

4.1 Appendix B: COVID-19 Extension of the Probationary Period and Academic Deferral Toolkit

PLEASE NOTE: This section of the process manual serves as a historical documentation and reference material for the COVID-19 automatic extension of the probationary clock offered in 2020 for eligible assistant rank appointees hired on or before June 30, 2020.

1. General

In light of the COVID-19 crisis and the potential impact on academics' scholarly and creative work during the Spring quarter, on March 24, 2020, Chancellor Khosla and EVC Simmons, in consultation with the UC San Diego Academic Senate, announced that effective immediately:

- UC San Diego will automatically extend the probationary period by one year for each assistant-level appointee whose appointment began on or before June 30, 2020 and who is subject to an eight-year clock, provided that the individual has not previously been granted two such extensions. While individuals with two previous extensions will not receive the extension *automatically*, they may request an exception for a third extension due to COVID-19.
- The automatic extension of the probationary period includes those who will begin their 6th (sixth) year of service in 2020-2021.
- The automatic extension of the probationary period does not include those who had a promotion review during or before the 2019-2020 academic year and who had an outcome of postponement or terminal year.
- Senior faculty and academics whose scholarly work has been affected by the COVID-19 crisis may choose to defer their academic review for one year. This deferral will not impact established departmental expectations for achievement during a normal two-, three-, or four-year review cycle. Academic review following a deferral will not be considered off-cycle. Appointees must be reviewed at least once in every five-year period, per UCOP [APM 200-0](#).

Extensions to the probationary period (also known as Stop-the-Clocks) may result in a decoupling of merit reviews on the normal two year cycle from appraisals and promotion reviews. The latter are always seen by CAP, but decoupled merit reviews that result from COVID-19 related extensions of the probationary period that do not involve an acceleration or BOS will be treated as Dean's authority actions.

Individual review cycles should be discussed annually with department chairs and AP staff to determine the most beneficial trajectory for an assistant level appointee. On the one hand, candidates whose research has been significantly delayed by COVID-19-related disruptions may decide that their prospects for tenure would be more accurately judged by CAP if their appraisal were delayed for a year and thus uncoupled from the normal merit review, which would proceed under the dean's authority. On the other hand, candidates often benefit from CAP's candid assessment of their files through the appraisal process, and it may therefore be in the candidate's best interest to receive the benefit of CAP's judgment sooner rather than later on the path to promotion.

Departments may decide to utilize the optional “opt-out” form provided by the office of Academic Personnel Services to assist with review timeline planning.

2. Process

Extensions to the probationary period will be automatic. There are many scenarios impacted by an extension to the probationary period, depending on the appointee’s review history and remainder of time “on the clock”. In general, an academic appointee may “opt out” of the automatic extension to their probationary period at any time by submitting a promotion file. An appointee may also “opt out” by submitting a 4th year appraisal at the standard review time and may later choose to “opt back in” when considering promotion readiness.

Merit and Reappointment reviews de-coupled as a result of COVID-19 related extensions to the probationary period are considered normal on-time merits at the Dean level of authority. These decoupled merit/reappointment files will not be reviewed by CAP.

Merit and reappointment deferrals are not automatic. Any desired deferral will require a memo relating the connection of the request to the COVID-19 pandemic and be routed for consideration according to standard practice/process. Authority level for a deferral is contingent on whether the request constitutes a first or second consecutive deferral request.

3. Frequently Asked Question (FAQ)

a. General

- **Q: How will these automatic extensions of probationary periods related to COVID-19 be implemented?**

A: Automatic extensions of the probationary period due to COVID-19 are to be applied now, as a one-time solution for real and potential difficulties appointees may experience this academic year (AY 2019-20) and moving forward as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Academic Personnel (AP) staff at the department level will use the campus-wide personnel database (AP Data) to enter new end dates and to track review timelines for individual appointees. On an annual basis, each department will inform faculty of review eligibility per its normal department procedures.

