Probationary Appointments for Tenure-track Faculty

Any appointment of a faculty member to a tenure-track position is considered probationary since the individual has not yet fulfilled the required conditions to be considered by his or her peers and the administration for continuous appointment; i.e., for tenure.

1. Crediting of Prior Experience Toward Fulfillment of Probationary Period

At the College of Charleston probationary appointments are for one year, subject to renewal. Unless stated otherwise in the initial contractual letter of appointment to any rank sent to an instructional faculty member or librarian, the probationary period before the individual is considered for tenure is six years. Credit may be granted for a faculty member’s full-time service at other institutions of higher learning. The number of years of credit for prior service normally will not exceed two years even though the faculty member’s total probationary period in the academic profession is thereby extended beyond the normal maximum of six years. The initial letter of appointment will state the years of prior service that will be counted toward fulfillment of the probationary period and the year in which he/she will be considered for tenure.

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Librarians appointed to the College Library with three or more years service in other libraries but who do not yet evidence appropriate records of activity in professional growth and development and/or institutional or community service will be given less than maximum credit in order to have more time to prepare for tenure review.

A period of scholarly leave of absence up to one year may count as part of the probationary period as if it were prior service at another institution. The faculty member, the Department Chair, the Dean, the Provost and the President will agree in writing to this provision at the time the leave is granted.

2. Information Relating to Standards and Procedures of Renewal, Tenure and Promotion

The instructional faculty member or librarian will be advised at the time of the initial appointment to review the sections of this Faculty/Administration Manual describing the substantive institutional standards and procedures generally employed in decisions affecting renewal and the granting of tenure and to discuss these with the Department Chair (or Dean of Libraries). Any special standards adopted by the faculty member’s department will be transmitted by the Department

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21 This section is based directly upon and quotes extensively from the 1982 RIR, 2. Probationary Appointments, p.22
Chair (or Dean of Libraries) at the time of appointment and be reviewed, together with the institutional standards, during the annual evaluation of the member by the Chair. The faculty member will be advised of the time when decisions affecting renewal or tenure are ordinarily made, and will be expected to submit material that he or she believes will be informative.

3. Procedure for Considering Non-Renewal of a Faculty Member Including Instructors in First or Second Year of Probationary Appointment

From time to time it is important to the welfare of students or faculty in a department for a faculty member to be terminated at the end of a first-year or second-year appointment. Since state legislation (South Carolina Code Section 8-17-380) provides that non-renewal of a one-year contract at the end of the contract period is not grievable, such terminations are not in violation of the terms of employment. Nonetheless, since terminations based on discriminatory intent, violations of academic freedom, or inadequate consideration are all grievable under other provisions of the SC Code, federal law, and/or this Manual, all decisions to terminate probationary appointments at the end of the first or second year must be accompanied by written notification of cause. Such notification is necessary to establish that the grounds for termination are indeed not grievable.

If the Chair or any other tenured member believes that non-renewal is appropriate, the Chair should convene the tenured faculty for a discussion of the chair’s proposed action, and seek to reach group agreement. If a consensus cannot be reached, the Chair will present in writing to the Dean the various positions represented by the group within the department as well as his/her position. The decision on whether to terminate or continue will rest with the Chair unless the Dean has serious reservations. In such a situation, the Provost will review all of the pertinent information and, after discussing the case with the Chair and the Dean, will rule on which action is to be taken.

In the case of individuals in their first (second) year of probationary appointment, individuals must be notified by March 15 (December 15) if their contract will not be renewed at the end of the contract year. Except under exceptional circumstances, a new faculty member credited with two years or more probationary time should be given at least one year’s notice in the event his or her contract is to be terminated.

After a decision has been reached, the Chair should notify the Provost two weeks before the dates specified in the Faculty/Administration Manual so that the Provost can inform a first or second year faculty member that he/she will not be given a contract for the following year.
The College is under no obligation to reappoint any untenured faculty member at the expiration of the contract year. But termination decisions for probationary faculty must be accompanied by written notification of the reasons for termination.

4. Employment of Faculty Who are Not United States Citizens

All faculty members who are not United States citizens must hold a valid visa or permanent alien registration card at all times while employed by the College of Charleston. This is a condition of employment and faculty members who do not comply with this condition are subject to termination.