TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSC OP: 60.01, **Tenure and Promotion Policy**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Health Sciences Center Operating Policy and Procedure (HSC OP) is to provide TTUHSC tenure and promotion guidelines within the HSC OP manual, as required by Section 04.02, *Regents' Rules*.

REVIEW: This HSC OP will be reviewed by April 1 of even-numbered years by the deans and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, with recommendations for revision forwarded to the president by May 1. Any changes in this HSC OP must be approved by the Board of Regents ("board").

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. **General Considerations**.

   a. **Required contribution by faculty.** TTUHSC is a community of scholars dedicated to teaching and to the advancement of scientific knowledge through scholarship. An essential component of academic endeavor provided by faculty members who have clinical skills is participation in clinical service. Faculty members may also serve the academic community through participation in institutional governance, e.g., committee work, in addition to other activities. Some TTUHSC faculty members also make important contributions to the community in the form of their academically related public service complementary to the institutional mission. All of these contributions by faculty members will be recognized as essential to the mission of TTUHSC.

   b. **Competence and objectivity.** Faculty members at TTUHSC have correlative responsibilities. In addition to maintaining standards of competence, particularly those relating to scholarship and teaching ability, faculty members are also responsible for maintaining objectivity and industry and cooperating with colleagues and associates in the university.

   c. **Subject to adjustments.** With approval of the dean, faculty members are subject to adjustments to salary, administrative positions, employment duties, and campus location.

   d. **Non-discrimination.** All tenure and/or promotion considerations and recommendations rest upon objective requirements in relationship to the ability of faculty members to perform effectively their responsibilities in teaching, scholarship, clinical service, and academically-related or other public service. Such considerations and recommendations are to be made without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, status as a covered veteran, or any other legally protected category, class, or characteristic, which, otherwise, do not preclude performance of requisite faculty responsibilities.

2. **Academic Freedom.**

   a. **Open expression.** Achievement of the teaching, research, patient care and service missions of TTUHSC depends upon an uninhibited search for truth and its open expression. Hence, it is essential that faculty members be free to pursue scholarly inquiry without undue restriction, and to voice and publish individual conclusions concerning the significance of evidence that they consider relevant.

b. **Content of teaching material.** TTUHSC faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing the subject which they teach, but should refrain from introducing controversial matters which bear no relationship to the classroom subject. When speaking, writing or acting as a citizen of the nation, state or community, faculty members must be free from institutional censorship or discipline, and should make it clear that in this capacity they do not speak for TTUHSC. Faculty members are subject to academic responsibility as noted below in this policy.

3. **Academic Responsibility.**

a. **Information provided by faculty.** Faculty candidates agree to provide complete, accurate and current information on all applications for employment and credentialing as deemed necessary by TTUHSC. Prior to commencement of employment and as a condition of continued employment with TTUHSC, faculty members shall, at a minimum, obtain and maintain all the requisite licenses/ certifications required by the state of Texas and other such governmental and professional boards having authority over them and practice privileges where applicable. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in suspension without pay and/or termination.

b. **Responsibility of faculty.** The concept of academic freedom for faculty members is accompanied by an equally important concept of academic responsibility. Faculty members have a responsibility to TTUHSC, their profession, students, and society at large. The rights of faculty members as extended by society and protected by written policies and the law require the reciprocal assumption of certain responsibilities. The fundamental responsibilities of faculty members as teachers, scholars and/or clinicians include maintaining competence in their field of specialization as exhibited in the classroom, the clinic or laboratory and in the public arena by such activities as discussions, lectures, consulting, publications, and participation in professional organizations and meetings.

c. **Protection of statements.** Statements by faculty members are protected even though they may be critical in tone or content. However, such statements are not protected by free speech if, they substantially impede faculty members' performance of their duties, materially and substantially interfere with the regular operation of TTUHSC, or are part of a continuing pattern of expression that may destroy the harmony and morale of an academic unit. False statements made publicly with knowledge of their falsity, or in reckless disregard for the truth, are not subject to constitutional protection. Such action may call into question the fitness of faculty members to perform their professional duties.

d. **Conduct in the classroom.** Faculty members should be professional in their conduct in the classroom and in relationships with students, maintain respect for students and students' rights in the learning experience, and be reasonably available to students for consultation concerning course work.

