

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

POLICY NO.: II:01:05A

DATE: July 1, 2008

SUPERSEDES POLICY NO.: II:01:05A

DATED: August 1, 1999

SUBJECT: Policies and Procedures for Tenure

APPROVED: Sidney A. McPhee, President



**I. INTRODUCTION**

This policy is in compliance with Tennessee Board of Regents Policy No. 5:02:03:60 and in the case of any conflict later discovered is subordinated to that particular policy.

It is important to note that the listed criteria represent minimum standards set by Middle Tennessee State University. College and/or department policies relating to the tenure process must meet the criteria as specified herein, but may exceed and be more specific than the minimum standards required by the university. All college and department policies will be reviewed for consistency with Middle Tennessee State University and Board of Regents policies by the provost and approved by the president. Approved college and department policies will be made available to faculty members in the office of their department chairperson and dean.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

The following are general definitions of words and terms used in this policy which are not hereinafter specifically defined; however, the words and terms are subject to further qualification and definition in the subsequent sections of this policy or those of colleges and departments.

- A. Academic Tenure: A personnel status in an academic department or academic program unit pursuant to which the academic or fiscal year appointments of full-time faculty who have been awarded tenure are continued at Middle Tennessee State University until the expiration or relinquishment of that status, subject to termination for adequate cause, for financial exigency, or for curricular reasons.
- B. Adequate Cause: A basis upon which a faculty member, either with academic tenure or a tenure-track or non-tenurable faculty appointment prior to the end of the specified term of the appointment may be dismissed or terminated. The specific grounds which may constitute adequate cause are set forth in Section V herein.
- C. Financial Exigency: The formal declaration by the Board of Regents that Middle Tennessee State University faces an imminent financial crisis, that there is a current or projected absence of sufficient funds (appropriated or non-appropriated) for the campus as a whole to maintain current programs and activities at a level sufficient to fulfill its educational goals and priorities, and that the budget can only be balanced by extraordinary means which include the termination of existing and continuing academic and non-academic appointments.

- D. Faculty Member: For the purposes of the MTSU Policies and Procedures on Tenure, “faculty member” generally refers to a full-time employee who holds academic rank as instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor and is potentially eligible for tenure. While other full-time non-tenurable faculty appointments are recognized by the university (temporary, clinical track, research-track, instructional coordinator, and visiting distinguished professor), use of the term “faculty member” in this document applies only to tenurable faculty positions unless otherwise noted.
- E. Probationary Employment: Period of full-time professional service by faculty members for whom an appointment letter denotes a tenure-track appointment in which they do not have tenure and in which they are evaluated by the university for the purpose of determining their satisfaction of the criteria for a recommendation for tenure. Probationary “tenure-track” employment provides an opportunity for faculty members to assess their commitment to the university and for the university to determine whether they meet its perception of quality and/or projected need. The tenure “clock” starts on the date specified in the letter of appointment.
- F. Faculty Appointments are defined in University Policy No. II:01:05D.
- G. Academic Year: The period of time consisting of the fall and spring semesters.
- H. Teaching. Teaching includes strategies by which information is imparted so that others may learn, and may include, but is not limited to, a variety of techniques including instruction, student advising and/or mentoring, development of course materials, courseware, and innovative approaches to instruction.
- I. Research/Scholarship/Creative Activity. Research/scholarship/creative activity encompasses the studious inquiry, examination, or discovery that contributes to disciplinary and interdisciplinary bodies of knowledge and is disseminated to an appropriate audience. Research/scholarship/creative activity may include, but is not limited to, disciplinary and interdisciplinary activities that focus on the boundaries of knowledge, field-based scholarship, creative activities (e.g., film-making, performances, or other artistic creations), research in teaching and learning, and seeking grants to support such activities.
- J. Service/Outreach. Service/Outreach encompasses a faculty member’s activities in three areas: public service; university service; and professional service.
1. Public service is the university’s outreach to the community and society at large, with major emphasis on the application of knowledge for the solution of problems with which society is confronted. Public service primarily involves sharing professional expertise and should directly support the goals and mission of the university.
  2. University service refers to work other than teaching and research/scholarship/creative activity done at the department, college, and/or university level. Participation in university service is expected of every faculty member. University service includes, but is not limited to, participation on department, college and university committees. Some faculty members may accept more extensive citizenship functions, such as a leadership role in the Faculty Senate, membership on a specially appointed task force, advisor to a university-wide student organization, and/or membership on a university search committee.

3. Professional service refers to the work done for organizations germane to one's discipline or to the teaching profession generally. Service to the profession includes, but is not limited to, association leadership, journal editorships, articles and grant proposal review, guest lecturing on other campuses, and other appropriate activities. While it is difficult to define the exact nature of significant professional service, clearly more is required than organizational membership and attendance; examples of significant service would be that done by an officer of a professional organization or a member of the editorial staff of a journal.

### **III. CONSIDERATION FOR TENURE**

#### **A. Tenure Appointments**

1. The awarding of tenure is recognition of the merit of a faculty member and of the assumption that he/she would meet the long-term staffing needs of the department or academic program unit and the university. Tenure is awarded only to those members of the faculty who have exhibited professional excellence and outstanding abilities sufficient to demonstrate that their future services and performances justify the degree of permanence afforded by academic tenure. The Board of Regents does not award tenure in non-faculty positions. Tenure appointments reside in the departments and academic program units, and are assurances of continued employment during the academic year subject to expiration, relinquishment, or termination of tenure as set out in Section V. Recommendations for or against tenure should originate from the department or academic program unit in which the faculty member is assigned and should include appropriate participation in the recommendation by tenured faculty in the department or academic program unit.
2. Tenure is awarded only by positive action of the Board of Regents, pursuant to the requirements and procedures of this policy, at Middle Tennessee State University. No faculty member will acquire or be entitled to any interest in a tenure appointment at Middle Tennessee State University without a recommendation for tenure by the president and an affirmative award of tenure by the Board of Regents. No other person will have any authority to make any representation concerning tenure to any faculty member, and failure to give timely notice of non-renewal of a contract will not result in the acquisition of a tenure appointment, but will result in the right of the faculty member to another year of service at the university, provided that no tenure appeals remain outstanding due to lack of cooperation and/or appropriate action on the part of the candidate in completing the appeal process.
3. Tenure and promotion are not formally linked, but typically promotion to associate professor comes with tenure, and granting of tenure comes with promotion to associate professor.

