

## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers About HSC Faculty Employment and Tenure

*The following information is provided for the sole purpose of assisting faculty members in understanding the various statements that govern certain aspects of their employment as faculty of the Texas A&M Health Science Center.*

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First Date of Publication: March 2004, modified August 2007, November 2010, March 2011

*Web links to documents are included wherever appropriate. The following acronyms and numbering systems are used in this document:*

- "TAMUS"=The Texas A&M University System
- "SPRM"=*The Texas A&M University System Policy and Regulations Manual*
- "HSC"=The Texas A&M Health Science Center
- "System Policy XX.XX"=Citation to a policy section of *The Texas A&M University System Policy and Regulation Manual*
- "System Regulation XX.XX.XX"=Citation to a regulation contained with *The Texas A&M University System Policy and Regulation Manual*

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## **1. What are the governing authorities for TAMUS?**

*(For more information, see [System Policy 01.01](#), and [System Regulation 01.01.01](#).)*

The Board of Regents of TAMUS adopts Policies which are based upon the legal powers and duties vested in it as the governing board for the System. Policies are organized based on topic, and are published in the [System Policies and Regulations Manual](#). Regulations are published by the Chancellor's Office. Each component publishes its own Rules which may not contradict or

supersede the policies or regulations. *A component may have a Rule under a Policy even if there is no Regulation in place.* The hierarchy is as follows:

- Texas Constitution
  - Texas Statutes & Codes
    - TAMUS Policies
      - TAMUS Regulations (if no Regulation, HSC Rule controls)
        - HSC Rules
          - HSC Internal Policies

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## **2. What is the governance structure of the TAMUS and HSC?**

*(For more information, see System Policies [02.01](#), [02.02](#), [02.03](#), and [02.04.19](#).)*

TAMUS is governed by a Board of Regents appointed by the Governor with advice and consent of the State Senate. The Board appoints a Chancellor who serves as the chief executive officer of TAMUS. The [System Administrative and General Offices](#) (SAGO) (informally referred to as 'the System offices') provide administrative support to the Chancellor and Board of Regents, as well as centralized services to entities within TAMUS. The components of TAMUS include universities, state agencies, and the health science center. The President of the HSC is appointed by the Board upon recommendation of the Chancellor, and is the chief executive officer of the HSC. The components of the HSC are the Baylor College of Dentistry ([BCD](#)), the College of Medicine ([COM](#)), the School of Graduate Studies, the Institute of Biosciences and Technology ([IBT](#)), the Rangel College of Pharmacy ([COP](#)), the College of Nursing, and the School of Rural Public Health ([SRPH](#)).

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### **3. What is the origin of HSC rule and policies on tenure?**

*(For more information, see [System Policy 12.01](#), and [HSC IP 12.01.99.Z1.03](#).)*

The rules pertaining to *Academic Freedom, Ethics, Responsibility, Rights and Tenure* are derived from two sources: [System Policy 12.01](#), which is a policy applicable to the entire A&M System, and [HSC Internal Policy 12.01.99.Z1.03](#), which is unique to the HSC and supplements System Policy 12.01. The HSC policies pertaining to *Academic Freedom, Ethics, Responsibility, Rights and Tenure* were promulgated and reviewed by committees from the HSC Faculty Senate and HSC Executive Committee, and approved by the president. The HSC policies are intended to be consistent with System Policy 12.01. In the event of a conflict or inconsistency between the two sets of policies, System Policy 12.01 governs and controls.

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### **4. What is tenure?**

*(For more information, see [System Policy 12.01](#), and [HSC IP 12.01.99.Z1.03](#).)*

Although the term may be defined in many ways, the governing authority within the A&M System is [System Policy 12.01\(4\)](#) which states, in part:

*Traditional tenure means the entitlement of faculty members to continue in their academic positions unless dismissed for good cause. Tenured faculty who remain in good standing shall continue to enjoy those privileges customarily associated with tenure, including an expectation of continuing employment, appropriate compensation, a suitable office and workspace, serving as a principal investigator and conducting research, teaching classes, participating in faculty governance, and representing oneself as a tenured faculty member at his or her component. However, tenure shall not be construed as creating a property interest in any attributes of the faculty position beyond the faculty member's regular annual salary. A specific system of faculty tenure should undergird the integrity of each System component.*

*Once granted tenure in title only the appointment carries only the privilege of representing oneself as a tenured faculty member of the HSC. Once appointed with tenure in title only,*

*faculty (employed by a formal HSC affiliate) will not be allowed to switch to the traditional tenure track. They will be allowed, however, to apply for an open traditional tenure track position. Faculty with traditional tenure (HSC-employed) cannot be switched to the tenure in title only designation. [Back to Top](#)*

#### **5. Where is the TAMUS policy on tenure located?**

It is contained within [SPRM 12.01](#), *Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure*.

