

**EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY MANUAL**

Part IX, Section I. Appointment, Tenure, Promotion, and Advancement Policies and Procedures, Subsection V. Procedure for Review of Any Notice of Non-Reappointment or Notice of Non-Conferral of Permanent Tenure at the Completion of the Probationary Term

HEARING COMMITTEE

V. Procedure for Review of Any Notice of Non-Reappointment or Notice of Non-Conferral of Permanent Tenure at the Completion of the Probationary Term.

A. Deadlines for Review

Failure to submit the review documents specified in this section within the time periods allotted constitutes a waiver of the right to have the decision reviewed by ECU faculty committees, institutional authorities, or the UNC Board of Governors. However, before the expiration of the deadline the faculty member may request an extension, provided that the request is made in writing and presented to the Hearing Committee. Within 10 calendar days of receiving a request for extension, decisions on requests for extension of time shall be made by the Hearing Committee. The Committee will endeavor to complete the review within the time limits specified except under unusual circumstances such as when the time period includes official university breaks and holidays and when, despite reasonable efforts, the Committee cannot be assembled.

B. Request for Hearing with the Hearing Committee

Within 25 calendar days of receiving written notice from the vice chancellor of non-reappointment or non-conferral of permanent tenure, a faculty member (hereinafter, the complainant) may request a hearing before the Hearing Committee.

1. The Hearing Committee

The Hearing Committee shall be composed of five members and five alternates each of whom is a full-time, permanently tenured voting faculty member without administrative appointment (as per Part IX, Section IV). Members shall be elected in accordance with the procedures for election of appellate committees specified in the Bylaws of the East Carolina University Faculty Senate. Members and alternates shall be elected to three-year terms. A quorum for the committee shall be the five members or their alternates.

Upon organization, the members of the Hearing Committee shall elect a chair and a secretary. Because hearings in matters of non-reappointment or conferral of permanent tenure can present complex and difficult questions of fact, policy and law, and because of the central role of the committee in gathering and preserving the evidence upon which most subsequent decisions related to the matter will be based, it is important for the chancellor to ensure that faculty committee members, as well as relevant administrators and aggrieved faculty members, are appropriately trained in accordance with guidelines and procedures jointly established by the faculty officers and chancellor. Should any committee officer be absent at the beginning of a hearing, the committee shall elect an alternate officer for the purposes of the hearing. (Faculty Senate Resolution #03-49)

When the committee is convened to consider any matter associated with a complainant's request for a hearing, those committee members who hold an appointment in the complainant's academic unit, those who might reasonably expect to be called as witnesses, those who might reasonably expect to be asked to serve as advisors (see subsection V.D.2, Conduct of the Hearing) to any party of the hearing, or those who may have any other conflict of interest should disqualify themselves from participation in the activities of the committee related to this specific request for a hearing. The complainant and those individuals or groups who are alleged to be responsible for the action or actions

described by the complainant in the request for the hearing (hereinafter, the respondents) are permitted to challenge committee members for cause. The other members of the committee will decide on any potential disqualifications if a committee member is so challenged but wishes to remain.

When membership of the committee falls below the specified five members and five alternates, the Faculty Senate will elect additional faculty members to the committee. Vacancies on the committee will be filled first by moving alternates to regular member status and by electing new alternates and/or members as needed to fill the committee roster.

Upon receipt of a request for a hearing, the chair of the committee shall determine the availability of the regular members and alternates, and shall select from those available one or more alternates, as necessary. The ranking of the available alternates for selection shall be determined by their years of service to the University. That available alternate who is most highly ranked shall attend all sessions of the hearing and shall replace a regular member should that member be unable to attend the entire hearing.

The committee may at any time consult with an attorney in the office of the University Attorney who is not presently nor previously substantively involved in the matter giving rise to the hearing, nor will advise the University administrator(s) regarding the committee action(s) during the review.

