarship until after tenure has been obtained. Because there are a wide variety of people with varying family practices and preferences at the University of Florida, it is important to have a tenure policy that combines maximum flexibility with the stringent attention to academic excellence that will help attract outstanding faculty and propel us to the top of academic institutions. An excellent and productive faculty comes in many shapes and sizes and does not conform to a single model. To encourage diversity of faculty and to protect the tenure process, the Committee recommends a standard 6-year maximum probationary period to tenure with a relatively liberal policy of extensions for both ordinary and extraordinary circumstances and a committed “Tenure When Ready” threshold to allow those who are ready to obtain tenure based on the summation of their scholarly contributions to the University of Florida and elsewhere.

The University of Florida does not currently have a “Tenure Clock Stopping” procedure for those who wish to continue working in a paid capacity, although their productivity may be hindered due to family circumstances. In contrast, the majority of our peer AAU institutions do have a policy in place. The need for a comprehensive “Tenure Clock Stopping” policy has been articulated in two position papers offered by the American Association of University Professors entitled, “Balancing Family and Academic Work”¹ and “Statement of Principles on Family Responsibilities and Academic Work.”²

The “Tenure Clock Stopping” policy recommended by the Committee is described below.

- I. No tenure earning time shall be accrued during a semester or year-long leave of absence or a reduced FTE appointment, EXCEPT when the primary purpose of the leave is to conduct research or as agreed to in writing by the Office of Academic Affairs and the faculty member at the time of approval of the leave. Such requests should be

¹ <http://www.aaup.org/Issues/FamilyWork/policy.htm>

² <http://www.aaup.org/statements/REPORTS/re01fam.htm>

included in the request for leave of absence or reduced FTE and processed through appropriate administrative offices.

II. It is presumed that all persons in a tenure-accruing rank shall be granted a one-year extension of the maximum probationary period for tenure under the following circumstances.

a. child birth or child care for newly born, adopted, or legally fostered child(ren) by either the faculty member or his or her domestic partner, spouse, or immediate family member and for whom the faculty member has significant child care responsibilities.

b. Serious illness of the faculty member or of a member of his or her immediate family for whom the faculty member has significant responsibilities.

Immediate family member shall be defined, for purposes of this section, as: faculty member's spouse or domestic partner, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, brother or sister (or spouse of any of them) of the faculty member or his/her spouse or domestic partner.

III. Extension for Extraordinary Circumstances: All persons in a tenure-accruing rank may request a one-year extension of the maximum probationary period for tenure for extraordinary circumstances where such an extension is reasonably necessary to allow the candidate to demonstrate professional excellence and a capacity for future academic productivity. Extraordinary circumstances may arise in the life of any person and may take an infinite variety of forms.

IV. Any person in a tenure-accruing rank may obtain a maximum extension of 2 years in the probationary period under any combination of circumstances identified in Sections II and III.

Documentation may be required at the college or university level to verify the circumstances for the extension if deemed appropriate. Extension of the probationary period is to be without prejudice to a candidate's salary, anticipated teaching load, determination of whether he or she has met the criteria for tenure and/or promotion, and shall not be considered relevant in department, college, or university-level tenure and promotion evaluations.

Events that occur in the last eighteen months of a faculty member's tenure probationary period may not be the basis for a request under this policy, and all requests under the policy must be made at a minimum of six months before the date that has been communicated to the faculty member as the date on which the unit will initiate the tenure review.

V. Any person requesting an extension of the probationary period under Section II must do so, in writing, no later than three months after the onset of the circumstances. The

faculty member shall notify his or her department chair (or dean where appropriate), and the chair (or dean) must notify the dean and provost of the request.

Any person requesting an extension for extraordinary circumstances under Section III must obtain approval from the provost, which should be sought through the usual administrative process of notification through the department chair and dean.