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#### **6. Are the procedures for tenure different for current and future faculty members?**

The procedures for *Academic Freedom, Ethics, Responsibility, Rights and Tenure* at the HSC apply equally to all faculty members. The procedures seek to establish a spirit of cooperation, good faith, and responsibility and to provide useful guidelines.

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#### **7. Are Non-Tenure Track and Non-Principal Faculty members affected by the tenure policy and rules?**

Certain parts of the rules are applicable to the two types of faculty, as indicated within the Internal Policies. Specifically, [IP 12.01.99.Z1.03](#) lists the subsections of System Policy 12.01 that apply to Non-Tenure Track and Non-Principal Faculty members.

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#### **8. Are faculty members employed indefinitely?**

No. Faculty members are employed generally on a year-to-year basis. System Policy allows up to five year appointments for non-tenure (HSC-employed) faculty. Those in tenure-track positions are expected to make progress toward becoming tenured. tenure-track faculty do not have an expectation of receiving a contract beyond the current year. Tenured faculty receive one-year contracts, but also have the expectation of continued employment unless dismissed for cause or financial exigency. Tenured faculty members are subject to post-tenure review, and may

be dismissed for cause if they fail to successfully complete a post-tenure review remediation plan.

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## **9. What are the possible outcomes of tenure review in the mandatory year?**

*The HSC process described in detail in [IP 12.01.99.Z1.01](#) indicates that successful meeting of the requirements for tenure no later than the sixth probationary year results in a recommendation by the President of the HSC to the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents for awarding of tenure. Unsuccessful meeting of the requirements for tenure results in no recommendation by the President to the Board of Regents. At that point, the faculty member is allowed one additional year of employment prior to the termination of the appointment. The faculty member may also seek a new appointment as a non-tenure track faculty member, with the concurrence of the Department Chair.*

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## **10. How does one receive tenure?**

[System Policy 12.01\(4.1\)](#) states, in part:

*Tenure is granted only by the affirmative action of the Board of Regents upon recommendation of the component CEO. At the conclusion of the probationary period, unless appropriately informed otherwise, the faculty member shall not have tenure. Prior to the beginning of the last year of the probationary period, the component shall notify the faculty member in writing of a decision regarding the granting or denial of tenure. The failure by the component to so notify shall not be construed as a grant of de facto tenure. If the decision is not to award tenure, the faculty member is entitled to serve for one additional contract year following the term or semester in which the notice is received.*

[System Policy 12.02](#) provides the basic requirements for implementation of tenure. The HSC process is described in detail in [IP 12.01.99.Z1.01](#).

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## **11. Are tenured faculty members subject to dismissal?**

Yes, traditional tenured faculty are subject to termination for cause--including financial exigency. [System Policy 12.01\(4.3\)](#) lists some of the reasons that constitute good cause for dismissal of a tenured faculty member. If a tenured faculty member does not successfully complete remediation as required by a post-tenure review, he or she is subject to termination for cause. Tenured faculty who are dismissed for cause have a right to appeal the dismissal. See [System Policy 12.01\(6\)](#), [12.01\(8\)](#), and [12.01\(9.3.5\)](#).

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## **12. If a faculty member is not granted tenure, what appeal process is available?**

If a traditional tenure-track faculty member is not granted tenure, no contract for the year after the probationary period will be offered. The result is that the faculty member will not be reappointed, unless the faculty member is appointed in the non-tenure track (mutually agreed to by the faculty member and the department chair). The process to appeal a failure to recommend tenure is found in [System Policy 12.01\(7\)](#). This is the process to be used when a faculty member is denied tenure. The policy states that an appeal must be based on one or more of the following grounds:

- 1) The decision not to recommend tenure was made in violation of the faculty member's academic freedom.
- 2) There was inadequate consideration of the faculty member's record of professional achievement.
- 3) The decision not to recommend tenure was made for an illegal reason. An illegal reason includes a decision based on race, sex, age, national origin, religion, creed, color, or disability unrelated to the performance of duties, or in retaliation for the faculty member's exercise of protected First Amendment rights.

