***Proposal from the Collegial Review Council Probationary Period Extension Request Policy***

Whereas at Western Carolina University the process for extending the tenure clock is not well known,

and whereas many of our sister institutions have a similar provision for their faculty,

the Collegial Review Council proposes the following changes to the Faculty Handbook to clarify and facilitate the process for untenured tenure track faculty to extend the tenure clock:

Current Faculty Handbook:

Section 4.07 Academic Tenure and Promotion

1. Overview of Tenure and Promotion
   * 1. Probationary Period
2. The probationary period is determined by the following guidelines

6) In the event of serious illness, childbirth or other compelling reasons, the probationary period may be extended in accordance with the Serious Illness and Disability Leave Policy (see Executive Policy number 89).

Proposed Changes to Faculty Handbook:

Section 4.07 Academic Tenure and Promotion

A. Overview of Tenure and Promotion

1. Probationary Period
2. The probationary period is determined by the following guidelines

6) In the event of serious illness, childbirth or other compelling reasons, the probationary period may be extended in accordance with the Serious Illness and Disability Leave Policy (see Executive Policy number 89). In circumstances pertaining to the Serious Illness and Disability Leave Policy as well as for other compelling reasons, the faculty member should use the Academic Procedure and Regulation (APR #??):Extending the Tenure Probationary Period process found at (provide link here).

***Rationale:***

After a 6 year probationary period, tenure may be granted to those faculty members who have demonstrated professional competence. However from time to time, the probationary period is interrupted due to circumstances beyond the candidate’s control. This interruption may result in disturbing the fair process of tenure and not allowing the faculty member the necessary time to demonstrate and prove competence.

***Reasons:***

Common reasons which are accepted at many of our sister institutions and which the CRC endorse are:

*Personal or family related changes*: birth /adoption of a child, elder care, serious personal injury or illness, serious immediate family illness, family medical leave

*Institutional changes:* College or department re-structuring

*Research changes*: program redirection beyond the reasonable control of the faculty member

*Infrastructure problems:* major disruption of key services and support i.e. building closures, power failures, etc.

*Work Load:* exceptional service load, exceptional teaching load, program accreditation issues or document preparation.

***Automatic Extensions:***

Automatic extensions will be granted to both the mother and the father for the birth or adoption of a child. This may eliminate the stigma associated with making the request in these circumstances.

Although with the birth/adoption of a child the extension is automatic, it may be waived by the faculty member.

***Length of Extension:***

The length of extension will be for one year. Faculty who receive an extension must be held to the same standard not a more higher or more stringent one upon their return.

***Method of Application:***

The faculty member will consult with his/her department chair and submit a form which will be on the Provost’s web site. An example of a form is attached to this document (VA TECH). http://www.provost.vt.edu/documents/stop\_clock.pdf

***Timing of Request:***

The request for extension must be made within one year of the qualifying incident.

***Tenure Review upon return:***

After the extension period is completed, the faculty member will return to the original year of review prior to the extension and this information must be clearly indicated on the application form. All parties must understand how this extension will affect the faculty member’s tenure process.

From Virginia Tech’s faculty handbook: “It is very important that all individuals and committees participating in tenure reviews understand that any individual who has received a probationary period extension must be held to the same standard-not a higher one or more stringent one – to which other candidates without such an extension are held. This is also true in the case where the candidate’s dossier is considered on the original schedule for review. However, in this instance where an approved extension has been granted but not utilized, the tenure review is not considered mandatory and can be conducted again in the subsequent year without penalty.”