

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

PROPOSAL 13-06
(Voting Units: Academic)

**AMENDMENT OF TENURE, PROMOTION AND REAPPOINTMENT PROCEDURES:
EXTENSION OF TENURE CLOCK**

Background

Michigan Tech allowed extension of the probationary period for “exceptional circumstances” some years ago at the request of the faculty member with recommendation from the cognizant department chair and/or dean, recommendation by the Committee on Academic Tenure, Promotion and Reappointment and approval by the Provost. This policy was applied not only to “exceptional circumstances” but also to the common circumstance of pregnancy. However few faculty members at Tech have applied for an extension; other universities with similar policies have also noted that few faculty members have applied for extensions of the probationary period for reasons ranging from concerns of being perceived as less dedicated to lack of understanding of how much addition of a child would slow down their lives.

Other universities, led by Princeton, have changed their tenure policies to provide for extension of the probationary period for both men and women who have added a child by birth, adoption or custody. These policies would appear to have little downside as tenure candidates who, despite having children, are ready for tenure in the standard period or earlier can apply in the standard way.

Hence this proposal proposes such a policy for Michigan Tech. The proposal comprises new section 5.1.1 Extension of the Probationary Period and the relabeling of old section 5.1.1 Extension of the Probationary Period to 5.1.2 Exceptional Extension of the Probationary Period.

5.1.2 Exceptional Extension of the Probationary Period has two changes. Requests for consideration of exceptional circumstances are now to be made within a reasonable period of time after the exceptional circumstance rather than during or immediately after, and the request should show reasonable, rather than substantial, progress toward tenure.

Proposal: New section 5.1.1 and amended section 5.1.2 for Tenure, Promotion and Reappointment Procedures

These changes will become effective for tenure candidates whose mandatory review is after 2007-2008.

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5.1.1 A Extension of the Probationary Period

The probationary period will be extended by one year, but not more than 2 years total, for each child: 1) Born to or legally adopted by the Candidate or his or her spouse during the probationary period; or 2) over whom full time physical custody is awarded to the Candidate or his or her spouse during the probationary period by any court having jurisdiction. Written notification must be given by the Candidate or the Candidate's Chair or Dean to the Provost

prior to November 15th of the final year of the tenure probationary period to entitle the Candidate to this extension.

5.1.2. Exceptional Extension of the Probationary Period

Exceptional circumstances may sometimes effect a prolonged disruption of professional responsibilities during the tenure probationary period, requiring extensive sick leave, unpaid leave, or substantial formal reduction of professional responsibilities. A faculty member encountering such circumstances may request a one-year extension of the tenure probationary period. The Committee on Academic Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment considers all such requests and makes a recommendation to the Provost on each.

This request should be made within a reasonable period of time following the period of exceptional circumstances, and in no case after November 15 of the final year of the tenure probationary period. It should be accompanied by a recommendation from the cognizant department chair and the dean of the college, or from the dean of the cognizant school. The request should clearly demonstrate that both of the following conditions are satisfied:

- i. the exceptional circumstances requiring the extension were such that normal conduct of professional responsibilities could not reasonably be expected.
- ii. exclusive of the period of exceptional circumstances, the faculty member had made reasonable progress toward achieving tenure.

Introduced in Senate: 15 February 2006

Revised Version Introduced in Senate: 5 April 2006

Adopted by Senate: 5 April 2006

Approved by Administration: 17 April 2006

Editorial Change Approved by Senate: 21 March 2007

Passed Referendum: 14 April 2008 (out of 347 possible votes; there were 111 Yes votes and 17 No votes)

Became Senate Procedures 707.1.1