Specific deadlines and other details of the appeal process in the HSC are found in [IP 12.01.99.Z1.03](#). A [diagram](#) of the process is included below.

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### **13. How does the appeal process work?**

The following is a brief overview of the process described in [System Policy 12.01](#). It begins when a faculty member is notified that he or she will not be reappointed. The faculty member may file a grievance with the Vice President for Academic Affairs. If unsatisfied with the Vice President's decision, the faculty member may appeal to the President of the Health Science Center. However, the appeal may only be based on one or more of the grounds set forth in [System Policy 12.01\(7\)](#). The appeal is referred to a Preliminary Review Committee. The findings of the Preliminary Review Committee are limited to determining whether or not the faculty member's evidence, alone and un-rebutted, would establish that a violation occurred. The committee is not charged with weighing the evidence, but to determine if evidence exists. If the Preliminary Review Committee determines that no evidence exists, then there is no further appeal. If the Preliminary Review Committee determines that evidence exists, then the matter is forwarded to the Committee on Academic Freedom, Ethics, Responsibility, Rights and Tenure (CAFERRT). The findings of the CAFERRT are limited to determining whether the decision not reappoint was made in violation of the academic freedom of the faculty member or for an illegal reason, or that inadequate consideration was given to the faculty member's record of professional achievement. In addition, the CAFERRT may make recommendations to the President regarding possible resolutions.

In cases where tenured faculty are dismissed for reasons of financial exigency or reduction or discontinuance of an academic program ([System Policy 12.01\(9\)](#)), the faculty member may appeal to the CAFERRT. The committee's review is limited to a determination of whether a bona fide financial exigency exists or that educational considerations led to the reduction or discontinuance of a program. The committee's findings and recommendation, if any, are forwarded to the President who makes the final decision in such matters.

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#### **14. Do all faculty members undergo an annual review?**

All faculty members, whether tenured or not, must receive an annual performance review. See [12.01.99.Z1.03](#), section 3. Tenured faculty are also subject to post-tenure review. See [12.06.99.Z1](#).

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#### **15. Is the annual review the same as or a substitute for post-tenure review?**

No. They are two distinct processes, although the criteria and procedures for post-tenure review form the basis for some annual reviews. See [12.01.99.Z1.03](#), section 3.

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#### **16. How are faculty positions defined?**

There are two Faculty Tracks in the HSC: Principal and Non-Principal. See [12.01.99.Z1.01](#). Principal Faculty are defined as those who contribute 50% effort or greater to the missions of the HSC. They may be either tenure track or non-tenure track. The following chart summarizes the requirements.

##### **Principal Faculty**

- Contribute 50% effort or greater to the academic mission of the HSC
- Meet expectations per definitions in individual Tracks
- Eligible to apply for Graduate Faculty appointment
- Two categories of Principal Faculty
  - Tenure Track
    - At least 50% directly salaried HSC employee (traditional tenure track)

- At least 50% directly salaried employee of a formal HSC affiliate (tenure in title only track)
- Substantial contributions in academic areas of education, research, or professional service
- Significant institutional service to HSC component
- Ranks
  - Assistant Professor
  - Associate Professor
  - Professor
- Non-Tenure Track
  - At least 50% directly salaried by HSC component and/or affiliate with formal agreement with HSC
  - Substantial contributions in areas of education, research or or professional service
  - Provide significant institutional service to components of HSC
  - Ranks
    - Instructor
    - Assistant Professor
    - Associate Professor
    - Professor
  - Tracks

- Research
- Educator
- Professional Services

### **Non-Principal Faculty**

- Contribute to the HSC academic mission through part-time or voluntary participation in education and/or research
- Contribution less than 50% effort
- Not eligible for tenure
- Prefix titles
  - Joint
  - Adjunct
  - Clinical
- Ranks
  - Instructor
  - Assistant Professor
  - Associate Professor
  - Professor

### **17. What are the expectations of faculty in the three academic areas of performance for successful promotion and tenure? Examples?**

**Performance Criteria:** Descriptions of faculty expectations in the three academic performance areas and in institutional service are presented below along with specific

examples of activities that represent successful achievement in each area. The lists of examples are intended to be useful guidelines and are not all inclusive of activities that represent successful faculty performance.

