

TEXAS A&M ESSENTIALS

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Resource:

[University Rule 12.06.99.M0.01](#) —
 Post-Tenure Review

Post-Tenure Review

Post-Tenure Review began at Texas A&M University in 1997, a year before the Texas Legislature passed SB 149 (effective January 1, 1998), which required all State-supported universities to provide for periodic Post-Tenure review. After debate in our Faculty Senate, where opinions ranged from total opposition to the idea of Post-Tenure Review to the majority view that deep discussion about the use of Post-Tenure Review to ensure that our tremendous investment in our faculty members is not abandoned frivolously, we passed guidelines with the following principles:

- All departments must communicate to tenured faculty, as part of the required annual review, whether their overall performance has been unsatisfactory, satisfactory, or most meritorious.
- Using standards developed by each department for what constitutes expected and exceptional performance in teaching, research or other creative contributions, and service, departments would develop guidelines on how the standards in each of the three performance areas contributed to the overall evaluation. Existing annual review requirements (as well as promotion and tenure guidelines) already required that student evaluations of teaching must be included.
- An unsatisfactory review in any area of performance should be followed by a dialogue focused on how the deficiency would be remedied. In the case of an unsatisfactory overall evaluation, a written remediation plan would be developed by the department head with the faculty member. The definition of overall unsatisfactory performance would be specified by each department, and approved by the Dean and the Dean of Faculties.
- While remediation was expected for any unsatisfactory dimension of performance and more serious actions, such as revoking tenure, could be taken sooner, it was decided that, because some performance indicators may require several years to become evident (e.g., publications or funding), up to three consecutive years of overall unsatisfactory performance would be allowed before mandating a written professional development plan outlining specific milestones confirming clear improvements. *(Note that faculty members can comment on but not appeal or grieve an annual evaluation; however, before this formal remediation begins, they can appeal to the dean or ask for an external review.)*
- As long as progress on the professional development plan could be documented, the timeline for completing all the objectives of the plan could extend to a maximum of 3 years.
- Faculty members could voluntarily place themselves in Post-Tenure review to benefit from their colleagues’ input and to put a plan into-effect to remedy deficiencies.
- In 2006, these guidelines were converted, unchanged, to a University Rule, which also acknowledges that State law requires Post-Tenure evaluations by faculty peers at least once every six years. Most departments already included a peer evaluation process in their annual reviews, but all now do so at least at the required frequency.

Since implementing the Post-Tenure review requirements in the 1997-1998 evaluation cycle, approximately 119 faculty members with tenure have been flagged for overall unsatisfactory performance. Of these, 30 retired within the first year after receiving the unsatisfactory evaluation, and another 20 retired in the second year. Of the 119, there have been 22 who actually went into a Post-Tenure review professional development plan; of those, 8 retired, 2 had tenure revoked, and the rest completed the plan satisfactorily. It is interesting to note that of the 119 who received an overall unsatisfactory in performance, 60 (50%) retire, left the university or passed away within three years of the first notification of unsatisfactory performance. In the same period (since 1997- 1998), 6 other faculty members had their tenure revoked, some (5) for professional incompetence due to poor mental health and one (1) for failure to meet his/her responsibilities in teaching. Two of these actions were appealed to the university-level faculty appeals committee. In one case the committee sided with the administration and in the other the appealing faculty member left the University before the committee could render a recommendation.

