

UH System

PERSPECTIVES

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UH System Announces Academic Personnel Policies

At a meeting on November 3, 1980, the Board of Regents of the University of Houston System approved the new policies and procedures as follow relating to academic appointments, separations, promotions, and tenure awards:

This document specifies the procedures and policies governing the various academic personnel actions utilized by the University of Houston System and its component campuses. Appointment and separation policies address the conditions and terms by which individuals enter and leave university service. In contrast, tenure and promotion are *evaluative* mechanisms utilized by the university to recognize the past academic achievement and future potential of faculty members. In the University of Houston System there are certain elements of these personnel policies that are common to all component campuses, while there are other elements that should be specific to the individual campuses. This document shall delineate those areas of commonality in these personnel policies. The policies and procedures detailed here are consistent with academic practices found in major universities. It is fully recognized herein that the four campuses of the University of Houston System are different in mission, tradition, and complexity. For these reasons, each campus is afforded the opportunity to enhance its mission and purpose by academic personnel policies germane to the campus. The document preserves the opportunity of the individual campuses to set the standards by which academic appointments, separations, promotions, and tenure decisions are made. The present document specifies the policies and procedures which are consistent among the four campuses while at the same time preserving the individualities of the four campuses.

Definitions and Conditions

1. *Appointment* is defined as the employment of an individual in a given capacity for a specified time period at a stated salary. Faculty appointments are made on the respective campuses following procedures developed on the campuses and which have been approved by the President. All faculty appointments are subject to the final approval of the President and Board of Regents upon recommendation of the Chancellors. Prior approval of the President is required before any faculty appointment with tenure can be made. In addition, no person shall be appointed to the position of Dean, or equivalent, or Vice Chancellor, or equivalent, without prior consultation with the President. No administrator may be given faculty status or tenure without a review and positive recommendation from the academic unit involved.
2. *Separation* is defined as the process by which an individual terminates employment with the university. Three distinct modes of separation are recognized.
 - a. *Resignation* is voluntary termination of employment by an employee. Chancellors may accept resignations and shall so inform the President for transmittal to the Board of Regents.
 - b. *Non-reappointment* refers to a situation in which a non-tenured faculty member is not offered the next successive employment appointment at the end of a stated employment period. The Chancellor is delegated this authority; the President shall be notified of such decisions and shall inform the Board of Regents. Non-reappointment notification must conform to the following schedule of dates:

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UH Regents Approve Nepotism Policy

The University of Houston System Board of Regents approved the nepotism policy as follows for the UH System and all of its component campuses at a meeting on November 3, 1980:

Purpose of Policy

To avoid possible conflict of interest which could result from related persons exercising peer judgment or administrative review on matters pertaining to employment, retention, promotion or salary determination.

Definitions

A *relative* is defined as a person related within the second degree of affinity and the third degree of consanguinity.

First degree of affinity: includes the spouse of the employee and the parents, children, and brothers and sisters of the employee's spouse.

Second degree of affinity: includes the grandchildren of the employee's spouse, and the nephews and nieces, uncles and aunts, grandmother and grandfather, and first cousins of the employee's spouse.

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Policies . . . from page 1

1. Not later than March 1 of the first academic year of service if the appointment expires at the end of that year; or, if a one-year appointment terminates during an academic year, at least three months in advance of termination.
 2. Not later than December 15 of the second academic year of service if the appointment expires at the end of that academic year; or, if an initial two-year appointment terminates during an academic year, at least six months in advance of its termination.
 3. Not later than May 31 of the academic year preceding the academic year in which the appointment is to expire, when the individual is in the third or later year of appointment.
- c. *Dismissal* is severance from employment for cause. Dismissal shall not be used to restrain faculty members in their exercise of academic freedom. When dismissal involves a tenured faculty member, consultation with the President and University Legal Counsel shall be made prior to any official action. The President has the authority to dismiss tenured faculty upon recommendation of the Chancellor after full and appropriate due process. Such action is subject to final acceptance by the Board of Regents. Dismissal authority in the case of non-tenured faculty rests with the Chancellors, who shall inform the President who in turn shall notify the Board of Regents.
3. *Tenure* is defined as the right to continuous employment. It is awarded by the President, based upon the authority delegated by the Board of Regents and upon the recommendation of the Chancellors of the respective campuses after the appropriate campus review processes have been followed. Tenure is awarded on the basis of teaching, research and service excellence to date, consistent with the mission of the campus, and a high degree of confidence in the continuation and enhancement of this performance for the benefit of the university. Tenure can only be revoked due to dismissal for cause, bona fide financial exigency, the elimination of programs, retirement or resignation. Tenured faculty members shall be afforded every opportunity to be placed in other related faculty assignments when the existence of a bona fide financial exigency or the elimination of a program may necessitate the reduction of tenured faculty members. Tenure shall be specific to the University of Houston System component recommending tenure and never applies to administrative appointments.
 4. *Promotion* is defined as an advancement to a higher rank or title based on merit and evidence of excellence in the performance of job responsibilities. Promotions are subject to the approval of the President and Board of Regents upon recommendation of the Chancellors. In the case of faculty, recommendations for promotion shall be made once each year to be effective at the beginning of the succeeding academic year.
5. a. *Tenure-track positions*: The following ranks are considered part of the tenure-track: instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor.
 - b. *Non-tenure-track positions*: Campuses may choose to utilize other faculty titles to convey certain meanings specific to that campus. These include lecturer and prefixes attached to titles in section A5a such as visiting and adjunct. The use of these terms implies non-tenure track status. All non-tenure track titles must be filed with the Office of the President.
 6. The *probationary period* is defined as the time a faculty member spends under appointment in a tenure-track position prior to being awarded tenure. It shall not exceed seven years and the conditions of the

period shall be specified in the appointment letter. Up to three years of prior full-time collegiate level teaching at the rank of assistant professor or above may be credited to the probationary period.

