

**Interpretive Guide to Tenure Policies at  
The University of Tennessee**  
October 1978

The statement below interprets current tenure policies—implicit and explicit—followed by the respective campuses\* of The University of Tennessee. It represents no change from existing policies or practice. The purpose of the statement is to respond to questions which are not explicitly codified in campus *Faculty Handbooks* and to insure that current tenure policies are implemented equitably and consistently for all eligible University of Tennessee personnel. Procedures for implementing these interpretations, including procedures whereby a faculty member may appeal an adverse decision shall be documented in *Faculty Handbooks* for each campus.

1. A faculty member of The University of Tennessee is granted tenure at a specific campus in a position appropriate to his or her qualifications. An adequate evaluation of a tenure candidate's qualifications, professional contributions, potential and determination of whether he or she should be accepted as a tenured member of the campus academic community, requires the judgment of both the candidate's faculty colleagues and the responsible administrators. Hence, although recommendations for tenure are administrative actions which must be approved by the Board of Trustees, there should be no positive recommendation for tenure without formal consultations with the tenured faculty of the academic unit in which the candidate holds his or her position.
2. Reorganizations which result in the merger or splitting of academic units at a given UT campus do not affect the tenure or probationary status of the faculty involved.
3. Should a tenured faculty member voluntarily transfer from one UT campus to another his or her tenured status is not transferred. However, a review by the responsible administrators in consultation with the tenured faculty of the receiving academic unit may result in an immediate recommendation to the Board of Trustees that tenure at the new campus be granted to the transferred individual: on the other hand, a new probationary period in the receiving unit may be established. There shall be no involuntary transfer of faculty members between campuses. Transfers of tenure between academic units on the same campus do not require Board approval, but must be approved by the responsible campus administrators in consultation with the tenured faculty of the receiving unit, with notification to the Board of Trustees. In any event, prior to the effective date of the transfer all conditions relating to tenure must be documented and accepted, in writing, by the transferring faculty member.
4. When a tenured faculty member accepts a part-time faculty position or an administrative position with the University, neither of which can carry tenure, the faculty member may retain tenure in the full-time faculty position he or she vacated.
5. When a non-tenured faculty member accepts a part-time faculty position or an administrative position with the University, such service is not counted a part of a probationary period leading to consideration for tenure.
6. When a tenured faculty member resigns his or her position, takes unauthorized leave of absence, or fails to return to the campus following an approved leave of absence, that person's tenure and employment are terminated.
7. Each campus bears an obligation to its tenured faculty members as follows. Should it become necessary to abolish tenured faculty positions because of the discontinuance of an academic program or function, or because of financial exigency, the campus administration shall attempt to

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\*The term "campus" as used in this document includes the four primary campuses of The University of Tennessee, The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture and The University of Tennessee Space Institute.

place each displaced tenured faculty member in another suitable position. This does *not* require that such a faculty member be placed in a position for which he or she is not qualified, that a new position be created where no need exists, or that a faculty member (tenured or non-tenured) in another academic unit be terminated in order to provide a vacancy for a displaced tenured faculty member.

Additional campus-wide protections for the rights of tenured faculty members in such situations are as follows:

- a. Any decision which results in the termination of a tenured faculty member because of abolition of his or her academic position should be developed in conjunction with faculty consultation.
- b. The place of any tenured faculty member so released shall not be filled by a replacement within three years, unless the released faculty member has been offered reinstatement and a reasonable time in which to accept or decline it.