2. Initiation of the Hearing Process

The basis for a request for a hearing must be found in one or more of the following reasons: (a) the decision was based on any ground stated to be impermissible in Section 604B of The Code of The University of North Carolina; (b) the decision was attended by a material procedural irregularity such that doubt is cast on the integrity of the decision not to reappoint. In addition, the University Equal Employment Opportunity policy prohibits employment discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Section 604B of The Code of The University of North Carolina states: "In no event shall a decision not to reappoint a faculty member be based upon (a) the exercise by the faculty member of rights guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, or by Article I of the North Carolina Constitution, or (b) the faculty member's race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, disability, veteran's status, or other forms of discrimination prohibited under policies adopted by campus Boards of Trustees, or (c) personal malice. The term 'personal malice' means dislike, animosity, ill-will, or hatred based on personal characteristics, traits, or circumstances of an individual that are not relevant to valid University decision making. For example, personnel decisions based on negative reactions to an employee's anatomical features, marital status or social acquaintances are intrinsically suspect. If reappointment is withheld because of personal characteristics that cannot be shown to impinge on job performance, a wrong likely has been committed. On the other hand, if personal characteristics can be shown to impede a faculty member's capacity to relate constructively to his or her peers, in a necessarily collegial environment, withholding advancement may be warranted. For example, the undisputed record evidence might establish that the responsible department chair declined to recommend a probationary faculty member for reappointment with tenure because of the faculty member's 'unpleasant personality and negative attitude'. Disposition of such a case requires a determination of whether the personality and attitude impeded the faculty member's job performance. While the terms 'ill-will', 'dislike', 'hatred' and 'malevolence'

may connote different degrees of antipathy, such distinctions make no difference in applying the fundamental rationale of the prohibition. Any significant degree of negative feeling toward a candidate based on irrelevant personal factors, regardless of the intensity of that feeling, is an improper basis for making decisions.” (UNC Policy Manual 101.3.1.II.B)

"Material procedural irregularity" means a departure from prescribed procedures governing reappointment and conferral of permanent tenure that is of such significance as to cast reasonable doubt upon the integrity of the original decision not to reappoint or not to confer permanent tenure. Whether a procedural irregularity occurred, and whether it is material, shall be determined by reference to those procedures which were in effect when the initial decision not to reappoint or not to confer permanent tenure was made and communicated. The Hearing Committee shall ask the chancellor to certify what procedures were then in effect if that question is a matter of dispute. (Faculty Senate Resolution #03-49)

The complainant's request for a hearing must specifically identify and enumerate all reasons for the request. The request must include (a) a description that is as complete as possible of the actions or the failures to act which support each specified contention; (b) the identification of the respondents; (c) an enumeration and description of the information or documents which are to be used to support the contention (copies of the described documents are to be made a part of the request for a hearing); (d) the identification of persons who may be willing to provide information in support of the contention; and (e) a brief description of the information those persons identified in (d) may provide and (f) a copy of the vice chancellor's notice of non-reappointment or non-conferral of permanent tenure. The complainant's request for a hearing shall be made to the chair of the Hearing Committee and delivered to the Faculty Senate office by a method that provides delivery verification.

C. Procedures for the Hearing.

1. Time and Date of Hearing

After receiving the request for a hearing, the committee shall provide a complete copy of the request for a hearing to the individuals named in the request for a hearing. The committee shall set the time, date, and place for the hearing. The date for the hearing must be within 42 calendar days after receiving the request, except under unusual circumstances such as when a hearing request is received during official university breaks and holidays and despite reasonable efforts the hearing committee cannot be assembled. The committee shall then notify the complainant, the respondents, the chair of the faculty, and the chancellor, of the time, date, and place of the hearing. At least 21 calendar days before the hearing, the complainant shall notify the committee, the respondents, the chair of the faculty, and the chancellor of the identity of the complainant's advisor, if any, and whether or not the advisor is an attorney. ("Attorney" is defined as anyone with a Juris Doctor, or other recognized law degree, regardless of whether or not that person is licensed to practice law in the State of North Carolina and/or whether or not that person is "representing" the employee). Within 14 days before the hearing, the complainant and respondent will submit documents and a list of witnesses to be used in the hearing.

2. Conduct of the Hearing

The chair of the Hearing Committee or regular member of the committee if the chair is unavailable, is responsible for conducting the hearing and for maintaining order during the hearing. Except as provided for herein, the hearing shall be conducted according to the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. Attendance at the hearing is limited to the committee's members and alternates, the complainant, one person who may

advise the complainant, the respondent(s), and one person who may advise the respondent(s). If there is more than one respondent, the respondents will designate a spokesperson for the hearing. There will be an equal number of persons advising the complainant and respondent(s). The person advising the complainant may not take an active part in the proceedings. The person advising the respondent(s) at the hearing may be either an East Carolina University faculty member (with or without administrative appointment) selected by the Chancellor or an East Carolina University attorney, if the complainant is accompanied by an attorney. The person advising the respondent(s) may not take an active part in the proceedings. Other persons (witnesses) providing information to the committee shall not be present throughout the hearing, but shall be available at a convenient location to appear before the committee as appropriate. For any hearing from which an appeal may be taken, a professional court reporter must be used to record and transcribe the hearing. (Faculty Senate Resolution #03-37)