Some comments on the recommended policy are in order. First, the Committee recognizes that the University has a comprehensive leave policy for paid and unpaid leaves, including certain federally- and state-mandated leaves. It is the belief of the Committee that the current policy, noted in Section I above (as it relates to the tenure probationary period), envisions that most instances of leave, whether paid or unpaid, will result in a stopping of the tenure clock, to be resumed when the faculty member returns to full service. The committee makes no recommendations about that policy and would leave it intact. The recommendations herein recognize that, in certain circumstances, the maximum probationary period is inadequate and a faculty candidate requires up to an additional two years to complete the work necessary for the granting of tenure. While the Committee recommends that a maximum of two years be allowed for service without a running tenure clock under provisions II and III, the number and length of leaves that stop the clock under provision I are at the discretion of the provost.

At least two criteria are necessary for the tenure policies to function as envisioned by the Committee. A true “Tenure When Ready” policy requires that a candidate who seeks consideration before the expiration of 6 years should not be held to a standard any different than one who comes up in his/her sixth year. Likewise, a true tenure clock stopping policy must protect the candidate who stops the clock from being held to a different standard of productivity than any other candidate in that field. Thus, in order for University of Florida tenure practices to adhere to the spirit of this document, there shall be no prejudice to a tenure candidate who stops the tenure clock, which might occur through additional teaching or service obligations, salary reduction, or a higher standard of productivity demanded at any level of the tenure and promotion evaluations.

It is also important to recognize that a person who seeks to stop the tenure clock under provision II should not be in the position of having to REQUEST approval from a chair or dean who may discourage the request. The Committee recognizes that junior faculty may hesitate to take advantage of the presumption to stop the tenure clock if they are required to seek approval from their immediate superiors who might be against the idea. The committee feels it is important that the candidate communicate through the usual channels of department chair, dean, and provost, when seeking to stop the tenure clock under provision II. At any administrative level, proof of circumstances may be requested. When tenure-clock-stopping is denied due to a lack of proof, the denial will be communicated by the Provost. When a candidate seeks to stop the tenure clock under provision III, the usual administrative channels of communication should be adhered to. The Committee believes the chair and the dean should forward the request to the provost’s office regardless of their opinions or preferences concerning the request. In many cases, the chair or dean may strongly encourage the extension, in which case that information should carry great weight with the provost. In other cases, the chair or dean may be lukewarm or try to discourage the extension. In those rare cases, the chair or dean may not threaten the candidate with extra teaching duties, reduced salary, or extra service work. The decision to grant or deny a request to stop the tenure clock under provision III will be made by the Provost.

4.4 Midterm Review Policy

The University of Florida has recently instituted a midterm review policy, and the details of the policy may be found in the current “Guidelines and Information Regarding the Tenure, Permanent Status and Promotion Process For 2004-2005” Article IX (below) states the current policy.

IX. Policy of Mid-Career Review for the Tenure-Accruing Faculty

The department initiates this process toward the end of the faculty member’s third or fourth year. The chair and the faculty decide which timeframe is most appropriate for their discipline. The chair and the faculty define the review process in the department as well, but it should include at a minimum a substantive assessment of an updated curriculum vita and the teaching evaluations of the faculty member.

The department and the tenured faculty should express themselves in a formal manner on the progress of the faculty member toward tenure, and the information should be shared with the faculty member by the chair. The dean should also review this information, and any response to the candidate should reflect both the department’s and the dean’s assessment of the faculty member’s record.

The Provost’s office will review this process, not the cases, in its initial years. After three years the Provost’s office will review this process every two years to make sure it is achieving the goals that were initially set for it.

Committee Recommendations on the Midterm Review Policy

The Committee is in full agreement that a midterm review is in the best interest of all junior faculty in their efforts to earn tenure. Virtually all of the AAU universities surveyed have in place a midterm review policy. Many of these universities conduct this review annually and all but one has completed at least one review prior to the 4th year of service. Nearly all the deans surveyed at the University of Florida also believe that there should be an interim tenure review process for all tenure accruing faculty.

