Criteria for Granting Indefinite Tenure

Tenure ensures the academic freedom that is essential to an atmosphere conducive to the free search for truth and the attainment of excellence in the University. But in addition, tenure also reflects and recognizes a candidate's potential long-term value to the institution, as evidenced by professional performance and growth. Tenure sets universities apart from other institutions. Faculty are not merely employed by the University but are the educational and research programs of the University; tenured faculty are the community of educators who create institutional stability and an ongoing commitment to excellence. Tenure, therefore, will be granted to faculty members whose character, achievements in serving the University's missions, and potential for effective long-term performance warrant the institution's reciprocal long-term commitment. The granting of tenure is more significant than promotion in academic rank.

Tenure is granted for achievement, not for years in rank, but under normal circumstances faculty will be considered for tenure in their sixth year of service in professorial rank. By the end of the sixth year on tenure track ("annual tenure"), the faculty member must be granted indefinite tenure or be given a year's timely notice that the appointment will not be continued. Under extenuating circumstances, such as personal or family illness, or parental leave, a faculty member can request of the Provost and Executive Vice President that the tenure clock be extended.

The tenure decision is based primarily on the candidate's performance of assigned duties and achievements in scholarship. In judging the suitability of the candidate for indefinite tenure, however, it is also appropriate to consider collegiality, professional integrity, and willingness to accept and cooperate in assignments.