4. **Tenure Perspectives.**

a. **Concept of tenure.** Academic tenure has been developed so that TTUHSC may have the benefit of the competent and honest judgment of its faculty. Tenure recognizes the professional status of faculty members and assures that employment may be terminated only for cause. The burden of proof rests upon TTUHSC when it elects to dismiss tenured faculty members.

b. **Purposes of tenure.** The purposes of tenure are to protect the academic freedom of the faculty member, to ensure faithful observance of the requirements of academic due process, and to retain, encourage, and promote the ablest and most promising faculty

members. This policy defines the types of appointments that may lead to tenure and specifies procedures for granting tenure.

c. **Award of tenure.** Tenure may be awarded at certain ranks only after a period of probationary service. TTUHSC may award tenure based on excellence of performance in the following areas relevant to faculty members' disciplines:

(1) teaching;

(2) scholarship (includes appropriate research pursuits);

(3) clinical service; and

(4) academically-related or other public service.

Tenure at TTUHSC is awarded only by formal action of the board.

d. **Ranks eligible for tenure.** Members of the faculty with the rank of associate professor and professor alone are eligible for tenure. Tenure does not apply to administrative appointments.

5. **Non-tenure Track Appointments.**

a. **Term appointment.** Non-tenure track term appointments (0.5 to 1 FTE) are for a specific period of time. Faculty appointees in non-tenured positions shall be given a statement in writing of the conditions and period of their appointment. Term appointments may be renewed. However, reappointment shall not create the right to a subsequent term appointment. Time served by persons in non-tenure track series cannot be used as time accrued toward tenure. Each school may select titles from the following non-tenure track appointment positions:

(1) **Non-tenure track appointments.** Non-tenure track appointments apply to non-tenure track faculty members who are, at the least, halftime, and to individuals with the appropriate professional credentials, as determined by TTUHSC, who are full-time employees of institutions holding formal affiliation agreements with TTUHSC as follows:

(a) assistant instructor;

(b) instructor;

(c) assistant professor;

(d) associate professor; or

(e) professor.

(2) **Faculty associate appointments.** Faculty associate non-tenure track titles may be used for persons who are employees of TTUHSC and who function in teaching, research, or clinical support roles.

(3) **Research appointments.** The following non-tenure track appointments are for faculty members engaged primarily in research, with incidental teaching and/or patient care responsibilities:

(a) research instructor;

(b) research assistant professor;

(c) research associate professor; or

(d) research professor.

b. **Other term appointments with qualifying conditions.** Non-tenure track term appointments with qualifying conditions are written for a specific period of time. Faculty appointees in non-tenured positions with qualifying conditions shall be given a statement in writing of the conditions and period of their appointment. Term appointments with qualifying conditions may be renewed. However, reappointment to any such position shall not create the right to a subsequent term appointment. Each school may select titles from the following non-tenure track appointment positions:

(1) **Clinical appointments.** The following non-tenure track appointments are reserved for appointees with less than half-time appointments (less than 0.5 FTE), i.e., less than half-time commitment to, and less than half-time compensation from, TTUHSC:

(a) clinical lecturer;

(b) clinical instructor;

(c) clinical assistant professor;

(d) clinical associate professor; or

(e) clinical professor.

Sections 10 and 12 herein do not apply to clinical appointments.

(2) **Non-clinical appointments.** The following non-tenure track appointments are reserved for appointees with less than half-time appointments (less than 0.5 FTE), i.e., less than half-time commitment to, and less than half-time compensation from, TTUHSC:

(a) lecturer;

(b) instructor;

(c) assistant professor;

(d) associate professor; or

(e) professor.

Sections 10 and 12 herein do not apply to non-clinical appointments.

(3) **Adjunct appointments.** The term “adjunct” may be used in conjunction with any appropriate non-tenure track titles including joint appointments to indicate that appointees are regularly engaged as employees of another institution or agency. The following “adjunct” series also may be used for TTUHSC faculty who may be engaged in part-time or full-time teaching and/or patient care activities in a duly authorized TTUHSC program and whose compensation is not derived from TTUHSC state-appropriated faculty budgets:

(a) adjunct instructor;

(b) adjunct assistant professor;

(c) adjunct associate professor; or

(d) adjunct professor.

