

TSU Policy # _____

Name of Policy: **Termination of Tenure for Curricular Reasons**

Responsibility: Office of Academic Affairs

Authority:

1. TBR [Policy #5:02:03:60 Policy on Academic Tenure for the Tennessee Board of Regents Universities](#)
2. [TBR Policy #1:02:11:00 , Appeals and Appearances Before the Board.](#)

I. Statement of Policy: Termination of Tenure for Curricular Reasons

A. Bases for Termination

1. 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. Before declaring that curricular reasons exist, the resident will ensure meaningful participation by the University's representative faculty body¹ 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-either verbally or in writing - a description of curricular reasons that may warrant the termination of tenured faculty member(s).

2. The university policy describing procedures whereby this presentation is made to a representative faculty body is provided below in item B. That body will have the opportunity to respond in writing to the President before 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 which are accommodated annually in light of shifting positions from one department to another or among colleges to handle changing enrollment patterns.

- a. Part-time faculty within a department or division should not be hired or renewed before a tenured faculty member is terminated.
- b. Temporary faculty should not be renewed before tenured faculty are terminated.
- c. Tenure-track faculty in the probationary period should not be renewed before a tenured faculty member is terminated.

¹ The TSU Faculty Senate

- d. Among tenured faculty those with higher rank should have priority over those with lower rank.
- e. Among tenured faculty with comparable rank, those with appropriate higher academic degree(s) should have priority over those with lower academic degree.
- f. Among tenured faculty with comparable rank and degrees, those with greater seniority in rank should normally have priority over those with less seniority.

II. Termination procedures

B. Procedures for Termination of Tenure

1. Upon determining that termination of one or more tenured faculty members is required for one or more of the two reasons cited above, the President shall furnish each faculty member to be terminated a written statement of the reasons for the termination. Those reasons shall address fully the curricular circumstances that warranted the termination and shall 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 shall also indicate that the faculty member has the opportunity to respond in writing stating any objections to the decision.
2. If the faculty member(s) to be terminated indicate(s) objections to the President's written statement(s) and request(s) a review, the President will appoint a faculty committee consisting of a minimum of five tenured faculty members from a slate of ten tenured faculty members proposed by the representative faculty body (TSU Faculty Senate). The committee shall conduct a hearing on the proposed termination(s). The committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the President, who shall 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 as provided in the policy on appeals to the Board (TBR Policy 1:02:11:00 [Appeals and Appearances Before the Board]).
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 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).

5. Upon determining that termination of one or more tenured faculty members is warranted for curricular reasons, the President shall base his/her decision about which faculty member(s) should be terminated upon his/her 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 which 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 shall also, at his/her discretion, base his/her decision 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.

III. Definitions

A. Deletion for curricular reasons

1. "Program is deleted from the curriculum" means that the Board 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.

2. "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.

B. Relocation Efforts

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.

Adopted: March 9, 2011.