

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



FACULTY HANDBOOK 2024

I hereby certify that this is the official Faculty Handbook of the University of Southern California, that it has been developed through a collegial process of consultation and review that has included the Academic Senate and the Provost's Council as specified by the policies of the Board of Trustees, that it is promulgated under authority delegated to the President of the University by the Trustees, and that it is based on the 2022 text as promulgated by me on October 18, 2022, as changed by the amendments approved by me through November 14, 2024.

Carol L. Folt

Carol L. Folt
President

January 9, 2025

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Chapter 1

Introduction

For the second time since I became President, I have the welcome opportunity to approve an updated edition of the Faculty Handbook, as recommended to me by the Academic Senate. Our faculty have long honored the Handbook as the symbol of shared governance, which is essential to the collegial functioning of a mature research university. Each edition of the Faculty Handbook reaffirms that faculty are partners in the collaborative responsibilities of managing the academic enterprise.

Shared governance and academic excellence

This past year's Academic Senate leadership took as its core emphasis that it is indeed an *Academic* Senate. I've learned that, when the University faculty years ago adopted by referendum the constitution of the Academic Senate, they chose that name as the mark of the faculty's academic focus, and for the same reason they wrote into the Senate constitution the declaration that the Senate's first purpose is to contribute to the intellectual vitality of the University. We work together towards the aim of academic excellence.

Academic freedom, an indispensable element of seeking excellence, remains enshrined in the Handbook in 3-B (1). As the Handbook explains, "Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning."

The Senate constitution also declares that the Senate is a forum for faculty decision-making and is the voice of the faculty in making university policy and considering academic issues. The Senate has strengthened these functions in recent years by ensuring the right of all faculty in the university, of every track, full-time, part-time and adjunct, to vote to elect the Senate's officers and executive board, to hold those positions, and to serve on all of its committees.

Faculty bodies on the university, school, and department levels have inter-related responsibilities in shared governance. Past Handbook editions focused on University-level matters. A greatly enhanced 2-B (3) in this edition is an expanded charter for the elected faculty council in each school. The section now states more explicitly the vision and expectations of shared governance on the school level, to help every school to further develop a well-functioning system meeting local needs. The councils are the voice of the school faculty, provide members representing the school on the Academic Senate, and are an important source of nominations to university-level committees. To respect the differing needs and traditions of each school, the approach the Senate has chosen in this section allows variation on which faculty bodies on the school or department level handle specified matters, and provides the framework within which each school develops and periodically updates shared expectations on its internal governance.

Faculty misconduct, complaints, investigations, sanctions

A major subject the Academic Senate worked on for this edition was a total rewriting of Chapter 6. In previous Handbook editions, the former chapter largely dealt with the Office of Equity and Diversity, as it was then known. USC now has a new Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX, and the new EEO-TIX policies and procedures are published on its own website, not detailed in Chapter 6. Instead, this Handbook edition expands Chapter 6 to address the wider topic of how the University handles all allegations of faculty misbehavior.

Our EEO-TIX policies reinforce our longstanding commitment to treat students and all members of our community, both inside and outside the classroom, with dignity and respect. As we advance our teaching and academic work, it is vitally important that all of us refrain from discrimination and harassment based on any protected class, including race, color, religion, national origin, or shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics. As the Handbook explains, “Our academic community...recognizes that when harassment is committed against students or faculty it threatens their academic freedom.” And as further noted by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom, “Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject.”

The new Chapter 6 includes information on how complaints can be made, how investigations are conducted, and how sanctions are decided. The Handbook Committee benefitted from the suggestions of faculty and faculty committees over the past few years that discussed improvements to several facets of investigative practices. I will explain how the new chapter addresses those topics and makes other welcome changes.

First of all, the chapter has been written in straightforward, non-technical, language. Its organization is clear. It does not try to set out the details available in other University documents, but instead outlines them with pointers to the appropriate documents. And, in a first for the Handbook, it has flow charts throughout showing the major steps in the process.

Responding to a faculty desire for a clearer picture of what behavior is prohibited, the categories are listed in 6-A, with more detail given in 6-B. The categories are interpersonal misconduct, 6-B (1); sex and gender-based harassment and other sexual misconduct, 6-B (2); discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, based on protected characteristics, 6-B (2); research-related misconduct, 6-B (3); misconduct in health care, 6-B (4); other professional misconduct, 6-B (5); concerns about administrators 6-B (6); retaliation, 6-B (7); and misconduct in reports and investigations, 6-B (8). For additional information, the list of pointers to related policies already set out in 3-B (3) has been expanded and reorganized.

It is vital to our academic community, as we work together, to avoid bullying and similar misbehavior. Faculty expressed special interest in clarifying the prohibition of interpersonal

misconduct, and that is now explained in 6-B (1). There also has been a faculty desire that minor cases of problematic interpersonal behavior, or isolated lapses in professional behavior, be handled collegially or informally at the school level by those familiar with school culture and norms. The Handbook now declares the preference to handle such cases through school-level processes when feasible and appropriate, and 6-D (2) explains the usual factors that may call for a formal investigation instead.

How to report misconduct is explained in 6-C, including both how to raise concerns within the school, 6-C (3), and how to submit concerns through central reporting channels such as [USC Report & Response](#) 6-C (4). Some matters are required to be reported centrally, 6-C(4). Sources of advice for those considering how to report possible misconduct are explained in 6-C (5).

How reports of misbehavior are routed and assessed initially is discussed in 6-D (1). The relevant Vice President (not just the Vice President for EEO-TIX) may take supportive or protective measures. To ensure that decisions to launch formal investigations into interpersonal behavior take into account faculty perspectives, 6-D (2) now provides, for the first time, that a faculty representative will be consulted before such cases are referred to a formal central investigation. The representative will be appointed by the Provost in consultation with the Academic Senate president.

Resolution of complaints through school processes is discussed in 6-E while 6-F deals with formal investigations. Since there is special interest in formal investigations related to interpersonal misconduct, 6-F (2) sets out a number of principles for such cases. Responding to another faculty concern, expectations for timely investigations are stated, along with a process to call for intervention if an investigation is proceeding too slowly. Respondents will of course be notified of the allegations and the information collected in the investigation that underlies its conclusions, and the respondent will have opportunities to respond and to provide information. Respondents also will have the opportunity to comment on preliminary findings to give them the chance to provide any new information or arguments that were not previously mentioned to the investigator.

Another important innovation in 6-F (2) is that respondent faculty members have the right to have a faculty or staff advisor with them during interviews about interpersonal misconduct. The Academic Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities can help to find a suitable advisor if needed.

In some cases, a written warning is sufficient without further ado, and 6-G (1) now allows the chair of the Committee on Professional Responsibility to request that the Provost's office issues such a warning. For other cases, there is an opportunity to contest the investigation's results, 6-G. Faculty have made known their preference that respondents have a chance within the process itself to appeal the investigation's findings to a panel of peers, instead of the previous process that provided for a limited grievance long afterward. Therefore, 6-G (3)

now provides respondents with an early opportunity to appeal the investigation's results to CoPR, which can make recommendations to the Provost's delegate, 6-G (6). CoPR, a faculty body, not the investigative office, also recommends appropriate sanctions and corrective actions, and the list of usual sanctions has been updated and integrated with the EEO-TIX policies, 6-G (4).

After considering appeals and CoPR's recommendations, the Provost's delegate makes the decision, which is final, 6-H.

Grievances

Another substantial project of the Academic Senate for this edition was a major reexamination of Chapter 7, dealing with Grievances and the Tenure and Privileges Appeals Committee that conducts hearings for grievances and tenure dismissals. The amendments are mostly intended to enhance transparency and provide more straightforward language. Changes were also made to align Chapter 7 with the revised Chapter 6. For example, as I just mentioned, misconduct cases are now dealt with by the Committee on Professional Responsibility rather than the Tenure and Privileges Appeals Committee.

All faculty have the right to a grievance hearing if they believe an administrator has violated their rights, as set out in 7-A. 7-B enumerates more clearly than prior Handbook editions the possible bases for grievances, as well as spelling out which complaints or disagreements go to other channels.

An important reminder, in 7-C, is that faculty may frequently be able to resolve disagreements or disputes informally, without filing a formal grievance, often with the help of the Ombuds or the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs. The possibility of binding arbitration in lieu of a grievance hearing, under 7-F, continues to be available if both sides wish it.

There are clarifications on how to initiate a grievance, 7-D, the procedures prior to the hearing, 7-E, and the details of the grievance hearing, 7-G. It continues to be so that the grievance panel's report and the record of the hearing go to the President for final decision, 7-H.

Other amendments

A number of other changes are made in this edition for various reasons, for example to reflect changes in administrative titles or practices, express existing policy more clearly, add or revise subheads for clarity, align with the revised Chapter 6, or be in compliance with current law. I thank the Senate Handbook Committee leadership for working on the editing of the final text. Some of the amendments, in addition to those I've already summarized, include the following:

3-B (2)(a) now cites the policy on profiles for teaching-track and research-track faculty.

- 3-B (3) the current non-exhaustive index to policies on expectations for faculty, has been updated and rearranged.
- 3-C (2)(a) On the definition of Institutional Base Salary for grant purposes has been reworded.
- 3-C (2)(b) Reduces the grounds for mid-year compensation changes.
- 3-D (1) simplifies the language that applies generally to leaves of absence.
- 3-D (8)(d) On some of the accommodations for childcare responsibilities of probationary faculty clarifies that the accommodations are available only once per faculty member.
- 3-F On Personal Conflicts of Interest has not been revised in this edition but is now supplemented by a separate policy that prohibits intimate relationships between undergraduate students and faculty or staff, even if consensual, except in certain exceptional circumstances. That policy was developed with an Academic Senate task force.
- 3-H (1)(b) Reminds faculty that disclosure of outside activities must be made to the department chair, dean, or other supervisor, as well as through the “diSClose” online system.
- 3-J Required Training (replacing former 6-C) recognizes that certain groups of faculty are expected to complete training (examples are listed) in addition to the training all faculty take on preventing sexual harassment and abusive conduct.
- 4-B (3) On maintaining the tenure system, clarifies the language on possible retention of individuals denied tenure.
- 4-D (1) Simplifies the language on Probationary Period and Tenure Decision Date
- 5-E (2) Explains Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.
- 7-A Updates the language that Chapter 6 matters and scientific misconduct are handled under those policies, not through grievances under Chapter 7.
- 7-B (2)(a) Removes a reference to the former provisions of Chapter 6, because the revised Chapter 6 provides an appeal process through CoPR.
- 8-D (3)(a) On suspensions is updated to reflect other relevant Handbook sections.

In Chapters 6, 7, and 8, the note referring to the EEO-TIX policies has been removed, since the new Chapter 6 reflects those policies.

General comments

Our Board of Trustees has specifically affirmed its endorsement and support of a collegial process of consultation and review in the development of amendments to the Faculty

Handbook. In language that has also long been set out in Chapter 2 of the Handbook, the Trustees' policy in this regard states:

The Board of Trustees endorses and supports a collegial process of consultation and review in the development of amendments to the Faculty Handbook. This process must include, at a minimum, the Academic Senate and Provost's Council, and may also include representatives of other university constituencies which might be affected by such amendments. To be sure, any amendments that are endorsed by the Academic Senate and approved by the President will be incorporated into the Faculty Handbook. However, the University Bylaws make it clear that the Academic Senate is strictly advisory with respect to the President. Thus, in the context of a collegial process of consultation and review, the policy of the Board of Trustees has been and continues to be that the President bears the final authority and responsibility for amending the Faculty Handbook.

As might occur in the governance of any complex organization, conflicts may arise from time to time in the interpretation of sections of this Handbook vis-a-vis the University Bylaws or the policies of the Board of Trustees. As in previous editions, the Handbook continues to make clear that the language of the Bylaws and the Trustees' policies will prevail.

In order to be official policy, a document must bear the signature of the president or other officials designated in the Policy on Policies, or may be established by resolution of the Board of Trustees. Other documents are not official policy. School-specific documents yield to university-wide policies if there is any conflict.

I express once more my warm gratitude to the Academic Senate and its Handbook Committee and Executive Board for their work on this edition of the Faculty Handbook.

Carol L. Folt
President

Chapter 2

Government of the University

Chapter 2. Chapter Contents

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2-A ADMINISTRATION

Policies and practices of the University derive from the total body of the University's charter provisions, bylaws, Board of Trustees resolutions, and Presidential directives by which the corporate staff is guided, as well as by policies and regulations initiated or recommended by the Academic Senate, the Provost's Council, the Staff Assembly, and the Student Senate, as approved by the President.

2-A (1) Board of Trustees

The University of Southern California is a private corporation governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees of at least thirty but no more than forty members. The organization and operation of the Board of Trustees are described in the Bylaws of the University, a copy of which is available at [USC Board of Trustees](#).

2-A (2) The President and Other Officers of the Corporation

The Board of Trustees elects annually the officers of the corporation including the Chair of the Board; the President of the University; Provost and Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs; Senior Vice President, Administration; Senior Vice President, Finance and Chief Financial Officer; Senior Vice President, Human Resources; Senior Vice President and General Counsel; Senior Vice President, University Advancement; Senior Vice President, University Relations; Senior Vice President and Chief Communications Officer; Senior Vice President, Health Affairs; Senior Vice President, Research and Innovation; and Secretary of the University. The Executive Committee of the Board appoints annually the Vice Chair of the Board.

Under the administrative structure of the University, all units of the University report directly or indirectly to the President. Among the President's responsibilities enumerated in the Bylaws of the University are the nomination of officers of the corporation (other than the Chair of the Board); the selection of academic staff; academic programs and fiscal programs; and the enforcement of all rules and regulations of the University.

2-A (3) Academic Organization

2-A (3)(a) Academic Deans and Directors

Academic deans and directors are appointed for no longer than a stated expected term (normally five years), and may be reappointed following an appropriate review and evaluation, all subject to section [6.4\(c\)](#) of the Bylaws and subject to [2-A \(3\)\(d\)](#) below.

Appointments and reappointments of deans and directors are to be done in consultation with the faculty.

2-A (3)(b) *Chairs or Directors of Academic Units*

The chair or director of an academic unit shall be a tenured faculty member unless the Provost authorizes otherwise. If the chair or director is untenured, then the Dean will designate a tenured faculty member to deal with all tenure-related issues. The chair or director is appointed for no longer than a stated expected term (up to five years), but without prejudice to reappointment by the procedures as described below, all subject to section 6.4 (c) of the Bylaws, and subject to [2-A \(3\)\(d\)](#) below.

Chairs or directors of academic units are appointed by the dean, with authority delegated by the President through the Provost, following full consideration by all faculty eligible to vote in the unit. The chair or director is appointed by the dean, following selection by (1) election by all faculty eligible to vote or (2) thorough consultation with the faculty of the department and of related departments. Appointments will normally be in conformity with department members' judgments. If, in extraordinary circumstances, conformity is not reached after such consultation and consideration, the dean shall consult with the Provost, who shall have the full and separate reports and recommendations of the departmental faculty, prior to decision, and will provide the dean and faculty the rationale of the decision.

2-A (3)(c) *School Academic Administrators*

Other school academic administrators (including institute directors, department vice chairs, and section chiefs) also are appointed for no longer than a stated expected term (up to five years), but without prejudice to reappointment following an appropriate review and evaluation, all subject to section 6.4 (c) of the Bylaws and subject to [2-A \(3\)\(d\)](#) below.

2-A (3)(d) *In General*

Deans, chairs, and other school academic administrators do not have tenure in office; they serve at will, and their appointments may be terminated by the President or his or her delegate with or without cause. Tenure as a faculty member is a matter of separate right.

2-B FACULTY

2-B (1) *The Faculty Assembly, Academic Senate, and Faculty Councils*

The faculty at large constitutes the Faculty Assembly. The membership of the Faculty Assembly consists of all full-time and part-time faculty members (tenure and tenure-track faculty; research, teaching, practitioner, and clinical faculty, and librarians) and those who have retired from these positions. When convened in a general meeting, or acting through referendum, the Faculty Assembly is the ultimate body for determining faculty positions on academic and University issues. It usually acts through its representative bodies, the Academic Senate, and the school Faculty Councils, to debate issues and express faculty opinion to the University administration.

The Constitution of the Academic Senate describes the goals of these faculty bodies as follows:

The primary purpose of the Faculty Assembly, the Academic Senate, and the school faculty councils, is to contribute to the intellectual vitality of the University, to faculty governance, and to the faculty environment. They are forums for faculty decision-making and are the voice of the faculty in the making of university policy and the consideration of academic issues. They strive to safeguard academic freedom, full academic due process, and the tenure system. They also determine positions on faculty status, responsibilities and welfare, other important institutional issues, and any and all issues pertaining to the wellbeing of the faculty and the University.

2-B (2) The Academic Senate

According to its Constitution, the Academic Senate "is the representative body of the faculty at large for university-wide issues." The Senate is described in the University Bylaws as follows:

9.4 Academic Senate The Academic Senate, as from time to time elected or designated by the faculty, shall be a deliberative and consultative body, with power to make studies, reports, and recommendations to the President of the University in any and all matters pertinent to the well-being of the faculty.

2-B (2)(a) Academic Senate Constitution and Bylaws

The complete text of the Constitution of the Academic Senate, which sets forth the purposes and organization of the Faculty Assembly, the Academic Senate, and the school Faculty Councils, is available at the [Academic Senate Constitution website](#).

The text of the [Academic Senate Bylaws](#) is also available at the Senate website.

The Academic Senate Constitution describes the Academic Senate as a body that shall, among other responsibilities,

seek to enhance the University's intellectual vitality..., be the voice of the faculty in making university policy. carefully monitor University issues, [and] strengthen faculty participation in governance.

The Senate especially concerns itself with the processes by which major University decisions about personnel and academic policy are made, with a view to obtaining and disseminating information about such decision-making.

Faculty members who accept their election to the Senate declare their individual commitment to work through it for the realization of these goals.

2-B (2)(b) *Officers and Executive Board*

As is provided in the Senate Constitution, the University-wide executive officers of the faculty are the President of the Faculty, the Academic Vice President, the Administrative Vice President, and the Secretary General. The President of the Faculty presides as chief executive officer of the Faculty Assembly, the Academic Senate, and the Executive Board. The Executive Board serves as the channel of communication between the Academic Senate and the administrative officers of the University and may act for the Senate between meetings if there is urgency.

2-B (2)(c) *Members*

Voting members of the Academic Senate are, typically, the President of each Faculty Council, any additional delegates from the Councils as specified by the Senate Bylaws, the executive offices of the faculty, and members at large of the Executive Board. Non-voting members are the chairs of faculty committees and, if authorized by the Bylaws, representatives of other university organizations.

2-B (3) *Faculty Councils*

2-B (3)(a) *Overview*

Each school has an elected faculty council. (Some schools may use alternative names.) Each faculty council is a deliberative and consultative body that operates under the Constitution and Bylaws of the Academic Senate, and under its own governing document as established and amendable by a secret vote of the faculty.

The faculty council serves as a voice of the faculty. It consults with the dean and other administrators on matters related to the faculty. As an independent body, it meets at its own call or at the request of the dean and considers both its own agenda and issues brought to it by the dean.

2-B (3)(b) *Relation to University-level Shared Governance*

The elected president or chair of the faculty council typically represents the school faculty as a member of the Academic Senate, as do additional council members depending on the size of the faculty. The faculty council is an important source of annual nominations to university-level committees, seeking to ensure representation of all groups of school faculty. The council (or other specified faculty body) makes recommendations to university-level committees as provided in university policies.

2-B (3)(c) *Facilitating the School Faculty’s Shared Governance Responsibilities*

Faculty bodies on the university, school, and department levels have inter-related responsibilities in shared governance. The faculty have important roles on matters related to the faculty itself; personnel policies; annual merit review; appointment, reappointment, promotion, and tenure; academic programs and the curriculum; research; academic policies; appointment of committees; finances; admissions; and other matters. (See, e.g., Policy on Policies; this handbook [3-B \(2\)](#), [4-G](#), [4-H \(1\)](#), [4-H \(2\)](#); University Bylaws 9.3; Constitution of the Academic Senate).

Each faculty council is responsible for regularly communicating with and soliciting views of the faculty and making them known to the dean and other administrators.

To provide an orderly process of consultation, each faculty council will work with the dean or dean’s representative to develop, and periodically update, written shared expectations regarding which faculty bodies on the school or department level are consulted or make decisions or effective recommendations on specified matters. For example, the school may decide that curriculum changes require approval by a school curriculum committee, by departments, or by the faculty council itself. These shared expectations should be codified in a tabular or other mutually agreeable form. These written shared expectations are subject to approval of the Provost (and for the health sciences schools, the Senior Vice President, Health Affairs). If assistance is desired in developing these shared expectations, either the council or the dean may request the Provost (and for the health sciences schools, the Senior Vice President, Health Affairs) and the Academic Senate officers to offer counsel.

As additional examples, each faculty council will work with the dean or dean’s representative to develop, and periodically update, shared expectations regarding:

- Information sharing and consultation on the school’s budget.
- Attendance of the dean or dean’s representative at faculty council meetings. (For some meetings or parts of meetings the faculty council may choose to meet without attendance of the dean or dean’s representative.) Meetings with the dean and other administrators should be sufficiently frequent to allow the dean and faculty council to address important issues in a timely manner.
- Processes by which the dean and other administrators will keep the faculty council apprised of emerging issues (for example, attendance of leadership meetings by a faculty council officer and regular meetings between the dean and a faculty council officer).

2-B (4) University and Senate Committees

Provision is made in the University Bylaws and in the University's current practices for a variety of bodies whose powers and duties are delegated by the President and are subject to the Bylaws and to the powers of the Board of Trustees.

2-B (4)(a) University Committees

A system of University Committees is defined in the University Bylaws.

University Committees advise the President and work closely with those administrative offices and units of the University most directly related to the responsibilities of the committee. Where appropriate, reports of University Committees are reviewed by the Academic Senate.

Members of University Committees are selected by the President upon nomination by the Academic Senate and others. The Senate acts through the Executive Board. Members of some committees are jointly selected by the University and the Academic Senate.

2-B (4)(b) Academic Senate Committees

Academic Senate Committees are established by the Senate, with members and chairs selected by the Executive Board from the membership of the Faculty Assembly or others. Committees report semi-annually to the Executive Board with reports forwarded to the Senate for action or publication.

The Executive Board works to coordinate University and Senate committee selection and membership.

2-B (5) The Faculty Handbook

The Faculty Handbook will be made available to the entire faculty at the University website. Printed copies will be supplied to the offices of the Provost and the Academic Senate.

The Senate has authority, derived from the University Bylaws, to make recommendations to the President in any and all matters pertinent to the well-being of the faculty, and therefore may propose any Faculty Handbook amendment it decides to endorse.

The rules in the Faculty Handbook are intended to be applied reasonably in light of their purposes.

Any proposed Faculty Handbook amendment submitted for Academic Senate consideration will be reviewed by the Senate Handbook Committee and the Executive Board, which will work with the Provost's representative in a process designed to lead to a joint formulation by faculty and administration. As part of this process, the Handbook Committee should seek other views and information, and the Provost's representative should seek views and

information from relevant university offices. The rationale and text of a proposed amendment that is recommended to the Senate by the Handbook Committee and the Executive Board will be circulated to Senate members in advance of a scheduled Senate meeting. Senate members are requested to submit suggested revisions for the proposed amendment to the Handbook Committee and Executive Board so that these can be considered in advance of the scheduled Senate meeting. Any proposals to revise an amendment, which are endorsed by the Senate without prior joint formulation, will be reviewed as provided in the first sentence of the paragraph. Subject to the University Bylaws and policies established by the Board of Trustees and the Trustees' delegation of authority to the President, a joint formulation endorsed by the Senate and adopted by the President of the University will be incorporated into the Faculty Handbook.

