

POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON TENURE

Preamble

Tenure is a state of presumed continuous employment awarded before the end of a specific time. After tenure is awarded, the faculty member's employment may be terminated only for adequate cause, cases of bona fide financial exigency, or formal discontinuance of a School/department/academic program, within the limitations and due-process safeguards as noted in the Francis Marion University *Policy and Procedures concerning Academic Freedom and Tenure*. Tenure status is available only to full-time institutional faculty members as defined in the aforementioned document.

I. Policy on Continuous Tenure

The achievement of continuous tenure of employment is based on merit and founded on the three criteria traditional in higher education: teaching effectiveness, scholarly activity, and professional service, as these are defined in the *Criteria and Procedures for Promotion in Academic Rank*. Consequently, the achievement of continuous tenure of employment parallels closely the achievement of academic promotion.

In exceptional cases a faculty member may apply for promotion early provided that the action has the prior written approval of the department chair (or school dean). In such cases, the faculty member may also apply for early tenure. However, if tenure is not awarded at this time, the individual will not have the opportunity to reapply for tenure.

Tenure decisions are normally made during the sixth full academic year of employment at Francis Marion University. With the approval of the department or school, up to three years of full-time teaching experience at other institutions may be used in partial fulfillment of the time requirement for acquiring tenure. For those using credit from other institutions, the first contract year at FMU is the first probationary year.

When by a majority vote of the tenured members of the department or school, a non-tenure-track position is converted to a tenure-track position, up to five years of full-time teaching experience at Francis Marion University may be used in partial fulfillment of the time requirement for acquiring tenure. At the time of appointment to a tenure-track position contracts will specify both the credit for previous service toward tenure and the tenure decision date. The time to the tenure decision date shall begin with the first tenure-eligible contract at Francis Marion University.

In exceptional circumstances, the President may grant a faculty member tenure at the time of employment based on a favorable recommendation by the tenured members of the department or school, review and recommendation by the appropriate tenure and promotion committee, and review and recommendation by the Provost. If the Provost is the faculty member in question, the recommendation goes from the committee to the President. If the President is the faculty member in question, the recommendation goes from the Provost to the Board of Trustees.