7. Faculty *leaves of absence* without pay are granted by the Chancellor, who shall inform the President and Board of Regents. Leaves of absence with pay are subject to the approval of the President and the Board of Regents. Normally, the period of time of a leave of absence shall not be counted as time in the tenure track or promotion sequence except in those circumstances approved by the Chancellor.

Time Sequences

1. The rank of instructor at a University of Houston campus shall normally be in the tenure track for that campus with time spent as an instructor counted in the probationary period. No instructor, however, may be awarded tenure. Under special circumstances the Chancellor may waive the inclusion of an instructor in the tenure track by written mutual agreement.
2. Assistant professors shall serve a probationary period not to exceed seven years, at least four of which must be on the specific University of Houston campus. Promotion to associate carries tenure unless otherwise stipulated by special circumstances. In special cases, Chancellors may request that tenure be awarded to assistant professors.
3. Associate professors may be appointed with tenure, or alternatively shall serve a probationary period not to exceed four years before tenure is awarded. In cases of exceptional merit, the probationary period specified in the appointment letter may be shortened by the campus Chancellor at the request of the Dean or appropriate Division Head.
4. Promotion from associate to full professor requires strong evidence of teaching, scholarship and service as appropriate to the mission of the campus in question. No specified time sequence is required for promotion from associate to full professor.
5. Full professors are usually appointed with tenure, but may be required to serve a probationary period which shall be stated in the appointment letter.
6. Full-time University of Houston employees, such as professional and administrative staff, who are carried at least 50% on teaching budgets shall accrue time toward tenure and promotion at the same rate as full-time faculty. Those not carried at least 50% on teaching budgets shall not accrue time toward tenure and promotion.
7. Recommendations for tenure and promotion shall be transmitted annually from the campus Chancellors to the President, with all supporting documentation filed by April 1 of each year.

Other Considerations

1. The specific criteria for tenure and promotion shall be determined on each campus through its appropriate governance procedures and shall reflect the mission, tradition, and complexity of the campus. No faculty member shall be appointed or promoted on any campus without a complete review consistent with the

campus criteria and procedures for such action. The general criteria and procedures of each campus are subject to final approval of the President.

2. The process by which faculty members are appointed or evaluated for tenure and promotion on each campus must include peer review in at least one level of evaluation. It must also include the recommendation of the appropriate Dean or equivalent mid-level administrator. This evaluation process and any subsequent modifications must be approved by the President.
3. Each campus must establish a campus-wide grievance committee of faculty members that concerns itself solely with due process issues. In addition, faculty members are entitled to submit their case to an appeal committee composed of individuals from their disciplinary areas (or related areas in the case of small departments) for appeals dealing solely with substantive issues. The procedures and general compositions of the grievance or appeal committees which are utilized by the campuses are subject to the approval of the President after review by University Legal Counsel. The President may approve deviations from the procedures and composition of the committees as special circumstances may warrant. Legal Counsel shall be informed of all grievance actions, prior to the grievance hearings. Where dismissal of tenured faculty members is not involved, the decision of the Chancellor is final after appropriate grievance and/or appeal processes have been followed on the campuses. In cases involving a recommendation of dismissal of tenured faculty members, the decision of the President is final upon acceptance of the Board of Regents.
4. Nothing in these policies and procedures shall in any way impair the fundamental policy of equal employment opportunity of the University of Houston System.
5. These policies and procedures shall take effect January 1, 1981. However, the specific individual conditions of probationary faculty appointments made prior to January 1, 1981 shall be honored by the University of Houston System.

Perspectives

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The University of Houston seeks to provide equal educational opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, handicap, or veteran status.

This policy extends to all programs and activities supported by the University.

Nepotism . . . from page 1

First degree of consanguinity: includes the father and mother, sons and daughters, and brothers and sisters of the employee.

Second degree of consanguinity: includes the grandfather and grandmother, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, grandsons and granddaughters, and first cousins of the employee.

Third degree of consanguinity: includes the great grandfather and great grandmother, great-uncles and great-aunts, great-nephews and great-nieces, great grandsons and great granddaughters, and second cousins of the employee.

Statement of Policy

Relatives of members of the Board of Regents and the President shall not be employed by the University of Houston System and its component campuses, except where the employment took place two years prior to the appointment of the Board member or the President (Vernon's Annotated Texas Civil Statutes, Article 5996a).

Relatives of Chancellors shall not be employed on the campus where the Chancellor is the administrative officer.

Relatives of Vice Presidents and Vice Chancellors shall not be employed on the campus or the System Office where the Vice President or the Vice Chancellor is an administrative officer if the Vice President or the Vice Chancellor must approve promotion or salary recommendations concerning such employee.

Relatives shall not be employed in a supervisory-subordinate relationship by the University of Houston System and its component campuses. If two employees within the University of Houston System marry, both may not continue to hold such positions beyond the specified appointment period, if the continued employment of the married persons violates the supervisory-subordinate relationship policy.

The provision of the nepotism policy applies to all programs administered under the University of Houston System regardless of funding source of the programs.

This policy in no way affects the fundamental provisions of equal employment opportunity at the University of Houston System and its component campuses.