Sections 10 and 12 herein do not apply to adjunct appointments.

(4) **Visiting appointments.** The following non-tenure track appointments are reserved for distinguished individuals who meet the criteria for appointment in senior academic ranks. Visiting appointments may be part- or full-time, but are not continuing unless approved by the dean:

(a) visiting associate professor, or

(b) visiting professor.

Sections 10 and 12 herein do not apply to visiting appointments.

c. **Non-reappointment in non-tenure series of appointments**. Faculty appointments in the non-tenure track series shall be reviewed annually by the respective department chairs and deans. Although a reason for the decision not to reappoint is not required, a decision not to reappoint cannot be based on considerations violative of academic freedom or other legally impermissible reasons. TTUHSC will be compliant in following its established standards or prescribed procedures. A written notice of non-reappointment will be issued by the dean to faculty no less than four months prior to August 31 of each year.

Notice of non-reappointment to clinical, non-clinical, adjunct, and visiting faculty may be issued at any time.

d. **Notice of non-reappointment following five years of service**. After a period of five years of service in the full-time non-tenure track at the assistant professor, associate professor, or professor level, a written notice of reappointment or non-reappointment will be issued by the dean no less than 12 months prior to the date of separation.

Notice of non-reappointment to clinical, non-clinical, adjunct, and visiting faculty may be issued at any time.

e. **Transition within non-tenure track appointments.**

(1) Non-tenured faculty members are subject to adjustments to salary, administrative positions, employment duties, and campus location.

(2) After a period of five years of service in the non-tenure track at the assistant professor level or three years at the associate professor or professor level, extended appointments not to exceed five years may be offered upon recommendation by department chair and approval of the dean.

(3) The transition from the non-tenure track series to the tenure track series, or vice versa, may be permitted following review and by mutual agreement of the faculty members, the respective department chairs and deans. Absent extraordinary circumstances which are approved by deans, only one transfer between tracks will be permitted.

(4) Non-tenure track faculty may be eligible for promotion in accordance with requirements and procedures provided for in the respective schools' tenure and promotion guidelines.

f. **Conditions of non-reappointment and dismissal.**

(1) Faculty members are entitled to review their personnel files and to obtain a copy of the information contained therein at their expense. The non-reappointment appeal process for an alleged violation of academic freedom, other legally impermissible reasons, or TTUHSC's non-compliance in following its established standards or prescribed procedures is set out in Section 10.b of this policy.

(2) Faculty members holding non-tenure appointments may be dismissed for cause as set out in Sections 11 and 12 of this policy.

6. **Tenure and Tenure Track Appointments.**

a. **Time served.** Time served on the tenure track in the assistant professor, associate professor and professor ranks shall count as probationary time toward the award of tenure. (See Section 7 of this policy.) Tenure may be awarded only at the associate professor and professor ranks.

b. **Tenure track appointments.** The following tenure track appointments are for full-time faculty members.

(1) assistant professor;
(2) associate professor; or
(3) professor.

c. **Tenured appointment.** A tenured appointment assures the right of faculty members to a continuing academic position of employment. Tenured faculty members are subject to adjustments to salary, administrative positions, employment duties, and campus location.

d. **Academic appointment.** Tenure applies only to full-time faculty members including those faculty members with nine month appointments. Although tenure does not apply to administrative positions, faculty members holding administrative positions may be tenured in their respective academic units.

e. **Leave of absence.** Tenure applies to continuous full-time appointment in the academic units which have the authority to initiate tenure recommendations. The following rules govern the effect of a leave of absence upon the maximum probationary period:

(1) Leave for four months or less during an academic year shall be included in the maximum probationary period.

(2) Continuous leave for more than four months shall cause that entire academic year to be excluded from the maximum probationary period unless faculty members are on faculty development leave l, or the equivalent of an approved fellowship, performing scholarly activities.

f. **Joint appointment.**

(1) Faculty members whose efforts constitute a 50/50 percent joint appointment in two TTUHSC academic units may be awarded tenure in the joint position. If one of the units refuses to recommend tenure upon expiration of the probationary period and issues timely written notice, tenure shall not be awarded, unless faculty members are given full-time employment in the academic unit that elects to recommend tenure.