- **Q: Whom do they impact?**

A: COVID-19 related automatic extensions of the probationary period are applicable to academic appointees who are subject to an eight-year probationary period with a hire date previous to July 1, 2020.

- **Q: When will these be implemented?**

A: The probationary period extension is effective immediately. Impacted academic appointees should meet with their department AP staff before Fall of 2020, to discuss their individual clock and potential deferral requests.

- **Q: If the campus COVID-19 crisis continues past Spring Quarter 2020, will these guidelines be revised to include individuals hired after June 30, 2020?**

A: This may be re-evaluated at a later date.

- **Q: Will the October 15 deadline for academic review materials eligible to be reviewed be adjusted?**

A: No.

b. Assistant Professor Review Impacts

- **Q: My appointment date is July 1, 2020. How might this emergency measure affect me?**

A: While an additional year will not be automatically applied to the probationary period for individuals appointed on or after July 1, 2020, campus reviewers remain aware that COVID-19 may impact future reviews and additional measures may be necessary. Academic appointees appointed July 1, 2020, and thereafter will have an opportunity to explain any extenuating circumstances, including effects of the COVID-19 crisis, in their academic review file.

- **Q: I have a promotion review currently in progress with a July 1, 2020 effective date; how will this extension of the probationary period be applied to me?**

A: Individuals who are currently under review for promotion with an effective July 1, 2020 date and who have not yet completed their 8-year probationary period, will continue to have their review file processed as normal. Once that review is complete, the extension of the probationary period will be applied unless: 1) the current review results in a promotion, 2) the final outcome is determined to be a postponement for one-year, or 3) the final outcome is a terminal reappointment file.

- **Q: I did not undergo a full promotion review. My department solicited letters, determined I wasn't ready, and subsequently proposed postponement of a promotion. My file is currently in progress with a July 1, 2020 effective date; how will this extension of the probationary period be applied to me?**

A: Individuals who did not undergo a full promotion review will automatically receive an extension of the probationary period.

- **Q: What if I received a terminal reappointment and am serving my terminal/final year?**

A: If you are adversely impacted by COVID-19 during your terminal year and the pandemic has been causal to additional delays for what you anticipated would be a viable promotion appeal file, you may request an extension to the due date for submitting a promotion reconsideration file.

Your request should document events that have interfered with your ability to complete the body of work to be reviewed for promotion (e.g. academic press temporary and/or long-term closures, lab results unable to be processed, publications paused that would

justify promotion, artistic performances cancelled, academic reviewer illnesses or inaccessibility, etc.).

- **Q: I don't need or want this extension. If I want to opt out of the automatic extension to my probationary period, what is the deadline by which I need to notify my department?**

A: To allow timely preparation of a promotion file, you should inform your department chair or equivalent as soon as possible during the spring quarter before an upcoming fall review.

- **Q: What will happen when I opt out of the automatic extension of the probationary period?**

A: Your probationary clock will remain the same as it is now. Your academic review schedule will also remain the same as it is now.

- **Q: What if in the future, I decide that I don't wish to wait another year to be considered for promotion?**

A: As has always been the case, assistant-level appointees may put forward a file requesting a promotion whenever they deem they are ready for such advancement.

- **Q: What happens if accepting this automatic extension of the probationary period causes me to reach my two extension maximum and I have a qualifying family accommodation event in future? Would I be eligible to request a third extension of my probationary period?**

A: You would be able to request a third extension of your probationary period. Please know that any request for an exception to allow a third one-year extension will require approval by the UCOP Provost and Executive Vice President.

c. All Ranks

- **Q: I am an Assistant level appointee. Does this automatic extension of the probation period defer the timing of my next merit or reappointment review file?**

A: The timing of your next merit/reappointment review will not be altered unless you also choose to defer your review in conjunction with the automatic extension of the probationary period. The extension will alter the timing of a 4th year appraisal file and your mandatory promotion date (i.e., your "must be promoted by x/xx/xx" date).