#### **B. Tenure Process**

1. Guidance through the Tenure Process.
  - a. Faculty will be given pertinent tenure criteria with their initial appointment and may be provided with a department or academic unit mentor. Workshops on portfolio development, information sessions on criteria, and other support mechanisms may also

be presented for making the process and expectations clear to the tenure-track faculty member.

- b. Tenure-track faculty members will be evaluated in writing annually and separately by their department chairperson and their department tenure review committee. Separate copies of these evaluations will be provided to tenure-track faculty, placed in their department personnel files, and sent to the faculty member's dean and to the provost.
- c. Typically, the faculty member will receive two formal reviews during the tenure process: a pre-tenure review of progress toward tenure and a final review during the fifth and/or sixth year of the probationary period. The pre-tenure review will follow the process of the final tenure review through the department and college level as outlined in Section III. Tenure-track faculty entering with zero or one years of credit for prior service will be subject to pre-tenure review in the third year of their probationary appointment; probationary faculty entering with two or three years of credit for prior service will be subject to pre-tenure review in the fourth year of their probationary appointment.
- d. Types of evidence relevant to evaluating effectiveness and contributions in teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity, and service/outreach are identified in Section IV of this document.

## 2. Procedures for Tenure Recommendations

### a. General Guidelines

- 1) Consideration for tenure originates in the department or academic program unit to which the faculty member has been assigned. Faculty members are responsible for initiating the tenure process by the written notification to the department chairperson by the deadlines specified in the tenure calendar. Candidates for tenure are also responsible for submitting to the department chairperson the Outline of Faculty Data form and such pertinent supporting materials as are called for in Section IV.
- 2) Administrators and committees involved in the review process shall submit materials, forms, letters, and other documentation as appropriate in the course of the review process outlined below. Letters of recommendation directed to the next reviewing body should specify the performance criteria used and explain how the candidate has or has not met those criteria.
- 3) No material can be added to the Outline of Faculty Data or supporting materials once the department and/or academic program unit review process has formally begun. It is important that all participants in the review process have access to the same set of materials.
- 4) Members of department and college tenure review committees should not make individual recommendations concerning candidates to other administrators or committees in the review process outside committee procedures.
- 5) In the case of departments or academic program units not affiliated with an academic college, the department tenure review committee will forward

recommendations directly to the appropriate dean or the vice provost, who will serve as dean for the purposes of the review process. When conflicting recommendations result between the dean/vice provost and the department tenure review committee, they will meet in an attempt to resolve conflicts before forwarding recommendations to the provost.

- 6) The nepotism policy of the Board of Regents (5:01:02:00) will apply to all levels of the tenure process.
- 7) The candidate for tenure may withdraw from the review process at any level without prejudice. Withdrawal from the process does not preclude the candidate from reapplying the next year, provided that the candidate has been recommended for renewal.

b. Department and/or Academic Program Unit Review

- 1) The review process for tenure recommendations at the department and/or academic program unit level consists of separate considerations by the department chairperson and a department tenure review committee. Departments and/or academic program units may establish a single committee for both tenure and promotion review, or if deemed desirable and necessary, departments and/or academic program units may create two peer review committees (a promotion review committee and a tenure review committee) as outlined in department policies, subject to approval by the provost and president.
- 2) Department Tenure Review Committee. Each department and/or academic program unit will develop written policies that cover the structure, annual election of committee members, and operating procedures of the department tenure review committee. A copy of these policies will be available to faculty members in the offices of their department chairperson and dean. At a minimum, these policies will include the following:
  - a) Committee members must be tenured;
  - b) All full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty members in the department and/or academic program unit are entitled to a vote on the committee membership;
  - c) Non-tenure-track faculty are not entitled to vote on committee membership;
  - d) Candidates for tenure and the department chairperson cannot be members;
  - e) A committee chairperson will be elected by the members of the committee;
  - f) Whether there will be academic rank requirements for committee membership.

In situations where the staffing procedures described in the department policy cannot be implemented (for example, in the case of an inadequate number of tenured faculty or of specified academic rank), an alternate committee composition may be proposed subject to approval of the provost, appropriate dean, and faculty senate president prior to review of the candidate application(s).

- 3) Review Process. The department chairperson, after examining all materials submitted by each candidate for tenure, then forwards the materials to the

department tenure review committee. The department tenure review committee will separately consider each candidate's qualifications for tenure on such department, college, and university criteria as have been approved. After consideration the committee will consult with the department chair. If the recommendations of the department chairperson and committee are in concert, separate reports will be filed by the department chairperson and by the committee to the appropriate dean. If the recommendations of the department chairperson and committee are in conflict, they will meet in an attempt to resolve the conflict prior to submitting written recommendations to the appropriate dean. If the conflicts cannot be resolved, reports submitted to the dean by the committee and by the department chairperson will each describe the points of conflict.

- 4) When deliberations are concluded, the department chairperson and the committee will separately notify each tenure candidate of the recommendation that has been forwarded to the appropriate dean. Each candidate will be afforded the opportunity to meet with the department chairperson and/or the department tenure review committee to discuss the review process and the data upon which the decision was made. It is the candidate's responsibility to initiate requests for a meeting with the department chairperson and/or department committee.

c. College Review

- 1) The review process for tenure recommendations at the college level consists of separate considerations by the dean and a college promotion and tenure review committee.
- 2) College Promotion and Tenure Review Committee. Each academic college will develop written policies that cover the structure, election of members to terms of three (3) years and the operating procedures for the college promotion and tenure review committee. A copy of these policies will be available to faculty members in the offices of their department chairperson and dean. At a minimum, these policies will include the following:
  - a) Colleges with six or more departments will elect one faculty member from each department to the committee; colleges with five or fewer will elect two faculty members from each department to the committee. (To provide for committee rotation, those tenured faculty elected to serve on the first college promotion and tenure review committee will draw numbers to determine whether they serve for periods of one, two, or three years; one-third of the members will rotate off the committee each year.)
  - b) Committee members must be tenured;
  - c) All full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty members in the department and/or academic program unit are entitled to a vote to elect their representative(s);
  - d) Non-tenurable faculty are not entitled to vote on committee membership;
  - e) Department chairpersons cannot be members;
  - f) A committee chairperson will be elected annually by the members of the committee;

- g) Whether there will be rank requirements for those faculty members serving on the committee.