The Board of Trustees has specifically affirmed its endorsement and support of a collegial process of consultation and review in the development of amendments to the Faculty Handbook. The Trustees' policy in this regard states:

The Board of Trustees endorses and supports a collegial process of consultation and review in the development of amendments to the Faculty Handbook. This process must include, at a minimum, the Academic Senate and Provost's Council, and may also include representatives of other university constituencies which might be affected by such amendments. To be sure, any amendments that are endorsed by the Academic Senate and approved by the President will be incorporated into the Faculty Handbook. However, the University Bylaws make it clear that the Academic Senate is strictly advisory with respect to the President. Thus, in the context of a collegial process of consultation and review, the policy of the Board of Trustees has been and continues to be that the President bears the final authority and responsibility for amending the Faculty Handbook.

Whenever in the Handbook “days” are mentioned, it means calendar days, unless working days are expressly stated. “Renewal” means the same as reappointment. A multi-year “appointment” is a multi-year contract at the core salary specified, subject to the provisions on mid-contract termination in [4-G](#).

Chapter 3

Faculty: Academic Practices and Policies

Chapter 3. Chapter Contents

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3-A FACULTY COMPOSITION

The University Bylaws define the faculty of the University of Southern California as follows:

9.2(a) Composition. The University Faculty shall consist of the President of the University; the Provost and Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs; the Senior Vice President, Health Affairs; Academic Deans and Directors; and members of the teaching and research staffs holding titles including the following terms: Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, Instructors, Lecturers (but not Assistant Lecturers) and Librarians.

The faculty consists of those properly appointed members of the teaching and research staffs who hold these faculty titles, whether or not tenured or tenure-eligible, whether full- or part-time. However, those academic staff listed in [4-B \(2\)\(c\)](#) are not designated as faculty.

3-B FACULTY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3-B (1) Academic and Professional Freedom

The University adheres to national standards and procedures concerning academic and professional freedom, academic tenure, and full academic due process. [Chapter 4](#), Faculty Appointments, Promotions and Tenure; [Chapter 7](#), Faculty Grievances; and [Chapter 8](#), Faculty Dismissals, provide the details as to how this adherence is made specific.

3-B (1)(a) Academic Freedom

The University of Southern California exists for the common good, not to further the interest of individual faculty members or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.

Academic freedom protects all faculty, of every track and every rank, full-time and part-time, and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning. It carries with it duties correlative with rights.

Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in research and the publication of research results. Faculty in the visual and performing arts are equally entitled to academic freedom in their work. Academic freedom in research embodies four basic principles. The first of these is the critical importance of freedom of inquiry to the academic community. The University does not presume to impose limits on the freedom of the faculty in the choice of fields or methods of inquiry and cannot allow outside agencies to do so. The second principle, closely linked to the first, is the importance of unrestricted scholarly dissemination of the results of research. Scholarly publication or other means of access by interested persons to such results,

normally including underlying data and procedures or analysis as well as final results, are essential elements in the progress of knowledge. Similarly important is the third principle, that of open identification of the actual sources of funding for all sponsored programs. The University must be free to disclose the existence of a project, the general nature of the inquiry, and the level and duration of funding as well as the identity of the sponsor. Finally, the fourth principle involves the University's recognition and protection of the legitimate rights of an outside sponsor, especially in terms of patent issues or possible disclosure of proprietary information. Thus, the University may grant to a sponsor the privilege of review or temporary delay of publications. Academic freedom in research is subject to adequate performance of other academic duties and subject to the limited exceptions stated in 5-B, but research and consultation for pecuniary return shall be in accord with University policy.

Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject; to the corollary responsibility to state the truth as they see it; and to the exercise of critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. Faculty members are citizens, members of learned professions, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and the University by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the University or an academic unit. See also [3-G](#).

Just as the University is committed through the policies on Equal Opportunity and Title IX to securing for its students, faculty, and staff a safe educational and work environment free of harassment, it is equally committed to maintaining academic freedom as declared in this section. Our academic community also recognizes that when harassment is committed against students or faculty it threatens their academic freedom. The University recognizes that students are exposed to thought-provoking ideas as part of their educational experience, and some of these ideas may challenge their beliefs and may lead a student to claim that an educational experience is offensive. Allegations of harassment that arise in the educational context will be considered in keeping with the University's commitment to academic freedom. The educational experience may include, for example, lectures, dialogues, assigned materials, and student assignments, and visual or written material as well as speech. The faculty member should carefully consider the class climate and ground rules around academic discourse, so that student learning is promoted but students are not unreasonably exposed to potential harassment.

3-B (1)(b) Professional Freedom and Professional Responsibility

Professional freedom is inherent within the concept of academic freedom and denotes the right of a faculty member to select those approaches to the development and exercise of

professional competence and those allocations of time and place for alternative functions and commitments as appear best fitted for this purpose.

Professional responsibility is a corollary of professional freedom. The faculty member owes responsibility to the standards of his or her discipline, professional and faculty colleagues, students, educational institution, and the community at large.

3-B (2) Academic Responsibilities

Although various groups contribute in different ways to the University's well-being, it is the faculty who preeminently create and enhance the scholarly excellence of the University. Their importance to the intellectual life of the University and the community at large confers on them, individually and collectively, responsibilities to the institution, to their students, and to their respective disciplines.

Faculty academic status and matters related thereto are primarily a faculty responsibility. This includes appointments, reappointments, decisions not to reappoint, promotion, the granting of tenure, and dismissal. The faculty's role on curriculum is set out in the University Bylaws as follows:

9.3 Courses of Instruction. The courses of instruction in the several schools and colleges shall be prescribed by their several faculties, on the recommendation of the appropriate faculty committee and subject to the approval of the President of the University.

3-B (2)(a) Activity Profile

Faculty discharge these responsibilities through teaching, research, and service. The average activity profile of a full-time tenure-track or tenured faculty member is approximately 35-45% each of teaching and research and 5-15% of service. (Some schools prefer to express the average profile as 3/9 – 4/9 each of teaching and research and 1/9 of service).

Although actual percentages may vary depending on the needs of the faculty member's academic unit, it is expected that each tenured and tenure-track faculty member will make a significant contribution in each of the three areas of responsibility, except that a research-only profile for a tenured or tenure-track faculty member may be established, only on a temporary basis and only with the Provost's approval.

Teaching-track, research-track, clinical-track, practitioner-track, and librarian faculty will have a different activity profile depending on the needs and expectations of the academic unit in which they serve. Visit USC Faculty Portal [Teaching-Track and Research-Track Faculty Profiles](#).

The specific nature of a faculty member's teaching, research, and/or clinical service to the University may be adapted in accordance with the demands of the specific academic unit, or

the terms of a particular faculty member's established profile, or both. The activity profile should be established through consultation between each faculty member and the dean or chair of the academic unit.

Faculty members may pursue other professional activities, in accordance with University conflict of interest policies, as long as these endeavors do not detract from the faculty member's responsibilities to the University.

3-B (2)(b) Teaching

Teaching includes classroom and other instruction of undergraduate, graduate, and professional and post-graduate students, academic advising, preparation, librarianship, and the direction of research. Faculty are expected to meet their classes, be accessible to their students through regularly scheduled and sufficient office hours and provide grading of student work in a timely fashion. Each class is to be provided with a syllabus outlining goals, the course schedule, readings, requirements for research papers, a timetable for examinations, the method and criteria for grading, and the means by which students can contact the faculty member outside the classroom. Students in all classes, labs, and discussion sections should be given the opportunity to provide evaluation and suggestions through anonymous course assessment forms. See also [5-E \(1\)](#).

Faculty are expected to teach courses that have been assigned to them by the department chair, including mid-semester changes if needed. Assignments will be made after consultation with department faculty, on the basis of departmental or school needs.

It is very important that students receive the instruction to which they are entitled and, except very rarely, from the instructor of record. In case of faculty absence, it is incumbent on the faculty member to provide appropriate class coverage, subject to the review of the chair or dean, as requested. Absences of two consecutive weeks or more require the faculty member and the chair or dean to provide a written plan for the discharge of individual faculty responsibilities, with notice to the Provost.

3-B (2)(c) Mentoring

Mentoring is an important component of faculty responsibilities. Depending on the discipline, the research effort involves the supervision and mentoring of undergraduate students, graduate students, other faculty, and those occupying post-doctoral or other research positions. Such mentoring is also part of a faculty member's teaching effort. Mentoring of junior faculty is a significant service responsibility of senior faculty members.

3-B (2)(d) Clinical Responsibilities

Faculty in a clinical department are expected to perform clinical responsibilities that have been assigned by the department chair, after consultation with the affected individual. If

requested, there will be consultation within 30 calendar days with a standing or ad hoc department faculty committee, appointed by the dean and including an observer from the faculty council. Such clinical assignments shall be made on the basis of departmental needs.

3-B (2)(e) Research and Artistic Work

Faculty are expected to engage in high quality, continuing research of a type appropriate for the field, discipline, or interdisciplinary area. Typically, the product of the research effort is publication or its counterpart in the visual and performing arts (performances, exhibitions, and the like). Similarly, depending on the field or discipline, research can require considerable effort in the writing of proposals or related endeavors to acquire outside funding as may be needed to conduct a faculty member's research. Participation in conferences, professional societies, and peer review panels are common activities. Ultimately, the results of research and artistic work are expected to contribute to the faculty member's national or international reputation.

3-B (2)(f) Librarianship

Faculty who are full-time librarians have a primary responsibility of excellent librarianship. This includes serving the library and information needs of faculty and students and supporting the mission of the University and the goals of the libraries. Professional growth and development is an additional responsibility. The individual's activity profile may also include teaching, research, and service as defined by the needs of the appropriate library or assigned by the Dean.

3-B (2)(g) Service

Service includes effort on committees and other activities at the departmental level through the University level. Depending on the field or discipline, this effort may include work outside the University. The responsibility to share in the management of the academic enterprise through service on University committees rests on all faculty, of every track and every rank, full-time and part-time, understanding that in elections and appointments the wishes, expertise, and other time commitments of the individual will be taken into account.

3-B (2)(h) In General

Teaching, clinical, and service assignments shall not be made for discriminatory, arbitrary, capricious, or retaliatory reasons. Claims that assignments violate this or any other provision of the Faculty Handbook, other University policies, or provisions of law are subject to review through the grievance procedure. Claims that conduct is based on a protected class, however, are handled as provided in the EEO-TIX policy (see 6-B (2).) If a faculty member makes a claim concerning an assignment, the faculty member must still perform the assignment while the claim is being reviewed.

3-B (3) Other Policies and Resources

This section does not contain a complete list of faculty rights and responsibilities. Other policies and resources are described elsewhere in this Handbook, and University, school, and medical enterprise documents and websites, including [USC Policies and Policy Governance](#). Some policies apply specifically to certain groups of faculty including those with clinical assignments and those performing research.

Faculty responsibilities also include basic norms ([8-C](#), first sentence); failure to adhere to those norms can constitute cause for dismissal or other sanctions.

A non-exhaustive list of policies on faculty rights and responsibilities is provided below for convenience. For reporting options, see [6-C](#).

Conflicts

- Candidacy for Degrees: [3-I](#).
- Conflicts of Commitment and Absences: [3-H \(2\)](#).
- Conflicts of Interest: [3-H \(1\)](#).
- Endorsements: [3-H \(5\)](#).
- [Fundraising Coordination](#).
- [Gifts and Hospitality Policy](#).
- Outside Activities of Faculty Members and Conflicts: [3-H](#).
- Outside Appointments and Educational Work: [3-H \(4\)](#).
- Consulting, Research, and Practice: [3-H \(3\)](#), see USC website on [Policies and Policy Governance, Policy Resources](#).
- Personal Conflicts of Interest: [3-E](#).
- [Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy: 3-H](#).

Culture, Ethics, and Compliance

- [Compliance](#).
- [Cooperation with Compliance Investigations](#).
- [Misappropriation of University Assets](#).
- [Office of Culture, Ethics and Compliance](#).
- [USC Report & Response](#).
- [Student Handbook](#).
- [University Organization, Culture and Ethics](#).

- [Integrity and Accountability Code.](#)

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

- Definitions of Prohibited Conduct, [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation.](#)
- [Mandatory harassment prevention training.](#)

Entity-Specific Policies

- [CHLA Hospital Code of Conduct.](#)
- [Keck/Norris Hospital Policies and Procedures.](#)
- Keck Medicine Policies and Procedures – All Departments <intranet>
- [Keck School of Medicine Governance Document.](#)
- Keck School of Medicine [Code of Professional Conduct for Faculty.](#)
- USC Care Medical Group [Documentation and Billing Standards.](#)
- USC Care Medical Group policies <intranet>
- Verdugo Hills Hospital policies <intranet>
- USC Arcadia Hospital <intranet>

General

- Abandonment of Duty: [8-D \(4\)](#); see also [3-D \(1\)](#).
- Academic Responsibilities: [3-B \(2\)](#).
- Adequate Grounds for Dismissal: [8-C](#).
- [Data Privacy Policy.](#)
- [Office of Culture, Ethics and Compliance.](#)
- [Policies and Policy Governance.](#)
- Professional Freedom and Professional Responsibility: [3-B \(1\)\(B\)](#).
- [Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation.](#)
- Types of Misconduct: [6-B](#).

Guide to Resources and Policies

- [Report & Response/Resources.](#)

Health and Safety

- [COVID-19 Resource Center.](#)
- [Illness and Injury Prevention Program.](#)
- [Environmental Health & Safety.](#)
- [Hazard Communication Program.](#)

Healthcare Professionals

- Clinical responsibilities: [3-B \(2\)\(d\).](#)
- [Billing Education for Physicians and Clinical Staff.](#)
- [Detecting and Preventing Fraud, Waste, and Abuse.](#)
- [Electronic Protected Health Information Standards.](#)
- [Exclusion Background Screening Policy.](#)
- [Healthcare Compliance.](#)
- [Relations with Industry, including duty to disclose:](#)
- [Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information for Research Purposes.](#)
- [Use of Protected Health Information for Treatment, Payment, and Healthcare Operations](#)

Protecting Minors

- [Minors in Laboratories.](#)
- [Protecting Minors.](#)

Relations with Students

- [USC Catalogue.](#)
- [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\).](#)
- [Grading and Corrections of Grades Handbook.](#)
- [USC Schedule of Classes.](#)
- [Office of Student Accessibility Services.](#)
- [The USC Student Handbook:](#)

Required Training

- [Compliance, Ethics, and Billing Education for Physicians and Clinical Staff.](#)
- [Healthcare Compliance Education and Training.](#)
- [Human Subjects Research Training, Good Clinical Practice, HIPAA Education and Certification](#)
- [HHS Conflict of Interest Training, Environmental Health, and Safety Training.](#)
- [Research Compliance Training.](#)

Research

- [Conflict of Interest in Research.](#)
- [Guide to Research.](#)
- [Intellectual Property](#), including duty to disclose.
- [Office for the Protection of Research Subjects.](#)
- [Research Policies.](#)
- [Research: Ethics & Responsibility.](#)
- [Research and Scholarship Misconduct.](#)

Teaching

- Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, [5-E \(2\)](#).
- [Courseware.](#)
- Responsibilities to Students – In General [5-E \(1\)](#).

3-B (4) Contractual Conditions

Contracts or letters shall be issued to all faculty by the appropriate University officer, specifying academic rank and title, salary, any change in tenure status, starting and ending dates for all appointments, and any change in the Tenure Decision Date (where appropriate). Any other conditions or limitations of employment also shall be given or incorporated by reference.

The President shall issue annual contracts or letters to all full-time faculty, as well as those faculty with part-time duties accorded full-time-equivalent status for University policies including benefits eligibility. The Provost, Senior Vice President, Health Affairs, or deans shall issue contracts or letters to all other faculty giving the title, salary, and terms of the appointment.

No individual is considered to have faculty status unless the President, Provost, or dean has signed a written contract or letter for that employee specifying a faculty title and other applicable conditions of the Handbook are met; however, academic staff as listed in [4-B \(2\)\(c\)](#) are not designated as faculty.

Whenever possible, contracts or letters shall be issued and delivered to all continuing faculty by the date of University Commencement.

3-B (5) Periods of Service

Except for academic recess and University holidays, unless agreed otherwise by individual contract, the period of service for academic year faculty is from August 16 through May 15 of the following calendar year and the period of service for fiscal year faculty is from July 1 through June 30 of the following calendar year.

In the event of emergency circumstances that severely disrupt the University's regular operations, after consulting with the academic units and the Academic Senate, the Provost may temporarily move the dates of the period of service for academic-year faculty and faculty on one-semester contracts as long as doing so will not adversely affect the academic experience of the students, adversely impact faculty compensation for that semester, or result in academic-year faculty working more than a total of nine months that academic year.

If the Provost grants special permission a newly-appointed academic year faculty member may begin the appointment before August 16 (on or after May 16 of the previous summer), and if the Provost grants special permission an academic year faculty member who is not returning for the following year may retain appointment beyond May 15 (up to August 15), with compensation arrangements as agreed in each case.

3-C COMPENSATION

3-C (1) Pay Schedule and Payroll Information

It is the policy of the University to make payroll schedules and information readily available to faculty members and update them regularly. Current payroll information is posted at the [University Comptroller](#) website. The website provides up-to-date information on required paperwork pertaining to payroll information for appointments, elections, deductions and terminations.

3-C (2) Compensation: Components and Changes

3-C (2)(a) Compensation Components

Total University salary (a) includes *core salary* based on a nine-month academic year or a twelve-month fiscal year period of service (or other period based on individual contract) and

(b) can also include *supplementary salary* or *stipends*, which are set for a fixed period (one year at a time, unless a different period is specifically stated by contract.) Total University salary is set by the Provost (or the Senior Vice President, Health Affairs in the health sciences schools) annually.

- *Supplementary Salary for Summer Teaching.* Members of the full-time faculty are given first option to teach courses offered by their departments during the Summer Session. Full-time faculty on academic year appointments may receive up to 3/9 of their core pay from non-grant funds during the summer months, subject to the approval of their dean.
- *Supplementary Salary for Externally Funded Summer Research and Other Sponsored Activities.* The United States government and some private agencies do not permit extra compensation or overload payment during the academic year on grants or contracts. No overload payment is permitted for research by faculty with fiscal year period of service. For faculty with academic year period of service, grants and contracts may provide for additional earning during the summer at the same monthly rate as during the academic year. Payment for more than 11 months service for academic year faculty is permitted if authorized by the awarding agency, and the arrangement should be included in the proposal to the government or private agency concerned.
- *Extra Compensation:* Subject to the approval of the Provost, full-time faculty members on academic year- or fiscal year- appointment may receive supplementary salary, administrative stipends, and other non-core salary.
- *Institutional Base Salary (IBS):* IBS is relevant for the purposes of federal grants. It is calculated from the components of University salary (core salary, supplementary salary, administrative stipends, other non-core salary) using definitions established by the federal government.

3-C (2)(b) Compensation Changes

Merit-based increases in core salary of continuing active faculty are considered annually as part of the salary setting process. University policies and guidelines deal with the merit evaluation of faculty, including the participation of a faculty committee.

No cuts in the contractual University core salary of continuing active full-time tenured faculty members or continuing active full-time untenured faculty members during the term of an existing annual appointment or a contract shall be made except by the Provost and then only for one or more of the following reasons:

- Bona fide financial reasons short of financial exigency, pro rata applying an equal percentage to all continuing active full-time tenured and untenured faculty in the school.
- In accord with contractual terms or with the express agreement of the faculty member.

All cuts are subject to annual review during the regular salary setting process.

3-D LEAVES OF ABSENCE

3-D (1) In General

This section summarizes leaves of absence for which faculty members may be eligible. Detailed policies are available on the [University Policies](#) website. Unless the Provost approves an extension, failure to return to work after one year on leave or absence from duty may be a basis for termination of employment by the President or Provost without formal proceedings. Most types of leaves are granted for one semester, or one year as a maximum. Generally, leaves are not approved retroactively.

The University provides all leaves required by Federal or state law or city ordinance and provides reasonable accommodations necessary to enable an employee with a qualifying disability (as defined under state and federal law) to perform the essential functions of the employee's position, or necessary to enable an employee with a qualifying disability to enjoy benefits and privileges of employment equal to those enjoyed by similarly situated employees who are without disabilities.

Faculty anticipating a leave without pay should consult the Benefits Office for information about the effect of the leave on their fringe benefits.

3-D (1)(a) Request for Extensions

Tenure-track faculty who have been granted leave may under certain circumstances request an extension of the Tenure Decision Date, and special provisions are set out in [4-D \(1\)](#). Requests for extension of the Tenure Decision Date shall be in writing and shall be directed to the Committee on Deadlines and Leaves for its review and recommendation in writing to the Provost on behalf of the President, either prior to the leave or within six months after returning to regular activities. The Committee will not review extensions to which the faculty member is entitled under [3-D \(8\)\(e\)](#), extensions based on a Medical Leave, and extensions based on legally protected leaves of absence such as leaves under the CFRA and FMLA.

The ADA/504 Coordinator serves as a resource for information about government and University rules on leaves and benefits and their coordination.

3-D (2) Sabbatical Leave

Sabbatical leave may be granted to faculty members after either six years or six semesters of accrued full-time service at the University. Deans and directors should take into consideration the following factors when making recommendations to the Provost:

- A definite and well-defined research or study program must be submitted for approval. A candidate should indicate what the prospects of completion of the project will be.
- Sabbatical leave will be allowed (a) one semester on full salary for each six years of service, (b) one academic year on half salary for each six years of service, or (c) one semester at half salary for each six semesters of service.
- If the faculty member requests based on an exceptional situation, the Provost may approve on a merit basis a more frequent sabbatical leave or more than half salary.

A faculty member on sabbatical leave should not engage in other activities for remuneration that would intrude on his or her sabbatical research.

The absence of a faculty member should not jeopardize the academic program of his or her department.

It is expected that the faculty member will return to the University for at least one year after sabbatical.

A final report shall be provided, if requested, to the dean or director upon the faculty member's return.

Normally, sabbatical leave is taken immediately following the period of service to which the leave relates. The sabbatical leave privilege may not be accumulated, e.g., after 12 years, a sabbatical of two academic years may not be taken.

Also, the sabbatical should be taken over consecutive academic periods (e.g., fall and spring semesters of a given academic year, or spring semester and fall semester of consecutive years, but not fall of one academic year and fall or spring of the following academic year). Benefits shall continue during the paid sabbatical.

A department may recommend to the dean exceptions to these policies, however, to facilitate the research or study of the faculty member. The department may also recommend an exception to the dean to meet teaching or other needs of the department, the school, or the University. Such exceptions require approval in writing by the Provost.

This section deals with eligibility of tenured faculty. Eligibility of other faculty is discussed in [4-C \(2\)\(b\)](#).

3-D (3) Medical Leave and Absences

Faculty members who are unable to work due to an illness, injury, or disability (including pregnancy-related disability) may be eligible for an unpaid Medical Leave. Such individuals may qualify for disability benefits while on Medical Leave. The Provost may place eligible faculty members on Medical Leave for the period that they are unable to work. See also the fifth paragraph of [4-E](#) and [3-H \(2\)\(c\)](#). The Provost may place on leave without pay faculty members who are absent for more than two consecutive weeks, whether or not they qualify for disability benefits. Medical Leave runs concurrently with all other leave for which a faculty member qualifies. Medical leaves for longer than one year are not regularly available, although the Provost may extend the leave and the University will do so to the extent the law requires. For USC's [Family and Medical Leave Act and California Family Rights Act](#) Leave website.

A tenure-track faculty member who has been granted Medical Leave may request an extension of the Tenure Decision Date. Such extensions shall be requested in writing and shall be directed to the Committee on Deadlines and Leaves for its review and recommendation in writing to the Provost on behalf of the President, either prior to the leave or within six months after returning to regular activities.

A faculty member who is absent because of illness for a brief period should make arrangements through his or her department chair to see that his or her teaching and other responsibilities are met. See also [3-H \(2\)\(c\)](#).