(2) Faculty members whose efforts do not constitute a 50/50 percent appointment in two TTUHSC academic units may be awarded tenure only in the unit where an

appointment greater than 50 percent is held. That unit then must be prepared to absorb the remainder of the faculty member's appointment if the faculty member relinquishes, or is asked to relinquish, the part of the appointment that is less than 50 percent.

g. **Restructuring of Academic Units.** If a department or other academic unit is merged or otherwise reorganized, tenured faculty members in the affected academic unit shall not lose their tenure appointment solely because of such reorganization.

7. **Probationary period.**

a. **Probationary appointment.** Probationary appointees serve in a faculty status leading to the possible award of tenure. Probationary appointees are reappointed after appropriate review each academic year unless otherwise given written notice. (See Section 10.a of this policy.) Such appointees are subject to adjustments to salary, administrative positions employment duties, and campus location.

b. **Maximum probationary period.** The maximum probationary period for tenure consideration is the same for all tenure-eligible ranks. Before the end of the seven-year probationary period, non-tenured assistant professors, associate professors, or professors must be notified in writing either that tenure has been awarded or that the appointment will not be renewed at the end of the eighth year.

c. **Early tenure.** Requests for early tenure consideration may be appropriate if faculty members' accomplishments are exceptional. Each school will establish criteria for awarding tenure before the end of the maximum probationary period.

d. **Previous service.** Previous full-time service at the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor, or comparable status in institutions of higher learning, may be applied toward the award of tenure. The dean's letter of appointment shall state whether, and to what extent, time served at another institution will be applied to the probationary period.

e. **Tenure with appointment.** The president, at the request of a dean, may recommend that the board award appointment with tenure to accommodate the recruitment of senior faculty who have been granted tenure by universities or institutions of higher learning that are at levels comparable to TTUHSC, or whose qualification merit tenure with appointment. The qualifications of candidates for appointment with tenure will be reviewed in accordance with school tenure and promotion policies, standards and guidelines, as well as Section 9 of this policy.

f. **Extenuating circumstances** .Occasionally, faculty members may experience extenuating circumstances during their appointment resulting in the need to interrupt the probationary period. Consequently, the years considered as part of the probationary period may not be consecutive. Staying the probationary period will not jeopardize or adversely affect faculty members in the tenure review. Guidelines for requests to stay the probationary period are provided in Section 8 of this policy.

g. **Computing date of service**. In computing probationary periods for tenure, the effective date of each appointment shall be September 1 of the calendar year in which the appointment is made. A common tenure anniversary date of August 31 for all tenure-eligible academic appointments shall apply. (See Section 6.f of this policy, for computing periods of leave without pay.)

8. **Extension of tenure track probationary period.**

a. **Adjustment of probationary period.** Faculty members may request an extension of their maximum probationary period in order to accommodate those faculty faced with extenuating circumstances. This period of time is not a leave of absence, but rather is a

defined period during which expectations for faculty performance are adjusted to reflect faculty members' past or current circumstances. The expectations and responsibilities during this period will be defined in writing by the respective department chairs and approved by deans.

b. **Extension of probationary period.** The maximum extension that may be granted to faculty members is three years, regardless of the combination of circumstances. Faculty members who are granted an extension of the probationary period will be evaluated on the same basis and by the same standards as though there had been no extension.

(1) **Parenting a new child.** Tenure-track faculty members who become the parent of children by birth or adoption during the probationary period for tenure may request a one-year extension of their maximum probationary period to provide time to adjust to the demands of parenting newborn or adopted children. An application for a second consecutive extension may be submitted, but must be approved by the dean, prior to completion of the first extension.

Requests for extension of the probationary period must be submitted as soon as possible after the birth or adoption. If both parents are employed in an eligible position at TTUHSC, each of them may request an extension of the probationary period for each birth or adoption that adds a child or children to their family.

(2) **Other extenuating circumstances.** When faced with extenuating circumstances, tenure-track faculty members may request an extension of up to three years of the maximum probationary period for reasons beyond the faculty members' control that deprive them of reasonable opportunity to demonstrate their ability and potential as faculty members. Examples of extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to, care for seriously ill children or family members, physical disaster affecting research materials, and exceptional institutional responsibilities.

