

Extending the Tenure Review Period

Policy: EXTENDING THE TENURE REVIEW PERIOD

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1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The university recognizes the importance of a healthy integration of work and life, and consistent with the goals of promoting faculty diversity, and professional career development and advancement, Montana State University is committed to creating a supportive environment for all faculty, particularly during major life transitions. This policy is intended to establish the guidelines for the extension of a faculty member's tenure review period at Montana State University.

2. EXTENDING THE TENURE REVIEW PERIOD TO INCLUDE CREDITED SERVICE

The tenure review period is the time between the date of hire and the date of tenure review established at the time of hire in the faculty member's letter of hire. This period may be extended as outlined in this policy, through either the automatic extension process or a requested extension process, provided that no combination of extensions may be granted for more than three (3) years total per faculty member.

3. AUTOMATIC EXTENSION OF THE RETENTION AND/OR TENURE REVIEW PERIOD

The tenure review period is extended automatically for one (1) year for the following reasons:

- a. Childbirth, adoption or placement of a foster child in the home (applicable to both parents).
- b. [Serious illness](#) of the faculty member, their child, foster child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, or other individual for whom the faculty member serves as a primary caregiver or legal guardian.
- c. Death of a child, foster child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, or other individual for whom the faculty member serves as a primary caregiver or legal guardian.
- d. Full-time military service.

Each faculty member is entitled to one automatic extension of either the retention or tenure review.

4. AUTOMATIC EXTENSION OF THE RETENTION OR TENURE REVIEW PERIOD

When a faculty member notifies the department head about an event described in Section 3, the department head is responsible for informing the faculty member, the dean, and provost that the retention and/or tenure review period will automatically be extended by one academic year. Notification must be made no later than twelve (12) months after the event.

The provost's office will notify the faculty member and department head of the faculty member's revised retention and/or tenure review date. The faculty member may opt out of that extension any time before March 30 prior to the designated academic year of review.

If the automatic extension is for a serious illness of the faculty member or other family member, the university may request documentation of the serious illness.

If the faculty member qualifies for the automatic extension of the retention review, both the retention and tenure review periods are extended. If the automatic extension is granted after retention, only the tenure review date is extended.

5. REQUESTED EXTENSION OF THE TENURE PERIOD

Any faculty member may request a one academic year extension of their retention or tenure review period for unanticipated circumstances that significantly limit the faculty member's available time to devote to teaching, research, and service other than an event listed in Section 3.

6. PROCESS FOR REQUESTING EXTENSION

A faculty member may request a one academic year extension of their retention or tenure review period by submitting a written request to the department head as soon as possible after

the need for the extension arises. The request must be submitted no later than twelve (12) months after the need arises or by March 30th in the year prior to the designated academic year of review, whichever is earlier.

The extension of the designated tenure review date must be approved in writing by the department head, the dean, and the provost. If approved, the provost's office will notify the faculty member and department head of the faculty member's revised retention and/or tenure review date.

If the faculty member is approved for the extension under this section before the retention review, both the retention and tenure review periods are extended. If the extension is approved after retention, only the tenure review date is extended. Approval of an extension does not preclude any faculty member from seeking retention or tenure on a date earlier than the extended review date.

7. STANDARDS FOR REVIEW OF FACULTY RECEIVING EXTENSION

When a faculty member extends their review date, the standards for review are the same as if they had not received an extension, and the extension does not increase the expectations of performance for that faculty member. When a faculty member is being reviewed for tenure, the letter soliciting evaluations from external reviewers should explicitly state that the candidate received an extension under university policy. The letter should further state that the policy of the university is to evaluate the productivity of each candidate who has been granted an extension as if they had been in probationary status for the normal duration, so that the candidate is not penalized for having received the extension.