3-D (4) Vacation

Faculty members on fiscal year appointments are entitled to 20 working days annual vacation, at a time agreed upon with the department of appointment so that it does not conflict with faculty responsibilities. The maximum amount of vacation a faculty member on fiscal year appointment can accrue at any time is 35 working days. Faculty members who accrue the maximum amount of vacation are not eligible to earn any additional vacation until that accrued vacation is reduced to below the maximum level. Benefits-eligible part-time faculty are entitled to accrue vacation based on the percentage of time worked.

3-D (5) Unpaid Personal Leave

Unpaid Personal Leave (also known as Personal Leave) may be granted at the discretion of the Provost for faculty members who are not eligible for another type of leave (Sick, Family and Medical, Medical, or Parental Leave). Unpaid personal Leave may be granted for one or two semesters and generally may not exceed one year.

3-D (6) Indefinite Leave

Faculty, including tenured faculty, may be placed on what is called “indefinite leave” without duties or pay only as provided by [4-E](#).

3-D (7) Part-Time Leave

The Provost may grant a short-term partial leave of absence, one or two semesters at proportionate pay for part-time service, to any full-time faculty member. Faculty anticipating a leave without pay should consult the Benefits Office for information about the effect of the leave on their fringe benefits.

Part-time service to accommodate family responsibilities or as a transition to retirement is provided for in [Chapter 9](#). Tenured and tenure-track faculty are otherwise on full-time appointments, see also [4-B \(2\)\(a\)](#), unless extraordinary permission is granted by the Provost.

3-D (8) Leaves and Adjustments to Accommodate Work/Life Balance

The University seeks to assist faculty in balancing their academic commitments and family life. In particular, it is in the interest of both the University and society as a whole that the demands of childbearing and childrearing not discourage talented individuals from pursuing academic careers. The University observes California's Pregnancy Disability Leave law.

3-D (8)(a) General Provisions for 3-D (8)

- (1) When this section 3-D (8) mentions a "child" that means a biological or adopted child of the faculty member (or of the faculty member's spouse or partner) who lives with the faculty member and is under 18 years of age. When this section 3-D (8) mentions an accommodation that is available for "child or children," it is available once no matter how many children.
- (2) When this section 3-D (8) mentions the "primary caregiver" of a child, that means the parent who has childcare responsibility, if such responsibility interferes substantially with academic responsibilities, and the child is not cared for more than half-time by a spouse, partner or childcare provider, and the parent is the sole caregiver for the newborn or newly-adopted child for half-time during the work week.
- (3) When this section 3-D (8) mentions "faculty" that includes all benefits-eligible faculty, except where a provision specifically refers to probationary faculty.
- (4) When this section 3-D (8) mentions "partner" that means Registered Domestic Partner as defined in the Benefits policies. See USC [Benefits Eligibility and Enrollment](#) website.
- (5) Requests under this section are submitted by the faculty member for the Provost's decision, and the department chair and dean will have opportunity to comment. When this section 3-D (8) uses language like "may request," or "may approve," it indicates a possible accommodation that the Provost will consider after receiving the

considered comments of the department chair and dean.

- (6) When this section 3-D (8) mentions that the individual is “entitled,” the right is provided automatically upon proper notification by the individual to the Provost, as long as the notification is accompanied by documentation satisfactory to the Provost.

3-D (8)(b) Parental Leave

A full-time faculty member is entitled to receive a ten-week paid parental leave in connection with the birth or adoption of a child, if the faculty member is the primary caregiver of the child (or will be, immediately following the birth). When this ten-week paid parental leave overlaps a semester, the faculty member is expected to work full time for the non-leave remainder of the semester; the division of this work between teaching, research, clinical work, service, and so forth will be determined by the chair or other local administrator upon consultation with the faculty member. For the timing of the leave, coordination with other leaves and benefits, and other conditions, see [3-D \(8\)\(f\)](#), below.

3-D (8)(c) Family Responsibilities

To accommodate family responsibilities, including caring for a child or an aged or ill relative, the Provost may approve.

- Part-time leave, with reduced duties at proportionate compensation, up to two years.
- Unpaid leave of absence, up to one year, to run concurrently with any leave provided by law.
- Modified responsibilities, up to two years, where the faculty member is given special consideration as to assignments of substantial service, large classes, night classes, and new course preparations.

3-D (8)(d) Childcare Responsibilities of Probationary Faculty

To accommodate the special responsibilities of the probationary period with the demands of childrearing, a probationary faculty member who is the primary caregiver of one or more children, may receive one (and only one) of the following:

- (i) Half-time leave, with half-time duties at half pay, up to a maximum of two years. This is an entitlement, if selected.
- (ii) A reduced teaching and service load for up to a maximum of two years, without reduction in pay. This is not an entitlement but must be requested, and is subject to approval of the Provost. The total teaching reduction (from this provision and, if applicable, [3-D \(8\)\(b\)](#) may not exceed two courses for any one parental leave).
- (iii) Assistance, such as provision of a laboratory technician or teaching assistant, for a

limited period. This is not an entitlement but must be requested and is subject to approval of the Provost.

A faculty member may receive an accommodation under this section, either (i), (ii), or (iii), only once except as required by law.

3-D (8)(e) *Adjustment of Probationary Period for Faculty Caregivers*

- (i) If a probationary faculty member gives birth prior to 12 months before the Tenure Decision Date, upon request she will automatically be granted an exclusion of one year from the probationary period, but she need not take advantage of the exclusion and may be considered for tenure at the usual time, as provided in [4-F \(2\)](#). If she also qualifies under the second paragraph of [4-D \(2\)](#) she is entitled to an exclusion of two years from the probationary period.
- (ii) A probationary faculty member who is the primary caregiver of one or more children in the period prior to 12 months before the Tenure Decision Date will, upon request, automatically be granted an exclusion of one year from the probationary period.
- (iii) After advice of the Committee on Deadlines and Leaves, the Provost may approve up to one year exclusion from the probationary period of a probationary faculty member to accommodate unusual circumstances beyond those mentioned in paragraphs (1) and (2) that significantly reduce the person's ability to make progress on scholarly work, according to the usual standards applied by the committee.
- (iv) A faculty member's leave under section 3-D (8), if it is at least one-year or half-time for two years, shall entitle the faculty member to an exclusion of one year from the probationary period.
- (v) If the Provost approves exclusions under more than one of the preceding subsections, two years will be excluded from the probationary period. Absent special approval by the Provost for extraordinary reasons, however, there shall not be more than a total of two years exclusion from the probationary period or extension of the Tenure Decision Date, or both, for any reason or combination of reasons under this Section or other policies.
- (vi) A faculty member for whom there has been an exclusion from the probationary period will nevertheless be entitled, if he or she wishes, to be considered for tenure as if there has not been an exclusion.

3-D (8)(f) *Expectations Concerning Scholarly Productivity*

A faculty member's taking of a paid parental leave or an exclusion from the probationary period as provided in this section 3-D (8) will not raise the expectations for scholarly productivity on account of the leave or exclusion. This standard shall be applied at the department, school and University level and, at the candidate's request, will be explained in requests to external referees.

3-D (8)(g) Coordination and Conditions of Paid Parental Leave

Leave and benefit provisions under this section 3-D (8) are to be fully coordinated with each other and other leave and benefit provisions, so as to avoid duplication. No more than one of the accommodations mentioned in 3-D (8)(d) is provided for caregiving for a child or children. It would be unusual to approve an accommodation based on caregiving for a child or children under 3-D (8)(c) in addition to an accommodation under 3-D (8)(d).

Accordingly, paid parental leave will run concurrently with any leave provided by law in connection with the birth or adoption of a child, as permitted by law. Similarly, when a faculty member is eligible to receive pregnancy or birth-related disability benefits or paid family leave benefits while on leave connected with the birth or adoption of a child, the paid parental leave will run concurrently and supplement the benefits that the individual would be entitled to receive, so as to equal full pay for up to ten weeks.

A faculty member's commencement of any leave or benefit with which paid parental leave is to be coordinated under this section 3-D (8), whether before or after the birth, will be deemed a notification that the member is exercising his or her entitlement to paid parental leave, subject to appropriate documentation satisfactory to the Provost. If a faculty member has commenced paid parental leave but does not exhaust his or her entitlement to ten weeks, subsection (4) applies to the remainder of the entitlement.

The remaining paid parental leave shall be scheduled as mutually agreed between the faculty member and his or her Dean, in situations where the faculty member is not eligible for, or has exhausted, maternity-related disability benefits, leave provided by law, and paid family leave benefits, but has not exhausted his or her entitlement to ten weeks paid parental leave under this policy.

- The Dean's agreement on the scheduling of the parental leave under this subsection (4) will be based on the academic needs of the School.
- In all cases the paid parental leave shall be concluded within one year of the birth or adoption of the child.
- Paid parental leave is not convertible to a cash benefit under any circumstance.

If a second parent is a University faculty member who qualifies as the primary caregiver at some point within the first year after the child's birth or adoption, the second parent to qualify is also entitled to a ten-week paid parental leave, subject to the conditions and coordination stated above, but does not have an entitlement under other provisions of this Chapter.

3-E BENEFITS

The University of Southern California provides extensive benefit programs to benefits-eligible faculty. In addition to benefits required by law, those programs currently include health insurance, dental insurance, retirement benefits, childcare, tuition assistance for the faculty member and his or her eligible spouse and dependent children, tuition exchange for eligible faculty children, life insurance and various other benefits.

The particular provisions of each of the above benefit programs are determined by the Senior Vice President of Human Resources, Administration after consultation with faculty through the Benefits Committee and the Senate Committee on the Faculty Environment. Current provisions are available at the [Benefits & Perks](#) website.

3-F PERSONAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

3-F (1) Equal Opportunity

Having a family, sexual, romantic or other intimate relationship to a current member of the faculty or staff shall not be a bar to equal opportunity in employment or education for anyone.

3-F (2) Decision-making Authority and Supervisory Roles

At the same time, any faculty member in such a relationship shall take all reasonable steps to avoid a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest in his or her USC work that could arise from the relationship.

For example, a faculty member shall not participate in any decision (such as decisions or recommendations concerning initial appointment, retention, promotion, salary, or leave of absence of a member of the faculty or staff, or decisions or recommendations concerning the admission, granting of awards, grading or academic advancement of a student) that involves either a direct benefit or detriment to a person with whom he or she has a family, sexual, romantic or other intimate relationship.

Faculty members shall not supervise or evaluate the work of a USC or affiliated-institution employee or student, or resident or fellow, with whom they have such a relationship. Supervision and evaluation include teaching in-person, online or any other format; teaching or training in a lab, clinic, hospital or the field; grading or evaluating student work; serving as an advisor, examiner, or member of a guidance, thesis or dissertation committee; supervising clinical activity; deciding on or recommending admissions, employment or granting of

awards; supervising teaching, research, clinical or other duties in all types of positions; mentoring; and having the other person paid from the funds of a grant or contract supervised by the faculty member as principal investigator.

A principal investigator shall not permit a person with whom he or she has a family, sexual, romantic, or other intimate relationship to be paid from the funds of a grant or contract supervised by the principal investigator.

3-F (3) Romantic Relationship with Supervisees

There is an inherent power differential between faculty and students, and there are also power differentials between faculty and non-students they supervise or evaluate. A relationship may be voluntary in the sense that an individual is not forced to participate against the individual's will, yet it may be unwelcome and therefore result in a claim of sexual harassment or sexual assault. Sexual relationships between these parties may lack meaningful consent. These relationships may put either party at risk. They can create a perceived lack of freedom to give meaningful consent about the relationships. The University does not tolerate non-consensual sexual relationships within its work and academic environment.

Because of the power differential, including the inherent power differential between faculty and students, all faculty are prohibited from having an intimate, romantic, or sexual relationship, even a consensual one, with any person that the faculty member teaches, supervises, or evaluates, including any student, resident, or fellow of the university or an affiliated institution as well as any visiting student, resident, or fellow. Supervision and evaluation are defined in [3-F \(2\)](#).

Exceptions from the prohibitions outlined in this policy will be granted only in rare circumstances, through the process discussed in [3-F \(4\)](#) Requests for a Special Management Plan, and [3-F \(5\)](#) Duty to Disclose.

3-F (4) Request for a Special Management Plan

In an unusual situation, including but not limited to a prior existing family or other relationship, that would otherwise call for a faculty member to supervise or evaluate the work of someone with whom he or she has such a relationship, the faculty member is required to disclose the relationship to the dean or dean's designee, and may continue to supervise or evaluate only if, at the request of both parties, special arrangements are approved by the dean (or the dean's designee) to avoid the possibility of favoritism, such as having an unrelated third party supervise or evaluate the work. The Provost's written permission is also required. The faculty member may appeal the dean's decision to the Provost.

(See also the policies of the [Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX](#), for procedures for complaints in non-consensual situations.)

To protect privacy, faculty members who recuse themselves from such decisions or supervisory responsibilities are not required to state reasons except to the dean (or the dean's designee) and the Provost.

3-F (5) Duty to Disclose

Section 3-F (4) requires disclosure when that section applies. If a faculty member is in doubt concerning the possibility of a conflict of interest, it is required that the faculty member consult the department chair or dean. A department chair or dean who has similar doubts should initiate discussion with the faculty member; and any other faculty member with such concerns should raise them with the chair or dean, who should take appropriate steps. The faculty member must seek a decision on what is appropriate in these situations from the Provost, who will make a written record of the decision. Advice may also be sought from the President of the Faculty. Confidentiality shall be protected to the fullest extent possible.

3-F (6) Persons Who Are Not Supervisees

In addition to the prohibition of personal conflicts of interest in [3-F \(3\)](#) the University strongly discourages sexual relationships and sexual advances between faculty and any students, residents, or fellows, or between faculty and any employees where there is a power differential.

There is an inherent power differential between faculty and students, and there are also power differentials between faculty and non-students they supervise or evaluate. This can create a perceived lack of freedom to give meaningful consent about the relationships.

Faculty and supervisors should seriously consider the risks to their own professional and private lives, as well as those created for the other person before entering into such a relationship. The University strongly recommends that such relationships generally be avoided.

Even a fully consensual relationship may create an exposure to legal risk, as others may be treated less favorably, or may feel they have been treated less favorably, than was the person in the sexual relationship; this may be considered a form of sexual favoritism or special treatment. If the facts establish sexual favoritism or special treatment, that would be a violation of University policy.

If a sexual relationship ends, and a participant finds that future such contact by the former partner is unwelcome, it is highly desirable that he or she give explicit notice to the former partner in clear, unambiguous terms of the fact that the relationship is over and future contact or comments of a sexual nature are unwelcome.

3-F (7) Consulting and Reporting

Sections [3-F \(4\)](#) and [\(5\)](#) provide for mandatory reporting concerning supervisees.

If a faculty member is in doubt concerning the possibility that a relationship with a non-supervisee, described in [3-F \(6\)](#), may create a conflict of interest, it is recommended that the faculty member consult the department chair or Dean. A department chair or Dean who has similar doubts should initiate discussion with the faculty member; and any other faculty member with such concerns should raise them with the chair or Dean, who should take appropriate steps. Advice in these situations should be sought from the Vice Provost designated for such purposes by the Provost and from the President of the Faculty. Confidentiality shall be protected to the fullest extent possible.

The University of Southern California provides extensive benefit programs to benefits-eligible faculty. In addition to benefits required by law, those programs currently include health insurance, dental insurance, retirement benefits, childcare, tuition assistance for the faculty member and his or her eligible spouse and dependent children, tuition exchange for eligible faculty children, life insurance and various other benefits.

The particular provisions of each of the above benefit programs are determined by the Senior Vice President of Human Resources, Administration after consultation with faculty through the Benefits Committee and the Senate Committee on the Faculty Environment. Current provisions are available at the [Benefits](#).

3-G POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

As citizens, the faculty members of the University have the same rights and responsibilities of free speech, thought, and action as all American citizens. Their position, however, imposes special obligations, such as emphasizing that they are not institutional representatives, and exercising appropriate restraint. See also [3-B \(1\)\(a\)](#).

For the protection of both faculty members and the University, faculty members campaigning as political candidates for state or federal offices will do so on their own time. For the period of such candidacy, it is required that they obtain personal leave of absence under [3-D \(5\)](#) or continue work at the University on a part-time basis under [3-D \(7\)](#). Such leave of absence is not a sabbatical leave and, if full-time, is also without pay.

Leave of absence is not required of faculty members who become candidates for or are elected to offices of a temporary or part-time nature, such as a membership on a municipal charter revision commission, delegate to the State Constitutional Convention, a member of a local school board, or a holder of municipal office.

This policy is intended to safeguard the freedom of speech, thought, and action of faculty, and to avoid impairment of the significant contributions they are capable of making toward improved local, state, and federal government.

3-H OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES OF FACULTY MEMBERS AND CONFLICTS

The University of Southern California encourages faculty involvement in outside consulting, research, and professional activities, as well as community service. However, since the primary responsibility of a full-time faculty member is to the University, limits on outside activities must be set. Outside research, consultation, educational work, and relationships with industry shall be in accord with the relevant University policies as well as the general policies on conflict of interest and conflict of commitment. Within the limits specified, such activities provide an opportunity for the professional development of the faculty member and the enhancement of the University's impact beyond the classroom and laboratory. However, the facilities and services of the University may not be used in connection with compensated outside effort except to a purely incidental extent, or for appropriate University-determined compensation and in accord with University regulations.

3-H (1) Conflict of Interest

3-H (1)(a) In General

Each full-time faculty member owes primary professional responsibility to the University and shall be alert to the possibility that outside obligations, employment, and financial and professional interests, including those of their close family members or those of anyone with whom they have intimate relationships, can affect their objectivity, decision-making, as well as other responsibilities to the University.

To assist faculty members in understanding possible conflicts of interest or other problems that may develop, and to alert the individual, the department chair, and the University to potential conflict of interest, policies are posted on the [University Policies](#) website.

Conflict of interest and conflict of commitment policies regulate outside activity which:

- is inconsistent with a faculty member's responsibilities to USC, or
- creates a conflict or appearance of conflict with any USC program (including working for another educational or research institution), or
- dilutes USC's academic stature, or detracts from the prestige of the University or the professional stature of the faculty member, or
- unduly impinges on the faculty member's primary responsibilities with the university, or
- takes more than one day a week, on average.

3-H (1)(b) Disclosure of Outside Activities

All outside employment, as well as other outside activities or personal relationships described in the University on [Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy](#) must be disclosed through the “diSClose” online system, and also to the department chair, dean, or other supervisor.

If in doubt concerning the possibility of conflict arising from a consulting or other remunerative activity, the faculty member should report it. This responsibility to report continues through the summer and while on leave.

The Office of Culture, Ethics and Compliance serves as a resource for information about government and University policies and regulations regarding conflict of interest. (See also policies posted on the [University Policies](#) website. This office bears responsibility to collect this information and disseminate it to the deans of the schools and colleges of the University and to other administrative personnel. Thus, faculty members who report to them and who are working on government-sponsored activities are kept abreast of policies and regulations touching upon conflict of interest.

3-H (1)(c) Other Disclosure of Conflicts

In University decision-making (including participating in recommending appointments, promotions, or honors; or serving on grievance panels or hearing boards), a faculty member shall disclose to fellow members of a committee making the recommendation, and also to the dean or Provost, any current or previous relationships or circumstances that create the appearance of a conflict of interest (including mentoring, teaching, patient or client relationship, dissertation supervising, or co-authorship).

3-H (2) Conflicts of Commitment and Absences

3-H (2)(a) In General

Faculty members have a binding obligation to discharge instructional and other regular duties, and performance of these duties may be impaired by any other activity requiring a large portion of time. It is important that students receive the instruction the curriculum envisages and almost always from the instructor of record. For faculty permitted to work remotely, failure to perform remote duties is deemed absence from duty.

3-H (2)(b) Justified Absences

Faculty members who belong to professional associations and societies or who serve on scholarly or advisory bodies in their field of expertise will necessarily be absent from duty on occasion, but such absences are subject to the review of the department chair, division head, or dean on how the individual’s instructional and other responsibilities will be met. There may be other good reasons acceptable to the chair or dean that justify brief absences from the faculty member’s usual obligations.

3-H (2)(c) Brief Absences

For brief absences from campus, or absence from duty for faculty permitted to work remotely, faculty members shall make appropriate arrangements, subject to the review of the chair or dean as requested and according to University and school policies, so that absences interfere only minimally with their normal teaching and other responsibilities. (See also [3-D \(3\)](#)) and policies posted on the [University Policies](#) website. For lengthy or frequent periods of absence from duty, however, a faculty member must seek an approved leave (statutory Family Care and Medical Leave, medical, parental, or personal leave of absence) and may qualify for disability benefits. Neglect of duty, in accordance with [8-C](#), may occur if there is excessively lengthy or frequent absence from duty due to illness or other reason, if taken without obtaining an approved leave.

3-H (2)(d) Unapproved Absences

The Provost may place on leave without pay faculty members who are absent from campus, or absent from duty for faculty permitted to work remotely, for more than two consecutive weeks without an approved leave, vacation, or permission from the dean or the dean's designee.

3-H (2)(e) Disclosures

All outside employment, as well as other activities described in the [University](#) policy which pose potential conflicts of commitment, must be disclosed through the "[diSClose](#)" online system.

3-H (3) Consulting, Research and Clinical Practice

3-H (3)(a) General Principles

Many faculty have the opportunity to receive recognition and remuneration through consultation beyond their University employment. The nature of the consulting work should be evaluated in terms of its worth as a scholarly experience and should in no way detract from the prestige of the University or the professional stature of the faculty member. (This is not intended to interfere with general personal or nonprofessional activities of the faculty member.)

The University obligations of faculty members are complex and the degree to which obligations are met cannot easily be ascertained by time records or publications lists. As a result, the University has established limits on the amount of time that normally can be devoted to outside consulting work (in addition to the requirements referred to in subsections (a), (b), and (c) of [3-H \(1\)](#).) A full-time faculty member may not consult more than one day per week on average during the contract period of service.

In rare instances, circumstances may warrant an exception to this policy. Requests should be made prior to the period during which consulting will take place. Approval must be secured from the Provost.

In addition to external consultation, a faculty member may engage in clinical practice for a University-approved faculty practice plan corporation, within the terms of the appropriate school or departmental practice plan and as approved by the dean. Full-time status for purposes of benefits, governance, and applicability of University policies may be extended to such faculty even though the extent of their practice with the practice plan corporation means that the professional services provided directly to the University are less than full-time.

It should always be borne in mind that consulting is a conditional privilege granted by the University. As such, the University is the final judge of the appropriateness of the outside activity and whether it unduly compromises the faculty member's primary responsibilities implicit in his or her contract for full-time employment with the University.

3-H (3)(b) Disclosure

All outside employment, as well as other activities described in the [University](#) policy, must be disclosed through the “[diSClose](#)” online system.

For policies requiring disclosure, and other policies governing newly-created intellectual property, please see the [Intellectual Property Policy](#) and Important Notices to when disclosure of inventions and software is required, it should be made via the online portal “[Sophia](#)”.

3-H (3)(c) Other Requirements

Compensated external research is subject to (1) the same time limitations as external consultation; (2) the policy of [Conflict of Interest in Research](#); (3) the policy on [Conflict of Interest in Professional and Business Practices](#); and (4) the duty to disclose through the “[diSClose](#)” online system

(Healthcare providers must also comply with the policy on [Relationships with Industry](#).)

For requirements concerning foreign and other external research relationships, please see [USC's Guide to Sponsored Research Procedures](#).

3-H (4) Outside Appointments and Educational Work

Faculty members occasionally have the opportunity to receive recognition and remuneration through activity as an educator or researcher with outside institutions while holding a USC faculty appointment. Any faculty member, full- or part-time, may be an educator, or hold a faculty or research appointment, at another institution or enterprise upon the written prior approval of the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs. This Section 3-H (4) applies

also to part-time faculty because of the principle stated at 4-B (3)(a) that having instructors who simultaneously teach at multiple academic institutions is not appropriate at USC.

