DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY TENURE POLICIES

AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHING FACULTY

Tenure serves the best interests of the faculty and the University by protecting faculty members from dismissal except for reasons set forth by policies of the IHL Board of Trustees. In our society we regard the acquisition of knowledge to be of paramount importance; and society, through enlightened self-interest, provides the University as a place for teaching and learning. Tenure in universities provides protection that scholars require and serves society’s aspirations that scholars should have freedom of expression.

TENURE DEFINED

Tenure is defined by the IHL Board of Trustees as continuing employment that may be granted to a faculty member after a probationary period upon nomination by the President for election by the IHL Board of Trustees. Faculty are tenured to a department/division, unless otherwise designated by the IHL Board of Trustees. For the University it is a safeguard of academic freedom and a reflection of the quality of education offered. For the faculty member it is a privilege granted by the University to faculty who have demonstrated their value to the academic quality of the institution over an extended period of time.

ELIGIBILITY FOR TENURE

All faculty employed in a position designated as tenure-track at the time of initial appointment to rank at the assistant professor level or higher who have satisfied the minimum requirement for years of service in a probationary appointment shall be considered for tenure.
PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENTS

In accordance with IHL Board of Trustees policy, probationary appointments are for one year, or for other stated periods, subject to renewal.

LENGTH OF PROBATIONARY PERIOD

The probationary period in a tenure-track position is seven years (six years for faculty hired in 2005-06 and after). Upon written agreement between the institution and the faculty member at the time of initial appointment to rank, credit up to a maximum of four years (five years for faculty hired in 2005-06 and after) toward fulfillment of the minimum probationary period may be allowed for service in rank at other institutions of higher education. In special cases, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, upon the recommendation of the college or school dean, may grant credit for exemplary service not in rank. Such credit shall be awarded only to individuals who possess exceptional professional qualifications and achievements and is not to be construed as exempting such individuals from other institutional policies and procedures governing the awarding of tenure. Faculty members who transfer from one institution to another within the Mississippi system are subject to the same probationary period in a given institution as any other faculty member who is new to the system. At the time of initial employment by the Board, a faculty member or an administrative employee whose preceding employment included faculty rank at the assistant professor level or higher and tenure may be granted tenure only if so recommended by the President and approved by the IHL Board of Trustees. In extraordinary circumstances, (e.g., extended medical leave, educational leave), faculty may submit a request for a suspension of the length of the
seven-year probationary period. Requests shall be submitted to the college or school dean for approval by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

TENURE NOTIFICATION

Once the probationary period has been completed, a faculty member, if reappointed, may be considered for tenure. For tenure to be awarded, the President must make a recommendation to the IHL Board of Trustees in writing. The award of tenure is not vested until notice of the award is given in writing by the President, after approval by the IHL Board of Trustees, and the written notice is actually received by the faculty member.

NOTICE OF NON-RENEWAL OF TENURE TRACK

FACULTY

The notice that a probationary appointment is not to be renewed shall be furnished in writing by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs to the faculty member according to the following schedule: (1) not later than March 1 for faculty in the first year of service at the institution, (2) not later than December 1 for faculty in the second year of service at the institution, (3) not later than September 1 for faculty who have completed two or more years of service at the institution. This schedule of notification does not apply to persons holding temporary or part-time positions, or persons with courtesy appointments, such as adjunct appointments.

CRITERIA FOR AWARDING TENURE

Decisions in favor of awarding tenure are made in recognition of accomplishments in response to the following criteria: teaching, scholarship, and service, as well as the appropriate academic background for a tenure appointment. Evaluation shall be based on
all three areas although it is realized that differences in emphasis may exist, depending on
the academic discipline. Each of the criteria is defined below.

TEACHING DEFINED

Delta State University is primarily a teaching institution. Therefore, effective teaching
and efforts to support an environment where teaching and learning are nurtured are
considered essential requirements for tenure consideration. Effective teachers
demonstrate qualities which may include the following: high academic standards,
concern for learning, a thorough knowledge of the subject, good organization of subject
matter and course syllabi, incorporation of research in instructional settings, excellent
communication skills, respect toward students, fairness in examinations and grading, and
willingness to experiment with new teaching methods. Contributions to the teaching,
learning, and academic support environment include, but are not limited to, developing
and implementing new courses and programs, developing instructional materials,
participating in faculty development initiatives, using new technologies and
methodologies for accessing information, and incorporating new strategies for enhancing
student learning.

SCHOLARSHIP DEFINED

Delta State University recognizes the important contributions that scholarship makes in
the advancement of a profession or discipline and as an important component of the
teaching/learning process. Scholarly inquiry and learning vary by discipline and are
reflected in, but are not limited to, the following: dissemination of research and scholarly
findings through books, journal articles, monographs, and presentations at professional
meetings; presentation of creative achievements through exhibitions, performances, and
publications; development of new research methodologies; grants or contracts that
support scholarly and creative activity; honors and awards for significant scholarly and
creative activity, and participation as an editor and/or referee in support of scholarly and
creative publications.

