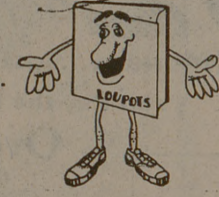




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F78-14	51.00	3.09	E78-14	43.00	2.57
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# Tenure for faculty members like acceptance to law firm

By MICHELLE SCUDDER  
Tenure for a faculty member is like being accepted into a law firm. After a period of probation, the person becomes a full-fledged colleague.

Until a faculty member is tenured, faculty appointments are made on a year-to-year probationary basis.

Tenure is an assurance to a faculty member who has passed a probationary period of service, that he or she may expect to continue in an academic appointment unless funds are no longer available or adequate cause for dismissal is demonstrated through established procedures of due process.

At Texas A&M University beginning with appointment to the rank of full-time instructor or a higher rank, the probationary period for an individual joining the faculty should not exceed seven years.

Faculty members who join the faculty at the rank of professor may become eligible for tenure after two years of satisfactory service.

According to Texas A&M's Faculty-Staff Handbook, "During the period of probationary service faculty members are employed annually with appropriate review in the academic department(s) where the faculty member is serving. Particularly close attention is paid to the review of non-tenured faculty members in their first and second years of employment."

"We look very, very closely at the person's first and second year at Texas A&M to be sure they are heading in the right direction," said Dr. Haskell Monroe, dean of faculties.

"The teaching load is usually heavier for younger faculty and the course preparation is heaviest the first and second year, but this is when the greatest demands are put

to get something published," one English professor said.

"We want there to be at least one annual conversation between the individual and the department head so the discussion of progress will take place. These conversations will strengthen the people we really want," Monroe said.

Although the general basis for determining tenure is standard within the University, different colleges and departments emphasize different criteria in granting tenure.

Although the emphasis is on teaching effectiveness in the College of Liberal Arts, in the College of Sciences research is weighed very carefully in determining tenure.

"Some departments don't have Ph.D. programs so they don't emphasize research like the sciences and engineering departments do," physics professor Dr. John McIntyre said.

"We feel a responsibility to get good research people at Texas A&M," McIntyre said. "A faculty member must have his research published and he should have a status of an independent scholar, which means he should be recognized nationally in his field. If we call a lab somewhere they should have his research."

"The people have to do a good job in their classes but research is very important," McIntyre said.

In the year preceding the last year of probationary service, a formal recommendation is made regarding tenure for each individual.

Based upon the sources of information, and faculty advisory participation a department head makes a tenure recommendation to the prospective dean.

"We cannot say that every department should judge everyone the same way," Monroe said. "Student evaluations are one useful source of information."

Dr. W.D. Maxwell, Dean of the

College of Liberal Arts, said a great deal of emphasis is placed on classroom teaching effectiveness in his college.

"We use the results of the student evaluations overtly, which means that they must be taken into account in recommendations for tenure and also for promotion decisions and salary determination," he said.

Maxwell said more emphasis is placed upon teaching in the College of Liberal Arts than most colleges, although the relative emphasis given to teaching and research varies among the individual departments that comprise the college.

Interpreting the results of the teaching questionnaires we look at them with a knowledge of their shortcomings," Maxwell said. "We know what biases there are and we take them into account."

It is typically true that in large classes that are required the rating of the professor will be lower and that the ratings of the professor will fare better in an upper level class teaching a few of his majors, Maxwell explained.

"There is faculty participation in tenure decisions in every department," Monroe said. "The decisions are made essentially down close where the faculty member works."

"The basic decisions are made at the faculty level because they know the people," McIntyre said. "Here is where the knowledge of the man is judged."

The department head makes the first written tenure recommendation, then it is reviewed by the dean of the college, the vice president for academic affairs, the president of the University, and then the Board of Regents, which has the authority to confer tenure.

"The higher it goes the fewer changes are made," Monroe said.

According to the Dean of Faculties office, in 1977-78 Texas A&M has 763 tenured individuals, 78 of whom were granted tenure this year.

Monroe says there is no quota for tenure. "If the individual does a

good job, that is the only thing that needs to get tenure," Monroe said.

McIntyre feels there are advantages to the tenure system for tenured and non-tenured individuals.

"If a non-tenured faculty member does not get along where he is, free to go look somewhere else," McIntyre said.

"Tenure does not protect a professor from not doing his job, main thing he gains is the time to do better things," McIntyre said. "If it works right, the quality of what the professor does because he doesn't have to be continually producing."

There are some disadvantages to the tenure system for a non-tenured faculty member. The seven-year probationary period can be shortened and there is no guarantee the individual will be here all years or that after the seven years the man he either will be steady job or he has to look elsewhere," McIntyre said.

"During my probationary period I was very concerned about it and worried about achieving it, I got it," one professor said.

Maxwell feels one misconception regarding tenure on the part of students and some of the faculty is that it is designed basically for security.

Tenure is probably an aspect of faculty life most hidden from the students and many students don't realize what their professors can really do and what they have accomplished in order to establish a steady job for their future.

According to Texas A&M Faculty-Staff Handbook, a faculty member has been granted tenure the only acceptable cause for dismissal are "if adequate professional competence, or gross neglect of professional responsibilities, or repeated failure to abide by the and regulations of the Texas University System."

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