(3) **Procedure for requesting an extension.** Individual schools will develop criteria for consideration of requests for extension of the maximum probationary period. School procedural guidelines will require, at a minimum, that such requests be submitted in writing through the department chair to the dean for approval.

9. **Tenure and promotion decision process.**

a. **Criteria and standards.** The criteria and areas of performance to be considered in the tenure and promotion decision processes may consist of teaching, scholarship, clinical service, and academically-related or other public service. Individual schools will develop standards of excellence in each of these areas. These standards should also describe the relative importance of each performance category, along with the related criteria for award of tenure or receipt of promotion.

b. **Guidelines.** Individual schools will develop and publish written policies that translate tenure and promotion standards into guidelines that are appropriate to their disciplines. It shall be the responsibility of the deans to assure appropriate faculty participation in the development of these standards and guidelines, to approve school tenure and promotion policies, and to monitor their application. Deans shall review these guidelines periodically and consider appropriate recommendations from the faculty, according to the bylaws of each school.

c. **Information regarding criteria, standards, and guidelines.** It is the responsibility of the respective department chairs and deans, to ensure that all faculty members are provided the written tenure and promotion criteria, standards, and guidelines of the school and the department in which appointment has been made.

d. **Procedure for review of qualifications for tenure and promotion.** Primary responsibility for evaluation of the academic qualifications of candidates for tenure and /or promotion rests with the faculty.

(1) Where applicable, six sequential steps in the tenure and/or promotion review process are as follows:

(a) peer review by tenured faculty members in the department for consideration of tenure;

(b) peer review by faculty members of higher academic rank in the department for consideration of promotion;

(c) review by the department chair;

(d) review by the school's committee charged with tenure and promotion;

(e) review by the dean; and

(f) review by the president.

(2) In conducting reviews at the department level, all tenured faculty shall have an opportunity to vote on a tenure recommendation. Likewise, in conducting reviews at the department level, all faculty of higher academic rank shall have an opportunity to vote on a promotion recommendation. However, no faculty member currently or previously related by blood or marriage may participate in the tenure and/or promotion evaluation process of any such relative. The department chair is responsible for making an independent tenure or promotion recommendation in writing to the dean. The summary of the vote by appropriate faculty of the department (or of any special review committee) is to be forwarded with the department chair's recommendation to the school tenure and promotion committee, along with appropriate documentation in the tenure or promotion dossier.

(3) Each school within TTUHSC will have a committee responsible for tenure and promotion, the composition of which will be outlined in the school's respective bylaws. The school tenure and promotion committee will review recommendations for tenure and/or promotion in terms of department and school standards. Each school's tenure and promotion committee will forward its recommendations to the dean, who will be responsible for reviewing and recommending appropriate action on all tenure and/or promotion recommendations emanating from the school. These recommendations, with accompanying documentation in the tenure and/or promotion dossier, will be forwarded to the president. The final recommendations on tenure and/or promotion will then be made by the president and forwarded to the board.

Faculty members may be awarded tenure and/or promotion only by formal action of the board.

10. **Non-reappointment of faculty.**

a. **Notice of non-reappointment of tenure track faculty.** Although a reason for the decision not to reappoint tenure-track probationary faculty is not required, a decision not to reappoint cannot be based on considerations violative of academic freedom or other legally impermissible reasons. TTUHSC will be compliant in following its established standards or prescribed procedures. Except under conditions relating to the dismissal of faculty noted in Section 11, deans shall give written notice of non-reappointment of non-tenured faculty members on tenure track probationary appointments in accordance with

the following schedule. For computing the period of employment, the effective date of each appointment shall be September 1 of the calendar year in which the appointment is made.

(1) at least four months before the end of two years of service;

(2) at least nine months for those with more than two years of service.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, notice of non-reappointment may be given at any time prior to the notice deadline

b. **Appeal of non-reappointment for non-tenured faculty (non-tenure track and tenure track).** TTUHSC is not required to give any non-tenured faculty members a reason for the decision to not reappoint. However, faculty members are entitled to review their personnel files and to obtain a copy of the information contained therein at their expense.