SERVICE DEFINED

Delta State recognizes the importance of service as a part of its mission. The service
component is based on performance in three areas: service to the faculty member’s
academic profession, service to the University, and public service to the community that
is related to the faculty member’s academic discipline. Efforts to advance accreditation-
related initiatives, such as the Quality Enhancement Plan, shall be considered as service
to the University.

DEPARTMENT/DIVISION TENURE AND PROMOTION

COMMITTEE

Each academic department/division in the University shall have a standing tenure and
promotion committee. This Committee shall consist of at least three persons. All of the
tenured faculty members of the department/division, excluding the department/division
chair, shall serve on the Committee. If there are not enough tenured faculty members
within the division/department to meet this criterion, the tenured faculty, in consultation
with the department/division chair, shall appoint tenured faculty to the Committee to
meet the required criterion of at least three persons. The Committee members may come
from tenured faculty within the same college or school or from tenured faculty in the
same discipline outside the University. Department/division chairs shall notify tenure
candidates of the non-departmental appointees to the Committee reviewing their
application prior to the initiation of their review. Any concerns of the candidate regarding non-departmental appointees shall be forwarded to the Chair of the University Tenure and Promotion Committee, who shall meet with the departmental tenure and promotion committee to seek resolution. In the absence of agreement, the Provost will mediate a resolution. The department/division tenure and promotion committee shall have the responsibility for reviewing portfolios of candidates for tenure and making recommendations, with reasons, as to whether tenure should be granted. The Committee shall also be responsible, with assistance from the department/division chair and tenure-track faculty, for recommending tenure and promotion procedures and for recommending guidelines for the portfolio to be used by candidates from that department/division for promotion or tenure consideration.

UNIVERSITY TENURE AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE

Membership
- The University P&T Committee shall be composed of eleven tenured faculty members, three from the College of Arts & Sciences, three from the College of Business, three from the College of Education, one from the School of Nursing, and one from Library Services
- No two members shall be from the same department/division
- Members shall be elected by the tenured and tenure-track faculty in the college or school they represent and shall serve for staggered three-year terms

Committee Chair
- The Chair shall rotate among the colleges and schools based on the following schedule: Arts & Sciences, Business, Education, Nursing, and Library Services
• The faculty member within the appropriate college/unit with the most longevity of service on the committee shall serve as Chair

• The Chair will
  ♦ make contact with each professor who has applied for tenure and promotion to

  assess their perception of compliance to university policies and procedures by
  deans, department committees, and chairs reviewing their respective dossier.

  ▪ Any discrepancies will be noted and discussed by the committee. If

  necessary, the Provost/VPAA will be made aware of the

  allegation(s).

  ♦ If necessary, meet with college/school deans to seek resolution of any policy

  compliance issues.

  ♦ Submit a letter to the Provost/VPAA

    ▪ If compliance issues are identified, the letter will identify the

    issue(s), reporting the committee’s discussion regarding the

    disposition of the application, reporting the committee’s vote and

    recommend either delay of future action on the application or

    allowing the application to proceed in the process.

    ▪ If there are no compliance issues, the letter will indicate that and

    recommend further consideration of each applicant.

Charge

• To advise and consult with the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs on

  criteria, policies, and procedures related to tenure and promotion
• To review all tenure and tenure policy recommendations transmitted from
department/division committees (not faculty portfolios) to ensure compliance with
Board, University, and department/division policies and timelines

Meeting Procedure
• The members of the P&T Committee will meet during the first two weeks of
March to review tenure/promotion documents for policy compliance.
• All proceedings by this committee are strictly confidential in nature.
• All members of the committee will independently review the candidates’ dossiers
at the scheduled meeting.
• Following the review, the committee will deliberate and vote.
• A simple majority vote is required for the committee to recommend that the
process complies with Board, University, and department/division policies for a
given candidate

Guideline for Recommending Further Consideration of an Applicant
• By a simple majority vote the P&T Committee will determine whether to
recommend that an applicant be given further consideration

TENURE AND PROMOTIONS APPEALS COMMITTEE

The University shall have a standing tenure and promotions appeals committee. The
Tenure and Promotions Appeals Committee shall consist of three tenured faculty
members at the rank of Professor. No two members of the Committee shall be from the
same college or school, nor shall they be members of the University Tenure and
Promotion Committee. The members shall be appointed by the Faculty Senate as a
standing committee at the beginning of the academic year and shall serve one-year terms.
Committee members shall not hear appeals from members of their academic department/division. If a member of the Committee cannot hear a particular appeal, the Faculty Senate Chair shall appoint a temporary replacement.

PROCEDURES

TENURE APPLICATION. Consideration for tenure shall not be deferred beyond the seventh full year of service in the probationary period (sixth full year of service in the probationary period for faculty hired in 2005-06 and after). Department/division chairs shall notify faculty in writing of their eligibility for tenure consideration by October 1 of the seventh year of service (sixth year of service for faculty hired in 2005-06 and after).

