

Interim Motion for Recommendation to the Provost on Tenure Clock Stoppage

Faculty Affairs Sub-Committee on Tenure Clock Stoppage

September 30, 2008

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*Rationale: Currently, tenure may be awarded upon completion of a probationary period of at least five years of full-time service at the rank of assistant professor or higher. At present, there is no policy at Georgia State University permitting extension of this probationary period (i.e., stoppage of the tenure clock) for tenure-track faculty who experience significant life events such as birth/adoption/fostering of a child, significant disability or prolonged illness of the employee, his or her spouse or partner, or other immediate family member. Although a policy, **307.06 Limitation on Length of Tenure-Eligible Service**, was approved by the University Senate in 1999, it subsequently was not approved by the Board of Regents (BOR), since the language in the GSU policy contained no provision requiring faculty to take a leave of absence in order to be considered for extension of the probationary period (i.e. stoppage of tenure clock).*

*Current Board of Regent's policy permits extension of the probationary period "in all cases in which a leave of absence, approved by the President, is based on birth or adoption of a child, or serious disability or prolonged illness of the employee or immediate family member." While linking tenure clock stoppage to leave, the BOR does not specify the amount of time for which a faculty member must take approved leave in order to qualify for stoppage. Therefore this has been left to the discretion of Department Chairs and Deans, with ultimate approval lying with the Provost. Non-tenured faculty members may not have accrued substantial sick hours prior to the onset of life events for which a leave of absence is sought, necessitating that they request unpaid leave. To assure fairness and equity in eligibility for extension of the probationary period by non-tenured faculty, and consistency in decisions on granting such extensions across departments and colleges within the University, as well as our concern that non-tenured faculty members not be required to take unpaid leave in order to qualify for tenure clock stoppage, we recommend the following interim policy, to be put in place for the 2008-2009 AY, until the committee can investigate this matter further and develop recommendations for a permanent family friendly policy:*

A tenure-eligible appointment is for one year and, except for cases in which a leave of absence, approved by the President, is based on a **family or life event** (defined as the addition of a child to the household through birth, adoption, or fostering; or a serious disability or prolonged illness of the employee, his or her spouse or partner, or other immediate family member) shall not be renewed, as a tenure-eligible appointment more than six successive times, i.e., for a maximum of seven (or longer in the case of a family/life event delay) academic or fiscal years of service, regardless of faculty rank or ranks held during the years of tenure-eligible service.

While holding a tenure eligible appointment at Georgia State University, a faculty member may request a one-year delay of the tenure clock such that tenure-status reviews will take place one year later than

would have occurred without such a delay. Such a delay or connected set of delays will be granted up to twice during the faculty member's tenure-eligible appointment period for a qualified family or life event, if certain eligibility requirements are met, as described in the paragraph that follows. A faculty member granted such a delay shall not be subject to additional professional development or service requirements, above and beyond those normally required, in order to qualify for retention or tenure. If both spouses hold tenure-eligible appointments at the University, and are otherwise eligible, then both shall be granted a delay upon request.

Eligibility requirements for receiving a delay include (1) providing a written notice to the department head as early as possible, and in no case later than one year subsequent to the date the family/life event and (2) taking a leave of absence for at least 2 weeks (i.e., 10 business days), during which accrued leave may be used. In order to be eligible for a delay of the tenure-status reviews, the family or life event must have occurred no later than the summer (or semester) immediately prior to the semester in which the scheduled department-level review is to take place. The request for a delay of a given review must be submitted prior to departmental consideration of the candidate under review.