3-H (4)(a) Disclosure

All outside employment, as well as other activities described in the [University Policy](#), which includes educational work, outside research and faculty appointments, must be disclosed through the “[diSClose](#)” online system. The criteria to be applied in deciding whether approval will be granted are stated the first paragraph of [3-H \(4\)\(c\)](#).

3-H (4)(b) Process

Faculty should submit a request for advance approval for work at another college, university or research institution, or instruction or course creation for other outside enterprises. If the individual making the request has a department chair, the request should be submitted through the chair; it then goes to the dean; and the request and evaluation of the request by the chair and dean then go to the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs for decision. Faculty may seek advice in these situations from the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs and the President of the Faculty. Department Chairs and Deans can make recommendations, but the decision for approval lies with the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs. Faculty may appeal the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs’ decision to the Provost.

3-H (4)(c) Criteria

The standard to be applied is whether the outside work may be inconsistent with a faculty member’s responsibilities to USC, create a conflict or appearance of conflict with any USC program, dilute USC’s academic stature, detract from the prestige of the University or the professional stature of the faculty member, or unduly impinge on the faculty member’s primary responsibilities with the university.

Examples of situations typically approved are: (1) responding to a request from a peer institution, after identifying the special or emergency needs that occasion their request, and (2) outside teaching where the added value of the corresponding USC offering is clear, and the work does not impinge on the faculty member’s responsibilities with the University. Some examples typically disapproved are: (1) outside teaching that largely duplicates a course in the USC curriculum, whether or not currently taught or taught by the individual making the request, (2) outside work that dilutes USC’s academic stature, and (3) outside work that interferes with the individual’s USC responsibilities.

Activities such as lectures at professional societies, occasional guest lectures, or community activities, that are pro bono or awarded an honorarium, generally do not require approval under this section. Advance approval must be obtained for institutional titles and designations such as principal investigator, honorary professor, and similar titles. Schools shall keep the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs informed in a timely fashion

concerning any concurrent activity as an educator to be done by a faculty member of their unit at other institutions.

3-H (4)(d) Dual Tenure

Faculty may not hold tenure simultaneously at two institutions except with approval of the President.

3-H (5) Endorsements

Any action of a faculty member that might seem to commit the University or an academic unit to an endorsement (e.g., of a business, private practice, product or service, or political position) should be avoided unless expressly authorized in advance by the Provost. See also [3-B \(1\)\(a\)](#) and [3-G](#). A faculty member may state his or her academic position for identification in the media, or as part of a biographical note.

3-I CANDIDACY FOR DEGREES

Faculty members shall not be candidates for degrees in the same department or program in which they have an appointment. In addition, assistant professors on the tenure track should not simultaneously be candidates for degrees anywhere. Individual exceptions may be made only with the approval of the Provost or of a special committee appointed by the President.

3-J REQUIRED TRAINING

All faculty, full- and part-time, must periodically complete required training on preventing sexual harassment and abusive conduct. Examples of unacceptable behavior are provided in this training. It is important for faculty to take this training even if they do not believe they need it. This is especially so for senior faculty, who are leaders of the academic community and role models for others. Taking the training as required is not discretionary; it is part of the duties of each faculty member.

Certain groups of faculty are also expected to complete training as explained in other University policies and websites, for example:

- [Healthcare Compliance Education](#).
- Human Subjects Research Training, Good Clinical Practice, HIPAA Training, HHS [Conflict of Interest Training](#), [Environmental Health and Safety Training](#).
- [Research Compliance Training](#).

Chapter 4

Faculty Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure

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4-A AUTHORITY

The University Bylaws provide in Section 6.4 (d) that

The President of the University shall have full power of appointment, direction, and supervision of the faculties and the organization thereof.

The Provost may make appointments and promotions at any rank. The Provost is the only official delegated by the President with the authority to grant tenure, make appointments of associate professors and professors on the tenure-track, or award special designations and continuing appointments. The President may delegate to the deans authority to make other appointments and procedures for those appointments may be abbreviated from the appointment procedures used for senior tenured appointments by agreement between the academic units and the Provost.

4-B FACULTY DESIGNATIONS AND ORGANIZATION

4-B (1) Titles and Modifiers

From time to time updates to the list of [Academic Titles](#) currently in use are approved by the Provost. For updates to this list, the Provost will seek the advice of the Academic Senate Executive Board. See [4-C \(1\)](#).

Individual schools may, with Provost's permission, use titles from this list; special approval from the Provost, based on unusual circumstances, must be obtained to use a title outside the specifications of this list. When a faculty member has an administrative assignment, the dean or Provost may add an administrative title in addition to the faculty title.

4-B (2) Policies

4-B (2)(a) Full-time and Part-time Appointments

Tenured faculty and tenure-track faculty, and librarians on continuing appointment or in positions leading to consideration for continuing appointment, are appointed on a full-time basis. See also [3-D \(7\)](#). Other faculty may be appointed on a full-time or part-time basis.

If a visiting faculty member receives a tenured faculty appointment, the period of the visit is counted as part of the tenured service period for purposes of calculating sabbatical eligibility.

4-B (2)(b) Tenure-Track Faculty

Tenure-track faculty are those faculty on appointments that lead to consideration for promotion to tenure under the up-or-out rules specified in [4-F](#).

If a visiting faculty member receives a tenure-track faculty appointment, the period of the visit is counted as part of the probationary period, unless the Provost on behalf of the President decides otherwise after advice of the Committee on Probationary Deadlines.

4-B (2)(c) Academic Staff

Academic staff titles are set out in the list of [Academic Titles Currently in Use](#) and those in the categories listed there are not designated as faculty. They fall under non-faculty policies, whether as staff, students, post-doctorals, or some specially defined category. Such titles are conferred by the dean or Vice President of an academic unit, who will issue to the individual a letter stating title and responsibilities and will inform the Provost of the conferring of this designation and its duration. These individuals have privileges for the use of the libraries and other research facilities, eligibility for parking, bookstore privileges, and office space as available.

4-B (2)(d) Special Designations

The following special designations that modify faculty titles may be used. Appointments are made by the President.

For positions within a school, the appointment will follow a review of qualifications and recommendation by the dean and an appropriate school faculty committee. For positions that transcend any one school, the appointment will follow a review of qualifications and recommendation by the Provost and an appropriate university-wide faculty committee, such as a panel of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure or a committee of University Professors and Distinguished Professors.

After recommendation by such a school or university-wide committee, or the Committee on Professional Responsibility, a special designation may be withdrawn by the President.

Distinguished Professor

Awarded on a very selective basis to those few professors in the University who have brought special renown to the University through their accomplishments. The modifier is added to the existing title, e.g., “Distinguished Professor of English” or “Gregor Piatigorsky Distinguished Professor of Cello.”

University Professor

Awarded to a small number of professors who, because of their multi-disciplinary interests and significant accomplishments in several disciplines, qualify for an appointment that transcends any single field of study. Generally, a faculty member accorded this title also has a tenured faculty appointment in a specific academic unit. “University Professor” is a separate title, and the individual continues to hold the existing title, e.g., “University Professor and Irene McCulloch Professor of Marine Biology.”

Provost Professor

Awarded to outstanding interdisciplinary scholars who contribute to the university by attracting excellent faculty and graduate students while adding significantly to USC's culture of interdisciplinary research and education. The modifier is added to the usual title, e.g., "Provost Professor of Psychology and Marketing."

Named Professor or Chair

Awarded to a distinguished faculty member in a specific discipline or inter-disciplinary area who is supported wholly or in part by funds given for this purpose. Named appointments are occasionally made by the University without endowment: such positions within a school are usually designated "Dean's Professor."

Named appointments without an endowment may also be made for eminent individuals from the arts, sciences, professions, business and community leadership who contribute to USC's academic life as set out in the individual appointment: such positions may be designated "Presidential Professor," or may honor one of the University's founders, usually as "Judge Widney Professor."

Named professorships and chairs are generally awarded on a fixed term basis, subject to renewal depending on the practice and customs of the school in which the appointment is made, or the appointment may be made on a continuing basis until withdrawn. Appointments are subject to University policy and the terms of the President's approval of the appointment.

If the named position is denominated in the same way as other appointments in the academic unit, the honor is combined with the regular title as a modifier, e.g., "Emory Bogardus Professor of Sociology"; however, if the named position has a unique denomination, it is a separate title and the individual continues to also hold the existing title, e.g., "Frank Baxter Professor of Teaching Shakespeare, and Professor of English."

Clinical Scholar

See **the list of [Academic Titles](#)**.

In Residence

The following titles and similar ones are appropriate for faculty members with special expertise or renown:

Artist in Residence
Executive in Residence
Scholar in Residence
Writer in Residence

4-B (3) Maintaining the Tenure System

4-B (3)(a) Tenure System

The tenure system is the principal form of faculty appointment, and tenured or tenure-track appointments are preferred whenever feasible. Tenure is indispensable to the success of our institution in fulfilling our obligations to students and to society. USC is committed to the tenure system.

4-B (3)(b) RTPC Appointments

Research-track and clinical-track full time faculty are invaluable to help perform the research and clinical practice missions of the University, and teaching-track and practitioner-track faculty may be invaluable for our teaching mission when it is academically desirable to make such appointments, for example to bring a practical orientation or to teach skills.

Part-time appointments are generally to be avoided but are appropriate for individuals who are asked to teach a course because of special expertise and who have another full-time position or career. Any exceptions require special approval by the Provost. Adjunct titles are limited to those who already have a primary position or an equivalent artistic career. **See also [4-C \(2\)](#), [4-D \(3\)](#) and [4-G](#).**

4-B (3)(c) RTPC and Governance

Research-, teaching-, practitioner-, and clinical-track faculty are eligible to participate in faculty governance at both the school and University level, except in matters concerning tenure, in accordance with Academic Senate and Faculty Council rules. **See also [4-C \(2\)\(c\)](#), [4-D \(2\)\(c\)](#) and [4-H \(2\)](#).**

4-B (3)(d) Maximum Number of Teaching RTPC

Each school policy shall maintain a limit for the maximum number of teaching RTPC faculty appointments, as a percentage of tenured and tenure-track faculty appointments, so as to preserve the tenure system as the principal form of faculty appointment.

4-B (3)(e) Periodic Review of RTPC for Promotion and Reappointment

Periodically during the ongoing appointment of a research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track, faculty member, full-time or part-time, at three-to-five-year intervals as stated in approved school guidelines, the individual's performance should receive careful review by an appropriate faculty committee as to whether promotion is appropriate and whether reappointment is appropriate. For faculty on multi-year appointments, the periodic assessment of performance should occur before the end of each appointment, preferably in the fall of the last year of the term. The relationship among the periodic assessment, merit reviews, and evaluations for promotion should be detailed in each school's Provost-approved guidelines.

4-B (3)(f) Simultaneous Appointments

Having instructors who simultaneously teach at multiple academic institutions is not appropriate at USC. See section [3-H \(4\)](#) on requesting permission for outside teaching. For joint appointments within USC, see also [4-C \(3\)](#).

A part-time visiting appointment of an individual who holds a full-time appointment at an AAU peer institution may be made by a dean to meet one-time emergency needs for up to one year, without special Provost's approval but observing other required processes.

4-B (3)(g) Those Not Granted Tenure

If an individual holding a tenure-track faculty appointment has not been granted tenure by the Tenure Decision Date, the individual is entitled to a one-year terminal appointment; such an individual cannot be retained or rehired on a full-time basis thereafter except under extraordinary circumstances, only as a research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, and clinical-track faculty, and only with the approval of the Provost.

When there is a proposal to appoint an individual to a faculty position who previously had tenure-track faculty status, the proposal will be submitted for the Provost's approval. Documentation must be submitted to show that the individual actually will have the work profile of the appropriate track and that the proposal is appropriate within the tenure system. It would be particularly unusual to approve such a shift in the year leading up to the Tenure Decision Date.

4-C APPOINTMENTS

4-C (1) Appointments to Tenure and Tenure-Track

Full-time tenure-track (probationary) and tenured faculty appointments are for service during the academic or fiscal year and are made on the bases described below.

Instructor and Assistant Professor

- Appointed on an annual basis with the possibility of renewal. A tenure decision shall be made in accord with the schedule described in established policy. See also [4-D](#). Instructor is an entry level position, generally for those who have not yet completed their terminal degree.

Associate Professor

- Generally comes with tenure, but if appointed without tenure, a decision on tenure shall be made in accord with the schedule described in established policy. See [4-D](#).

Professor

- Generally comes with tenure, but if appointed without tenure, a decision on tenure shall be made in accord with the schedule described in established policy. See [4-D](#).

Faculty members in their probationary periods are appointed for specific terms, in accordance with the customs of their academic units, of one to three years. The University is under no obligation to reappoint an untenured faculty member or to renew the appointment for the full probationary period. See [4-D \(3\)](#).

4-C (2) Appointments to Research-Track, Teaching-Track, Practitioner-Track, and Clinical-Track

4-C (2)(a) Policies

Full-time research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track faculty appointments are made in accordance with University policy and school-specific guidelines. All initial appointments of such faculty must be approved by the dean or Provost. Every school is required to maintain a written statement of guidelines on such faculty. **See also [4-D \(3\)](#) and [4-G](#).**

4-C (2) (b) Benefits

Full-time research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track, faculty are treated equally with tenured and tenure-track faculty with respect to all fringe benefits as defined by the established faculty policies. However, Visiting Faculty are not generally eligible for retirement benefits. Schools may also extend eligibility for sabbatical leaves for research or other scholarly activity (consistent with the candidate's expected faculty profile) or other perquisites of tenured or tenure-track faculty on a categorical basis or may provide for such extension on the basis of individual negotiation.

4-C (2) (c) RTPC Faculty and Governance

Each school must have active participation by research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, and clinical-track, faculty members in faculty governance, including on faculty guidelines for those tracks, but not including matters concerning tenure and the tenure system. Part-time faculty are eligible to be elected or appointed to faculty governance bodies. The Academic Senate Constitution has provisions concerning participation in faculty governance by research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, and clinical-track, faculty (Article I, Sections 2 and 3). **See also [4-B \(3\)\(c\)](#).**

4-C (3) Joint Appointments

A joint appointment between two schools or divisions of the University may be tendered if the faculty member will teach or conduct research in both schools. A tenured appointment

may be made, however, in only one school. Promotion to a higher rank for faculty holding joint appointments should be initiated by the school of primary appointment.

4-D LENGTH OF APPOINTMENT

4-D (1) Probationary Period and Tenure Decision Date

Each tenure-track (probationary) faculty member has a person-specific *maximum probationary period*. The person-specific probationary period is equal to the school-specific maximum probationary period reduced by the number of years of prior full-time service in a similar faculty position at other institutions, with a maximum reduction of three years. For example, a faculty member in a USC school with a seven-year maximum probationary period would have a person-specific maximum probationary period of (i) seven years if the person had no previous service, (ii) six years if the person had one year of previous service, and (iii) four years if the person had three or more years of previous service. The person-specific probationary period may be extended as provided for in [3-D \(8\)](#), [4-D](#), and [4-D \(2\)\(a\)](#). The faculty member's Tenure Decision Date is 12 months before the person-specific maximum probationary period. The tenure decision must be made before the Tenure Decision Date. The person-specific maximum probationary period and Tenure Decision Date should be stated in the faculty member's appointment letter.

4-D (1)(a) Annual Review

A new faculty member, like those already employed by the University, should be assured that his or her record shall be reviewed annually by his or her academic unit according to known and established procedures. There should be a particularly thorough review midway in the probationary period, normally in the third year. The University is under no obligation to reappoint an untenured faculty member or to renew the appointment for the full probationary period. See [4-F \(3\)](#).

4-D (1)(b) Tenure at Appointment

In unusual instances, an outstanding new faculty member may be recommended for tenure or promotion during or at the end of his or her first year. In this case, the original dossier may be resubmitted with clear evidence of continued achievement and collegial activity.

Occasionally, an outstanding faculty member, such as one who already holds tenure at a peer institution, is accorded tenure at the time of appointment to the University of Southern California, upon the recommendation of the established committees and the dean and approval by the President.

4-D (1)(c) Midyear Appointments

If a tenure-track faculty member initially commences full-time academic duties on or after December 1, the remainder of that academic or fiscal year shall not be included in calculating the maximum length of the probationary period.

4-D (2) Committee on Deadlines and Leaves

4-D (2)(a) Probationary Deadlines

Unresolved questions concerning what prior service must or must not be counted, and other matters pertaining to the length of the probationary period, shall be directed to the Committee on Deadlines and Leaves, for its review and recommendations to the President. This review may take place before the appointment is accepted, or on request thereafter.

Section [3-D](#), Leaves of Absence, and [3-D \(8\)](#), provide for excluding a certain amount of time in rank from the normal probationary period ("stopping the clock") which has the effect of adjusting the Tenure Decision Date. The Committee also gives its review and recommendations on requests to change a probationary deadline based on special circumstances.

The annual letter of reappointment or contract for each tenure-track faculty member shall reflect any adjustments to the Tenure Decision Date approved during the prior year.

In the event of emergency circumstances severely disrupting the University's regular operation, the Provost may declare the tenure clock stopped for an appropriate period, and extend deadlines correspondingly.

4-D (2)(b) Research-Track, Teaching-Track, Practitioner-Track, and Clinical-Track, Promotion Deadlines

If an approved school guideline establishes an up-or-out deadline for research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track promotion, the faculty member may request "stopping the clock" under the same principles as apply for the tenure-track probationary period. See [4-D \(2\)\(a\)](#). If the faculty member does not accept a decision by the dean on stopping the clock, the Committee on Deadlines and Leaves gives its review and recommendations to the Provost. In such cases, the Committee will include research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track faculty of the rank of associate professor or above, as well as tenured faculty.

4-D (2)(c) Leaves

If there is an appeal as to the grant or denial of a sabbatical or other research leave, the Committee on Deadlines and Leaves gives its review and recommendations to the Provost. If the case involves a research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track faculty member, the Committee will include research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track faculty of the rank of associate professor or above, as well as tenured faculty.

4-D (3) Term of Employment for Research-Track, Teaching-Track, Practitioner-Track, and Clinical-Track Faculty

Research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, and clinical-track faculty are appointed to fixed-term contracts that must specify the starting and ending dates of the appointment and any specific duties of the appointment beyond the responsibilities stated in 3-B, and school guidelines. The date on which each appointment ends shall be specified in the appointment letter and any subsequent reappointment letter. That letter also constitutes adequate notice of non-reappointment, and the appointment will expire at the end of its term, unless there is a written renewal.

Research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track faculty appointments are not subject to the up-or-out rules of [4-F](#) and do not lead to consideration for promotion to tenure.

A signed copy of the research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, and clinical-track faculty member's acceptance must be filed with the dean prior to commencement of employment.

However, optionally for those with annual contracts, the contract may state that it will roll over on the same terms unless there is a decision not to reappoint, with 90 calendar days' notice or pay to the extent notice is less than 90 days. See the second paragraph of [4-G \(2\)](#) concerning the process for the decision. **See also [4-B \(3\)](#) and [4-C \(2\)](#).**

4-E CONDITIONS OF TENURE

Tenure confers on its bearer the right to hold his or her position with pay until retirement. Only for adequate cause and through stipulated procedures may the faculty member be dismissed, demoted, or placed on indefinite leave without pay from that position.

Tenure and promotion are separate processes. Tenure should be considered on an individual basis and should be fully justified.

The President is empowered by the Board of Trustees to take action relating to appointments, promotions, demotions, dismissals, and assignments to indefinite leave, of all personnel holding tenured positions as defined herein. In such actions the President is advised by the Provost and the appropriate University committee, and may delegate his or her authority to the Provost.

Tenured faculty shall not be dismissed or demoted except for adequate cause as defined in [Chapter 8](#), Faculty Dismissals.

Tenured or untenured faculty may be urged to apply for disability status in the event of physical or mental incapacity. The Provost may place tenured or untenured faculty on

Personal Leave or Medical Leave upon proof of severe physical or mental incapacity. See [3-D \(3\)](#). The intention is, whenever reasonable, that tenured or untenured faculty be returned from disability to active status. If the tenured or untenured faculty member does not return to active service after one year's absence, the Provost may terminate his or her appointment without formal proceedings. In such cases, financial benefits that have accrued as a result of service to the University shall not be forfeited.

Tenured faculty may be placed on indefinite leave without pay if reduction in faculty becomes necessary under extraordinary circumstances because of demonstrated financial exigency. Financial benefits accrued through their University service shall not be forfeited. See also [3-D \(6\)](#).

4-F EVALUATION, REAPPOINTMENT, AND PROMOTION OF TENURE-TRACK AND TENURED FACULTY

4-F (1) The Dossier

The dossier should present the evidence gathered by both internal and external peer review of a candidate's fitness for tenure, or for appointment or promotion as associate or full professor. See the [Manual of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure](#).

4-F (2) Evaluation Process

4-F (2)(a) Up or Out Decisions

Careful evaluation of each faculty member shall be made at the time of consideration of grant of tenure, and at the time of consideration of promotion to associate professor whether those decisions are simultaneous or not. If those evaluations are positive, the faculty member shall receive a contract from the President stating the new status; if either decision is negative, the faculty member shall receive timely notice, as specified in [4-F \(3\)](#), that his or her contract of employment with the University will not be renewed.

4-F (2)(b) Peer Review

The principles of academic freedom and tenure, which are firmly established in this and all other major American universities, rely on an established probationary period during which excellence in teaching and scholarly research can be demonstrated by faculty. An established probationary period only has significance if there is a definite time at which the probationary period ends.

A university is as strong as its faculty. A principle especially important to achieving a strong faculty is that the quality of a faculty member's work not be assessed by the potentially capricious judgment of any single person, but rather by a searching review by the faculty

member's colleagues. This principle is given form by making sure that each faculty member is provided a Tenure Decision Date when this process of review must be completed, and ensuring that the President, as is required by his or her accountability to the Board of Trustees for maintaining the long-range quality of the institution, makes a final decision on the award of tenure based on this full and careful process of peer review by colleagues.

4-F (2)(c) Tenure Timelines

- *Traditional timeline*

For faculty initially appointed as assistant professor, there shall be a formal review for promotion to associate professor and the grant of tenure by the sixth year of appointment, unless school-specific guidelines approved as provided in 4-F (2)(d) provide a different period as explained below.

- *School-specific extended timeline*

Schools may provide a longer timeline for formal review for promotion to associate professor and grant of tenure. The longer timeline may apply to the entire school or only to designated departments or disciplines within the school. For example, there may be an eight-year probationary period instead of the traditional seven years. The adoption process is described in [4-F \(2\)\(d\)](#).

- *Highly extended timeline with tenure at full professor*

An approved school-specific guideline may provide for formal review for promotion to associate professor without tenure by the sixth year of appointment, followed by formal review for the grant of tenure (generally simultaneous with promotion to professor) by the end of the school-specific probationary period. The maximum school-specific probationary period is twelve years. Both the decision on promotion to associate professor, and the decision on grant of tenure, are up-or-out decisions. See also [4-F \(3\)](#).

- *Compressed timeline with tenure at full professor*

An approved school-specific guideline may provide for formal review for promotion to associate professor without tenure midway within the traditional probationary period, followed by formal review for the grant of tenure (generally simultaneous with promotion to professor) by the end of the traditional probationary period. Both the decision on promotion to associate professor, and the decision on grant of tenure, are up-or-out decisions. See also [4-F \(3\)](#).