- **Q: This new COVID-19 related extension has decoupled my merit and 4th year appraisal or upcoming 6th year file; how do I request a deferral of my merit/reappointment to align my reviews?**

A: A memo may be sent forward requesting that a deferral be granted in conjunction with the COVID-19 related extension of the probationary period.

- **Q: Are Research Scientists and Project Scientists eligible to defer reviews?**

A: Reviews for Research Scientists and Project Scientists may be deferred due to COVID – 19 related reasons. The academic appointee should submit a memo requesting that a deferral be granted in conjunction with the COVID-19 related extension of the probationary period. The current end date of the appointment will also be extended for one year, to coincide with the deferral period.

- **Q: What if I am undergoing a “Barrier Review” Case (Promotion to Full, Advancement to Step VI and Advancement to Above Scale)?**

A: Senior faculty and academics whose scholarly and/or creative work has been affected by the COVID-19 crisis may choose to defer their academic review for one year. This deferral will not impact established departmental expectations for achievement during a normal two-, three-, or four-year review cycle. Academic review following a deferral will not be considered off-cycle. Appointees must be reviewed at least once in every five-year period, per policy.

- **Q: What if it is determined that I am ineligible for a deferral due to multiple consecutive no-change actions?**

A: A request for an exception to policy may be made in some cases if, and only if, events have transpired as a result of COVID-19. Any exception request should document progress made toward advancement as well as events that have interfered with an academic appointee’s chances for advancement (e.g. academic press temporary and/or long-term closures, lab results unable to be processed, publications paused that would justify promotion, artistic performances cancelled, academic reviewer illnesses or inaccessibility, etc.).

d. Additional Consideration FAQ

- **Q: I am a represented Assistant Research Scientist or Assistant Project Scientist. How does this new crisis extension impact my reviews?**

A: You are eligible for the automatic extension of your probationary period. If you would like this probationary period extension, no action is necessary; however, you may opt out if desired. Academic Researchers in the Research Scientist or Project Scientist Series may reach out to their departmental Academic Personnel analyst if they have any questions related to the calculation of their probationary period or how this may impact their review cycles.

- **Q: What, if anything, should I be mindful of as an Assistant Adjunct or an Assistant HS Clinical Professor?**

A: If you are an Assistant Adjunct Professor or an Assistant Health Sciences Clinical Professor who has been hired on a fiscal-year basis (Health Sciences), your normal eight-year probationary period consists of ninety-six (96) months of completed service, and any appointment in this series above 50% time will count toward the calculation of the probationary period. This extension automatically extends your probationary period by 12 calendar months, provided you meet stated eligibility requirements. Please reach out to your departmental Academic Personnel analyst if you have any questions related to the calculation of your probationary period, or how this calculation may impact your review cycle.

- **Q: What, if anything, should I be mindful of as an Assistant Professor In Residence, Assistant Professor of Clinical X, Assistant Teaching Professor, or Assistant Ladder-Rank Professor?**

A: As a member of the Academic Senate, you will need to be reviewed for promotion at least one year prior to the end of your probationary period. If you have any questions with regard to how this extension impacts your review cycle, please contact your departmental Academic Personnel analyst.

4. Expanded COVID-19 Extensions of the Probationary Period Options

Based on recommendations made by the 2021 Senate-Administration Workgroup on Academic Advancement in the Wake of COVID-19 (SAWAA), the option to extend the probationary period by tenure-track/security of employment faculty owing to COVID-19 impacts were made available to faculty appointed between 7/1/2020 – 6/30/2021 if supported by the exigent circumstances of the pandemic and its impact on their academic file.

Candidates, in coordination with their department and dean, must make the case that exigent circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic support the proposed clock extension request.

Clock extension opportunities for appointees hired between 7/1/2020 through 6/30/2021 represent an extension of the COVID-19 probationary period extension and academic deferral program, see [Section 2.1.2](#) above.

COVID-19 clock extensions for appointees hired between 7/1/2020 through 6/30/2021 are not automatic and appointees have to make a formal request.