

Tenured and Probationary Faculty Decisions

July 21, 2017

Background

Under the *nEXT Generation* model, future county-based Extension Educator positions will be held by academic staff rather than tenure-track faculty members, under the working titles of Extension Educators or Program Coordinators (depending on the specific needs of the position). Academic staff roles are considered to be a better match for the unpredictable funding sources from county partners and align with the tasks county partners regularly expect from locally-based educational positions. Decisions regarding current tenured faculty and those probationary faculty serving in county roles are described below. In the future, new Cooperative Extension faculty will be hired into Extension Specialist faculty roles with a scholarship specialization in a specific field and a regional, statewide or national geographic responsibility. All other county-based educational positions, including current vacancies, newly created positions, and those held by probationary faculty, will be converted to academic staff positions in the future.

Decisions

The following decisions were made in close consultation with leadership in Human Resources and the Secretary of Faculty and Staff Governance. They are based on our review of various options for handling existing tenured and probationary faculty appointments during the transition to the *nEXT Generation* model.

Tenured Faculty: All tenured, county-based faculty will retain their current position description, salary, and position assuming county financial and program support is in place and there are no outstanding performance issues. Tenured faculty may be asked to work in multiple counties depending on their specific situation. Current faculty position descriptions (i.e. working titles, etc.) may be modified if we move to a new Academic Department structure. The decision on the structure of Academic Departments is pending given review and consideration by faculty governance bodies.

Probationary Faculty: Probationary faculty will receive standard annual appointment letters, issued for July 1, 2017. These letters are standard and do not preclude the decisions described below.

Tenure process: The tenure process for probationary faculty will proceed as usual from July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018, for those who are eligible. Eligible probationary faculty include those who have completed their 4th year of service (per Articles of Faculty Governance Appendix IIC Part I, see attached). Eligible probationary faculty may submit a tenure portfolio per normal processes and timelines for Fall 2017, and tenure considerations through the end of the calendar year will be based on current job descriptions and will be consistent with the prior year. Depending upon the completion of the hiring process for the *nEXT Generation* model, the late Fall 2017 – Spring 2018 submission dates will apply to those probationary faculty hired into tenure-track faculty positions in the *nEXT Generation* model and who are eligible to go up for tenure by timelines established in current policy (as referenced above). Those receiving tenure from July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018 will be considered tenured faculty in the *nEXT Generation* model. Additionally:

- Per current practice, the dean will recommend to approve, hold, or deny tenure as appropriate July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018, based on the recommendations from the Faculty Tenure Advisory Committee and the dean's subsequent review. Recommendations of the dean are forwarded to the provost, who makes recommendations to the chancellor.
- Current probationary faculty may apply for either academic staff or tenure-track faculty positions when these are determined for the new model. Probationary faculty who accept a new position would be issued a new contract for that position.

Notice of non-renewal process:

- As consistent with past practice, those probationary faculty in their 6th year who have not achieved tenure will receive a letter of non-renewal, which is described in [the UWEX Faculty Policies and Procedures 3.10](#) provide information on non-renewal of probationary faculty.

- Probationary faculty who: (1) are not eligible to apply for tenure, (2) have not achieved tenure, or (3) have not successfully competed for a faculty or academic staff position by the end of the year, will be given a 1-year notification period of non-renewal starting December 31, 2017.
- Per University Personnel Guideline policy those probationary faculty who are given non-renewal notices during the year will not be able to submit for tenure during their non-renewal period. Non-renewed faculty positions would end on December 31, 2018. During that 1-year period of time, non-renewed faculty would be able to compete for faculty or academic staff positions and will be expected to continue their work as described in their contract.

Next steps

We will work closely with faculty governance groups on implementation of future decisions regarding the structure of Academic Departments, which may result in the review and update of position descriptions.

Communications: Dean Karl Martin has communicated the decision for tenured faculty through the Dean's WisLine on July 10, 2017. Further communications on the faculty and probationary faculty decisions will be shared through a direct email to tenured and probationary faculty and during meetings with faculty governance groups and representatives.

The Dean will share information on the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefit that is designed to assist with our employees' emotional and mental well-being. This program is provided to address such topics such as stress management, workplace changes, finance, legal matters and health. We urge staff to take advantage of the free and confidential EAP benefit by contacting their HR representative or visiting the [EAP website](#) for additional information, and specifically navigate to the [LifeMatters website](#). Staff sign in using our company password - **SOWI** - or call 1-800-634-6433 every day of the year, 24 hours a day, to receive LifeMatters services.

We encourage you to send any questions or concerns to nextgencommunications@ces.uwex.edu.

Sincerely,

Executive Sponsors of the *nEXT Generation* project

Aaron Brower

Provost & Vice Chancellor

University of Wisconsin-Extension

Karl Martin

Dean & Director

Cooperative Extension,

University of Wisconsin-Extension

Steve Wildeck

Vice Chancellor for Administrative & Financial Services

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