- *Other adjustments*

Individual adjustments in the timeline for promotion to associate professor, the grant of tenure, or both decisions, may be made by the Provost after advice by the Committee on Probationary Deadlines, or in unusual cases after advice by the University Committee on Appointment, Promotion and Tenure. **See also [4-D \(1\)](#).**

4-F (2)(d) Process for Approving School-Specific Timelines

Each change in school-specific guidelines is subject to approval by the Provost on the recommendation of the dean. Such a recommendation shall be made only if endorsed by the tenured and tenure-track faculty of the school, through a vote held by secret ballot. Unless a school specifically requests a change, the school's pre-existing policy shall remain in effect.

A faculty member holding a tenure-track (probationary) appointment at the time such a policy change comes into force will be considered under the policy in effect at the time of his or her initial appointment, unless the faculty member requests that the new policy apply and the Provost approves the request. Approval of such a request will not imply any modification in either rank or tenure status; no one shall be granted tenure or a promotion without a full review.

4-F (2)(e) No De Facto Tenure

To ensure that a tenure decision is made following proper faculty review, every effort must be made to bring each case to the attention of the appropriate faculty reviewing bodies.

If formal review of a faculty member for promotion to associate professor has not been initiated by the beginning of the specified year as described above, or if formal tenure review has not been initiated by nine months before the Tenure Decision Date, or if any contractual timeline on promotion or tenure is missed, it is the duty of the faculty member to bring this to the attention of the Provost by written notice. The Provost shall then notify the appropriate school to commence the review procedure. There is no such thing as *de facto* tenure or tenure by default.

4-F (3) Non-Reappointment for Full-Time Tenure-Track (Probationary) Faculty

In the case of non-reappointment of a tenure-track (probationary) faculty member, the faculty member shall receive notice of non-reappointment in writing as follows: (1) not later than February 15 of the first academic year of service; (2) not later than November 15 of the second academic year of service; (3) at least twelve months before the expiration of an appointment after two or more years at the University.

If the result of the promotion review to associate professor is to deny promotion to the faculty member, or if the result of the tenure review is to deny tenure, the faculty member shall be offered a terminal year of employment beyond expiration of the annual contract in place at the time of the decision and at the rank he or she held prior to review.

In the case of non-reappointment or terminal year notice, during this period the faculty member will continue to receive his or her full salary and benefits, but the faculty member's responsibilities may be altered by mutual agreement between the faculty member and the

University. Alternatively, the Provost may authorize early termination of the faculty member's performance of duties; in such a case, the faculty member will receive compensation equivalent to salary for the notice period.

Faculty appointments expire at the end of the period of service as specified in [3-B \(5\)](#), unless a different date is specified in the appointment letter or any subsequent reappointment letter.

4-G EVALUATION, REAPPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION OF RESEARCH-TRACK, TEACHING-TRACK, PRACTITIONER-TRACK, AND CLINICAL-TRACK FACULTY

4-G (1) Reappointment

The University has no obligation to renew a research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track faculty appointment.

4-G (2) Process

University policies, and school-specific guidelines approved by the Provost under this subsection, address the question of review and recommendation procedures for appointment, reappointment or mid-contract termination of research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track faculty.

Procedures for appointment, reappointment and promotion shall provide thoroughness and documentation sufficient for evaluation of the suitability and qualifications of the candidate, and review and recommendation by an appropriate faculty body. Therefore, decisions on appointment, reappointment and promotion of faculty on full-time appointments shall only be done after review and recommendation by an appropriate faculty body. In addition, the adequacy of the process in each instance of non-reappointment will be reviewed by the Provost's delegate.

Procedures for reappointment and promotion do not apply to individuals on non-renewable contracts. Procedures for part-time faculty may be abbreviated with permission of the Provost.

4-G (3) Guidelines

Proposed guidelines of a school research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track are formulated by the Dean and faculty, acting through the faculty council or another appropriate faculty committee or, in some smaller units, the entire faculty. The proposed guidelines will be submitted for approval by the Provost and do not take effect until approved.

For each proposed set of guidelines submitted to the Provost, the Provost will seek the advice of the Academic Senate Executive Board on whether (a) the procedure used in formulating and endorsing the guidelines provided adequate means for the faculty to fulfill its responsibility for matters of faculty academic status; (b) the content of the proposed school guidelines is consistent with the Faculty Handbook and other University policy; and (c) the proposed guidelines have no adverse University-wide implications.

4-G (4) Early Termination

Contracts of research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track faculty may be terminated earlier than their stipulated end, with a minimum of 90 calendar days' notice, if there is a bona fide need to do so (a) based on cutbacks in external sources of funding for the specific activity, or (b) based on substantial program change or departmental reorganization or substantial resource limitations in the school, or (c) based upon poor performance, in which case the Dean must consult first with the appropriate faculty committee, or (d) termination for cause, as determined by the Committee on Professional Responsibility under 6-G. Adequate cause for a termination shall be one or more of the following: violations of academic freedom, misconduct, dishonesty, unmanaged or unreported conflict of interest, or moral turpitude.

Mid-contract terminations for poor performance determined at the school level should not be confused with terminations for cause determined by the Committee on Professional Responsibility. Termination for poor performance is based on a failure to meet expectations that is less egregious and that does not entail the same opprobrium as termination for cause.

During any notice period the faculty member will continue to receive his or her full salary and benefits, but the faculty member's responsibilities may be altered by mutual agreement between the faculty member and the University. Alternatively, the Provost may authorize early termination of the faculty member's performance of duties. In such a case, the faculty member will receive compensation equivalent to the salary to the extent notice is less than 90 days.

4-H ADVISORY COMMITTEES ON APPOINTMENTS, PROMOTIONS AND TENURE

4-H (1) University Committees

The President receives the advice of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure. This committee generally consists of at least six panels of four to eight faculty members, and the subcommittees described in the next two paragraphs. For nomination procedures, see [2-B \(4\)\(a\)](#). The committee may use consultants or appoint ad hoc panels or members as necessary. A member of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure shall not participate in the deliberations on a dossier

prepared by the academic unit within which he or she serves (such a unit would be a department in the larger schools or the school itself when that unit is not departmentalized.)

For librarians, the President receives the advice of the University Committee on Librarian Appointments, Promotions and Continuing Appointments. This committee generally consists of a single panel of four to eight members. For nomination procedures, see also [2-B \(4\)\(a\)](#). The committee may use consultants or appoint ad hoc panels or members as necessary. A member of the University Committee on Librarian Appointments, Promotions and Continuing Appointments shall not participate in the deliberations on a dossier prepared by the specific unit within which he or she serves.

For research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track promotions, the President receives the advice of the University Committee on Research-Track, Teaching-Track, Practitioner-Track, and Clinical-Track Promotions whenever the dean has not agreed with the advice of faculty committees. For nomination procedures, see also [2-B \(4\)\(a\)](#). The committee appoints ad hoc panels that include both tenured and research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track faculty, at the rank of Associate Professor or higher. If the faculty member being considered is part-time, the ad hoc panel will, whenever possible, include a part-time faculty member at appropriate rank. Individuals shall not be appointed to panels deliberating on files prepared by the specific units in which they serve.

4-H (2) School or Divisional Committees on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure

In preparing all recommendations to the Provost, and in making delegated decisions on appointments and promotions, the dean receives the advice of faculty committees on appointments, promotions, and tenure. These committees are selected in accordance with school guidelines. In larger schools there are departmental as well as school faculty committees on appointments, promotions, and tenure. Some schools may utilize committees of the whole departmental or school tenured faculty, or divisional or institute faculty committees on appointments, promotions, and tenure. Committees (or committees of the whole) for research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track cases include tenured, tenure-track, and research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, or clinical-track faculty. Procedures for certain appointments are abbreviated as provided in [4-A](#).

Chapter 5

Policies Pertaining to Research and Teaching

Chapter 5. Chapter Contents

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5-B CLASSIFIED AND PROPRIETARY RESEARCH

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5-A RESEARCH PROPOSALS

All faculty-initiated proposals relating to research or training programs, whether made to private foundations, corporations, or government sponsors, must be transmitted to the prospective sponsor through regular USC channels, including the Department of Contracts and Grants. Approaches to private sources of funding for gifts must be coordinated with the Office of the Senior Vice-President, University Advancement, as well as submitted to the dean or Provost. See the [University Policies and Policy Governance](#) website. All proposals for sponsored research or training programs should utilize the TARA system to document approvals by academic and administrative officers before submission to the Department of Contract and Grants. These should be prepared as far in advance of submission dates or deadlines as possible. For more information on the preparation process, please consult the [Department of Contracts and Grants](#) website.

5-B CLASSIFIED AND PROPRIETARY RESEARCH

The University policy regarding participation in classified or proprietary research is not to accept or to renew extramural contracts, grants, gifts or other agreements that restrict the rights of the faculty to free conduct of inquiry or to free scholarly dissemination of results within a reasonable time, with the exception of the limited cases described below.

5-B (1) Basic Principles

This policy is based upon adherence to four basic principles. The first of these is the critical importance of freedom of inquiry to the academic community. The University does not presume to impose limits on the freedom of the faculty in the choice of fields or methods of inquiry and cannot allow outside agencies to do so. The second principle, closely linked to the first, is the importance of unrestricted scholarly dissemination of the results of research. Scholarly publication or other means of access by interested persons to such results, normally including underlying data and procedures or analysis as well as final results, are essential elements in the progress of knowledge. Similarly important is the third principle, that of open identification of the actual sources of funding for all sponsored programs. The University must be free to disclose the existence of a project, the general nature of the inquiry, and the level and duration of funding as well as the identity of the sponsor. Finally, the fourth principle involves the University's recognition and protection of the legitimate rights of an outside sponsor, especially in terms of patent issues or possible disclosure of proprietary information. Thus, the University may grant to a sponsor the privilege of review or temporary delay of publications as indicated under Exception (a) in [5-B \(2\)](#).

5-B (2) Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy enunciated above are as follows:

(a) The University may permit sponsor review and delay (normally not to exceed three months and never to exceed one year), but not denial of publication of results, for one of the following reasons:

- If a project involves use of privileged, restricted, or export-controlled data from the sponsor.
- If a project is only one task or element of a larger program and the release of result must be coordinated with others; or
- If a project involves the development of a process or invention that may be patentable. These publications should suitably protect the sponsor's proprietary or confidential input data according to mutually agreed upon contractual requirements and normal standards of professional ethics.

(b) The University may consent to the preparation of privileged reports to a sponsor such as technical reports and other materials produced specifically in satisfaction of a contract, provided that the purpose and the general results of the research remain publishable. Such arrangements must be clearly established in the terms of agreement.

(c) The University may permit faculty with appropriate security clearance to have access to classified facilities or to classified information outside the University, provided that such access is necessary to the conduct of the research and that neither the conduct nor the general results of the research are treated as classified within the University.

(d) The University does not agree to participate in classified or export-controlled research, or research that otherwise restricts publication or identification of the sponsor, except in rare instances involving national security, exceptional national need, or other special circumstances. Proposals for such exceptions must be reviewed and approved by the Senior Vice President of Research and Innovation, (i) after review and recommendation by a standing committee of faculty from a broad range of disciplines appointed by the Provost, or (ii) in an expedited process without committee review only as specified in the University Policy on International Collaboration and Export Control.

(e) Finally, the University does not prohibit its faculty from engaging in individual consulting relationships with external organizations that may involve classified research. Normal University policies governing consulting activity will apply in all such cases, and care must be taken to prevent the appearance of University participation in the classified research.

5-B (3) Scope and Applicability

This policy applies with equal force to all government, private, and foreign-sponsored projects, and to all gift agreements. All agreements for sponsored projects must clearly state that University investigators retain full and free rights to publish the general results of their research in the manner accepted in the relevant discipline, except as provided in [5-B \(2\)](#).

5-C RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

The University Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) are fully authorized to review all research proposals, whether funded or not, that are conducted by the faculty, staff, and graduate or undergraduate students, that involve the use of human subjects. The University IRBs have been established to comply with regulations of various federal agencies, and are committed to conducting biomedical and behavioral research involving human subjects under rigorous ethical principles. The IRBs are required to assure that:

- Research methods are appropriate to the objectives of the research;
- Research methods are the safest, consistent with sound research design;
- Risks are justified in terms of related benefits to the subjects;
- Subjects' privacy is protected;
- Subjects participate willingly and knowingly to the extent possible; and
- Research projects are monitored by the IRBs.

For more information on the IRB review process, please consult the USC [Institutional Review Board](#) website.

5-D PATENT POLICY

A basic function of the University is to contribute to knowledge and culture by creative activity in all academic areas, and to disseminate the results of such creative activity by the most appropriate and effective means. The securing of a patent, in certain circumstances, may be the most appropriate and effective means of disseminating the knowledge involved, and it is the general policy of the University to encourage and support production of such patents for the purpose of dissemination of knowledge. For the requirement to disclose creation of intellectual property, see [Intellectual Property](#) policy.

5-E RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS

5-E (1) Teaching

The faculty of the University of Southern California expect themselves and one another to maintain high standards in the conduct of their courses. See also [3-B \(2\)\(b\)](#).

For specific responsibilities and information relating to most student concerns, the primary

documents of authority are the [University Catalogue](#) and the USC [Student Handbook](#). The program requirements listed in the Catalogue supersede any information contained in any bulletin of any school or department. Specific information about matters not covered in the catalogue can be found in the [Schedule of Classes](#); the [Grading and Correction of Grades Handbook](#); and the [Student Directory](#) (on-line only). For reference purposes, the following table delineates the appropriate university document for various common faculty-student administration issues.

Specific Issue	Source(s)
Information about the conduct of courses, grading, student records, students with disabilities, ethics of graduate study, and academic integrity	University Catalogue ; Schedule of Classes ; Grading and Correction of Grades Handbook ; USC Student Handbook ; USC Integrity and Accountability Code .
Information about registration, withdrawal, drop and add procedures, dates and locations, and rescheduling of classes	University Catalogue ; Schedule of Classes
Information regarding the administration of mid-term exams, final exams, accommodations for students with disabilities, and submission of grade reports	University Catalogue ; Schedule of Classes ; Grading and Correction of Grades Handbook ;
Information on identifying and responding to academic dishonesty	Student Conduct Code and University Governance sections of USC Student Handbook)
Email and contact identification for enrolled students	Student Directory (On-line only)

The following administrators and their staffs may also be consulted regarding matters not covered in the foregoing publications: Vice President for Student Life, Vice President for Enrollment Management, Registrar, and the advisement and administrative offices in the various academic units of the University.

5-E (2) Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University is committed to full compliance with the laws protecting qualified students with disabilities. Not all disabilities will be apparent to faculty members. The professional staff of the Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) determines the necessary accommodations and services and issues accommodation letters that students present to their instructors.

Faculty members who have a student with disabilities in their class are required to provide the accommodations set out in the accommodations letter, and to make reasonable efforts as necessary to cooperate with the implementation of any accommodation. Faculty members are also required to maintain the confidentiality of students with accommodations.

Most accommodations require minimal faculty involvement. In some cases, though, faculty must work collaboratively with OSAS on accommodation implementation. In those cases, faculty must respond to reasonable requests from students with disabilities and OSAS in a timely manner in order to assure the student access to the course and course materials.

All course syllabi must include a required statement regarding students with disabilities. Visit USC's [Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) website.

Faculty should not modify or interpret on their own the accommodations stated in the accommodations letter, but should instead address any questions or issues to a OSAS professional staff member at (213) 740-0776, [OSAS Front Desk](#). Faculty who have unresolved questions, or who believe that an accommodation fundamentally alters the nature of their course, may speak with the Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Accessibility and ADA Compliance: (213) 821-4658.

Chapter 6

Faculty Misconduct, Complaints, Investigations, and Sanctions

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6-A INTRODUCTION

This chapter is intended to help navigate the university's procedures relating to faculty misconduct, complaints, investigations, and sanctions. The chapter is not intended to be comprehensive but rather to provide a roadmap and pointers to more detailed information.

One important thing to be aware of is that procedures vary by the nature of the complaint. This is partly because some forms of misconduct are governed by federal and state law while others are university-specific policies. Individuals involved in a misconduct process should start by identifying the broad category of alleged misconduct that applies from the following list:

- Interpersonal misconduct ([6-B \(1\)](#))
- Sex and gender-based harassment and other sexual misconduct ([6-B \(2\)](#))
- Discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, based on protected characteristics ([6-B \(2\)](#))
- Research-related misconduct ([6-B \(3\)](#))
- Misconduct in health care ([6-B \(4\)](#))
- Professional misconduct ([6-B \(5\)](#))
- Concerns about administrators ([6-B \(6\)](#))
- Retaliation ([6-B \(7\)](#))
- Misconduct in reports and investigations ([6-B \(8\)](#))

6-B TYPES OF FACULTY MISCONDUCT

6-B (1) Interpersonal Misconduct

Faculty members are expected to engage professionally with all members of the university community. They may not take actions that are abusive, harassing, intimidating, or humiliating against another member of the university community even if not based on a protected class.

In particular, the following behaviors are not permitted:

- (a) Behavior or words that a reasonable person would perceive to be demeaning, intimidating, threatening, bullying, or violent enough to significantly impair, or be likely or intended to significantly impair, the ability of a community member to learn, work, or live in the University environment.
- (b) Misconduct that the perpetrator fails to correct after being warned, counseled, or instructed to do so by a supervisor or other appropriate school or university official, whether through a collegial, school, administrative, or investigative process.

Potential harm is considered to be “significant” if it would be viewed as significant in the eyes of a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances. Occasional instances of behavior that is rude, mean, or uncivil, or any form of interpersonal misconduct that does not cause nor is likely or intended to cause significant harm and is not extreme, is unprofessional and calls for early intervention, but is not the focus of this section.

It is important to note that faculty members have academic freedom protections as expressed in [3-B \(1\)\(a\)](#), and the preceding sections do not override those protections.

For convenience, the following flow chart outlines the typical steps of the misconduct process for allegations of interpersonal misconduct. The processes may be different for complaints related to other forms of misconduct.

6-B (2) Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Based on Protected Characteristics

The University is committed to maintaining an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics, including sexual harassment, and related retaliation. Statements and actions that create a discriminatory or harassing work or educational environment based on protected characteristics, and related retaliation, are prohibited.

Sexual misconduct in the academic and work environment includes: sexual harassment as defined under Title IX; sexual and gender-based harassment; sexual assault; dating violence; domestic violence; exposure; stalking; other forms of dating and domestic violence; and nonconsensual viewing, recording, and dissemination.

A partial list of protected characteristics includes: race, color, ethnicity, religion (including religious dress and grooming practices), creed, sex, age (40 years and over in the context of the academic or work environment), marital status, national origin, citizenship status, employment status, income status, shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics, partnership status, medical condition (including cancer and genetic characteristics), pregnancy (including childbirth, breastfeeding, and related medical conditions), disability, political belief or affiliation, domestic violence victim status, military or veteran status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, and genetic information. These categories are set by law and can change over time. For a complete up-to-date list of protected characteristics based on federal, state, and local law, visit USC [Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX, Notice of Non-Discrimination website](#).

Support, reports and complaints, investigations, alternative resolution, and other matters related to discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics, and related retaliation, are handled by the [Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX](#) (EEO-TIX). Online resources include:

- A fuller statement of the University’s values, definitions, oversight, and an overview of processes: [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation](#).
- Details on the process for reporting and the resolution options regarding sexual and gender-based harassment and other forms of sexual misconduct: [Resolution Process for Sexual Misconduct](#).
- Details on the process for reporting and resolution options regarding discrimination based on protected characteristics (including gender and sex) and harassment based on all other protected characteristic (not including sex and gender), and related retaliation: [Resolution Process for Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#).

The Vice President of EEO-TIX periodically reviews the EEO-TIX policy and processes on at least an annual basis including consultation with Academic Senate representatives. EEO-TIX policies and processes are implemented consistent with the principles protecting the academic freedom of faculty and the statutory free speech rights of students.

6-B (3) Research-related Misconduct

Research-related misconduct is mainly governed by University policies and procedures set out in other university documents, not this Handbook. For an overview and a guide to locating the policies and procedures applicable to a specific activity, see the [Guide to Research at USC](#), or contact [Compliance](#) for assistance. Generally speaking, there are three broad categories of research-related misconduct:

(a) Administrative Requirements

Administration and expenditure of internally or externally sponsored research projects, research involving human or animal subjects, intellectual property, biological agents, chemical safety, research safety, radioactive materials, and select agents. See the policies and procedures listed at USC [Office of Research and Innovation](#) website. For assistance contact the [Office of Culture, Ethics, and Compliance](#).

(b) Conflicts of Interest

Disclosure and management of conflicts of interest or situations with the appearance of a conflict of interest. See also [3-H](#) of this Handbook and the policy on [Conflict of Interest in Research](#). For assistance contact the [Office of Culture, Ethics, and Compliance](#).

(c) Falsification, fabrication, and plagiarism

Fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing scholarly or research endeavors, or in reporting research results into the research record. This does not include honest error, differences of opinion, or differences in interpretation or judgements in evaluating research methods or results. See the policy on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct; and Office of Research Integrity](#)).

6-B (4) Misconduct in Health Care

Faculty members who provide clinical services at Keck Medicine of USC are subject to Keck Medicine policies, as well as clinical standards for credentialing. In addition, faculty members who provide clinical services as part of the University Clinical Services (UCS) are subject to the clinical policies and standards of UCS. Matters impacting healthcare regulatory compliance at Keck Medicine are managed by Keck Medicine's Office of Healthcare Compliance. Matters impacting healthcare regulatory compliance at UCS are managed by the Office of Culture, Ethics and Compliance. See the healthcare compliance-related policies pertaining to both [Keck Medicine and UCS](#). The broad categories of misconduct in health care are:

- *Relationships with industry.* The purpose of this policy is to minimize conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest in interactions with industry, and to ensure compliance with federal, state and local laws and regulations, including the federal Anti-Kickback laws. "Industry" means pharmaceutical companies, biotechnology companies, device and medical manufactures and other healthcare suppliers. See the policy on [Relationships with Industry](#).
- *Compliance.* These policies are aimed at preventing healthcare fraud, waste and abuse, ensuring proper clinical documentation, and protecting patient privacy in accordance with state and federal law. See also 3-B (3).

Faculty members may also be subject to entity-specific policies. Keck Medicine of USC, comprised of hospitals, ambulatory clinics, and the USC Care Medical Group, has entity-specific conduct policies that apply to faculty members ([3-B \(3\)](#)). Keck Medicine of USC also has affiliations with other entities such as Children's Hospital Los Angeles, which maintain their own policies that may apply to faculty members. Besides these entity-specific policies, faculty members who provide clinical services for Keck Medicine or UCS are subject to the Faculty Handbook and all other University policies applicable to faculty.

6-B (5) Professional Misconduct

Faculty members have other professional responsibilities that are described elsewhere in this Handbook and in University, school, and medical enterprise documents and websites. See also [3-B](#) and [8-C](#). Faculty members also have professional responsibilities that are not explicitly itemized, for example, showing up and teaching scheduled classes. Faculty members are expected to uphold professional standards in light of the USC Unifying Values, including refraining from behavior described as Prohibited Conduct in USC's [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#), when on campus, when at other university facilities, when at university activities or events off campus, when acting in their capacity as faculty members off campus, and when interacting on or off campus with university employees, students, post-docs, patients, vendors, contractors, or other members of the university community.

6-B (6) Concerns about Administrators

Concerns related to administrative decisions (such as teaching or office or laboratory space assignments) can be raised with the administrator's direct supervisor, or if that proves unsatisfactory, with the supervisor's supervisor. The grievance process is also available as described in [3-B \(2\)\(h\)](#). Concerns related to misconduct – interpersonal misconduct, sexual misconduct, or other prohibited behavior discussed in this chapter – should be reported through the channels mentioned in [6-C](#). Concerns about misconduct by deans can also be raised with the [Provost](#).

