


The Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Process at MSU

A Conversation with Terry Curry
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The MSU Philosophy



MSU attempts to hire the best faculty on the market who we are confident can be great professors. We strive to provide a supportive environment, so that they have every opportunity for successful reappointment, promotion and tenure. There is a shared interest in success.

Administrators play a key role in faculty RPT success.

“NO SURPRISES” IS THE OPERATIVE PHRASE!



The Annual Memorandum on “Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure”

- Some selected quotes



Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure

- At MSU, faculty are expected to be both active scholars and student-focused educators, demonstrating substantial scholarship and ability to promote learning through our on-campus and off-campus education and research programs.
- MSU is committed to improve continuously. To do so means vigorous, effective recruitment and selection of new faculty who are encouraged and helped to grow professionally, through mentoring and development. These new faculty members are evaluated by demanding standards and required procedures for reappointment, tenure, and promotion recommendations. Our expectation is that they will thrive at MSU, as well as in the changing national and international landscape.



Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (slide 2)

- Our policies, procedures, criteria, and decisions on recruitment, reappointment, award of tenure, promotions, and salary changes must be guided by the goal of enhancing academic excellence, taking into account the mission and goals of the department, school, college, and University, including the MSU commitment to diversity and inclusion. Departments/schools and colleges are required to review regularly their standards, criteria, and procedures to this end. These personnel decisions, in large measure, will determine MSU's reputation and prominence for many years to come.



Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (slide 4)

- Assessment should take into account the quality of outcomes as well as their quantity; it should also acknowledge the creativity of faculty effort and its impact on students, on others the University serves, and on the field(s) in which the faculty member works.
- In many cases, faculty demonstrate excellence through individual scholarly activities. Collaborative scholarly efforts, cross-disciplinary activities, and the integration of scholarship into the creation, application, and dissemination of knowledge are also recognized as relevant dimensions of faculty performance.



Key Policy Issues

1. The norm – One 4 year and one 3 year probationary appointment for assistant professors
 - Associate professors may be hired with one probationary appointment, usually 2-4 years.
 - Starting date of the “tenure clock” is August 16, regardless of when during the calendar year the appointment is effective.



THE REVIEW PROCESS

Department level committee makes recommendation to chair or school director



Chair independently makes a recommendation to the dean



The dean is advised by a college review committee



The dean independently makes a recommendation to the provost



THE REVIEW PROCESS (Continued)

Representatives of the provost meet with each dean – Associate Provost AHR, SVPRGS, and a distinguished MSU faculty member -- to review each case



Provost meets with representatives and formulates recommendations for President and Board of Trustees



For the Health Colleges – CHM, COM, CON

- With the creation of the position of Executive Vice President (EVP) for Health Sciences, and the change in the reporting relationship of the human health colleges to the EVP:
 - Deans will make recommendations to the Provost and EVP
 - EVP will meet with dean and provost representatives
 - Provost and EVP will confer and make joint recommendations for reappointment, promotion, and tenure



Key Policy Issues (slide 2)

- “A recommendation for promotion from assistant professor to associate professor in the tenure system should be based on several years of sustained, outstanding achievements in education and scholarship across the mission, consistent with performance levels expected for promotion to associate professor at peer universities. A reasonably long period in rank before promotion is usually necessary to provide a basis in actual performance for predicting capacity to become an expert of national stature and long-term, high-quality professional achievement.”



Key Policy Issue (Slide 3)

- A recommendation for promotion from associate professor to professor in the tenure system should be based on several years of sustained, outstanding achievements in education and scholarship across the mission, consistent with performance levels expected at peer universities. A reasonably long period in rank before promotion is usually necessary to provide a basis in actual performance to permit endorsement of the individual as an expert of national and/or international stature and to predict continuous, long-term, high-quality professional achievement.



Key Policy Issues (slide 3)

- Extending the Tenure Clock
 - The tenure system probationary appointment for the next reappointment/promotion/tenure review is extended automatically for one year for the following reasons:
 - Leaves of absence with or without pay that are one semester to twelve months.
 - Changes in appointment to 50% time or less for one year.
 - An extension recommended as an outcome of a hearing and/or appeal conducted pursuant to the Faculty Grievance Policy.
 - Because of COVID-19, assuming the faculty member was in the tenure system Spring 2020*



Key Policy Issues (slide 4)

- Extending the Tenure Clock (cont'd)
 - The tenure system probationary appointment for the next reappointment/promotion/tenure review is extended automatically upon faculty request for one year for the birth or adoption of a child.
 - Extensions for this reason are limited to two separate one-year extensions during the entire probationary period. The request for an automatic one-year extension for the birth or adoption of a child must be submitted within two years of the birth/adoption, but no later than the due date for the submission to the department/school of the dossier for the next reappointment/promotion/tenure review.



Key Policy Issues (slide 5)

- Additional extensions of the probationary appointment may be requested from the University Committee on Faculty Tenure (UCFT) for reasons related to:
 - childbirth, adoption, the care of an ill and/or disabled child, spouse, or parent;
 - personal illness;
 - to receive prestigious awards, fellowships, and/or special assignment opportunities; or
 - other such serious constraints.



Key Policy Issues (slide 6)

- **Note:** Receipt of an automatic extension for any of the reasons above **does not** preclude consideration for reappointment or promotion with tenure at the normal time. However, if the extension for the first probationary appointment is waived by the faculty member, the extension does not carry over to the second probationary appointment. In addition, a faculty member is bound to the outcome of the reappointment review if unsuccessful.



Key Policy Issues (slide 7)

- Criteria and procedures must be examined locally.
 - Get copies of standards, procedures, etc.
 - Review college and/or unit mentoring policy
 - Review your letter of appointment
 - Joint appointments
 - Review Multiple Appointment Memorandum
 - Annual performance reviews
 - Conferring with peer advisory committee before a recommendation is forwarded
 - Points of Distinction provides a framework for outreach



Key Policy Issues (slide 8)

- Evaluation of teaching, research/creative activities, and service
- External letters of reference
- College-level committee
- Role of central administration
- Form D
- WorkLife@msu.edu
- Resources/checklist – “Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure Toolkit – A Resource for Tenure System Faculty at Michigan State University”, developed with our NSF Advance Grant



Rule #1



TALK TO YOUR CHAIR/DIRECTOR & MENTOR(S)