

TIMING OF PROMOTION AND TENURE REVIEW

Administrators and faculty make decisions about the timing of a tenure review at several points in the process: at the time of hire, during annual performance evaluations, at the time of the preliminary review, and at the time of the promotion and tenure review.

The timing of review for promotion to associate professor with tenure is complex. The timing is governed by the faculty member's contract as well as by the [Faculty Handbook \(Ch. 5.\)](#) Tenure at Iowa State is normally conferred on a faculty member "after seven consecutive years of continuous faculty service in a regular appointment at Iowa State University." The mandatory tenure review ordinarily takes place in the faculty member's sixth year. However, there are some cases in which the review takes place *earlier* or *later* than the sixth year.

Credit for Prior Service

According to the [Faculty Handbook 5.2.1.5](#), "a faculty member's usual probationary period of seven years at Iowa State University may be reduced through credit for prior faculty service at other academic institutions. The amount of time credited will be determined by the specific relevance of the prior service to the needs and criteria of Iowa State University." The granting of credit for prior service is always optional, since it shortens the time a faculty member has to prove their performance and impact at ISU. The department must carefully review the faculty member's record to determine the quality of performance at the prior institution.

Any credit for prior service must be established at the time of hire and documented in the candidate's formal Offer Letter (formerly Letter of Intent) within Workday. When such credit is awarded, the Offer Letter should document in writing the expected review schedule, since a preliminary review in the third year may not be appropriate or useful.

At the time of the promotion and tenure review, the review considers all work accomplished at rank (at ISU or elsewhere) but the **focus** of the review is on the most recent five years. For someone who has served a portion of these five years in a faculty position at another university, documentation of that service will be necessary to include in the review.

Early Promotion and Tenure

There may be cases in which it is appropriate to bring a faculty member up for promotion and tenure before the mandatory year. These cases should be discussed in detail by the department chair and dean BEFORE the decision to review a faculty member is made. The department chair and dean have the responsibility to provide the rationale for a non-mandatory tenure review when it is forwarded. In fact, for every promotion and tenure case forwarded, the department chair should include a brief explicit rationale for the timing, for example:

- “This is a mandatory case.”
- “This case is one-year early due to an extension of the tenure clock that was not used.”
- “This case is two years early because the candidate meets all criteria for promotion and tenure with no weaknesses in the case.”

There is **no** requirement that an early candidate meet performance expectations that are “extraordinary,” rather they must fully meet the departmental and university expectations for promotion and tenure.

Extended Probationary Periods

ISU encourages faculty members to consider an extension of the probationary period when special circumstances may interfere significantly with their opportunity to develop the qualifications necessary for tenure in the time allowed (e.g., arrival of a child, personal illness, care of an ill family member, significant alterations in position responsibilities). ISU has policies in place to allow for longer probationary periods in order to accommodate a variety of work-life and other situations and to allow tenure-eligible faculty the possibility of working less than full-time. These policies include the [extension of the probationary period \(FH 5.2.1.4\)](#) as well as the option to work part-time on either a temporary or permanent basis ([FH chapter 5](#)). As noted in our policy, “[t]he length of the probationary period may exceed seven years only for faculty who have had an extension of the tenure clock or for faculty on part-time appointment for a portion of the probationary period” ([FH 5.2.1.3](#)). Standards regarding what constitutes a record deserving of tenure are not raised to adjust for a tenure-clock extension of any length.