In situations where the staffing procedures described in the college policy cannot be implemented (for example, in the case of an inadequate number of tenured faculty or of a specified academic rank in a department), an alternate committee composition may be proposed subject to approval of the provost, appropriate dean, and faculty senate president prior to review of the candidate application(s).

Each college dean will provide the faculty senate president with the names of those elected to the college promotion and tenure review committee according to the timetable specified in the tenure calendar. The faculty senate president, in consultation with the faculty senate steering committee, may in turn appoint up to two additional faculty members to each college promotion and tenure review committee to ensure diversity, which will provide for representation that reflects the make-up of the university.

- 3) Review Process. Upon receipt of recommendations and other materials from the department chairperson and department tenure review committee, the college dean then forwards the materials to the college promotion and tenure review committee. The college promotion and tenure review committee is responsible for:
  - a) consideration of each candidate's qualifications using approved department, college and university criteria; and b) reviewing the tenure recommendations of the departments committees and chairperson for each candidate. After consideration, the committee will consult with the college dean. If the recommendations of the dean and committee are in concert, the committee will forward all materials submitted, along with their own recommendations to the appropriate dean. If the recommendations of the college dean and committee are in conflict, they will meet in an attempt to resolve the conflict prior to submitting formal recommendations. If the conflicts cannot be resolved, reports submitted by the committee to the dean will describe the points of conflict. Deans are responsible for: a) consideration of each candidate's qualifications using approved department, college and university criteria; and b) reviewing the recommendations of department chairpersons, department tenure review committees, and college promotion and tenure review committees for each candidate. Deans will forward all materials submitted, along with their own recommendations, to the provost.
- 4) When deliberations are concluded, the academic dean and the college promotion and tenure review committee will notify each person considered for tenure of their recommendations. Each candidate will be afforded the opportunity to meet with the dean and/or the college promotion and tenure review committee to discuss the review process and the data upon which the decision was made. It is the candidate's responsibility to initiate requests for a meeting with the dean and/or college committee.

d. Provost's Review

- 1) The provost will review all recommendations on tenure and forward his/her recommendations to the president of the university, state whether the issuance of letters of non-renewal is necessary, and prepare a list of those to whom such letters are to be sent.
- 2) On the same date a decision is forwarded to the president, the provost will notify each person considered, along with the appropriate dean and department chairperson, of his or her decision. The provost will afford each person considered

an opportunity to meet and discuss the review process and the data upon which the decision was made. It is the candidate's responsibility to initiate any request to review the process and data upon which the decision is made.

e. President's Review

The president will review the recommendations forwarded to him or her, and then prepare a list of faculty recommended for tenure, which will be submitted to the chancellor of the Board of Regents. The president will notify candidates, department chairpersons, deans, and provost of his or her recommendations. When notified of official action by the Board of Regents, the president will provide written confirmation of the Board of Regent decisions to the candidates, department chairperson, deans, and provost.

f. Appeals

The appeals process for official review by members of the University Grievance and Appeals Committee and others is outlined in University Policy II:01:05C. The appeal process should commence after the provost has rendered his or her decision and notified the candidate of the decision.

3. Calendar of the Review Process

Each spring semester, the office of the provost will issue a calendar for the tenure review process for the upcoming academic year, which will include key dates at each major step in the process.

4. Qualified Privilege of Academic Confidentiality for Tenure Review Committees

- a. Peers and other faculty members serving on committees that make evaluations are expected to observe the highest appropriate standards of confidentiality concerning deliberations. Tenure review committees have qualified privilege of academic confidentiality against disclosure of individual tenure votes unless there is evidence that casts doubt upon the integrity of the committee. This policy will be interpreted in a manner consistent with the Tennessee Public Records Act, as recorded in Tennessee Codes Annotated Sections 10-7-101 et seq.
- b. In general, no such privilege is recognized for proceedings outside of the university. The records created during the tenure process are subject to disclosure pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated Section 10-7-503, and information regarding the process may be sought by subpoena or court order.

C. Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Consideration for Academic Tenure

1. Academic tenure may be awarded only to full-time faculty members who: (a) hold academic rank as assistant professor, associate professor, or professor and meet the minimum rank criteria for that rank under university policies; (b) have been employed pursuant to tenure-track appointments and have completed the probationary period of service as stated in the university's policy, and/or as agreed upon in writing and signed by the appropriate academic officer; and (c) have been determined by the university to meet

the criteria for recommendation for tenure and have been so recommended pursuant to this policy.

- a. Faculty members holding temporary, instructional coordinator, clinical, or research appointments are not eligible for tenure.
- b. Faculty members supported in whole or in part by funds available to the university on a short-term basis, such as grants, contracts, or foundation sponsored projects, will not be eligible for tenure unless continuing support for such members can be clearly identified in the regular budget of the university upon the recommendation of tenure to the Board of Regents.
- c. No faculty member will be eligible for tenure unless the employee's contract specifies his/her tenure-track status; provided that where a faculty member with tenure is appointed to an administrative position, he/she will retain tenure in a former faculty position only; and provided further that a faculty member otherwise eligible for tenure who also holds a non-faculty position may be awarded tenure in the faculty position only, subject to the requirements of this policy.
- d. In general, candidates for tenure must have earned the doctorate or other specified terminal degree in the faculty member's discipline. The university may request exceptions to this standard based upon its mission or based upon an extraordinary candidate. In the latter instance, the exception will be requested when the faculty member is employed and/or when the length of the probationary period is determined.
- e. In some instances, a faculty member with the rank of instructor may be reviewed for and be awarded tenure and promotion to assistant professor simultaneously. Instructors applying for tenure and promotion simultaneously will be evaluated using the general performance criteria for assistant professor.
- f. Tenure and promotion are not formally linked, but typically promotion to associate professor comes with tenure, and granting of tenure comes with promotion to associate professor.

#### D. Probationary Employment

1. Probationary faculty may be employed on annual tenure-track appointments for a maximum probationary period that may not exceed six (6) years. Faculty members may stand for tenure in their fifth or sixth year. Faculty members who stand for tenure in their fifth year and are denied tenure will be permitted to reapply for tenure in their sixth year provided they have been recommended for renewal.

Exceptions to the minimum probationary period may be made under special circumstances upon recommendation by the president and approval by the Chancellor. Upon approval of such an exception by the Chancellor, the faculty member's recommendation will go forward to the Board of Regents as meeting the requirements for the probationary period.

2. Faculty members are reminded that it is their responsibility to initiate requests for tenure. A faculty member's failure to apply at the end of the probationary period and within the prescribed due dates for submission relieves the university of responsibility in regard to

awarding tenure, and any faculty member who fails to apply will be automatically denied tenure.