### **A) Current Knowledge**

Scholarly activity has two forms: (1) the compilation, synthesis, and transmission of current knowledge, and (2) the generation of new knowledge through original research and publication of the findings. Typically, peer review is the most rigorous standard for publications. In addition, publications can be evaluated with regard to their impact and dissemination, e.g. local vs. regional vs. national/international.

#### 1) Compilation, synthesis, and transmission of current knowledge

The compilation, synthesis, and transmission of current knowledge is one aspect of this activity that contributes to and advances scholarship and may include:

- a) publication of textbooks, book chapters, review articles, case reports and technical and clinical procedures;
- b) publication of instructional materials, videos, teaching manuals, and syllabi development of new, existing, or continuing education courses;
- c) editorship of professional journals;
- d) invention of new methods and techniques in education, instrumentation, and technology;
- e) evidence of creative professional practice.

#### ▪ New Knowledge

Research is the generation of new knowledge through use of the scientific method or its equivalent in scholarly investigation. Such research may be basic, behavioral, clinical, educational, historical or in health services. It is most

frequently expressed as manuscript publication in refereed scientific and scholarly journals.

Research can be most readily measured through two peer review mechanisms: publication in refereed journals and the acquisition of grant funds. It is recognized that quality research can be conducted without the support of peer reviewed grant awards. Additional demonstration of the research record may include:

- a) invitations to present one's research at other universities or major scientific meetings;
- b) appointment as a section or symposium chairperson;
- c) receipt of awards or other special recognition for outstanding research;
- d) appointment to NIH study sections;
- e) participation in sabbatical opportunities;
- f) supervision of thesis or dissertation research;
- g) service on thesis or dissertation committees;
- h) publication of research abstracts;
- i) manuscripts submitted for publication;
- j) officer of national/international scientific and scholarly societies;
- k) receiving nationally approved patents;
- l) membership on national or state peer-review panels;
- m) manuscript reviewer for scientific and scholarly journals;
- n) service on national research committees and task forces;

- o) election to membership or fellowship in prestigious scholarly societies or advisory groups;
- p) frequency of citation;
- q) other evidence of original contributions to the health science knowledge base.

## **B) Educational Activities**

The criteria for effectiveness that shall be considered in evaluating educational performance are teaching qualities, educational innovation, impact upon students, and degree of teaching responsibility. Evaluation of teaching shall include qualitative and quantitative measurement from multiple sources. Appropriate input from students, peers, Department Chairmen, and other sources help maximize the validity of the value judgment that must be made.

### 1) Teaching qualities

The foundation of quality teaching is mastery of the subject, including the spectrum of foundational and current literature in one's discipline. Essential components of teaching may include:

- a) the use of appropriate methods of instruction;
- b) effective planning and organization;
- c) clarity of written, oral, and visual presentation;
- d) rapport with students;
- e) effective questioning and group facilitation skills;
- f) stimulation of critical thinking and problem solving;
- g) modeling professionalism;
- h) mentoring students;

- i) using appropriate methods of evaluation;
- j) providing adequate feedback to students;
- k) enthusiasm and energy.

## 2) Educational innovation

Teaching excellence includes some degree of innovative effort. Innovations in teaching must accomplish more than mere change. Rather, new methods should demonstrate measurable advantage over those previously used. Examples of innovations in teaching may include:

- a) taking advantage of new technology to improve teaching effectiveness;
- b) developing new learning experiences, courses, programs, or curricula;
- c) developing unique methods to evaluate student learning, skills, and professionalism;
- d) developing methods to evaluate individual teaching, courses, or curricula.

## 3) Impact upon students

A positive impact of teaching on students should be the primary educational goal of each faculty member. Increased knowledge, skills, professional attitudes and values result from effective instruction. The ultimate outcome of effective teaching is students achieving competency.

## 4) Degree of teaching responsibility

The degree of responsibility assigned to a faculty member and the extent to which the faculty member's responsibilities contribute to the teaching programs of the individual components and the HSC must be a consideration. More weight should be given to directing a course or having primary responsibility for a teaching program than merely presenting lectures in a course or serving as a laboratory or clinical instructor. It is expected that faculty members will assume more responsibility for teaching as they gain academic experience. Preparation time and

unscheduled contact time directly related to teaching/learning issues will be taken into consideration for the review of teaching responsibility.