6-B (7) Retaliation

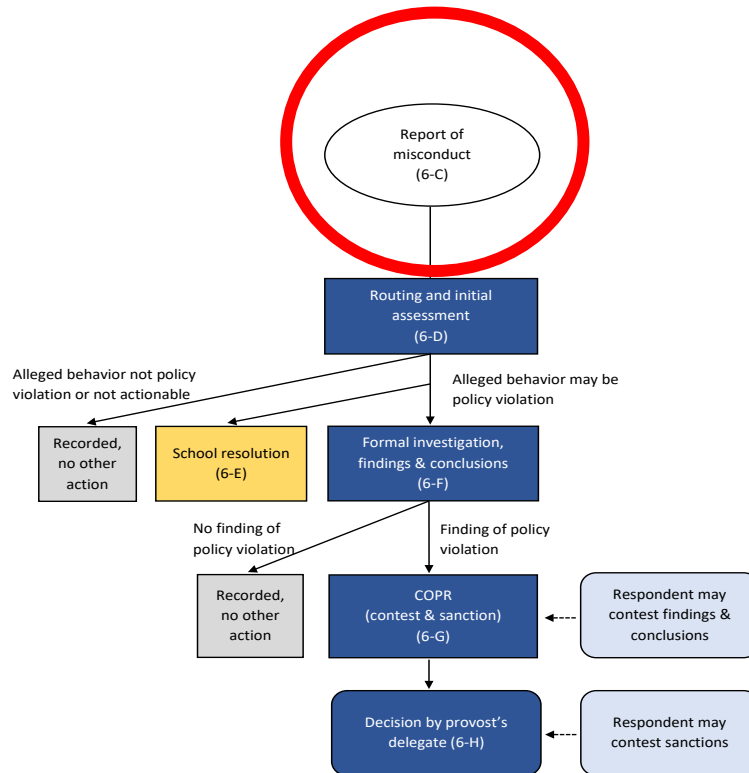
Faculty members may not retaliate against or intimidate others for seeking advice, raising concerns informally, filing a report, or asserting a right under a University policy, or under a federal, state, or local law, or a funding agency requirement. Faculty members may not retaliate against or intimidate others for their participation in a University-authorized investigative or resolution process, nor attempt to dissuade them from participating in such processes. These prohibitions, even in non-EEO-TIX matters, include all the behaviors defined as retaliation in USC's [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#).

6-B (8) Misconduct in Reports and Investigations

Faculty members are expected to participate in investigations and audits as requested. Whether they are reporting parties, respondents, or others providing information, they are expected to provide truthful information in any allegation, investigation, appeal, or hearing, and in any audit or compliance process. They may not deliberately provide false or misleading information or otherwise obstruct the fact-finding process. They may not submit complaints or provide testimony about allegations of purported misconduct in bad faith or with a view to personal gain or intentional harm to another. This prohibition does not apply to reports made or information provided in good faith, even if the facts alleged turn out to be erroneous or are not later substantiated.

6-C REPORTS OF MISCONDUCT

6-C (1) Overview



Concerns about potential misconduct by a faculty member or administrator may involve potential violations of any university policies. Concerns may be raised:

- Within the school ([6-C \(3\)](#)).
- Through a central reporting channel ([6-C \(4\)](#)) such as USC [Report & Response](#).

For advice prior to reporting potential misconduct, see [6-C \(5\)](#).

6-C (2) Required Reporting

If faculty observe or hear of potential prohibited sexual misconduct or misconduct related to discrimination based on protected characteristics involving faculty, staff, or students, they are required to immediately report the information to the EEO-TIX office. Faculty members, faculty bodies, and academic units may not attempt to investigate or resolve an apparent violation of the policies concerning protected characteristics except with the permission of the EEO-TIX office. Reports can be made by emailing [EEO-TIX](#) or calling the EEO-TIX office at (213) 740-5086.

USC policy requires all faculty to promptly report to central offices their suspicion of some additional specific issues. (Even someone who has reported the concern to school officials such as a chair or dean must also make a report to central offices.) Concerns that must be reported to central offices include: protection of minors, violations of government compliance requirements, allegations of criminal conduct, misappropriation of USC assets, accounting and auditing matters, research misconduct ([6-B \(3\)](#)), misconduct in health care ([6-B \(4\)](#)) reports required by the Clery Act, danger to self or others, violence in the workplace, elder abuse, domestic violence, firearm injury, and NCAA violations. See [Faculty and Staff Reporting Responsibilities](#), and [Reporting Wrongdoing](#), for specific guidance.

6-C (3) Raising Concerns Within the School

Concerns can be raised with the department chair, school vice or associate dean of faculty affairs, the school human relations or similar office, or through the central channels listed in [6-C \(4\)](#). Some concerns *must* be reported through central channels, including matters related to protected classes ([6-C \(2\)](#)); it is not enough to report them only within the school

6-C (4) Concerns Submitted through Central Reporting Channels

Anyone who wishes to report any form of misconduct does not have to identify the appropriate category, but may make a report through [USC Report & Response website](#) or any of the channels listed below. If unsure which channel is appropriate, they can proceed through any central University office and their concern will be referred to the appropriate office, depending on the nature of the reported concern.

- [USC Help and Hotline](#): (213) 740-2500 or (800) 348-7454. Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, or [Online](#).
- Report to administrators: Reports of potential misconduct can be made to the department chair, school vice or associate dean of faculty affairs, school human relations or similar office, or the vice provost responsible for faculty affairs. (However, see [6-C \(2\)](#) on required reporting to central offices.)
- Report to the Provost: Reports of potential misconduct by deans can be made through the channels listed in this section [6-C \(4\)](#) or email the [Provost](#).
- Email [EEO-TIX Office](#) or (213) 740-5086. For sexual misconduct or discrimination, harassment, or retaliation involving a protected characteristic, anyone may make a report to the USC's Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX to request supportive measures, explore procedural options, or ask questions about the [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#).

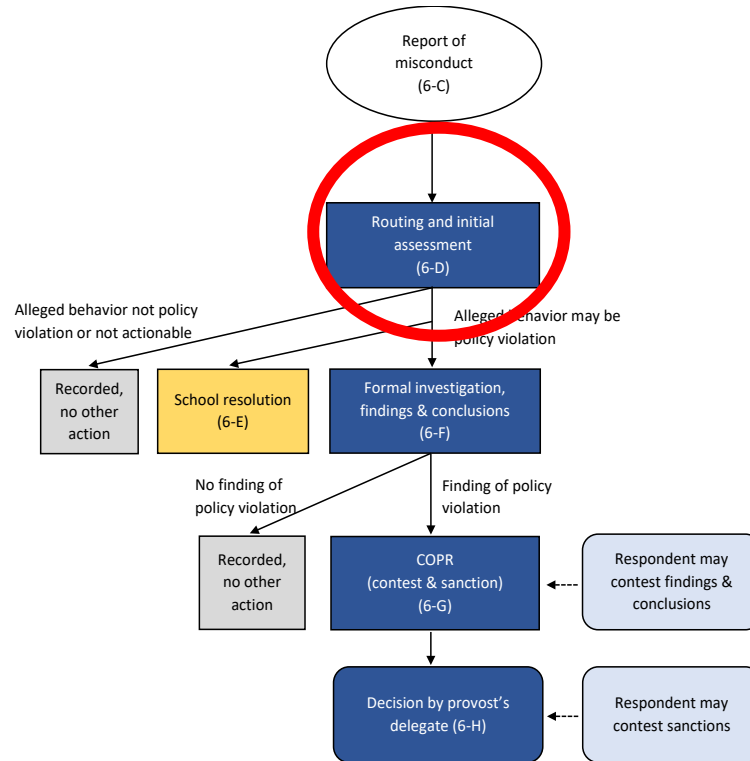
6-C (5) Advice Prior to Reporting Potential Misconduct

Several sources of advice are available for individuals who are considering how to address issues that potentially amount to misconduct. Consulting these sources does not amount to reporting the misconduct.

- *Ombuds*: Offer confidential advice, help explore options, and provide references to information and resources: See [7-C \(1\)](#) and [USC Office of the Ombuds](#) website; [UPC Ombuds Office](#) email, (213) 821-9556, [HSC Ombuds Office](#) email, (323) 442-0382,
- *Academic Senate*. The Academic Senate, through the Committee of Faculty Rights and Responsibilities or the President of the Academic Senate, can provide advice and help on disputes with colleagues, consideration of reporting potential misconduct or filing a grievance, or responding to an investigation. Visit USC's [Academic Senate](#) website, or call (213) 740-7169.
- *Campus Wellbeing and Education*. Focuses on support and prevention and can provide references to information and resources. Visit USC's [Campus Wellbeing](#) website, or (213) 740-0411.
- *WorkWell Center*. Provides confidential counseling, coaching, and support services at no charge. Visit USC's [WorkWell Center](#), by [email](#), or call (213) 821-0800.
- *Care for the Caregiver*. Provides emotional well-being support within the medical enterprise. Email: [Care for the Caregiver](#) or visit USC's Website [Care for Caregiver: Supporting Our Caregivers and Improving Patient Care](#).

6-D ROUTING AND INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF REPORTS

6-D (1) Routing and Recording



Once a report involving potential misconduct is received by a central office, it is routed to the appropriate office or to the school for further review and assessment. Complaints are routed according to the nature of the complaint:

- Reports relating to interpersonal misconduct are assessed as described in [6-D \(2\)](#).
- Reports relating to sexual misconduct and discrimination based on protected characteristics are assessed as described in the policy documents mentioned in [6-B \(2\)](#).
- Reports relating to research misconduct are assessed as described in the policy documents mentioned in [6-B \(3\)](#).
- Reports related to misconduct in health care are assessed as described in the policy documents mentioned in [6-B \(4\)](#).
- Other reports are assessed as described in the policy for the underlying behavior [\(6-B \(5\)-\(8\)\)](#).

In some cases, an allegation may be recorded without further action being taken. This may happen, among other reasons, because the allegation (even if true) does not constitute a violation of university policy, or the allegation lacks sufficient detail to allow investigation or early intervention. If the case is recorded without further action, the person making the allegation will be notified and may request that the Vice President of Professionalism and Ethics reconsider that decision; the Vice President will respond but is not required to issue a detailed ruling. Typically, the subject of the complaint will be informed even if the allegation is recorded without further action.

Upon receiving a report, the central office determines if there are any immediate health or safety issues that must be addressed. The Vice President for Equity, Equal Opportunity and Title IX, (or the appropriate Vice President for other investigations) or designee, may take supportive or protective measures, including those described in the *Resolution Process for Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation* (VII, A and C).

All allegations and information on their resolution are recorded in a confidential repository so that repeated instances of problematic behavior occurring in the future can be evaluated in context. Access to the repository is on a need-to-know basis limited to the office handling the matter and central supervisors. See [6-E](#) on certain limits to confidentiality.

6-D (2) Assessment of Allegations of Interpersonal Misconduct

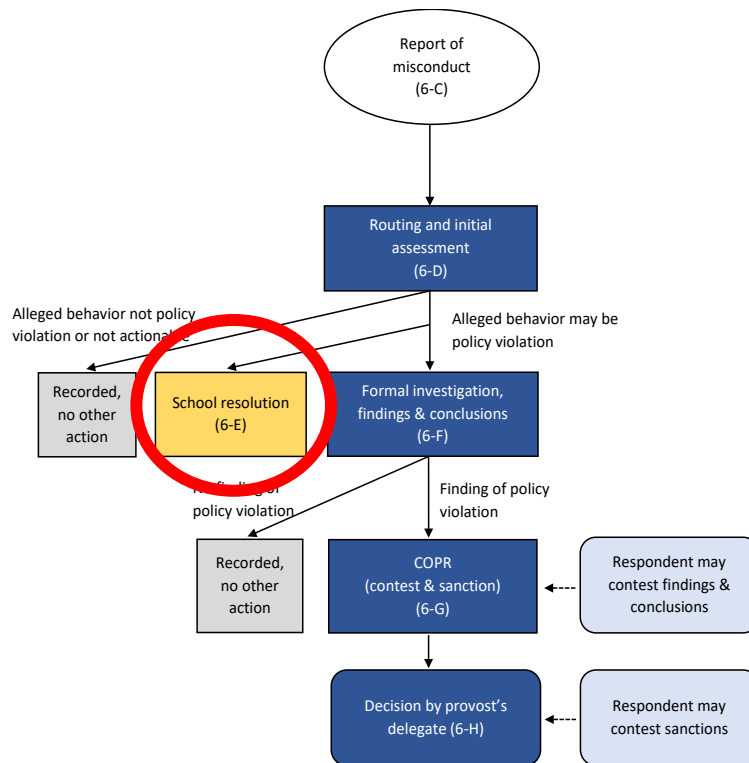
Allegations of interpersonal misconduct are assessed to determine whether to refer them to the school faculty affairs office for resolution through school processes ([6-E](#)); refer them to an investigative office for formal investigation ([6-F](#)), or record them without taking further action.

The decision where to refer a case of interpersonal misconduct is made by the Vice President for Professionalism and Ethics, or designee. Before referring a case to an investigative office for formal investigation, the Vice President or designee will consult with a faculty member who is appointed annually by the Provost after consultation with the President of the Academic Senate. One purpose of faculty participation in assessment is to ensure that academic norms are taken into account and academic freedom ([3-B \(1\)](#)) is protected.

In deciding where to refer a case, school-level processes are preferred to formal investigations when feasible and appropriate. As a general goal, cases are referred for formal investigation only if the alleged behavior is repeated, or the alleged potential harm is significant in the eyes of a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances ([6-B \(1\)](#)), or investigation is mandated ([6-C \(2\)](#)), or involves violence or the threat of violence; or involves the abuse of power or retaliation; or requires fact-finding beyond the capacity of the school. Isolated lapses in professional behavior that do not create significant potential harm are expected to be handled through school-level processes.

After assessment, the appropriate responding office promptly informs the reporting party of the availability of supportive measures and resources.

6-E RESOLUTION THROUGH SCHOOL PROCESSES



Many cases may be resolved through a school’s normal administrative procedures. Typically, this involves the dean, vice or associate dean, department chair, or school human resources or similar office reviewing the circumstances and meeting with the involved parties. Issues related to standard faculty responsibilities, such as absenteeism, are usually managed in this way.

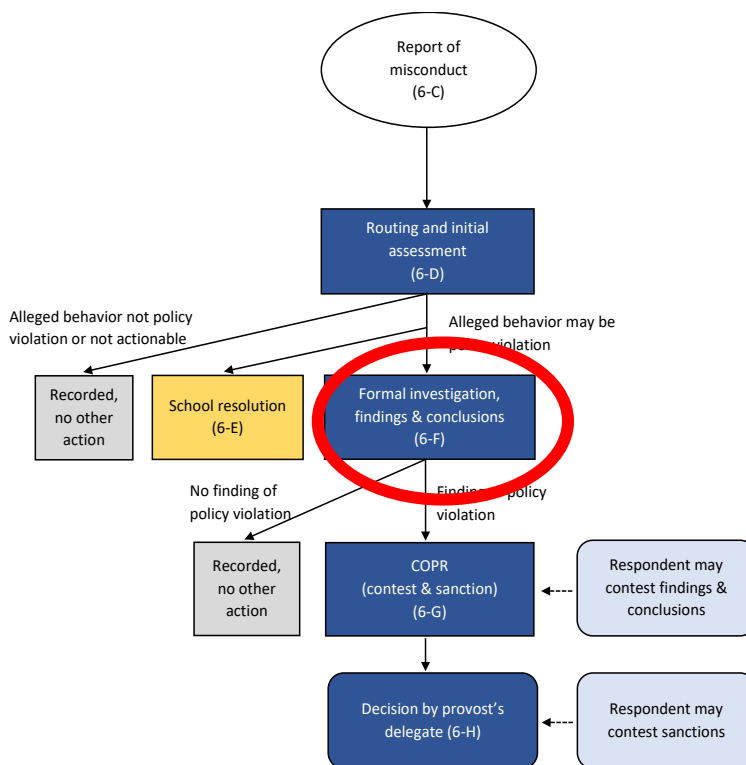
Possible outcomes include, for example, counseling, warning, instructions, corrective actions, changes in teaching or clinical care assignments, training, performance improvement plan, or, after consultation with a faculty committee, use of the established processes for mid-contract termination ([4-G](#)) or non-reappointment ([4-F \(3\)](#) or [4-G](#).) Early intervention methods are emphasized, including referring matters to a partnering unit such as Campus Wellbeing and Education, WorkWell Center, or others for coaching, training, skills building, or professional support. If a reported case turns out to be more serious than initially believed, or turns out to require investigation beyond the school’s capabilities, it may be referred back for a formal investigation.

A record of the allegation will be promptly documented in a central confidential repository so that repeated instances of problematic behavior can be evaluated in context (see [6-D \(1\)](#)). The outcome (whether resolved within the school or reported to a central office, and whether or not action was taken) will also be promptly recorded in the repository. (Under some circumstances the university may be legally obligated to disclose the records, and some future employer may ask a faculty member to waive confidentiality and allow them to see the records.) Corrective actions and responses, such as warnings, counseling, disciplinary notices, performance improvement plans, and the individual’s responses, are also recorded in the person’s personnel record as provided in university policy. Visit USC’s [Policies and Policy Governance, Employee Records](#) website.

Schools that identify potential problems in workplace dynamics before an actual allegation is made or the problems develop into serious policy violations are encouraged to consult with school and university human relations or similar offices with an eye toward early intervention. Early intervention can involve cultivating positive working relationships, navigating fairness disputes, fostering open communication, and resolving interpersonal conflicts.

6-F FORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

6-F (1) Overview



The procedures for formal university-authorized investigations vary by nature of the alleged misconduct. Sources for documents describing procedures are described above: sexual misconduct and discrimination, harassment and retaliation based on protected characteristics ([6-B \(2\)](#)), research-related misconduct ([6-B \(3\)](#)), misconduct in health care ([6-B \(4\)](#)), and other professional misconduct ([6-B \(5-8\)](#)). In those cases, their processes apply rather than the provisions of this section ([6-F \(2\)](#)).

In all investigations (EEO-TIX or not), interim supportive and protective measures are available including those described in the *Resolution Process for Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation* (VII A and C). Before the Vice President of EEO-TIX or designee (or the appropriate Vice President or designee for non-EEO-TIX cases) reaches a determination regarding such measures affecting a faculty respondent, he or she consults with a delegate of the Provost and other appropriate stakeholders.

All persons involved in an investigation can expect a prompt, fair, adequate, reliable, and impartial process from beginning to end.

When undertaking an investigation of a faculty member for failing to comply with a policy, the relevant university-authorized investigative office shall notify the appropriate Dean, and the officials designated for such matters by the Provost (and for the Health Science Schools, the Senior Vice President, Health Affairs) and shall also notify them of the findings and conclusions of the investigation. The Dean decides which other administrators within the school to notify; in many cases it may be helpful to notify those who oversee the faculty member, such as the department chair or vice dean of faculty, in order to assist with monitoring the academic climate.

6-F (2) Investigations Related to Interpersonal Misconduct

The following principles and processes apply to formal investigations of interpersonal misconduct, ([6-B \(1\)](#)) (investigations not involving a protected class; for investigations that do involve a protected class ([see 6-B \(2\)](#))).

The terminology of an investigation can be somewhat confusing. To help understand the process, one can think of an investigation producing two outcomes: First, it produces *findings of fact*, which are essentially a description of what actually occurred. Second, it produces *conclusions* about whether a policy violation occurred, based on the findings of fact. Findings of fact and conclusions are related but logically distinct and are often distinguished throughout this chapter. *Findings of fact* are made by the investigator (in consultation with the Vice President or other university official supervising the investigation); *conclusions* about whether policies have been violated are ultimately made by the Vice President or other university official supervising the investigation. (in consultation with the investigator).

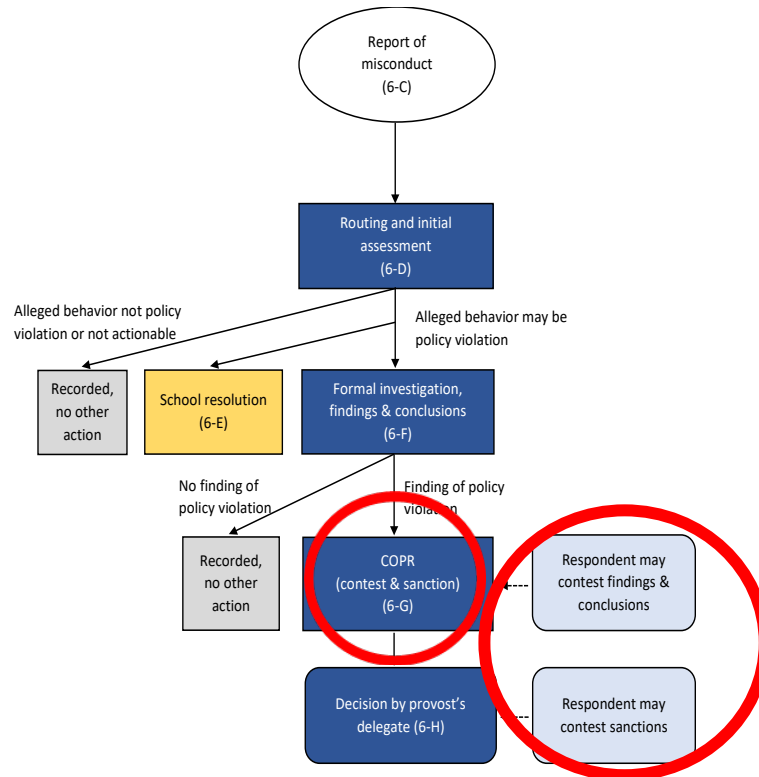
- *Timeliness.* Investigations are expected to proceed and be concluded promptly, taking into account the complexity of the case. Unless preliminary investigation is appropriate before notifying the respondent, the investigator will tell both parties at the outset the anticipated time required to complete the investigation and indicate issues that can cause it to take longer than the expectation. If the investigator does not act in a timely manner, either the reporting party or the respondent or the Academic Senate's Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities (if requested by either party) may ask for an explanation and may ask the investigator's supervisor to intervene.
- *Equitable information gathering for both parties.* Both the reporting and responding parties will have the opportunity to provide information, suggest witnesses, and offer arguments in person and in writing.
- *Information sharing and opportunity for response.* Respondents will be told the allegations against them, and the policy violations that are being investigated, in enough detail so that they can respond to them. Respondents will be given access to the evidence that the investigator is proposing to rely on and any evidence that is potentially exculpatory and can respond to the evidence before findings are made. Respondents will be notified if the charges or policies being considered change during the investigation.
- *No retaliation or interference.* The respondent will be counseled that retaliation against reporting parties and witnesses or other interference with the investigation is prohibited ([6-B \(7\)](#)).
- *Availability of advice.* The respondent has the right to consult and share information about the case with an advisor. The respondent also has the right to have an advisor who is a USC faculty or staff member present during any interviews with investigators. An advisor may be disqualified based on a conflict of interest. The advisor provides support, but the interview is between the investigator and the respondent, and the advisor may not speak or interfere with the interview. The Academic Senate Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee can be requested to provide names of potential faculty or staff advisors, who may or may not be members of that committee.
- *Preliminary findings and opportunity to comment.* The investigator will provide the respondent and reporting party with a preliminary Notice of Findings of fact that is sufficiently robust to explain the evidence the investigator considers to be relevant, reliable, and credible, and any evidence that is potentially exculpatory, as well as a preliminary conclusion on whether a policy was violated. The respondent and the reporting party may then provide any new information or arguments that were not previously mentioned to the investigator. (If the respondent wishes to appeal the findings or conclusions, that takes place later in the process ([6-G \(3\)](#))); the purpose of this late-stage opportunity to provide information and arguments is to ensure as much

as possible a fair and objective outcome where relevant information and contentions have been brought to the attention of the investigator.)