#### E. Calculating the Probationary Period

Only full-time continuous service at the university will be included in determining completion of the probationary period, except where a break in service was pursuant to an approved leave of absence. The probationary period starts on the date specified in the letter of appointment.

1. **Credit for Prior Service.** The minimum probationary period of five (5) years may include credit for prior service when agreed to by the president and subject to the maximum permissible credit for prior service, as noted below.
  - a. Credit toward completion of the probationary period may, at the discretion of the president, be given for a maximum of three years of previous full-time service at other colleges, universities, or institutes provided that the prior service is relevant to the institution's own needs and criteria. Any credit for prior service must be recognized and confirmed in writing in the appointment letter to a tenure-track position.
  - b. Credit toward completion of the probationary period may, at the discretion of the president, be given for a maximum of three (3) years of previous full-time service in a faculty appointment at the same institution. Any credit for prior service must be recognized and confirmed in writing in the appointment letter to a tenure-track position.
2. **Approved Leave of Absence.** A period of approved leave of absence will be excluded from the requisite period for completion of the probationary period unless the president of the university specified in writing prior to the leave of absence that it will be included in the probationary period. Leaves of absence may not be granted retroactively. A faculty member may apply for a maximum of two (2) extensions in one-year increments so long as the total probationary period does not exceed six years. Requests for an extension to a leave of absence follow the same procedure.
3. **Stopping the Tenure Clock.** Faculty members in a tenure track appointment may request to "stop the clock" during their probationary period when circumstances exist that interrupt normal progress toward building a case for tenure. Discretion for stopping the tenure clock rests on the institution and also requires supervisory approval. In such cases, the faculty member may request to "stop the tenure clock" for one-year if he/she demonstrates that circumstances reasonably warrant such interruption. Reasons for approving a request to "stop the clock" will typically be related to a personal or family situation requiring attention and commitment that consumes the time and energy normally addressed to faculty duties and professional development. Examples may include, but are not limited to, childbirth or adoption, care of dependents, medical conditions or obligations, physical disasters or disruptions, or similar circumstances that require a fundamental alteration of one's professional life. The intent of this policy is to serve the best interests of the university while providing neither preference to nor adverse effect on a faculty member's process of developing a case for tenure. Once approved, the "stop the clock" year is not counted in the probationary period accrual.
4. **Procedure to Modify the Probationary Period.** A faculty member seeking a modification of his/her probationary period must submit his/her request, in writing, addressing the

considerations described above. The request is to be submitted to the department chair for consideration and recommendation. The chair's recommendation is forwarded to the dean of the faculty member's college for consideration and recommendation; then to the provost for consideration and recommendation; and finally to the president for approval or denial. The president will notify the faculty member, in writing, of the decision to approve or deny such exceptions within one month of submission. Requests for modification of the probationary period that are based on a faculty member's health or care for an immediate family member should also be submitted to the university's legal counsel or to the Board of Regents Office of the General Counsel for review.

5. A faculty member who is appointed to an administrative position prior to a tenure award remains eligible for tenure under two conditions: 1) the faculty member must qualify for tenure under department or academic program unit, college and university guidelines; and 2) the faculty member must maintain a significant involvement in academic pursuits including teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity and service/outreach. The time (or prorated portion of time) spent in the administrative position may be credited toward completion of the probationary period.
6. Where a faculty member is serving a probationary period in a department or academic program unit and is subsequently transferred to another department or academic program unit, the faculty member may – with the approval of the president – elect to begin a new probationary period on the date that the transfer occurs. If he/she does not so elect (and confirm in writing to the president), time spent in the first appointment will count toward establishing the minimum and maximum probationary period.
7. Employment during summer terms or in part-time positions will not be credited toward satisfying the probationary period.
8. When a faculty member's appointment begins in January, service for that semester will be counted for tenure as one whole academic or fiscal year.

#### **IV. Criteria to be Considered in Tenure Recommendations**

##### **A. General Tenure Criteria**

1. Staffing needs of each department and the total university are the first priority when faculty members are considered for tenure. Staffing needs are determined primarily by the current student enrollment, by the enrollment trends over the past five to ten year period, and by the overall mission of the department and university. An over-staffed department or even one whose enrollment trends indicate that it will soon become over-staffed, should not give serious consideration to tenuring additional faculty unless retirements and/or resignations of tenured staff appear imminent. The criteria relevant to assessing the long-term staffing needs of a department and the university are considered significant and are stated in a generic sense as follows: (a) mandates of the Board of Regents and the Higher Education Commission; (b) university mission and long-term goals; (c) college mission and long-term goals; and (d) department academic program emphasis, specialized orientation, and long-term goals.
2. While the nature and relative importance of the criteria for recommendation for tenure depend upon the nature, missions and goals of the college and the department or academic

program unit, all faculty members considered for tenure will be evaluated with respect to their performance in (a) teaching; (b) research/scholarship/creative activity; and (c) service/outreach. They are expected to demonstrate high quality performance in teaching, high quality performance in one of the other two areas and quality performance in the remaining area.

The performance expectations for tenure will be dependent on the faculty member's rank (see University Policy on Promotion II:01:05B). In all categories of evaluation, documentation of quality as evaluated by peers will be stressed over quantity. Within the context of teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity, and service/outreach, the faculty member must demonstrate willingness and ability to work effectively with colleagues to support the mission of the university and the common goals both of the university and of the academic organizational unit.

Where departments demonstrate a clear need for additional tenured faculty, the following are general guidelines for assessing the work and potential of probationary faculty who are candidates for tenure:

- a. Evidence of professional experience and performance in teaching;
- b. Evidence of direct participation in scholarship through research and/or creative activity;
- c. Evidence of thorough and systematic study of the research, scholarship, and/or creative activity of others;
- d. Evidence of continuing direct participation in public service, university service, and/or professional service germane to their discipline; and
- e. Evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity that will ensure cooperation with colleagues and commitment to the programs and students of the department, the college, and the university;

## B. Outline of Faculty Data and Supporting Materials

Candidates for tenure will submit a completed Outline of Faculty Data form. Candidates will also submit an orderly file of supporting materials (reprints, letters of support, creative works, etc.). A list of these supporting materials will be attached to the Outline of Faculty Data form. However, the supporting materials themselves will be stored in the department. Administrators and committees involved in the review process may ask to review any or all of these supporting materials at their discretion. Departments and/or colleges may require additional specific supplemental documentation as outlined in department and/or college policies, subject to approval by the provost and president.