The Committee affirms the midterm review process and recommends several modifications to the existing policy that incorporate the concept of faculty governance and ultimately should strengthen the benefits gained from a midterm review:

1. The review needs to be **completed by the end of the third year** of tenure accruing service (since this is the half way point of the suggested 6 year probationary period for tenure).
2. **The review process should be a peer review process.** At the least it would be carried out by tenured faculty in the candidate’s department. At the discretion of the college, it may also use its tenure and promotion committee to participate in the review process. However, the committee feels that the individual unit should have flexibility in the

composition of the review body. **The faculty within the individual colleges should provide a framework for the review process and have it incorporated into their college policy guidelines. It is the intent that the review process should be advisory to the candidate and without any prejudice in future reviews.**

3. The review should consist of elements that best prepare the faculty to be successful in obtaining tenure in the future. **Units are encouraged to require submission of a standard T&P packet for this review.** No external letters of support should be required for this review.
4. The **faculty member should receive, in writing, a summary of his/her progress toward tenure**, and the information should be shared with the faculty's chair and dean. This report should also include any suggestions the review group feels will facilitate strengthening the faculty member's future tenure packet.
5. **The provost's office will be contacted and informed that the review has taken place, not the substance of the review.** To insure that the review takes place as required, the provost's office will inform individual colleges at the beginning of each academic year as to which individual faculty should be reviewed.

Commentary

This review process should be designed and implemented to benefit the individual faculty for the successful achievement of tenure. It should be designed to provide the faculty member with constructive comments to strengthen the eventual tenure packet and provide the faculty member with a true assessment of how his/her efforts are perceived by peers within his/her own discipline. It also will assist that faculty member, in that peers, other than his/her own chair, will provide an evaluation of the faculty member's efforts. **This evaluation is designed to apprise the faculty member of his/her performance up until that date and provide a commentary on his/her readiness for tenure and should not be used in a punitive fashion.** The intent of the review is to provide feedback to help promote progress for tenure.

The fact that the review process takes place at the end of the third year of service should allow for proper review of the faculty members teaching, research and service efforts and will allow enough time for the faculty member to make any modifications necessary for the successful award of tenure in the future, if any deficiencies are noted in the review. Likewise, it could also be used to assist the faculty member in the choice as to when he/she would be successful in applying for tenure ("Tenure When Ready" policy).

Although the intent of the policy is to provide beneficial feedback to the tenure candidate, the Committee recognizes that there will be concern that a negative review might be used as the basis of a non-renewal notification. It is important to recognize that during the probationary period a Chair has the discretion to deny an annual contract renewal to a faculty member when his/her performance is well below normal standards. The Committee does not believe that the midterm review will have a strong impact on such cases.

Another criticism voiced about this review is that it would take time away from the candidate's research and teaching efforts. It is understood that some effort is required for the preparation of the review packet. Therefore, a new faculty member should be advised to collect the necessary data for his or her yearly evaluations, and this effort will facilitate the eventual

compilation of the final tenure package. Each unit should provide assistance to the faculty member in gathering the necessary documentation.

Several colleges within the university already conduct interim reviews and require a candidate to submit a review document in the same format as is required for the normal tenure process. It has been the experience of those serving on the Committee that this practice is advantageous for the candidate when the feedback from the review group includes comments on the style, format, etc., which aids the candidate in putting forth a polished document for the formal tenure submission.

It is emphasized here that the intent of the Committee's recommendations is to provide input to the tenure candidate from his/her peers in addition to input from the Department Chair and the Dean. The current University of Florida midterm review policy requires the Dean to communicate the review findings based on his/her assessment as well as that of the Department Chair. The intent of the Committee's recommendations is to insure that the findings of the peer reviewers are communicated to the tenure candidate as well those of the Department Chair and Dean.

4.5 Junior Faculty Mentoring

The University of Florida has recently adopted a mentoring policy for junior faculty. The policy is cited below.