If non-tenured faculty members allege that the decision not to reappoint them is caused by considerations violative of academic freedom, legally impermissible reasons, or for significant noncompliance with TTUHSC's established standards or prescribed procedures, the allegation shall be given consideration in accordance with the following procedures:

(1) Faculty members shall submit in writing, and with specificity, allegations of improper non-reappointment, as outlined above, and request a hearing within fifteen (15) TTUHSC business days of receipt of the notice of non-reappointment. Faculty members shall submit the allegations and request for hearing to the dean, the department chair, and the chair of the School Hearing Committee.

(2) A hearing will be initiated by the School Hearing Committee as soon as possible after receipt of written, specific allegations. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with guidelines and procedures provided in Section 12.i-k of this policy. Under these procedural guidelines, the panel of the School Hearing Committee will select a chair and may request *pro bono* legal counsel or legal counsel from the Office of General Counsel. Legal counsel may advise the hearing panel but may not vote. The faculty member shall have the right to appear in person with legal counsel retained by the individual. Failure on the part of the faculty member to use an attorney or other representative at the hearing shall not preclude the hearing panel from using legal counsel or other assistance from the Office of General Counsel. An audio recording of the proceedings shall be made and delivered to the dean, and a copy of the audio recording will be made available to the faculty member. The record will be transcribed only on the request of either the faculty member or the dean and at the expense of the requesting party.

(3) The faculty member shall have the burden of proving to the hearing panel facts that establish the non-reappointment was improper, as outlined above. The procedure shall be investigatory and non-adversarial in nature.

(4) Within ten (10) TTUHSC business days of conclusion of the hearing, the chair of the hearing panel shall deliver the findings, recommendations, and minority opinions, if any, to the dean.

(5) Upon receipt of the hearing panel's findings and recommendations, and within ten (10) TTUHSC business days thereof, the dean shall submit these documents, along with his or her findings and recommendations, to the president and to the faculty member.

(6) The president shall review the findings and recommendations and within ten (10)

TTUHSC business days of receipt of the dean's recommendation make a decision. The president's decision will be stated in writing and communicated to the dean and the faculty member. The decision of the president shall be final.

11. **Grounds for dismissal of tenured and non-tenured faculty.**

a. **Dismissal.** Dismissal of all faculty members before the expiration of the stated period of their appointment, except by resignation or retirement, will be for cause only.

b. **Cause for dismissal.** Examples of cause for dismissal of appointment of faculty members include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

(1) professional incompetence;

(2) neglect of professional responsibilities;

(3) moral turpitude adversely affecting the performance of duties or the meeting of responsibilities to the school, or to students or associates;

(4) mental or physical disability of a continuing nature adversely affecting the performance of duties or the meeting of responsibilities to the school, or to students or associates that cannot be reasonably accommodated;

(5) unprofessional conduct adversely affecting the performance of duties or the meeting of responsibilities to the school, or to students or associates.

(6) failure to pass comprehensive performance evaluation (See HSC OP 60.03 Comprehensive Performance Evaluation of Tenured Faculty).

12. **Procedures in dismissal cases.** Due process as set forth in this policy statement embodies a course of proceedings in line with rules and principles generally recognized in the academic community. Among these is the right of a tenured faculty member and a non-tenured faculty member during the term of his or her appointment, to request and be granted a hearing before a panel of the School Hearing Committee when notice of cause and request for dismissal has been received by the faculty member and the dean.

In each case, the procedure for dismissal will be determined by an equitable procedure, affording protection to the rights of the individual and to the interests of TTUHSC.

a. **Written notice.** A faculty member shall not be dismissed until he or she has received written notice of the cause for dismissal and, except as specified below, only after a reasonable opportunity for a hearing, which shall meet the established procedures of due process as set forth herein and in which the school shall bear the burden of showing cause for dismissal.

b. **Salary and duties.** The faculty member will receive his or her salary until conclusion of the dismissal procedures and may continue the performance of his or her duties for that period unless the individual's welfare or that of the school, in the opinion of the dean, requires that a leave of absence be issued. A faculty member's salary, benefits, and duties may be discontinued, on written recommendation of the dean and approval by the president, in cases of job abandonment, loss of professional license/certification to practice, loss of clinical credentials, or similar instances where the faculty member, either by choice or as the result of official actions, becomes prohibited from fulfilling the conditions of his or her employment.