## C. Teaching

1. Overview. All faculty members are expected to demonstrate high quality performance in teaching. Teaching applies to any strategy in which information is imparted so that others may learn, and may include, but is not limited to, a variety of techniques including instruction, student advising and/or mentoring, development of course materials and courseware, and development of innovative approaches to instruction. Effective teaching is

an essential qualification for tenure, and tenure should not be granted in the absence of clear evidence of a candidate's teaching ability and potential for continued development.

2. Performance Criteria. All faculty members are expected to demonstrate high quality performance in teaching. Although academic units of the university may assign varying degrees of significance to individual criteria, all faculty members will be evaluated with respect to each of the following criteria for teaching.
  - a. Performance in teaching of students as evaluated by students and peers;
  - b. Performance in the advisement and mentoring of students;
  - c. Improvement of their own courses and also the curricular offerings of the department, college and university;
  - d. Effectiveness in teaching methods (including efforts to improve pedagogy with new techniques and integration of new instructional technologies);
  - e. Supervision of specialized instructional activities (student research/scholarship/creative activity, service learning, experiential learning, thesis and dissertation direction, internships, student teaching, etc.);
  - f. Honors received and recognition for teaching;
  - g. Currency and continued intellectual development in the field of specialization;
  - h. Seeking internal and external funding for instructional activities. Whether funded or unfunded, the quality of the proposal will be stressed in the evaluation. Other factors may include the reputation of the funding source and the competition for funding; and
  - i. Contributions to teaching (for example, textbooks, articles, workshops, presentations, instructional technology resources, etc.) could be appropriate here or under research/scholarship/creative activity depending on the nature of the work.
3. Documentation.
  - a. Supporting materials as described in IV:B will, at a minimum, include a statement of teaching philosophy; course materials; evidence of student projects and other forms of student mentorship; and evidence of evaluation by faculty peers.
  - b. Student evaluations for each course section evaluated during the probationary period will be added to the candidate's supporting materials by the department chairperson.
  - c. Other supporting material may include, but will not be limited to grant proposals, additional student input, results of alumni surveys and/or student exit interviews, textbooks or educational articles, and innovative contributions to teaching, if published or presented in a peer-reviewed forum.

#### D. Research/Scholarship/Creative Activity

1. Overview. All faculty members are expected to demonstrate quality research, scholarship, and/or creative activity. Candidates for tenure must present evidence of their research, scholarship and/or creative activity when they apply for tenure.

Research/scholarship/creative activity applies to the studious inquiry, examination, or discovery that contributes to disciplinary and interdisciplinary bodies of knowledge. Research/scholarship/creative activity may include, but is not limited to, disciplinary and interdisciplinary activities that focus on the boundaries of knowledge, field-based scholarship, creative activities (e.g., film-making, performances, or other artistic creations), and the development of innovative teaching approaches.

2. Performance Criteria. Although academic units of the university may assign varying degrees of weight to each criterion, all faculty members will be evaluated with respect to each of the following criteria:
  - a. Direct participation in research, scholarship, and/or creative activity. Faculty collaboration with undergraduate and/or graduate students may be included here;
  - b. Thorough and systematic study of the research, scholarship, and/or creative activity of others; and
  - c. Seeking internal and external funding for research, scholarship, and/or creative activity. Whether funded or unfunded, the quality of the proposal will be stressed in the evaluation. Other factors may include the reputation of the funding source and the competition for funding.
  
3. Documentation
  - a. The Outline of Faculty Data and supporting materials as described in IV:B above must include evidence of peer-review of some elements of the candidate's research, scholarship and/or creative activity.
  - b. Other supporting materials may include, but will not be limited to the following:
    - 1) Publications (articles, monographs, books, electronic media, and other published works). Publications that are subject to a formal review process by recognized scholars in the field are considered more significant than those subject to less rigorous examination.
    - 2) Written reviews and evaluations of performances, compositions, and other creative activities by qualified peers, either in person or aided by other forms of reports, are considered appropriate documentation;
    - 3) Published programs or reviews of public performance or public display will constitute documentation of original creative work;
    - 4) Presentations before one's professional peers at regional, national, or international meetings/conferences;
    - 5) Appropriate textbooks, educational articles, and instructional technology resources in one's own discipline and innovative contributions to teaching, if published or presented in a peer-reviewed forum, constitute scholarship of teaching. The scholarship of teaching is a valid measure of research capability;
    - 6) Funded internal grants from the university or external grants from public or private sources;

- 7) Unfunded proposals for internal and external grants, where the documentation supports the quality of the proposal.

#### E. Service/Outreach

1. Overview. As a vital component of the university's mission, service/outreach must be performed at the same level of quality that characterizes the teaching and research/scholarship/creative activity programs. Service/Outreach encompasses a faculty member's activities in three areas: public service, university service, and professional service.
  - a. Public service is the university's outreach to the community and society at large, with major emphasis on the application of knowledge for the solution of problems with which society is confronted. Public service primarily involves sharing professional expertise and should directly support the goals and mission of the university.
  - b. University service refers to work other than teaching and research/scholarship/creative activity done at the department, college, and/or university level. A certain amount of such service is expected of every faculty member. University service includes, but is not limited to, participation on department, college and university committees. Some faculty members may accept more extensive citizenship functions, such as a leadership role in the Faculty Senate, membership on a specially appointed task force, advisor to a university-wide student organization, and/or membership on a university search committee.
  - c. Professional service refers to the work done for organizations germane to one's discipline or to the teaching profession generally. Service to the profession includes, but is not limited to, association leadership, journal editorships, articles and grant proposal review, guest lecturing on other campuses, and other appropriate activities. While it is difficult to define the exact nature of significant professional service, clearly more is required than organizational membership and attendance; examples of significant service would be that done by an officer of a professional organization or a member of the editorial staff of a journal.
2. Performance Criteria. Participation in university service is expected of every faculty member. Although it is recognized that differences in emphases may exist, evaluation of service/outreach will be based on an appraisal of the faculty member's performance, resourcefulness, and creativity in each of the three areas defined above: public service; university service; and professional service. Evaluation will be based on the following criteria, with the academic unit of the university to which the faculty member is assigned determining the degree of weight for each criterion. These criteria should include: community service programs; public service consultation; university, committee and administrative responsibilities; and active contributions to professional associations. In each case, documentation of the evaluation process and criteria used will be as complete as possible.