The chair of the department will initially select a mentor or mentors for an untenured faculty member. At the end of the untenured faculty member's first year, the faculty member and the chair should discuss the relationship with the mentor(s) and whether a new mentor or mentors might be more appropriate. Where appropriate, the chair should give strong consideration to the preference of the untenured faculty member. The mentor(s) will write an annual assessment to the untenured faculty member describing his/her progress toward tenure. This assessment should be provided orally to the untenured faculty member initially, and he/she should be given opportunity to respond and for the assessment to be modified as a result of this meeting if appropriate. The chair and the mentor (or mentoring committee) should also meet to discuss the progress of the untenured faculty member on an annual basis.

The Committee strongly favors the recent implementation of junior faculty mentoring. The Committee believes individual colleges should set their own junior faculty mentoring guidelines and use the current UF policy for guidance.

4.6 Tenure Criteria

The motivation of reviewing the current University of Florida tenure criteria is to insure that these criteria set a realistic target that encourages a rising trajectory in the status of UF among peer institutions. The Committee was mainly concerned with three issues. The first issue is whether or not the targets set by the tenure criteria are realistic and appropriate. The second is insuring that clinical responsibilities and extension service are appropriately rewarded. The third issue is whether or not the current tenure criteria encourage numerical assessments of

performance (“bean counting”) in lieu of qualitative assessments (quality). The current University of Florida tenure criteria are cited below.

1. The University’s criteria for granting tenure, promotion, or permanent status shall be relevant to the performance of the work that the faculty member has been employed to do and to his/her performance of the duties and responsibilities expected of a member of the university community. These criteria recognize three broad categories of academic service as follows:

(A) Teaching – Instruction, including regular classroom teaching and distance/executive/continuing education, direction of theses and dissertations, academic advisement, extension education programs, and all preparation for this work, including study to keep abreast of one’s field.

(B) Research – Research or other creative activity including publications.

(C) Service – Public and professional.

All tenure track faculty will have some portion of their time assigned to research unless alternative assignments are approved in advance by the appropriate Dean and the Provost. Extension contributions in academic service may be inclusive of the three broad categories described above. Refer to 6C1-7.010(2)(b) F.A.C. for a detailed description of these activities specifically designed for extension faculty.

2. Tenure requires distinction in at least two areas, and those areas should be teaching and research unless the faculty member or extension faculty member has an assignment that primarily reflects other responsibilities, such as the Cooperative Extension Service.

Promotion also requires distinction in at least two of the three categories, both of which should be in areas of the candidate’s primary responsibilities. Merit should certainly be regarded as more important than variety of activity. Distinction here means appreciably better than the average college faculty member of the candidate’s present rank and field, and recommendation of promotion and tenure shall contain evidence that such a comparative judgment has been made. Faculty and new hires should receive a copy of the College’s or Division’s criteria clarifying the expectations for promotion and tenure.

The Committee believes the current University of Florida tenure criteria should be maintained. In deliberating the UF tenure criteria it was obvious to the Committee that the definition of “distinction” is ambiguous and is interpreted differently by different committee members. For example “distinction” can be interpreted as appreciably better than the average college faculty member of the candidate’s present rank and field within the University of Florida or appreciably better than the average college faculty member of the candidate’s present rank and field around the nation. Another significant concern is that when the former interpretation of distinction is adopted, an unrealistic bar is being set since the University aims to be ranked among the top ten public institutions. In view of these considerations the Committee recommends that the tenure and promotion guidelines do not explicitly define “distinction.” Instead, each discipline is encouraged to outline guidelines for scholarly achievement that constitutes distinction. The committee recognizes that faculty interests within the University of Florida are very diverse, and local units are better suited to establish guidelines for scholarly achievement that rise to the level

of distinction. Guidelines should be established that result in a strengthening of the faculty body and an ascending stature for the University of Florida. The Committee believes it is important to emphasize that even though tenure candidates are required to demonstrate “distinction” in two out of three areas of their University duties, they must be held accountable to do quality work in all three areas.