- *Decision on findings and conclusions, and notification.* After the respondent and reporting party have had the opportunity to comment on the preliminary findings, the investigator may investigate further and may revise the preliminary documents. The investigator then forwards the final findings to the vice president or other university official supervising the investigation who makes a decision whether a policy has been violated. The respondent is notified of the findings and conclusions and the reporting party is notified as appropriate. The relevant dean and other officials mentioned in [6-F \(1\)](#) are also notified as appropriate.

6-G Appeal of the Findings and Conclusions, Recommendations of Sanctions and Corrective Actions

6-G (1) Overview



If a formal investigation concludes that a faculty member engaged in a violation of policy, then the case is referred to the Committee on Professional Responsibility (CoPR), a neutral body comprised of faculty members that advises the Provost's delegate on sanctions and

corrective actions and also on matters that have been appealed ([6-G \(2\)](#)). Upon receiving the case, if the chair of CoPR in the chair's discretion determines that the violation was of such a nature that a written warning is sufficient without further consideration by CoPR, the chair will request the Provost's designee to issue such a warning. Otherwise, the respondent will be notified of the opportunity to appeal in writing the findings and conclusions ([6-G \(3\)](#)), and both the respondent and the reporting party may comment on potential mitigating and aggravating factors regarding sanctions and corrective actions ([6-G \(4\)](#)). CoPR reviews the respondent's letter and other information ([6-G \(5\)](#)) and makes a recommendation to the Provost's delegate regarding sanctions and corrective actions and, if it chooses, regarding any appealed matters ([6-G \(6\)](#)). The Provost's delegate then makes a final decision on any appealed matters and on sanctions.

6-G (2) Committee on Professional Responsibility (CoPR)

CoPR is a committee of faculty members appointed by the Provost after consulting with the chair of the Committee on Tenure and Privileges Appeals and the President of the Faculty. Members are selected from both tenured and RTPC faculty and typically include one or more past Presidents of the Faculty. The purpose of CoPR is to advise the Provost on sanctions and corrective actions and on matters that have been appealed ([6-G \(6\)](#)).

In order to develop institutional memory of procedures and sanctions, and to ensure fairness across cases over time, members serve renewable three-year terms. The Provost appoints a chair of CoPR for a three-year term.

When a case is referred to CoPR, it is heard by a panel with a minimum of three voting members. In cases involving tenured faculty members, the panel must include tenured faculty and in cases involving RTPC faculty members the panel must include both tenured and RTPC faculty. The panel also includes a non-voting designee of the Provost.

CoPR members receive training on the university's EEO-TIX policy and resolution processes.

6-G (3) Appealing the Findings and Conclusions; Explaining Factors Related to Sanctions

The respondent may appeal the findings and conclusions after receiving notification of the outcome of the investigation. If the respondent chooses to appeal, the respondent will be given electronic access to the report of the investigation, the findings and conclusions, any underlying evidence that the investigator relied on for the findings, and any exculpatory evidence. (In rare cases, information may be excluded if necessary to avoid the risk of retaliation, as long as the investigator does not rely on it.) The respondent may appeal the findings and conclusions within 14 calendar days of being notified of them by sending a letter to [Committee on Professional Responsibility \(CoPR\)](#).

The findings and conclusions may be appealed on the following grounds: (i) the findings of fact are not supported by evidence; (ii) the conclusion of which policies were violated is not supported by the findings of facts; (iii) there is significant additional evidence that was not available during the investigation; and (iv) there were procedural errors or bias that had a significant impact on the fairness of the investigation. To effectively appeal a case, respondents are encouraged to state clearly the grounds that are the basis for their appeal, and confine their argument to matters related to those grounds.

In addition, and regardless of whether the respondent chooses to appeal the findings and conclusions, both the respondent and the reporting party may submit letters explaining any factors they believe should mitigate, aggravate, or otherwise be considered in determining sanctions and corrective actions. These letters must also be submitted to the [Committee on Professional Responsibility \(CoPR\)](#), within 14 calendar days of being notified of the outcome of the investigation.

Both the respondent and the reporting party are advised that CoPR often finds short, focused letters more effective than lengthy documents with attachments.

The CoPR review of the investigation's findings and conclusions is more comprehensive than the grievance process that was available in the previous edition of this Handbook and it replaces that process.

The resolution process in EEO-TIX cases, including provisions for appealing findings and conclusions, follow the provisions of that policy, and may be different from what is described in this Chapter 6. For example, under the EEO-TIX process, both the respondent and the reporting party have equal rights to appeal.

6-G (4) Sanctions

Potential sanctions and corrective actions that CoPR may recommend include: admonishment or warnings; performance improvement plans; required counseling, coaching, or training; elimination or reduction of merit pay increases; reduction in compensation; removal from an administrative or supervisory position; removal of honorific title; removal of special designations [\(4-B \(2\)\(d\)\)](#) or ineligibility for honors; denial of promotion or postponement of consideration for promotion; suspension; demotion; termination; non-reappointment; or ineligibility for future appointment; or (whether or not it is an EEO-TIX case) any of the sanctions and corrective actions set forth in the EEO-TIX resolution processes. Lesser sanctions may be imposed for behavior which [8-C](#) identifies as adequate cause for dismissal.

As a special case, if the respondent is tenured, CoPR may recommend to the Provost that dismissal charges be filed; whether or not there is such a recommendation the Provost

decides whether to bring tenured dismissal charges as described in [8-D \(2\) \(step 4\)](#) and, if so, there is then a hearing as described in [8-D \(2\)\(a\) \(step 5\)](#) and [Chapter 7](#). In recommending a sanction, the panel considers the seriousness of the case, the circumstances, and the sanctions imposed in similar cases. (In EEO-TIX cases, the panel also considers the factors mentioned in the EEO-TIX resolution processes.)

6-G (5) Information Available to the CoPR Panel

The investigative office provides CoPR with the information mentioned in [6-G \(3\)](#). If the respondent appeals the findings or conclusions, the panel also considers the respondent's letter. The panel may ask the investigative office for additional information or comments on the respondent's letter. The panel may also ask the reporting party to comment on an appealed matter, and if so will provide the reporting party whatever information is necessary to do so. In addition, the panel may request additional information from the university necessary to carry out its charge.

The panel considers letters submitted by the parties on mitigating, aggravating, or other factors relevant to sanctions. The panel also solicits comments and a recommendation concerning sanctions from the dean of the respondent's school.

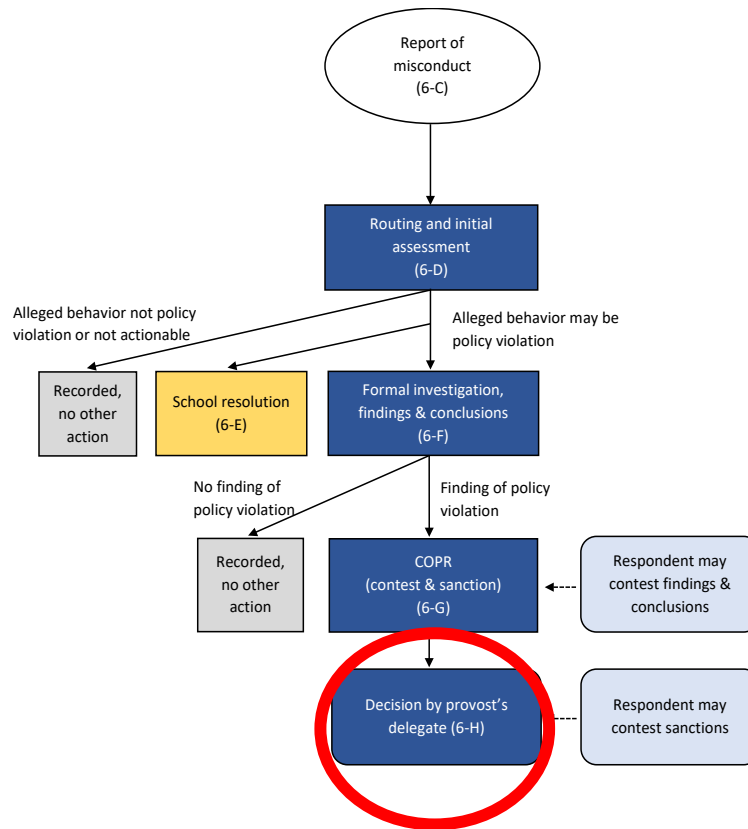
The panel is not an investigatory body and does not conduct independent investigations nor conduct an in-person hearing.

6-G (6) CoPR Panel Recommendations

- *Recommendations on appealed matters and on sanctioning.* After considering the information available to it, the CoPR Panel makes a recommendation to the Provost's delegate based on its own judgement, by majority vote. The recommendation includes any appropriate sanctions and corrective actions.
- The panel may also advise the Provost's delegate regarding appealed matters. In doing so, the panel will give the investigator's findings of fact substantial deference because the investigator could observe the demeanor of witnesses.
- The panel is expected to convene and issue its recommendations within the time limits stated in the relevant university policy. If the panel does not act in a timely manner, either the reporting party or the respondent, or the Academic Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities (on the request of either party) may ask the Provost to intervene.

- *Opportunity to appeal sanctions.* In addition to providing its recommendation to the Provost’s delegate, the panel also notifies the respondent of its recommendations. If the respondent believes that the recommended *sanctions and corrective actions are grossly disproportionate to the violation*, the respondent may send a final letter appealing the sanctions to the Provost’s delegate, strictly restricted to this one issue, by emailing to within three calendar days of the panel’s notification to the respondent.

6-H DECISION BY THE PROVOST’S DELEGATE



After receiving CoPR’s recommendations along with the information that was available to CoPR [6-G \(5\)](#), and possibly a letter from the respondent on severity of sanctions [6-G \(6\)](#), the Provost’s delegate makes a final decision on any appealed matters and on sanctions. The Provost’s delegate may affirm or modify the findings and conclusions, and may affirm or modify the recommended sanctions and corrective actions. The decision will be made as quickly as possible, normally within 30 calendar days.

In making a decision, the Provost’s delegate may consult with others at the delegate’s discretion. For example, if the Provost’s delegate reaches a decision on the findings and conclusions different from CoPR’s recommendation, the delegate may consult with the panel chair on what change if any in the recommended sanctions and corrective actions may be

appropriate. There will not be further investigation by the delegate nor an in-person hearing, except as noted below.

Once a decision is made, the Provost's delegate sends a written notification to the respondent, and the respondent's dean, (and for health sciences school, the Senior Vice President of Health Affairs) of the sanction and corrective action (and the reasoning for any change from CoPR's recommendations). In addition, the delegate notifies the reporting party that appropriate action was taken. As an exception, in EEO-TIX cases, the delegate informs the Vice President of EEO-TIX who then sends the appropriate notifications to both the respondent and the reporting party.

The decision of the Provost's delegate is final; however, tenure dismissal cases have a different process and a decision by the Provost whether or not to bring tenure dismissal charges as described in [8-D \(2\) \(step 4\)](#) is outside the jurisdiction of the Provost's delegate.

The sanctions imposed by the Provost's delegate following CoPR deliberation are separate from school actions on salary, reappointment, and termination of contracts for performance or programmatic reasons (see, e.g., [3-C \(2\)\(b\)](#), [4-F \(3\)](#), [4-G \(2\)](#) and [4-G \(4\)](#)) or corrective or preventive measures taken by committees or offices under other University policies.

Chapter 7

Faculty Grievances

Chapter 7. Chapter Contents

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7-H DECISION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

7-A OVERVIEW

The grievance process is a means by which faculty members who believe their rights have been violated by an administrator may seek redress. The process offers both an opportunity for informal resolution, and if that is unsuccessful, a hearing before a panel of a faculty members drawn from the Committee on Tenure and Privileges Appeals (T&P) at which the complaining faculty member and the respondent administrator present their arguments, witnesses, and evidence. After the hearing, the panel makes a recommendation to the President of the University who then makes the final decision.

7-B BASES FOR GRIEVANCE

The grievance process is designed to address claims of violations of established faculty rights. It is not designed to address disagreements on the merits of faculty or administrative decisions. It is also not appropriate for claims related to discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on protected categories or claims related to scientific misconduct, which are handled through a different process (see [6-B \(2\)](#) and [6-B \(3\)\(c\)](#)). Appropriate grounds and inappropriate grounds for grievances are discussed more fully below. The grievance process is open to all members of the faculty, of every track, full- or part-time.

7-B (1) Appropriate Bases for Grievances

Grievances may be filed on the following bases:

- **Basis 1.** Violation by the university of any right provided to the faculty member by law.
- **Basis 2.** Violation by the university of any right of the faculty member established in the Faculty Handbook or other University policies.
- **Basis 3.** Violation by the University of any right under the faculty member's contract.
- **Basis 4.** Unfair evaluation for reappointment, promotion, tenure, or merit review, because of procedural defects that materially inhibited the review process, or because of considerations that violate academic freedom.
- **Basis 5.** Revocation of tenure without sufficient cause (not applicable if there has been a hearing and cause for termination was determined).

Committee on Tenure and Privileges Appeals (T&P)

The Committee on Tenure and Privileges Appeals is a standing committee that oversees grievance hearings. Its members are appointed by the President from among persons nominated as provided in [2-B \(4\)\(a\)](#). The membership includes at least 40 tenured faculty, and at least nine research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, and clinical-track faculty of the rank of Associate Professor or higher who serve only where the Handbook requires a research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, and clinical-track faculty member. At least four tenured committee members shall have law degrees and at least six other tenured members shall have had prior service on a grievance panel. Members serve three-year terms, and until their successors are appointed. The President also appoints the Chair for a three-year term.

7-B (2) Inappropriate Bases for Grievances

Grievances are not permitted for the following:

- Complaints about practices or policies that do not involve violations of established rights. (Such complaints, as well as any suggestions for improved practices or policies, can be made to the Academic Senate or to the Vice Provost of Academic and Faculty Affairs.)
- Disagreements over the merits of administrative decisions, for example, on salary. (Administrative decisions can be appealed to the administrator's supervisors, up to the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs.)
- Disagreements over the merits of decisions by faculty bodies, e.g., concerning the requirements of the academic unit or an individual's professional qualifications.
- Matters referred to in [Chapter 6](#) on Faculty Misconduct, Complaints, Investigations, and Sanctions. (These are handled under separate procedures described in [Chapter 6](#)).
- Allegations of scientific misconduct. (These are handled under the process set out in the [University Policy on Scientific Misconduct](#) website.)
- Complaints related to reappointment, promotion, or tenure other than those listed in [Basis 4](#) and [Basis 5](#).
- Complaints about a matter that arose when the person was not a member of the faculty, or that are not filed within nine months of the alleged violation.
- Complaints concerning discrimination, harassment, or retaliation related to a protected category. (Such complaints should be made to the USC website: [Office of Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX](#) (EEO-TIX). See [6-B \(2\)](#)).

7-C BEFORE FILING A GRIEVANCE

7-C (1) Advice on the Grievance Process

Before filing a grievance, it's helpful for faculty members to seek advice from one or more persons with knowledge about the process. Faculty members are welcome to approach any or all of the following persons or bodies for advice.

- *Ombuds*. The Ombuds is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent problem-solving resource. Discussions with the Ombuds are confidential and do not constitute a report to the University, but the Ombuds can explain how to make a report, if that is appropriate. The Ombuds may, on request, attempt to assist in settling disputes informally prior to the grievance being heard. See USC [Ombuds](#) website.
- *Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities*. This committee of the Academic Senate advises faculty members on grievance and other work-related disputes. The President of the Academic Senate is also available for consultation. See USC [Academic Senate, Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee](#) website.

- *Vice Provost.* The Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs, on behalf of the Provost, is also available for discussion and consultation, and in some cases may be able to arrange an immediate remedy.
- In addition, a number of offices are available for advice on specific topics; see USC [Report & Response/Resources](#).

7-C (2) Informal Resolution

In many cases, faculty members may be able to resolve disagreements or disputes informally, without filing a formal grievance. To do so requires discussion with the administrator who made the decision in question (chair, dean, etc.). If that discussion doesn't resolve the issue, faculty may discuss it with the administrator's supervisor (such as talking with the dean or vice dean about a disagreement with a chair). The faculty member may also appeal to the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs. Faculty members may initiate such a discussion themselves, may request informal assistance from one of the parties listed in [7-C \(1\)](#), or may request mediation or other informal assistance with the help of the Ombuds.

Mediation is a more structured approach to finding a resolution between the involved parties. Mediation is voluntary and goes forward only with the agreement of both sides. It involves a mediator who helps to find a solution that is agreeable to both sides; the mediator does not impose a resolution. Mediation normally begins with the lowest level administrator with the authority to solve the problem, and if appropriate, can progress to higher level administrators. Ombuds are available to serve as the mediator (see [USC Office of the Ombuds](#) website.) The Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities may be able to suggest another mediator if either party prefers. As a special case, if faculty members are represented by counsel, mediation or settlement must be discussed by their attorney with the Office of General Counsel. If mediation does not result in a settlement, the faculty member may file a grievance, as described in [7-D](#).

7-D INITIATING A GRIEVANCE

7-D (1) In General

A faculty member formally initiates the grievance process by filing a USC [Faculty Grievance Form](#). Grievances must be formally initiated within nine calendar months of the discovery of the action on which the grievance is based. In order for the grievance process to effectively address the claim, the grievance statement should, as clearly as possible, identify the rights implicated and describe the key facts. Specifically, the grievance statement must state clearly:

- the specific right or rights (from among the general categories described in Bases 1-5 in [7-B \(1\)](#)) that allegedly have been infringed.
- the facts showing how and when the right or rights have been infringed.

- the outcome or action being sought as a remedy (see the third paragraph of [7-G \(6\)](#)).
- the lowest level administrator able to resolve the problem (typically, the person who made the decision, such as a chair or dean).

The grievance statement must be submitted to the President of the Academic Senate through the Academic Senate office, either online or hard copy, within the nine-month period stated above. The Academic Senate office maintains grievance records in a confidential manner.

The grievance statement may be revised by the grievant at any time up to three weeks prior to a hearing, by submitting the revision to the respondent's representative, the Academic Senate President through the Senate office, and the T&P chair through the T&P office.

Retaliation or intimidation against anyone because of participation in the grievance process is prohibited under [6-B \(7\)](#). This includes participation as a grievant, witness, or hearing panel member. Among other things, grievants are prohibited from retaliating against witnesses and administrators are prohibited from retaliating against faculty members who file a grievance. If a person believes that they have been subject to retaliation because of such participation, the concern should be raised through a central reporting channel such as USC [Report & Response](#) website. (See [6-C \(4\)](#) for other options).

7-D (2) Multiple Grievants

Two or more persons with essentially the same grievance may file a single grievance, covering all of them. If an individual files a grievance, and it is later discovered that one or more others are similarly affected, the others may ask to join the original grievant at any stage of the grievance process. Such joining is allowed if all of the grievants agree and the President of the Academic Senate determines that the grievances can be combined without prejudice to the rights of the grievants or the University.

7-E PROCEDURES PRIOR TO A HEARING

Within seven calendar days after receiving the grievance statement, the President of the Academic Senate will deliver a copy of the grievance statement to the lowest-level administrator identified in the grievance statement as able to solve the problem, as well as to the Provost and the Chair of the Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.

The chair of the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities will usually inquire if the grievant would like to consider mediation or other informal attempts to resolve the issue as in [7-C \(2\)](#), if it has not already been attempted and has not already been declined by one of the parties.

If the grievant declines mediation or other informal approaches, formal proceedings will commence. If the respondent declines structured mediation, the grievant may nonetheless pursue other informal approaches seeking resolution (see [7-C \(2\)](#)). If mediation or other informal approaches are attempted, formal proceedings will also commence if mediation or the informal approach is unsuccessful or does not lead to a settlement within 45 calendar days of when the grievance was filed, or at any earlier time upon written request of the grievant. If both the Provost and grievant agree, the mediation period may be extended up to a total of 90 calendar days of when the grievance was filed.

Formal proceedings are initiated by the President of the Academic Senate sending a message to the Provost requesting a grievance hearing, as discussed below. The Provost will then send a request to the Chair of the Committee on Tenure and Privileges Appeals (T&P) requesting a hearing.

7-F BINDING ARBITRATION IN LIEU OF A GRIEVANCE HEARING

Binding arbitration (as discussed in this section, which is different from arbitration under an individual's arbitration agreement) can be an alternative to a grievance hearing. It is a process in which both parties submit their case to an outside arbitrator, who makes a decision. With binding arbitration, the faculty member foregoes the ability to sue in court over the matter and the University foregoes the ability of the President to overrule the arbitrator's decision. Binding arbitration requires the consent of both sides and occurs only if both the grievant and the President of the University agree, in writing, to submit the matter to this process and to abide by the decision of the arbitrator. Binding arbitration is not available for disputes concerning tenure, promotion, dismissal for cause, non-reappointment, matters under [Chapter 6](#), or EEO-TIX matters.

The grievant has seven calendar days after filing the formal grievance in which to request the President to agree to arbitration. (The grievant will simultaneously send copies of the request to the Provost and the Office of General Counsel.) The President then has seven calendar days to notify the Chair of Committee on Tenure and Privileges Appeals whether the University agrees to arbitration. Arbitration under this section in lieu of a grievance hearing occurs only if both parties give notice that they have elected arbitration by the end of the 14-day period.

If both sides agree to submit the matter to binding arbitration, the Chair of T&P will arrange for the appointment of an arbitrator under the rank and strike procedures specified by *JAMS Mediation, Arbitration and ADR Services*, unless both parties have agreed among themselves on an arbitrator. Once an arbitrator is chosen, the arbitration will be conducted in accord with the rules of JAMS.

Within 20 calendar days after the completion of the arbitration, the arbitrator shall notify, in writing, the parties, the President of the University, and the Chair of the T&P of the arbitrator's ruling.

The University will be responsible for all of the costs of the arbitrator and in no event will the grievant be held responsible for these charges. The University is not responsible for costs and expenses incurred by the grievant in the process of arbitration, such as expert witness fees, costs, attorneys' fees, and other fees (except that the University will pay any portion of a filing fee that exceeds the then-current filing fee in the California Superior Court.)

Binding arbitration of this nature (in lieu of a grievance hearing) is distinct from arbitration provided under the terms of any arbitration agreement between the faculty member and the University.

7-G GRIEVANCE HEARING

7-G (1) Introduction

Grievance hearings are conducted by a grievance panel under the Committee on Tenure Privileges and Appeals (T&P), as described below. The administrator is represented by an "respondent's representative" designated by the Provost. During the hearing, each side presents its case before a three-person panel of faculty members. After the hearing, the panel makes a written report to the President recommending findings of fact, a determination whether the faculty member's rights were violated, and, if appropriate, a remedy.

If a grievance substantially overlaps an ongoing investigation ([see 6-F](#)), the hearing will not occur until the investigation is completed or the investigative office declines jurisdiction. The Chair of T&P determines if a relevant overlap exists.

If (i) a grievance is related to a separate dismissal hearing, or (ii) the same party files two or more grievances that are related, all of the issues will be addressed in a single hearing. Grievances that are unrelated will be addressed in separate hearings. The Chair of T&P decides if separate grievances are sufficiently related to be combined.

7-G (2) Scheduling

The grievant will email the respondent's representative and they will communicate to seek agreement on a date for the hearing, to be held as soon as practical. Both parties are responsible for attempting to find a hearing date in an expeditious manner. Once a date is selected, both parties notify the Chair of T&P of the date. The Chair of T&P then commences selection of a hearing panel and selects a location for the hearing that takes into account the convenience of all involved.

If, at any time, the grievant feels unable to settle on a date with the University representative, the grievant may request the Chair of T&P to select a date. The Chair will attempt to find a time that is convenient for both parties, but in any case, both parties are expected to participate on the date chosen by the Chair. If the Chair determines that the respondent is not cooperating regarding scheduling, the Chair will report that fact to the Provost for corrective action. The hearing must be held, at the latest, within six months from the filing of the grievance. If six months pass from the date the grievance was filed and a hearing has not been held, the grievance is deemed dismissed, except in the special situation where the Chair or panel allows a brief extension to reschedule an already-scheduled hearing or to complete a hearing that has begun.