Examples of indicators of achievement in educational activities:

- a) research mentor or preceptor for students, residents or fellows;
- b) awards or honors to mentored students;
- c) chairman or member of graduate student research committee;
- d) award of training grant;
- e) ability to attract students to electives;
- f) faculty serving as preceptor, mentor and/or role model for medical students, dental students, public health students, residents, fellows, postdoctoral associates, or junior faculty;
- g) evidence of effectiveness in class preparation, interaction, and lecturing to students, residents or fellows based upon appropriate measurement tools;
- h) faculty advisor for students, residents, fellows or graduate students;
- i) coordination of multi-faculty courses, clerkships, residency/fellowship programs, including continuing education programs, and professional seminars;
- j) development of new courses or major revisions of existing courses;
- k) invitation as guest lecturer or presentation of continuing professional education;
- l) unsolicited invitations to lecture/teach at other institutions;
- m) publication in refereed educational journals;

- n) demonstrated evidence of teaching excellence by receiving university, college or professional society teaching awards;
- o) outstanding performance evaluations from peers or students or outstanding student performance on standardized exams;
- p) development of innovative or acclaimed instructional materials including syllabi or software.

**C) Professional Service Activities**

The HSC, consistent with tradition and history of the land grant university, provides professional service to the community in many ways. Examples of these activities are:

- 1) Education for public school students on health promotion and disease prevention;
- 2) Career counseling and encouragement of young people to enter health professions;
- 3) Continuing education services to help professionals in the community;
- 4) Advice to community organizations and agencies on health related matters;
- 5) Advice and consultation to health professionals in the community on enhancement of quality, efficiency, and delivery of health and public health services;
- 6) Collaboration with local, regional, and state public health agencies;
- 7) Dissemination of research information to the appropriate public sectors;
- 8) General advice, consultation, and service to community organizations and agencies;
- 9) Membership in and contribution to professional organizations (includes offices held);
- 10) Consultant to professional journals as a manuscript referee, reviewer, etc.;

- 11) Editor for professional journal;
- 12) Consultant to accrediting and other educational review boards;
- 13) Grant reviewer on study section;
- 14) Consultanship to industry related to research, health care, or product development;
- 15) Participation in health events (health fairs, e.g.) of benefit to the community;
- 16) Participation on national or regional: board, examination, certification, or accreditation committees;
- 17) Outreach programs for college students (career counseling, recruitment, mentoring);
- 18) Outreach programs for high school, junior high school, and elementary school students (career counseling, recruitment, mentoring).

**D) Institutional service**

Service is related to those activities that pertain to an individual's role as a member of the faculty of the HSC and as a member of a professional discipline (e.g., participation in departmental, component, HSC, or System committees, representing the institution in professional organizations, and other activities that do not involve an official faculty role in teaching, research, or professional service).

1) Institutional programs and services

All faculty members must share in the work necessary to maintain the operation of the institution and are expected to contribute to the growth of the institution through efforts that are aimed at improving programs and services. Examples of activities that relate to institutional programs and services are:

- a) membership on committees or other assignments within the HSC;

- b) leadership role in curriculum reform, development, and implementation;
- c) contribution to faculty governance;
- d) participation in HSC, institutional, departmental, or program strategic planning;
- e) participation in student recruitment activities;
- f) development of or participation in minority student programs;
- g) participation in faculty recruitment;
- h) conducting faculty development programs;
- i) providing in-service seminars, continuing education, and training;
- j) participation in quality control;
- k) participation in assessment programs;
- l) setting up educational displays.

## 2) Professional activities

Faculty members should contribute to the maintenance and growth of their profession. The state, the profession, and the general public depend on the HSC for help in maintaining state-of-the-art practice in health care delivery and public health practice.

### Patient care/clinical activity

Clinical faculty members are expected to provide exemplary patient care that is respected by patients and peers both within the HSC and in the professional community. Examples of activities relating to patient care and clinical activities are:

- a) certification by specialty board;
- b) awards that recognize clinical expertise;
- c) referral of patients from practitioners both within and outside the HSC;
- d) expression of confidence and respect from patients and clinical staff;
- e) consultation as requested by other faculty members;
- f) application of current methods in patient care;
- g) membership on a specialty examining board;
- h) service as a consultant on patient care (e.g., third-party payment groups, courts, health organizations);
- i) diligent efforts to make clinical and private patient care efficient and effective;
- j) holding leadership roles in hospital or healthcare organization;
- k) membership or fellowship in elected professional organization that denotes high level of clinical competency.

[Process diagram for non-renewal of non-tenured faculty at end of term contract »](#)

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