### 3. Documentation

- a. The Outline of Faculty Data and supporting materials as described in IV:B above must include evidence of peer-review of some elements of the candidate's service/outreach activities.
- b. Other supporting materials may include, but will not be limited to the following:
  - 1) A description of the candidate's service/outreach position that permits evaluation of performance. This should include a statement of the mission or purpose of the position, and of the objective(s) of the candidate's service unit, as well as the specific assigned tasks and responsibilities of the candidate.
  - 2) An evaluation of the effectiveness of the candidate's service/outreach, as judged by its impact on individuals, groups, or organizations served. This should include indices of the success of the service/outreach activities, in terms of improvement of communities, programs, operating agencies, production processes, or management practices. The evaluations should also include indications of satisfaction with the service/outreach provided by the candidate, and of the magnitude and complexity of the work (as opposed to perfunctory activity that does not lead to useful results).
  - 3) An appraisal of the candidate's local, regional and national stature. Although the achievement of national stature is sometimes difficult for faculty whose service/outreach activities are primarily directed to groups within the state, the public service professional should take advantage of every opportunity to project his or her accomplishments among peers on a local, regional, and national basis. Service/outreach work is sometimes not publishable. The results may be in the form of direct consultations, planning reports, or instructional time directed largely to the recipients of university service programs. But certain aspects of service/outreach work are suitable for publication in professional journals. For example, unique techniques developed to motivate clients, or new approaches to the transfer and application of knowledge, would be of interest to peers in other public service programs across the nation.
  - 4) Evidence of applications seeking internal and external funding for service/outreach activities; funded grants from Middle Tennessee State University, public agencies, or private foundations; submitted proposals for external funding by public agencies or private foundations. The quality of the grant proposals, whether funded or unfunded, will be stressed in the evaluation.

## V. Changes in Tenure/Tenure-Track Status

### A. Non-renewal of Probationary Tenure-Track Faculty

1. When tenure-track appointments of faculty are not to be renewed for further service, applicable dates for notice of non-renewal will be based upon actual years of service at Middle Tennessee State University and are in no way affected by any credit for prior service that may be awarded pursuant to Section III:E of this policy. Faculty members will receive notice of their non-renewal for the ensuing academic year as follows:

- a. Faculty members in their first year of service will be given notice at least two (2) months in advance of their termination; notification will not be later than March 1 for those whose appointments expire at the end of the academic year.
  - b. Faculty members in their second year of service will be given notice at least five (5) months in advance of their termination; notification will not be later than January 1 for those whose appointments expire at the end of the academic year.
  - c. Faculty members in their third or subsequent years of service will be notified no later than the close of the academic year, if the appointment expires at the end of that year of service; or, they will be notified at least twelve (12) months in advance of termination, if the appointment terminates during an academic year. In either event, faculty members who have served three (3) or more years of their probationary appointment will be provided notice twelve (12) months prior to termination.
2. Notice of non-renewal will be effective upon personal delivery by the faculty member's department chairperson of the Notice to Faculty Members form, or upon the date the notice is mailed, by certified mail, return receipt requested, postage prepaid, to the faculty member's current home address on record at the university. Said written notice will carry the signature of the president or that of a designated representative.
  3. When faculty members on tenure-track appointments complete the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) year of their probationary period, faculty members will either be recommended for tenure by the president or will be given notice of non-renewal. Notice of non-renewal will be given by the president no later than the final day of the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) academic year. The appointment to the university would end at the close of the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) academic year. A faculty member's rights in such instance where timely notice is not given are described in III:A:2.
  4. Faculty members on tenure-track appointments will not be terminated during the annual specified term of the appointment, except for reasons that would be sufficient for the termination of tenured faculty.
  5. The non-renewal or non-reappointment of faculty members on a tenure-track appointment does not necessarily carry an implication that their work or conduct has been unsatisfactory. No proprietary or other interest in a position is created by acceptance of a probationary appointment.
  6. Unless there is a violation of state or federal law under the limitations described in the Tennessee Board of Regents Policy on Appeals (1:02:11:00), decisions that are not subject to appeal to the Chancellor include (a) non-renewal of a tenure-track faculty appointment during the first four years of the probationary period and (b) denial of tenure unaccompanied by notice of termination in the fifth year of the probationary period.

## B. Transfer of Tenure

Faculty members tenured in an academic program unit (e.g. a department or division) may be transferred to another academic program unit. In such cases, the transfer will be made with tenure; moreover, the tenure appointment will be transferred to the new academic program unit. In no instance may the faculty member be compelled to relinquish tenure (see V:D) as a condition for effecting the transfer.

### C. Expiration of Tenure

Tenure status will expire upon retirement of a faculty member. Tenure will also expire upon the event of permanent physical or mental inability of a faculty member, as established by an appropriate medical authority or other relevant factors, to continue to perform his/her assigned duties.

### D. Relinquishment of Tenure

A faculty member will relinquish or waive his/her right to tenure upon resignation from the university or upon failure to report for service at the designated date of the beginning of any academic term, which will be deemed to be a resignation, unless, in the opinion of the president, the faculty member has shown good cause for such failure to report. Tenure is not relinquished during periods of approved leaves of absence, or during administrative assignments at the university.

### E. Termination of Tenure for Reasons of Financial Exigency

A tenured faculty member may be terminated as a result of financial exigency at a university subject to declaration by the Board of Regents that such financial conditions exist. Personnel decisions (including those pertaining to tenured faculty) that result from a declaration of financial exigency at a Board of Regents university will comply with the Board of Regents Policy on Financial Exigency (5:02:06:00; also see definition of Financial Exigency in II:C).

### F. Termination of Tenure for Curricular Reasons

The employment of a tenured faculty member may be terminated because (1) an academic program is deleted from the curriculum or (2) because of substantial and continued reduction of student enrollment in a field or discipline.

“Program is deleted from the curriculum” means that the Board of Regents takes formal action to terminate a degree major, concentration, or other curricular component and that such termination eliminates or reduces need for faculty qualified in that discipline or area of specialization. “Substantive and continued reduction of student enrollment in a field” means that over a period of at least three (3) years student enrollment in a field has decreased at a rate in considerable excess of that of the university as a whole and that such reduction has resulted in faculty-student ratios that, in the opinion of the president, cannot be warranted either by comparison with equivalent faculty load practices within the university or by comparisons with faculty loads in comparable departments or academic program units at similar universities which the president would deem to be appropriate for comparison.

