

Memo To: All UH-Downtown PS Holders
From: Dr. Juan Sánchez Muñoz, President
Subject: Extension of the Probationary Period for
Tenure-Track Faculty

UH-Downtown/PS 10.A.23
Issue No. 1
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Page 1 of 3

1. PURPOSE

This Policy Statement (PS) defines policies and procedures for the extension of the probationary period for faculty at the University of Houston–Downtown (UHD). These policies and procedures are consistent with the role and scope of the institution.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Tenure: The right to continuous employment.
- 2.2 Promotion: Advancement to a higher rank. For purposes of this document, an assistant professor is eligible for promotion to the rank of associate professor, and associate professor is eligible for promotion to the rank of professor. Promotions are subject to the approval of the chancellor and the board of regents and become effective at the beginning of the next academic year.
- 2.3 Probationary period: The time a faculty member spends under appointment in a tenure-track position prior to being awarded tenure. It shall not exceed seven years without the approval of the UHD president, and the conditions of the period shall be specified in the appointment letter. Provisions for stopping the probationary clock are detailed in section 3.

3. POLICY

- 3.1 Discrepancies with the University of Houston System Policy: If any discrepancy occurs between the following UHD policies and those of the University of Houston System (UHS), the system policies are to be followed.
- 3.2 Extension of the Probationary Period: Faculty members are eligible for a one-year extension of the probationary period when they become new parents, either through natural childbirth or through legal adoption, or when serious illness, family emergencies or other serious personal circumstances arise.
- 3.3 For purposes of this policy, a child is newborn or, in the case of adoption, under the age of eighteen. Also, a tenure-track faculty member who is responsible for the primary care

of the child is one who is responsible for significant and continuous care of his or her newborn or adopted child.

An untenured tenure-track faculty member who becomes responsible for the primary care of a child will be given, upon written request, a one-year extension of the probationary period, whether or not the faculty member takes a leave of absence. The faculty member is responsible for notifying his/her department chair, in writing, of the request for an extension within six months after the birth or adoption of the child. The department chair will acknowledge the extension of the probationary period and will inform the faculty member, in writing, of the revised year of tenure review and second and fourth year reviews (as applicable), with a copy to the dean, who will then notify the provost's office.

Requests for extensions of the probationary period are normally submitted prior to the first Monday of May, but in extreme and justifiable circumstances, upon written approval by the provost, requests for extensions may be submitted up to the first Monday in October.

- 3.4 An untenured tenure-track faculty member has the right to request a one-year extension of the probationary period because of serious illness, family emergencies, or other serious personal circumstances, whether or not the faculty member takes a leave of absence. Circumstances that may justify an extension include, but are not limited to, serious illness and injury or other serious disruptions or personal emergencies beyond the faculty member's control. Requests for extensions of the probationary period are normally submitted prior to the first Monday of May, but in extreme and justifiable circumstances upon written approval by the provost, requests for extensions may be submitted up to the first Monday in October.

Requests must be made in writing and submitted directly to the provost within six months after the emergency circumstances or personal circumstances occur. The provost will notify the appropriate department chair of the request, but not the reason for the request, within five working days. Prior to requesting the extension, faculty may consult with the department chair, dean, and/or ombuds regarding the circumstances of the request, but no faculty may be required to discuss the circumstances with anyone outside of the provost. Upon approval by the provost, the department chair will acknowledge the extension of the probationary period and will inform the faculty member, in writing, of the revised year of tenure review and second and fourth year reviews (as applicable), with a copy to the dean, who will then notify the provost's office. These decisions should be made as soon as practicable.

3.5 The extension of the probationary period may occur at most twice (for a total of two years' extension), with each extension occasioned by circumstances determined by 3.3 and/or 3.4 above and by timely notice as defined in 3.3 and 3.4.

3.5.1 An approved request for an extension does not obligate the faculty member to take the extension. If circumstances resolve, the faculty member may follow their original tenure timeline, with second and fourth year reviews adjusted accordingly, if necessary.

3.6 This policy does not address faculty leave, nor does it affect any existing policy or policies relating to faculty leave. If a faculty member takes a leave of absence, this policy shall be applied in conjunction with relevant leave statutes and policies.

4. PROCEDURES

See Section 3 for Procedures

5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost

Review: Every five years, or as necessary.

Signed original on file in Employment Services and Operations

6. POLICY HISTORY

No prior issues of this policy.

7. REFERENCES

There are no references associated with this policy.