In the special case where a grievance substantially overlaps a pending but incomplete investigation, the Chair of T&P will, if necessary, delay the hearing beyond the six-month period until the investigation is complete.

7-G (3) Selection of Grievance Panel Members and Chair

A grievance panel is comprised of three T&P members, one of whom serves as panel chair. Within seven calendar days after the hearing date established, the Chair of T&P will communicate with all T&P members to see who is available on the proposed hearing date. The Chair of T&P will then forward to the grievance parties a list of at least six T&P members available to serve on the hearing panel and a list of at least three T&P members available to serve as the panel chair. The panel chair will either be a person holding a law degree or a person with prior service on a grievance panel.

The grievant and the respondent may each strike two names from the list of potential panel members and one name from the list of possible panel chairs. If either side waives its right to make peremptory challenges, the list need only be four potential panel members and two potential panel chairs. If there is a shortfall in the number of potential panel members, any names on the list of potential chairs which have neither been challenged nor selected as chair can be considered as potential panel members.

After the exercise of these peremptory challenges, if more names remain than needed, the members and panel chair will be chosen randomly. Persons not chosen will be designated as alternates, in a sequence designed randomly, to serve in the event that the initially chosen members become unavailable.

If there is more than one grievant (a case in which multiple grievances have been combined), the Chair of T&P will decide how the grievants' side exercises its peremptory challenges. The Chair of T&P informs the parties of the chair and panel members once they are chosen.

7-G (4) Motion to Dismiss

The respondent may make a motion to dismiss a grievance because it fails to allege a violation of one of the Bases 1-5 in [7-B \(1\)](#), or concerns one of the excluded claims listed in [7-B \(2\)](#), or fails to meet the requirements of [7-D \(1\)](#). Any motion to dismiss by the respondent must be made before the hearing and no later than 10 days after notification of the identity of the grievance panel. After the motion, the grievant has 10 calendar days to respond to the motion.

If the respondent's motion is made before the panel is identified, it will be ruled on by the Chair of T&P. If the motion is made after the panel is chosen, the panel decides. In deciding whether to grant a motion to dismiss, the Chair of T&P or grievance panel shall accept for purposes of the motion all of the grievant's allegations as true; at this stage the Chair of T&P or grievance panel shall not examine or evaluate the evidence as to the merits of the grievance. The T&P Chair or grievance panel will dismiss a grievance only for failing to allege one or more violations listed in [7-B \(1\)](#), or for entirely involving bases that are excluded under [7-B \(2\)](#), or for failing to meet the requirements of [7-D \(1\)](#) including being filed within nine months. (If only part of a grievance involves a base excluded under [7-B \(2\)](#), that part will be dismissed, leaving the part alleging a violation listed in [7-B \(1\)](#).)

7-G (5) Hearing Procedures

- (a) At the grievance hearing, either party may be represented by legal counsel (that is, by a person who holds a law degree). If either side intends to be represented by legal counsel, it shall notify the other party of this intention at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing. Failure to notify will entitle the other party to a reasonable continuance to secure its own legal counsel.
- (b) The grievant and the respondent, and their legal counsel if any, shall have the opportunity to be present during all argument and presentation of evidence. Each party shall have the opportunity to present its evidence, including witnesses, and to make an argument to the grievance panel. Each party shall have the right to confront and question the witnesses of the other. Both parties are to submit to the panel and the other party in advance of the hearing (by a deadline set by the T&P Chair) a written argument, documentary evidence, and (if the party wishes) witness statements. Each party shall have the right to inspect and respond to all written arguments and documentary evidence offered and may require the opportunity to question any witness whose written statement was submitted.
- (c) Technical rules of evidence, voir dire proceedings, and pre-trial discovery proceedings are not applicable.
- (d) The chair of the panel presides over the hearing and rules on all evidentiary questions. The chair sets the order of argument and of presentation of evidence and may exclude irrelevant or unduly repetitious evidence or argument.

- (e) Subject to the provisions of the Faculty Handbook, University policies, and the law, the grievant may obtain necessary pertinent witnesses and documentary or other evidence and may ask the University to use its persuasive power and the grievance panel its good offices to help, but the University is not obligated to incur undue expense or burden for this purpose. If the grievant requests material which involves privacy rights of an individual or is confidential or legally privileged, the Chair of T&P or the panel will request the Provost to rule on whether and with what restrictions the material can be made available.
- (f) Grievance panels will be instructed that their decisions must be in accord with all relevant federal, state, and local law, and established University policies including those contained in the Faculty Handbook, and the faculty member's contract. The grievance panel will be instructed to decide only the grievance before them, that is, the grievance panel should hear only evidence that is relevant to the grievance and shall decide only the issues presented, as to supposed infringements of the grievant's rights, and the panel's report will deal only with those issues.
- (g) No member of the grievance panel shall disclose any of the evidence received during the grievance hearing nor any aspect of the deliberations, except as provided below.
- (h) A stenographic or electronic record of the hearing shall be maintained and made available upon request only to the parties, the grievance panel, the Academic Senate President, or the President of the University. Copies of the stenographic or electronic record shall be made for either party at its request, and if either party requests a copy of a court reporter's transcript, upon the payment of the charges of the court reporter. In addition, with a person appointed by the Academic Senate office present, either party may, at any time before a stenographic or electronic record is destroyed, read, or listen to the original, at a time and place set by the Academic Senate office.
- (i) A grievance process will not be terminated (unless the Provost requests) if a faculty member files a lawsuit in court or seeks another remedy external to USC over the same matter that is the subject of the grievance, but in such circumstances the hearing may be postponed if both parties agree.
- (j) In grievance cases, the burden of persuading the panel that the actions or inactions of the University were not proper rests upon the grievant, and shall be satisfied only by clear and convincing evidence (except in cases where government regulations require the standard of the preponderance of the evidence.)
- (k)

7-G (6) Decision and Recommendations of Grievance Panel

At the conclusion of the hearing, the grievance panel prepares a written report to the President recommending findings of fact, a determination whether the faculty member's rights were violated, and any proposed remedial action for a violation of rights. The report shall be based solely on the hearing record.

In all cases, the following basic principle applies: The panel's report will deal only with the issues presented concerning alleged infringement of the grievant's rights. The report will not address matters outside that scope.

In grievances related specifically to reappointment, promotion, tenure, and merit review, additional principles and procedures apply: The panel shall not substitute its judgment on the substantive merits of the decision, including the requirements of the academic unit or of a candidate's professional qualifications. If the grievance panel concludes that a grievant's claim of a violation of rights is proven, the report will recommend reconsideration by the appropriate faculty body or bodies and administrators, indicating respects in which it believes the review process was inadequate. If the grievance panel concludes that there was an unfair evaluation because of considerations violative of academic freedom, it will recommend reconsideration by a new faculty body and by administrators, indicating the respects in which it considers unfair judgments to have taken place.

The panel will provide its written report within 14 calendar days after the completion of the grievance hearing. The written report will be provided to each party and to the Chair of T&P.

Each party has the option to append an additional statement to the report, by submitting the statement to the T&P Chair within 14 calendar days of when the report was issued. The additional statement is the opportunity to express agreement or disagreement with any aspects of the panel recommendation or process that the party wishes to challenge or call to the attention of the President of the University.

After allowing the parties 14 calendar days to append additional statements, as described above, the Chair of T&P forwards the panel's report and the appended statements, if any, to the Provost, the President of the University, and both parties. The President also will receive any evidence presented and the stenographic or tape record of the proceedings.

7-H DECISION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

The President will consider the record and make a decision as promptly as possible, generally within 30 calendar days of receiving the grievance panel's report. The President retains ultimate decision-making authority on all grievances and may accept or reject grievance panel recommendations. (Binding arbitration is different, as explained in [7-F](#)).

If the President intends not to follow the panel's recommendation, the President will notify the panel of this in person or in writing, stating the reasons, and allowing the grievance panel an opportunity to respond before reaching the final decision. If the President finally decides not to follow the recommendations of the grievance panel, the President will explain in writing, as part of the President's final decision, the reasons for rejecting them and for rendering a different decision.

The report of the grievance panel and the President's final decision on the grievance will be communicated to the grievant, the respondent, the Provost, (for faculty in the health sciences schools, also the Senior Vice President, Health Affairs), the President of the Academic Senate, the Chair of T&P, and the members of the grievance panel. The President of the Academic Senate, upon receipt of written consent from the grievant, will forward to the Chair of the Academic Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities a copy of the decision and a copy of the report of the grievance panel. This Senate Committee has the right to refer these reports to the Academic Senate, provided that the names of persons mentioned therein are deleted. In appropriate circumstances, where the privacy of students or faculty members or administrators would be compromised by disclosure, the President of the University or the chair of the grievance panel may ask all parties to keep the report confidential.

Chapter 8

Faculty Dismissals

Chapter 8. Chapter Contents

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8-A SCOPE

The procedures in [8-D](#) apply to the dismissal for cause of a tenured faculty member. For the sanctioning process in other cases, see [6-G](#). Dismissal for cause should not be confused with non-reappointment or termination of faculty who do not hold tenure, as discussed in [4-F \(3\)](#), [4-G](#), or [6-G \(4\)](#).

8-B REDUCTION IN SALARY FOR CAUSE

See [6-G \(4\)](#).

8-C ADEQUATE GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL

Adequate cause for a dismissal shall be one or more of the following: neglect of duty, incompetence, violations of academic freedom, misconduct, dishonesty, unmanaged or unreported conflict of interest, or moral turpitude. No offense will be considered adequate cause for dismissal unless it is serious and either (a) relates directly and substantially to the fitness of the faculty member in his or her professional capacity, including as a teacher, researcher, or practitioner performing clinical services, or (b) is of such a nature that it would bring severe injury or discredit to the University. Dismissal shall not be used to restrain faculty members in their exercise of academic freedom or other rights of American citizens.

8-D DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Every action to dismiss a tenured faculty member must follow these carefully detailed procedures, with the full cognizance of the affected person, the Provost, and the President of the Faculty (or the ranking tenured Academic Senate officer, if the President is untenured or unavailable.) The full set of faculty rights enumerated in this Handbook must be observed.

Preliminary investigation and committee consideration may take place as specified in [6-G](#). As provided in that section, after consideration by the Committee on Professional Responsibility, if the Provost decides to bring formal charges to dismiss a tenured faculty member the charges shall be considered pursuant to the formal proceedings set forth in [8-D \(2\)](#), commencing with Step 4. If [6-G](#) is not utilized and instead a school-based process is used, then [8-D \(1\)](#) applies.

8-D (1) Preliminary Inquiry When Section 6-G is Not Utilized

Step 1: (a) When reason arises to consider whether cause exists to dismiss a faculty member who has tenure, the relevant dean or academic director shall invite the faculty member to meet with him or her in a personal conference to discuss the problem, its possible resolution, and the possibility of dismissal proceedings if it is not resolved. The dean's consideration of recommending dismissal for cause shall be based on a thorough inquiry into the circumstances.

Before making a recommendation to the Provost, the dean shall consult with an ad hoc faculty committee, whose existence will be immediately disclosed to the faculty member concerned, to invite its views whether sufficient grounds exist for the dean to forward the matter to the Provost. The ad hoc committee, which the dean shall constitute, shall include one or more members of the Faculty Council and also a member drawn from either the Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities or the Committee on Tenure and Privileges Appeals and the dean shall ask the Provost to notify the President of the Faculty as to the appointment and composition of the ad hoc committee.

Alternatively, the dean may elect to ask that the Provost request the President of the Faculty to appoint a three-person ad hoc committee from a list of six members of the Committee on Tenure and Privileges Appeals nominated by the Chair of that committee. The ad hoc committee's recommendations are not binding on the dean.

The chair of the Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities, and the Ombuds, are available for consultation, and mediation may be arranged if desired by both sides, but mediation is not mandatory.

During Step 1, the dean may elect to formulate in writing a preliminary statement of charges with reasonable particularity of the grounds pertinent to the dismissal action under consideration. If the dean does so, a copy of the preliminary statement shall be given to the faculty member for the faculty member's written comments. The dean may also elect to provide evidence in writing to the faculty member and invite comment on that as well, and if the dean does so the faculty member shall be allowed 18 calendar days from the date on which the charges were sent to him or her to provide in writing his or her comments on the evidence to the dean. If the dean receives such comments on the preliminary statement, the evidence or both, and has not yet consulted with a faculty committee as provided above, the dean will share the comments with the committee as part of the consultation.

If the dean believes there is probable cause for dismissal, the dean shall forward his or her recommendation to the Provost, together with any preliminary statement or evidence which has been shared with the faculty member, and comments submitted by the faculty member, and shall inform the Provost whether the views of the ad hoc committee were that sufficient grounds do or do not exist to forward the matter to the Provost. The Provost will inform the President of the Faculty of the dean's recommendation.

Step 2: If the Provost then believes there may be cause for a dismissal, he or she shall formulate a preliminary statement of charges with reasonable particularity of the grounds pertinent to the dismissal action under consideration. A copy of the charges and grounds shall be given to the faculty member for the faculty member's comment to the Provost, unless the Provost adopts the preliminary statement formulated by the dean as part of Step 1 on

which the faculty member has already had the opportunity to comment, in which case the Provost will refer to any comments the faculty member submitted at Step 1.

Step 3: If the Provost is satisfied there is good cause to proceed further, he or she shall request a review of the evidence by a three-person select committee appointed by the President of the Faculty from a list of six members of the Committee on Tenure and Privileges Appeals nominated by the Chair of that committee. The select committee shall review the evidence to determine whether, in its view, sufficient grounds exist to initiate formal dismissal proceedings. The faculty member shall be allowed 18 calendar days from the date on which the evidence is sent to him or her in which to review all the evidence upon which the committee will rely in making its recommendation and to present a response to the committee, unless the preliminary statement of charges and the evidence presented to the committee are in all respects identical to those the dean elected to provide to the faculty member in Step 1 and the faculty member was afforded an opportunity to review and comment on them during that step, in which case the committee will refer to any comments the faculty member submitted at Step 1. The committee shall convey its recommendations to the Provost within 45 calendar days of its appointment. If, for any reason, it proves necessary for this time to be extended, the committee shall request an extension from the Provost, who shall notify the faculty member and others involved of any approved extension. The committee's recommendations are not binding on the Provost.

However, if an ad hoc committee has already been appointed by the President of the Faculty in Step 1; if the preliminary statement of the charges and the evidence which would be presented to the committee are in all respects identical to those the dean elected to provide to the faculty member during Step 1; if the faculty member was afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the charges and evidence during that step; and if the dean shared with the ad hoc committee any comments he or she received from the faculty member on the preliminary statement, the evidence, or both; then the Provost may refer to the recommendations by the ad hoc committee and any comments by the faculty member, made in Step 1, instead of requesting an additional review as provided in the prior paragraph.

8-D (2) Formal Proceedings

Step 4: If the Provost determines that formal proceedings for dismissal should commence, such proceedings shall begin by conveyance of written notice from the Provost to the faculty member by personal delivery, by courier, or by email with a duplicate sent by U.S. mail. This notice shall contain the formal statement of charges framed with reasonable particularity, and state the University's intent to initiate a dismissal hearing. The letter will also note that if the faculty member exercises the right to resign, no dismissal hearing will be held. However, resignation in itself does not halt the University's investigation or impact the University's right to impose remedial measures or other sanctions. A copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of the Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.

Step 5: If the faculty member has not resigned and the Chair of the Senate Committee on

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities and the Ombuds have not through mediation effected a mutual settlement, it shall be assumed that the faculty member contests the statement of charges. The Provost shall ask the Chair of the Committee on Tenure and Privileges Appeals to convene a Hearing Board to recommend whether the proposed dismissal should occur. The hearing shall be convened no earlier than 30 calendar days after the date on which written notice was sent to the faculty member by means specified in Step 4.

Normal procedures as set out in [Chapter 7](#) shall then be followed; for scheduling and conduct of the hearing, including participation by the faculty member; for formulation of findings, reasons, and recommendations of the Hearing Board; and for final disposition of the case by the President. These normal procedures specified for use in faculty grievances are incorporated herein as required procedures in dismissal cases, except that there is no option for binding arbitration in cases involving dismissal for cause. In cases of dismissal or demotion from a tenured position, the burden of persuading the Hearing Board that adequate cause for dismissal exists rests upon the University, and is as defined in [7-G \(5\)](#).

8-D (2)(a) Constituting the Hearing Board

The Hearing Board consists of a chair and two members, selected from among the members of the committee who will be available to serve. The chair shall inform the parties of the composition of the Hearing Board as soon as its selection is completed.

The normal procedures as set out in [Chapter 7](#) for constituting a grievance panel shall be used to select the chair and two members of the Hearing Board.

8-D (3) Suspension of a Faculty Member

A faculty member may be suspended from his or her duties, without loss of pay and usual faculty privileges, only as part of the initiation of a dismissal action and only if, in the judgment of the Provost, immediate harm to the faculty member or others is threatened by his or her continuance, or as provided below in this Section 8-D (3).

8-D (3)(a) Limitation on Suspensions

Suspension shall not be used as penalty, an alternative to dismissal, or imposed outside normal dismissal procedures, except that suspension as a sanction is provided for as recommended by the Committee on Professional Responsibility under [6-G \(4\)](#), temporary separation is provided for under 8-D (3)(b), and administrative leave is provided for in the Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation, part VII.C.

8-D (3)(b) Temporary Separation

The Provost may temporarily separate a faculty member from his or her duties even before an investigation is initiated, without loss of pay and usual faculty privileges, if it is the Provost's judgment that immediate harm to the faculty member or others is threatened by his or her continuance and that extraordinary circumstances warrant the action. The Provost may also use the term "administrative leave" in announcing a temporary separation.

In the case of temporary separation from duties, within fourteen calendar days either an investigation will be initiated, or a voluntary agreement will be reached between the individual and the University. The faculty member retains the right to file a grievance seeking an end to the temporary separation. During the separation period, the faculty member may consult with members of the University community, except those persons or categories of persons with whom the Provost expressly prohibits or restricts contact. The University shall make reasonable efforts to protect the continuity of the academic work of students, faculty and staff who are adversely affected. The Provost shall consult with the President of the Faculty and the dean of the relevant school during the temporary separation and indicate the reasons underlying any prohibited or restricted contact between the faculty member and other members of the University community.

Interim protective measures, including paid leave, may also be authorized by the Provost as provided in [6-D \(1\)](#).

8-D (3)(c) Protections in Connection with Dismissal Proceedings

A faculty member may not be dismissed nor, except as specified in [8-D \(4\)](#), may his or her compensation be cut off or withheld before the dismissal procedure has been completed and a final decision has been made by the President, unless a sanction under [6-G](#) has been determined by the Committee on Professional Responsibility.

8-D (4) Abandonment of Duty

If the Dean, on the advice of the faculty committee constituted as described in Step 1 of the dismissal procedures, or the Committee on Professional Responsibility, determines that the faculty member has abandoned his or her duties, e.g., by failing to return from vacation or leave, or by a pattern of failure to teach scheduled classes, or by a pattern of failure to meet established clinical, research, or other responsibilities, then compensation may be withheld for the period the duties are not being performed. If the faculty member returns to his or her duties at any time in the process, compensation shall resume immediately.

The faculty member may appeal such a determination of abandonment of duty to the Provost. If this determination is reversed at any step in the procedures, compensation that has been withheld shall be paid in full, at once, with interest at the statutory rate. If the conclusion of the dismissal procedures results in severing the ties between the faculty member and the University, and if the finding of abandonment of duty is not reversed, then the faculty member is not entitled to receive compensation that had been withheld.

8-D (5) Demotion of a Faculty Member

Demotion is a reduction in rank, e.g., from professor to associate professor, with a corresponding reduction in salary. It does not involve loss of tenure.

8-D (6) Terminal Notice

If the faculty member is to be dismissed, the faculty member shall receive reasonable notice or salary in lieu of notice. The President in determining the length of terminal notice or salary in lieu of notice shall take into account the length and quality of service and the character of the grounds upon which the action was based.

Chapter 9

Transition from Full-Time Work

Chapter 9. Chapter Contents

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9-A EMERITI STATUS

The designation Emeritus or Emerita may be awarded to faculty with ten or more years of full-time faculty appointment on or after retirement or may be preapproved in contemplation of retirement to be effective upon retirement. Faculty who are not retiring from their academic careers but who have a position at another institution after USC are not eligible for the designation except in extraordinary circumstances. In preparing recommendations, the primary department or school will review the eligibility of all prospective retirees, and the Provost's office will annually remind units to do so. The award of the designation is not automatic. It indicates honorable retirement from assigned duties, recognizes faithful service worthy of high commendation, and expresses an anticipation of continued membership in the academic community. The emeritus or emerita designation carries with it the honor of the title and the use of University facilities as authorized by the Provost.

The President may approve the title to be added to the last academic title a faculty member held in active service (e.g., <Associate>Professor Emeritus of <discipline>; <Associate>Professor <Emerita> of <discipline>; <Associate> Professor of Law, Philosophy, and Political Science; "Ken Price Professor Emeritus of Art"; or "Anton Burg Professor Emerita of Chemistry"). The President will consider the recommendation of the primary department or school, and the dean, the individual's curriculum vitae, a summary of the individual's contributions, and the record (if any) of findings of misconduct or other violations of University policies. The President may also approve the designation for a title of honor or administrative title (e.g., named chairs emeriti, Distinguished Professors Emeriti, Deans Emeriti).

9-B PHASED RETIREMENT

Full-time faculty who have submitted their retirement shall be entitled to receive a transitional part-time leave, with half-time (or greater) duties at proportionate compensation, for up to two years (or such longer period as the Provost decides). Such a leave is not available beyond the effective date of termination or non-reappointment under other policies, and use of such a leave requires Provost's approval if formal discipline is pending or under investigation under Chapters [6](#) or [8](#).

At the individual's option, the relinquishment of tenure may take effect either at the beginning or the end of the transition period; in either case, the individual will use his or her normal academic title during the transition period. Subsequent to the transition period, the faculty member may also be invited to serve part-time after retirement, as individually agreed, as provided below in 9-C.

9-C CONTINUED POST-RETIREMENT ACADEMIC ACTIVITY

A retired faculty member is eligible to be invited to serve on a year-to-year or other fixed term basis (without tenure) for whatever services, compensation, and percentage of effort are agreed between the individual and the dean with the approval of the Provost. Unless the Provost gives special permission, the percentage of effort must be less than 50% and thus under current policies the individual is not eligible for benefits. As agreed between the individual and the dean with the approval of the Provost, the retired faculty member (whether with or without compensation) may be authorized to continue to be principal investigator of grants and contracts, have research space as allocated, direct graduate students, and continue active participation in departmental and university activities as agreed. On the request of the department and dean, the Provost may reinstate the tenured status of the previously tenured individual only for the period invited back to service, not to continue when that period ends. The Provost may also appoint a previously tenured individual to roles dealing with tenure matters.

9-D RETIREMENT BENEFITS

9-D (1) Income Replacement

Information on the University retirement plan is available at the [Benefits Administration](#) website.

9-D (2) Health Care after Retirement

For information on USC Senior Care, call the Health Plans office (213) 740-0035, USC [Health Plans](#) website.

9-D (3) Long Term Care after Retirement

For information on Long Term Care insurance, contact the USC Benefits Administration office.

9-D (4) Other Benefits, Privileges and Guides

Information on more USC benefits for retirees is on the USC [Retirement Savings Program-Employee Gateway](#) website, and a directory of retiree privileges (“Gold Card”) is on the [Emeriti Center](#) website. A guide to those considering retirement is on the [Faculty Portal](#).

9-D (5) Changes in Benefits Programs

As provided in [3-E](#), the particular provisions of all benefit programs, including those listed above, are subject to change from time to time by the Senior Vice President of Human Resources.