Before declaring that curricular reasons exist, the president will ensure meaningful participation by the faculty senate in identifying the specific curricular reasons, evaluating the long-term effect on the university’s curriculum and its strategic planning goals, and the advisability of initiating further action. Prior to initiating the process described below, the president will present a written description of curricular reasons that may warrant the termination of tenured faculty member(s). Subsequent to provision of the written description, the president will meet with the faculty senate to review these curricular reasons. The faculty senate will have the opportunity to respond in writing to the president for action described below is initiated. Each of these reasons for termination of tenure for curricular reasons must denote shifts in staffing needs that warrant greater reductions than those that are

accommodated annually in light of shifting positions from one department to another or among colleges to handle changing enrollment patterns.

#### G. Procedures for Termination of Tenure for Curricular Reasons

The president should deny renewal to part-time faculty, temporary faculty, clinical track, research-track, and tenure-track faculty in the probationary period, before termination of tenured faculty.

1. Upon determining that termination of tenured faculty members is warranted for curricular reasons, the president will consult with the chairpersons and deans of affected departments concerning which terminations would least jeopardize the educational programs of their departments. The president will base decisions about which faculty member(s) should be terminated upon assessment as to what action would least seriously compromise the educational programs in a department or division. Termination for curricular reasons presumes a staffing pattern in a department or academic program unit that cannot be warranted either by comparison with general load practices within the university or by comparison with faculty loads in comparable departments or academic program units at similar universities. In that light, the president will also, at his/her discretion, base decisions on a careful assessment of the impact of the curricular reason on staffing requirements in the department or academic program unit as compared to overall patterns in the university and to comparable departments or academic program units which, in his/her judgment are in universities similar enough to warrant assessment.

Unless the president demonstrates (preferably by means of past performance evaluations) that an exception should be made to protect the quality of an educational program, the following considerations should guide the president in determining the order of faculty reductions in a department where termination of tenured faculty is proposed for curricular reasons.

- a. among tenured faculty, those with higher rank should have priority in retaining their tenured positions over those with lower rank;
- b. among tenured faculty with comparable rank, those with appropriate higher academic degree(s) should have priority in retaining their tenured positions over those with lower degree(s); and
- c. among tenured faculty with comparable rank and comparable degrees, those with greater seniority in rank should have priority in retaining their tenured positions over those with less seniority.

The president will furnish each faculty member to be terminated a written statement of the reasons for the termination. Those reasons will indicate the manner and the information upon which the decision of which faculty members were to be terminated was reached. The president's written statement will also indicate that the faculty member has the opportunity to respond in writing stating any objections to the decision.

When a tenured faculty member is to be terminated for curricular reasons, the president will make every possible effort to relocate the tenured faculty member in another existing vacant position for which he/she is qualified. In instances where (in the opinion of the president) relocation within the university is a viable alternative, the university has an

obligation to make significant effort to relocate the faculty member, including the bearing of reasonable retraining costs. The final decision on relocation is within the discretion of the president.

2. If a faculty member to be terminated indicates objections to the president's written statement and requests a review, the president will appoint a faculty committee consisting of a minimum of five (5) tenured faculty members from a slate of ten (10) tenured faculty members proposed by the faculty senate. The committee will conduct a hearing on the proposed termination(s). The committee will report its findings and recommendations to the president, who will in a reasonable time inform the faculty member(s) proposed for termination in writing either that the decision for termination stands or that it has been altered.
3. The president's decision to terminate a tenured faculty member for curricular reasons is subject to appeal to the Chancellor and the Board of Regents as provided in the policy on appeals to the Board (Tennessee Board of Regents Policy 1:02:11:00).
4. When a tenured faculty member is terminated for curricular reasons, the position will not be filled by a new appointee with the same areas of specialization as the terminated faculty member within a period of three (3) years unless the terminated faculty member has been offered, in writing, reappointment to the position at his/her previous rank and salary (with the addition of an appropriate increase which, in the opinion of the president, would constitute the raise(s) that would have been awarded during the period that he/she was not employed).

#### H. Termination for Adequate Cause

A faculty member in any appointment category (including tenured faculty) may be terminated for adequate cause prior to the end of the term of appointment. Adequate cause includes the following:

1. Incompetence, misconduct, dishonesty, and/or fraudulent activity in teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity, and/or service/outreach;
2. Willful failure to perform the duties and responsibilities for which the faculty member was employed or refusal or continued failure to comply with the policies of the Board of Regents, the university or the department, or refusal to carry out specific assignments, when such policies or assignments are reasonable and non-discriminatory;
3. Conviction of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude;
4. Improper use of narcotics or intoxicants, which substantially impairs the faculty member's fulfillment of his/her department and university duties and responsibilities;
5. Capricious disregard of accepted standards of professional conduct;
6. Falsification of information on Middle Tennessee State University employment application or of other information concerning qualifications for a position; and/or
7. Failure to maintain the level of professional excellence and ability demonstrated by other members of the faculty in the department or academic program unit of the university.

## I. Procedures for Termination for Adequate Cause

Termination of a faculty member in any appointment category (including tenured faculty) prior to the end of the annual specified term of the appointment, will be subject to the following procedures:

1. No termination will be effective until steps four (4) through ten (10) below have been completed.
2. Suspensions pending termination will be governed by the following procedures:
  - a. A faculty member may not be suspended pending completion of steps four (4) through ten (10) unless it is determined by the university that the faculty member's presence poses a danger to persons or property or a threat of destruction to the academic or operational processes of the university. Reassignment of responsibilities is not considered suspension; however, the faculty member must be reassigned responsibilities for which he/she is qualified.
  - b. In any case of suspension, at the time of the decision or immediately thereafter to contest the suspension; and, if there are disputed issues of fact or cause and effect, the faculty member will be provided the opportunity for a hearing on the suspension as soon as possible at which time the faculty member will be provided the opportunity for a hearing on the suspension as soon as possible at which time the faculty member may cross-examine his/her accuser, present witnesses on his/her behalf, and be represented by an attorney. Thereafter, whether the suspension is upheld or revoked, the matter will proceed pursuant to these procedures.
3. Except for such simple announcements as may be required concerning the time of proceedings and similar matters, public statements and publicity about these proceedings by either the faculty member or administrative officers will be avoided so far as possible until the proceedings have been completed, including consideration by the Board of Regents.
4. Upon a recommendation by the provost of the university to the president or upon a decision by the president that these procedures should be undertaken in consideration of the termination of a tenured faculty member, one or more appropriate administrators will meet privately with the faculty member for purposes of attempting to reach a mutually acceptable resolution of the problems giving rise to the proposed termination proceedings.
5. If no mutually acceptable resolution is reached through step four (4), the president will appoint a faculty committee consisting of tenured faculty members whose appointments should be, but are not required to be, agreed to by the faculty member. The faculty committee will conduct an informal inquiry of the facts giving rise to the proposed termination and seek a mutually acceptable resolution. Should no such resolution be reached, the committee will recommend to the president whether in its opinion further proceedings should be taken in pursuit of the termination. The recommendation will be in writing and will be accompanied by reasons for the recommendation. The committee's recommendation will not be binding on the president.
6. If no mutually acceptable resolution is reached through step five (5) and/or if after consideration of the faculty committee's recommendation, the president determines that