Any such record is a part of the personnel inquiry and must be treated with appropriate confidentiality. Only the immediate parties to the controversy, the responsible administrators and attorneys, and the members of the University governing boards and their respective committees and staff are permitted access to such materials. (Faculty Senate Resolution #03-49)

The hearing shall begin with an opening statement by the committee member chairing the hearing. This statement shall be limited to explaining the purpose of the hearing and the procedures to be followed during the hearing. The hearing chair explicitly will note that the committee shall consider only information bearing on the allegations presented in the complainant's request for the hearing.

Following the opening remarks by the hearing chair, the complainant shall present his or her contentions and any supporting witnesses and documentary evidence. The respondent(s), through their spokesperson, may then reply to these contentions and present any supporting witnesses and evidence. During these presentations, the complainant, and the respondent(s), through their spokesperson, may cross-examine opposing witnesses. Committee members may question witnesses for purposes of clarification. At the conclusion of the hearing, the complainant may make a summary statement of up to ten minutes in duration. If the complainant elects to do so, then the respondent(s), through their spokesperson, will be given the same opportunity.

D. Procedures After the Hearing

After the hearing, the committee shall meet in executive session and begin its deliberations or shall adjourn for no more than two calendar days, at which time it shall reconvene in executive session to determine whether it sustains or does not sustain the allegations stated in the request for the hearing. In reaching decisions on which the committee's written recommendations to the chancellor shall be based, the committee shall consider only the evidence presented at the hearing and such written or oral arguments as the committee, in its discretion, may allow. The Complainant shall have the burden of proof. The standard applied by the committee shall be that the preponderance of the evidence establishes that a basis for his or her contentions is found in one of the reasons listed in subsection V.B.2. Initiation of Hearing.

Within 14 calendar days of finishing its deliberations the committee shall provide the complainant, respondents, and the chancellor with a copy of the committee's report and, a copy of the court reporter's transcript of the hearing. (Faculty Senate Resolution #03-37)

If the Hearing Committee determines that the complainant's contention has not been established, it shall, by simple, unelaborated statement, so notify the complainant, the respondents, the chair of the faculty, and the chancellor. Such a determination confirms the decision not to reappoint or not to confer permanent tenure.

If the Hearing Committee determines that the complainant's contention has been satisfactorily established, it shall notify the complainant, the respondents, the chair of the faculty, and the chancellor by written notice and shall recommend further substantive review.

Within 42 calendar days after receiving the recommendation of the Hearing Committee and the transcript, the chancellor shall notify the complainant, the respondents, the chair of the faculty, and the chair of the Hearing Committee what further substantive review, if any, will be made of the original decision not to reappoint or not to confer permanent tenure. If the chancellor is considering taking action inconsistent with the committee's recommendations, the chancellor shall request within 14 calendar days that a joint meeting with the committee occur. At the joint meeting, the chancellor will communicate his or her concerns and the committee will have an opportunity to respond. The joint meeting must occur within the 42 calendar day period.

The chancellor must base his or her decision on a thorough review of (1) the record evidence from the hearing and (2) the report of the committee. While the chancellor should give deference to the advice of the faculty committee, the final campus-based decision is the chancellor's.

The chancellor will inform the complainant of his or her decision in writing by a method that produces adequate evidence of delivery. In the event of an adverse decision, the chancellor's notice must inform the complainant: (1) that, within 14 calendar days of the complainant's receipt of the decision, the complainant may file a notice of appeal with the president requesting review by the Board of Governors in accordance with the Board of Governors Policy 101.3.1, (2) that a simple written notice of appeal with a brief statement of its basis is all that is required within this fourteen day period, and (3) that, thereafter, a detailed schedule for the submission of relevant documents will be established if such notice of appeal is received in a timely manner. (Faculty Senate Resolution #03-49)

The purpose of the appeal to the Board of Governors is to assure (1) that the campus-based process for reviewing the decision was not materially flawed, so as to raise questions about whether the faculty member's contentions were fairly and reliably considered, (2) that the result reached by the chancellor was not clearly erroneous, and (3) that the decision was not contrary to controlling law or policy. No appeals for denial of early tenure will be heard by the Board of Governors.

As of 8/1/19