The Committee recognizes that the health science disciplines are unique in that they have a number of tenure candidates who devote a considerable portion of their time to clinical service. There are circumstances where a superior clinician may be in high demand and may not be as productive in research as his/her peers who have considerably less clinical responsibilities. IFAS is another college that has tenure candidates whose main responsibilities consist of extension service. It is the opinion of the Committee that clinical service and extension service are covered by the tenure criteria under “Professional Service,” and outstanding clinicians and extension personnel should be recognized for their clinical contributions. Under such circumstances, faculty assignments should reflect the fact that a major portion of their time is devoted to clinical service or extension service. Faculty would not normally be granted tenure for distinctive service in circumstances where a very small percentage of faculty time is assigned to service duties. The Committee recommends that each college in the health sciences draft guidelines for rewarding substantial clinical contributions. IFAS has historically rewarded outstanding service contributions and will continue to do so. Other colleges are encouraged to draft guidelines on how service contributions will be evaluated during tenure review.

The Committee does **not** believe that the current UF tenure criteria encourage numerical assessments of performance (“bean counting”) in lieu of qualitative assessments (quality). However, the Committee is sensitive to the fact it is in the best interest of UF Faculty to use both quantitative and qualitative assessments when considering tenure decisions. Although qualitative assessments are considerably more complex and at times difficult to obtain, ultimately the University of Florida will rise in stature for having a reputation of consistently producing high quality creative scholarly works and graduating students who strive for excellence in their chosen professions. Therefore, departments and colleges within the University of Florida are strongly encouraged to incorporate qualitative assessments into tenure decisions.

4.7 Selection of College Tenure and Promotion Committees

There is considerable variation in the method used to select the members of the College-level Tenure and Promotion committees at the University of Florida. In some colleges, the committee is appointed by the Dean, while in others the committee is elected from among the faculty. The departmental faculty members are best suited to judge the status of a candidate for tenure and promotion with respect to the field of that individual’s assignment, and thus the role of a college-level tenure and promotion committee should be to evaluate candidates with the interests of the whole college in mind. We believe that a consistent method should be used in all colleges on campus.

Given the dual nature of the criteria used to evaluate tenure and promotion candidates at the different levels, a balanced representation on the college-level committee seems appropriate. The Committee suggests that at least half of the college-level tenure and promotion committee be

elected from the faculty of appropriate rank with the balance of the committee appointed by the dean of the college.

4.8 Individual Faculty Assessments

In the spirit of shared governance, the Committee believes the faculty should have a stake and a consultative voice in tenure and promotion decisions. Therefore, it is recommended that college level tenure and promotion boards should provide recorded individual assessments to the college deans as part of their fact finding and consultative role in the review of promotion and tenure cases. At a minimum, an individual assessment should indicate whether or not the candidate meets the necessary standards required for tenure and that assessment is to become part of the tenure and promotion packet. The individual assessors should not be identified in the tenure and promotion packet.

The Committee has spent considerable time investigating how the Florida Sunshine Law impacts the tenure process and which information can be included in tenure packets without compromising their confidentiality. The University of Florida General Counsel has advised the Committee that the recommended individual faculty assessments are confidential and are not subject to public disclosure.

4.9 Minimum Number of Outside Peer Evaluation Letters

The majority of our peer institutions require at least 4 peer evaluation letters as part of the tenure and promotion packet. The majority of deans favor requiring 5 or more peer evaluation letters. The Committee believes that substantive information provided in peer evaluation letters is often very useful in evaluating a candidate's performance relative to his/her peers in his/her field of expertise. Therefore, the Committee recommends that the minimum number of outside peer evaluation letters required for tenure review should be **five**.

5.0 Concluding Remarks

The motivations for the tenure policy recommendations contained in this report are to provide a framework for the University of Florida to attract and retain the most outstanding scholars and recognize their contributions through a balanced and well defined tenure policy. In order for these recommendations to be applicable to the 2005 pool of new faculty, these recommendations should be acted upon and implemented by April, 2005.

The Committee worked diligently to address the most important tenure issues currently facing the University of Florida. Due to the fall 2004 deadline, we did not have time to completely investigate the issues related to item 9 on page 3.