By the end of seven years in the probationary period (six years for faculty hired in 2005-06 and after) in a tenure-track position, a faculty member shall be awarded tenure or given a terminal contract for the eighth year (seventh year for faculty hired in 2005-06 and after).

PRE-TENURE AND PRE-PROMOTION REVIEW. By February 1 of a faculty member’s third year and fifth year in a probationary appointment at the University (second year and fourth year in a probationary appointment for faculty hired in 2005-06 and after), the faculty member shall submit his/her portfolio to the chair of the department/division’s tenure and promotion committee. This committee shall review the portfolio and make recommendations in writing to assist the faculty member in advancing in an appropriate manner toward tenure and promotion. The department/division chair and the dean shall also review the portfolio and make written recommendations to the faculty member. Both the committee report and the department/division chair/dean reports are to be on file in the department/division chair’s office and in the dean’s office.
by March 15. In cases where minimal progress is made between the third year and fifth year (second year and fourth year for faculty hired in 2005-06 and after), as determined by the committee, the department/division chair, and/or the dean, the faculty member shall, in consultation with the chair, develop and have on file in the dean’s office by May 1 a plan of action for improvement. This pre-tenure and pre-promotion review process shall serve as a mentoring function for the faculty member to identify strengths and weaknesses, not as a vote on tenure/promotion consideration.

PORTFOLIOS. Faculty who are eligible for tenure consideration shall compile and maintain a portfolio that provides evidence of their accomplishments in response to all three criteria used to make tenure decisions. These include teaching, scholarship, and service. Unless otherwise specified in the faculty member’s contract, the primary emphasis among the three criteria shall be teaching. Evaluation shall be based on all three areas, although it is realized that differences in emphasis may exist, depending on the academic discipline and the nature of the faculty member’s assignment. Ultimately, the portfolio must demonstrate an excellent record of faculty productivity, through performance on the three criteria, which improves the academic quality of the University. Guidelines and suggestions for portfolios are available through the department/division chair.

PORTFOLIO REVIEW. A candidate applying for tenure must submit his/her portfolio to the chair of the department/division tenure and promotion committee for review no later than December 1 of the year in which the candidate is being considered for tenure. The department/division committee for tenure and promotion shall meet and make its recommendation (with reasons) as to whether tenure should be granted to the candidate.
and forward the portfolio and recommendation to the department/division chair by February 1. The chair shall also review the portfolio and make a recommendation (with reasons) regarding the award of tenure and shall transmit the portfolio and both recommendations by February 15 to the appropriate college or school dean, who shall also make a tenure recommendation. If the dean’s recommendation for tenure is in disagreement with the recommendation of the department/division committee, it shall be the responsibility of the dean to meet with the department/division committee to inform the members of such and provide an explanation. By March 1, the portfolio and the recommendations from the department/division committee, the chair, and the dean shall be sent by the dean to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. A copy of the recommendations shall be sent by the dean to the Chair of the University Committee on Tenure and Promotion. The University Committee on Tenure and Promotion shall schedule a meeting during the first two weeks of March to review the recommendations for compliance with IHL Board, University, and department/division policies and procedures. The Committee Chair shall also contact all tenure candidates to identify any potential grievance and/or concern. In the event procedural problems and/or concerns are discovered, the Chair of the University Committee on Tenure and Promotion shall meet with the appropriate college or school dean to seek resolution. Annotation of any unresolved procedural problems shall be forwarded by the college or school dean to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs as soon as possible after the meeting of the University Committee on Tenure and Promotion and no later than the fourth Friday in March. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs shall also review the portfolio and make a recommendation (with reasons) regarding the award of tenure and shall
forward the portfolio and the tenure recommendations to the President by April 1, citing any unresolved procedural problems and/or concerns from the University Tenure and Promotion Committee. If the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs’ and/or the President’s recommendation for tenure is in disagreement with any of the previous recommendations, it shall be the responsibility of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and/or the President to inform the involved parties and provide an explanation. The recommendations for tenure submitted by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and approved by the President shall be transmitted by May 1 to the IHL Board of Trustees for confirmation. Upon Board approval, successful candidates shall be notified in writing by June 1 by the President.

**APPEAL.** Candidates who are not recommended for tenure shall be notified in writing by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs by April 15. Faculty members who wish to appeal must refer the case to the University Tenure and Promotions Appeals Committee by May 1. This Committee shall hold a hearing within fifteen days to review the decision and submit a recommendation to the President, who shall make a final determination within seven days and notify the candidate of such in writing. Faculty who wish to appeal the final decision of the President to the IHL Board of Trustees have thirty days to do so effective from the date of notification by the President and should follow the procedures outlined in section 403.0105 of the Policies of the IHL Board of Trustees.

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