

2007-2008 Group on Faculty Affairs
AAMC Listserve Queries & Responses

Query: Move to Tenure Track

Question from Mary Moran, Drexel University (mary.moran@drexelmd.edu):

What is the process at your institution for moving someone from the non-tenure track to the tenure track?

Responses:

Robert Bornstein, The Ohio State University (Robert.bornstein@osumc.edu):

At Ohio State a faculty member cannot simply transfer from a non-tenure to a tenure track position. University rules require that tenure track positions be filled through a national search. Non-tenure track faculty members are eligible to apply for a tenure track position. Since most of our departments are in constant recruitment mode, they can easily demonstrate that there is a national search, and at the end of the day the transition from non-tenure to tenure track is relatively straightforward. In the event of a move to tenure track this is regarded as a new appointment and any years of seniority accrued on the other tracks do not transfer to the tenure track probationary period.

Roberta Sonnino, University of Minnesota (ronnino@umn.edu):

Minnesota is pretty much the same as Bob has described.

Stephen Lerner, Wayne State University (slerner@med.wayne.edu):

Our Provost will not permit a direct switch from the non-tenurable Clinician-Educator track to tenure track on the tenurable Research-Educator track. Rather, the department must post a tenure-track position, for which the faculty member in question (as well as others, of course) may apply. If the faculty member is selected in that search, then he/she is appointed to the new tenure-track position. For someone who is already in the Research-Educator track, but not on tenure track, the process is simpler, as long as a tenure line is available.

Kathe Nelson, University of Alabama (KNELSON@uasom.uab.edu):

This is the same at University of Alabama SOM---if the original position had been advertised as open tenure-rank, there is a possibility to change from non-tenure to tenure without a new search, but as is usually the case, if originally described as a non-tenured position, it must be re-advertised and searched for and new personnel papers established.

Lois Geist, University of Iowa (lois-geist@uiowa.edu):

Our case is similar – there must be an open tenure track position and therefore there needs to be a somewhat competitive process. They do not necessarily have to have a full blown search but do need a waiver for the hire. They have to go through all the usual stuff, including a new offer letter and outside letters, a faculty vote, an executive committee vote and provost approval.

Victoria Mulhern, University of Pennsylvania (vmulhern@mail.med.upenn.edu):

Penn requires a national search and the standard academic review process as would be applicable for any new appointment.

Tracy Eells, University of Louisville (eells@louisville.edu):

At the University of Louisville, it is a relatively straightforward process. In fact, we encourage clinical faculty with scholarship ambitions to come in on a non-tenurable (or what we call term) track. They may then transfer to a tenure (i.e., probationary) track if they demonstrate potential to be tenured (i.e., publish sufficiently and get funding that supports their scholarship). They may make a transfer either way only once. The process involves a meeting with faculty affairs dean to review the implications of the switch, formal letter of request from the faculty member to his/her

2007-2008 Group on Faculty Affairs
AAMC Listserve Queries & Responses

chair, endorsement by the chair to the dean, endorsement by the dean to the provost, then approval by the board of trustees.

Linda McLaughlin, Stanford University (deasy@stanford.edu):

At Stanford, a faculty member in a non-tenure line may 1) apply for an open tenure line position (which is nationally advertised) or 2) be considered for appointment to a tenure line position based on a Provost-approved search waiver. Both mechanisms require a full academic appointment review. Transitions between lines occur infrequently.

Jeannette Shorey, University of Arkansas (shoreyjeannettem@uams.edu):

At UAMS, within the College of Medicine, a faculty member on one of our two non-tenure tracks (Clinical Attending and Research Scientist) may request to change to a tenure track (Clinician Scientist, Clinician Educator, and Basic Scientist) within the first three years after appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor. The time in rank on the non-tenure track counts against the individual's tenure clock if the request is approved (currently, we have a 7-year tenure clock). The process to accomplish this change involves a letter from the candidate to the chair, expressing the reasons for the change and the candidate's understanding of the requirements for promotion and tenure on the tenure track being requested; a letter from the chair to the dean, requesting the change; and then review by the dean of the letters and the candidate's CV. We have no limit on the number of tenured positions available within the school.

Janis Letourneau, Louisiana State University (JLetou@lsuhsc.edu):

We have 2 basic mechanisms:

- 1) A faculty member on a non-tenure track can apply for and be selected for a nationally advertised new tenure track position.
- 2) A faculty member on a non-tenure track can request a review for switch to tenure track, with formal review by Appointments and Promotions Committee; faculty member must then wait at least one year before consideration and full review for tenure granting. Typically, review for assistant professors occurs several years out from switch.

Double switches are not permitted, tenure, to non-tenure, to tenure track.

Marcie Weiss, Northwestern University (mbweiss@northwestern.edu):

Northwestern/Feinberg follows a similar process as Penn, treating these changes as new appointments requiring national search and academic review.

Lisa Sutton, East Carolina University (suttonli@ecu.edu):

At the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, we have a similar process as they do at the University of Louisville. If the position was originally advertised as either tenure-track or fixed term, then we will consider making a change in appointment type for a faculty member if they request it, and if the personnel committee, department chair, dean and VC approve the "switch". If the faculty member was not selected by a national search with the tenured track or fixed term language, then we would not allow the "switch" in appointment type. This transfer can occur only once.