c. **Resignation.** In cases where the respondent faculty member admits his or her conduct constitutes cause, or does not choose to have a hearing, he or she may resign.

d. **Lapse of deadline.** Failure to appeal the dismissal, or to submit one's resignation, within fifteen (15) TTUHSC business days of receipt of written notice as set forth above, will relieve TTUHSC of any further obligation to pay a faculty member's salary and benefits, effective immediately, and completes the dismissal process. The dean shall notify the faculty member in writing of this action.

e. **School Hearing Committee and Hearing Panel.** The School Hearing Committee shall be charged with initiating a hearing in cases of dismissal of tenured faculty or non-tenured faculty during their term of appointment. The composition and method of selecting a School Hearing Committee panel will be set forth in the faculty bylaws of each school.

f. **Mediation.** Before the filing of formal dismissal charges by the dean, a reasonable effort shall be made to mediate and conciliate differences, where appropriate. Upon written notification by the dean of a request for dismissal, and within fifteen (15) TTUHSC business days, the chair of the School Hearing Committee shall appoint a mediation team comprised of two faculty members, neither of whom serves in the same department as the faculty member recommended for dismissal, who are not on the School Hearing Committee, and who are acceptable to both parties. If no mediators are found acceptable within fifteen (15) TTUHSC business days, mediation will be deemed not feasible, and the matter will be referred back to the dean. In this case, the dean will determine whether formal charges should issue to dismiss the faculty member for cause.

If a mediation team is acceptable, it shall attempt to reach a mutually acceptable resolution between the dean and faculty member in a thorough, confidential, equitable, and expeditious manner. The mediation team shall report the outcome of the mediation to the president within fifteen (15) TTUHSC business days of the first day of the mediation. If conciliation is not achieved, the dean shall determine whether formal charges should issue to dismiss the faculty member for cause.

g. **Formal dismissal charges.** In all cases where formal dismissal charges issue, the faculty member will be informed in writing of the charges. The charges will be considered by the panel of the School Hearing Committee unless the faculty member resigns, as set out in Section 12.c. of this policy, or the faculty member fails to cooperate in advancing the appeal, per Section 12.d. of this policy.

h. **Right to hearing.** Upon receipt of formal dismissal charges, the faculty member shall also be notified in writing of his or her right to a hearing and shall be given fifteen (15) TTUHSC business days from the date of receipt of such notice to submit to the dean and the chair of the School Hearing Committee a request for a hearing before the panel of the School Hearing Committee.. Upon receipt of the request, the chair of the School Hearing Committee, will take the necessary measures to address the formal charges as soon as possible.

i. **Hearing panel.** The panel of the School Hearing Committee will select a chair and may, if it chooses, request *pro bono* legal counsel from the Office of General Counsel. Legal counsel will advise the School Hearing Committee, but may not vote. If the panel of the School Hearing Committee retains *pro bono* legal counsel from outside the Office of the General Counsel, it may consult with the Office of General Counsel regarding technical questions not directly bearing on the merits of the case.

j. **Representatives at hearing.** In a dismissal hearing, the faculty member shall have the right to appear in person with legal counsel retained by the individual, or representative of his or her choice, and to confront and cross-examine witnesses. The faculty member shall have the right to testify, but may not be required to do so, and may introduce in his or her behalf all evidence, written or oral, which he or she considers to be relevant or material to the case. TTUHSC shall also have the right to legal counsel from the Office of General Counsel in the preparation and presentation of charges and have the same rights in the hearing as those accorded the faculty member. Failure on the part of the faculty member

to utilize an attorney or other representative at the hearing shall not preclude the panel of the School Hearing Committee from utilizing *pro bono* legal counsel or other assistance from the Office of General Counsel.

k. **Procedural aspects.** The parties shall make any objections, substantive or procedural, deemed relevant during the course of the hearing, although neither the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure nor the Texas Rules of Evidence shall apply to the hearing.

l. **Recording.** An audio recording of the proceedings shall be made and delivered by the dean to the president of TTUHSC, and a copy of the audio recording shall be made available to the faculty member. The record will be transcribed only on the request of either the faculty member or the president at the expense of the requesting party.