further proceedings are warranted to consider termination, the following steps will be taken:

- a. The faculty member will be provided with a written statement of the specific charges alleged by the university which constitute grounds for termination and a notice of hearing specifying the time, date, and place of the hearing. The statement and notice must be provided at least twenty (20) days prior to the hearing. The faculty member will respond to the charges in writing at least five (5) days prior to the hearing. The faculty member may waive the hearing by execution of a written waiver.
  - b. A Hearing Committee consisting of tenured faculty or tenured faculty and administrators will be appointed to hear the case and to determine if adequate cause for termination exists according to the procedure hereinafter described. The committee will be appointed by the president and the officially recognized faculty senate, assembly or advisory committee, with each appointing the number of members designated by the policy of the university. The committee may not include any member of the faculty committee referred to in five (5) above. Members deeming themselves disqualified for bias or interest will remove themselves from the case, either at the request of a party or on their own initiative. Members of the committee will not discuss the case outside committee deliberations and will report any ex-parte communication pertaining to the hearing to the president who will notify all parties of the communication.
7. The Hearing Committee will elect a chairperson who will direct the proceedings and rule on procedural matters, including the granting of reasonable extensions of time at the request of any party and upon the showing of good cause for the extension.
  8. The chairperson of the hearing committee may in his/her discretion require a joint pre-hearing conference with the parties, which may be held in person or by a conference telephone call. The purpose of the pre-hearing conference should include but is not limited to one or more of the following:
    - a. Notification as to procedure for conduct of the hearing;
    - b. Exchange of witness lists, documentary evidence, and affidavits;
    - c. Define and clarify issues;
    - d. Effect stipulations of fact;
    - e. A written memorandum of the pre-hearing conference should be prepared and provided to each party; and
    - f. Any other appropriate preliminary matters.
  9. A hearing will be conducted by the hearing committee to determine whether adequate cause for termination of the faculty member exists. The hearing will be conducted according to the procedures below.
    - a. During the hearing, the faculty member will be permitted to have an academic advisor present and may be represented by legal counsel of his/her choice.

- b. A verbatim record of the hearing will be taken and a typewritten copy will be made available to the faculty member, upon request, at the faculty member's expense.
  - c. The burden of proof that adequate cause exists rests with the university and will be satisfied only by clear and convincing evidence in the record considered as a whole.
  - d. The faculty member will be afforded an opportunity to obtain necessary witnesses and documentary or other evidence. The administration will cooperate with the committee in using its best efforts to secure witnesses and make available documentary and other evidence that is under its control.
  - e. The faculty member and the administration will have the right to confront and cross-examine all witnesses. Where the witnesses cannot or will not appear, but the committee determines that the interests of justice require admission of their statements, the committee will identify the witnesses, disclose their statements, and, if possible, provide for interrogatories. An affidavit may be submitted in lieu of the personal appearance of a witness if the party offering the affidavit has provided a copy to the opposing party at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing and the opposing party has not objected to the admission of the affidavit in writing within (7) days after delivery of the affidavit or if the committee chairperson determines that the admission of the affidavit is necessary to ensure a just and fair decision.
  - f. In a hearing on charges of incompetence, the testimony will include that of qualified faculty members from the Middle Tennessee State University and/or other universities of higher education.
  - g. The hearing committee will not be bound by strict rules of legal evidence and may admit any evidence which is of probative value in determining the issues involved. Every possible effort will be made to obtain the most reliable evidence available.
  - h. The findings of fact and the report will be based solely on the hearing record.
  - i. The president and the faculty member will be provided a copy of the written committee report. The committee's written report will specify findings of fact and will state whether the committee has determined that adequate cause for termination exists and, if so, the specific grounds for termination found. In addition, the committee may recommend action less than dismissal. The report will also specify any applicable policy the committee considered.
10. After consideration of the committee's report and the record, the president may in his/her discretion consult with the faculty member prior to reaching a final decision regarding termination. Following his/her review, the president will notify the faculty member of his/her decision, which, if contrary to the committee's recommendation will be accompanied by a statement of the reasons. If the faculty member is terminated or suspended as a result of the president's decision, the faculty member may appeal the president's action to the Chancellor pursuant to Tennessee Board of Regents Policy 1:02:11:00. Review of the appeal will be based upon the record of hearing. If upon review of the record, the Chancellor notes objections regarding the termination and/or its proceedings, the matter will be returned to the president for reconsideration, taking into

account the stated objections, and, at the discretion of the president, the case may be returned to the hearing committee for further proceedings.

NOTE 1: The Board of Regents Policy No. 5:02:03:60 became effective on July 1, 2004 for all faculty whose employment in the Board of Regents' system began on or after that date. As of July 1, 2008, faculty members appointed prior to July 1, 2004, may no longer be considered for tenure under the August 1, 1999 MTSU Policies and Procedures for Tenure. This revised policy, MTSU Policies and Procedures for Tenure, is applicable to all tenure actions taken on or subsequent to July 1, 2008, for all MTSU faculty regardless of whether his/her employment began prior or subsequent to July 1, 2004.

The definition of tenure (II:A) became effective January 1, 1984. That definition applied only to faculty tenured subsequent to the effective date. For faculty members tenured previous to January 1, 1984, the applicable definition of tenure will be: "a status pursuant to which the academic year appointments of full-time faculty who have been awarded tenure are continued at a university until the expiration or relinquishment of that status, subject to termination for adequate cause for financial exigency or curricular reasons (see policy adopted June 25, 1976)."