m. **Findings of hearing panel.** The nature of the hearing or review of the formal dismissal charges shall be investigatory and non-adversarial. The panel of the School Hearing Committee, by majority of its membership, shall make written findings on the material facts on each charge and make specific recommendations with regard to each of the charges, as well as general recommendations concerning dismissal. The panel of the School Hearing Committee, by majority of its membership, may make any supplementary suggestions it deems proper concerning disposition of the case. If minority findings, recommendations, or suggestions are made, they shall be similarly treated.

n. **Dean's review.** The chair of the panel of the School Hearing Committee shall deliver the written findings, recommendations, and suggestions to the dean within seven (7) TTUHSC business days of the hearing. The dean shall review the committee's findings and recommendations and, within seven (7) TTUHSC business days, shall transmit them along with his or her own recommendations to the president.

o. **President's review in dismissal of non-tenured faculty.** In the case of dismissal of a non-tenured faculty member, the president shall review the School Hearing Committee's findings and recommendations and the dean's recommendations and make a decision. The president's decision will be stated in writing and communicated to the faculty member and the dean within ten (10) TTUHSC business days of receipt of the recommendations of the School Hearing Committee and the dean. The decision of the president shall be final.

p. **President's review in dismissal of tenured faculty.** In the case of a dismissal of a tenured faculty member, the president shall transmit the findings and recommendations of the panel of the School Hearing Committee and the dean's recommendations, along with his or her recommendations, to the faculty member, dean and to the board for its consideration. The board, by a majority of its total membership, shall take final action. The decision of the board will be stated in writing and communicated to the president, who will communicate it to the dean. The president shall also notify the faculty member in writing of the board's decision. The decision of the board shall be final. Once the board acts to dismiss, salary and benefits shall cease, unless such has been discontinued previously for any reason referenced hereinabove.

q. **President's right to extend time periods or intervene.** The president shall have the prerogative of extending any of the time periods specified above if, in his or her opinion, it is in the best interest of TTUHSC or the faculty member. The president shall have the right to intervene when, in his or her judgment, the proceedings are not progressing in a timely manner.

r. **Suspension of faculty.** The procedures for dismissal described in the foregoing paragraphs of this section do not negate the right of the president to suspend the faculty member from all or some duties when the president reasonably believes it to be in the best interest of the institution. The suspension with pay shall be without appeal and shall continue until such time as the suspended faculty member has been accorded the procedural rights described in this section.

13. **Financial exigency, phasing out, or reorganization of programs.**

a. Financial exigency: The board has sole authority to declare financial exigency. When faculty dismissals are contemplated on grounds of financial exigency, there should be timely notice as reasonably early as possible. In cases of financial exigency, the faculty members involved shall be given opportunities for appointment in related areas of the school or TTUHSC, provided they are qualified professionally to serve in such areas, and provided such positions are available.

b. Phasing out, or reorganization of programs: When faculty dismissals are contemplated on grounds of program termination or reduction, or reorganization of academic units, there should be timely notice as reasonably early as possible, with affected faculty having an opportunity to address the matter with the dean. Recommendations from the faculty will be sought by the dean regarding alternatives available to the school to ensure continuation of a strong academic program and to minimize the losses sustained by affected students and faculty members. In cases of the phasing out of programs requiring reduction in the number of faculty, the faculty members involved shall be given opportunities for appointment in related areas of the school or TTUHSC, provided they are qualified professionally to serve in such areas, and provided such positions are available.

14. **Implementation.**

a. This policy, as amended, applies to all faculty members and is to be implemented immediately upon approval by the board. Faculty members in tenure track probationary status at the time of an amendment will have the option of electing the tenure and promotion decision process of either the tenure policy that was in effect when they were appointed or that was in effect at the time of application for tenure. All faculty members are subject to all other provisions and procedures of this tenure policy, as amended, upon its approval by the board. Faculty members who have been awarded tenure at TTUHSC shall continue under this policy, as amended. This policy shall not be applied in derogation of any faculty members' contract rights. It is not the intent of this policy to operate in derogation of any substantive benefit earned by tenured faculty members under a previous TTUHSC tenure policy.