

Alamo Colleges

Executive Faculty Council

Name of Work Proposal	Review and Reimplementation of Tenure Track System at Alamo Colleges
Initiator	United Faculty Senates
Contact	

Background:

In 2011, Alamo Colleges suspended the tenure-track system. Although faculty who possessed tenure at that time maintained their tenured status, all full-time faculty hired since 2011 have been non-tenure track, contract employees. The result has been a number of problems, including:

- Full-time faculty are divided into a two-tiered (tenured/contract) system with inherent inequities.
- The status of non-tenured, or probationary, faculty is ambiguous because the current wording of procedure (D.2.5.5) implies that all non-tenured faculty are in a permanent state of probation without any option or goal of acquiring permanent status within the five colleges.
- The District is out of compliance with a range of board policies related to tenure (See Appendix I).
- Contract faculty, who are on annual contracts, lack job security.
- Perceived difficulty recruiting and retaining new faculty of the best quality

A review of our tenure track system is important to the Alamo Colleges District because:

- Tenure provides a process for data-informed and peer-reviewed vetting, so that colleges retain only the best faculty members, ensuring excellence in teaching and service. Rigorous review of faculty directly impacts students and student success
- Tenure supports the academic freedom of faculty in their primary roles of teaching and oversight over curriculum as well as their important role in shared governance to maintain the academic integrity of our institutions and compliance with SACSCOC accreditation standards.
- The two-tiered system of tenured and probationary faculty is not aligned with the Alamo Colleges District’s goals of addressing equity, diversity, and inclusion. Current tenured faculty – all hired prior to 2011 - are less diverse than the makeup of the totality of our faculty, leaving minoritized populations including women and people of color effectively in a second-class status among faculty. (for breakdown of faculty by Racial/Ethnic group see Appendix II)

What has been done to address this issue?

Since the suspension of tenure in 2011, faculty have developed systems for continual review and improvement of:

- Faculty Evaluations
- Faculty Development
- End-of-Course-Student Surveys

1. Charge and Work Products

The primary charge is to make a recommendations regarding the tenure-track system at Alamo College. The components of this work include:

Data Deliverables

- Best practices regarding tenure around the country among peer institutions
- Data showing how improvements to Faculty evaluation and development have contributed to improvements of student success metrics
- Data reflecting how lack of tenure has impacted recruitment and retention of quality faculty at Alamo Colleges (HR records)
- Statistical make-up of faculty by gender and race and how those numbers are different among tenured vs. non-tenure track faculty hired after 2011. (HR records; for breakdown of faculty by Racial/Ethnic background see Appendix II)

On the Merits: Making the Case for Tenure

- Define tenure for Alamo Colleges
- Answer the major questions surrounding tenure by assessing the benefits and liabilities of tenure and a tenure-track system for Alamo Colleges, including:
 - How does tenure benefit our ultimate goal of Student Success?
 - Myth versus fact: What legal barriers are created by the tenure system and the process for removal of tenured faculty?
 - How does tenure impact faculty accountability, development, and evaluation?

The Path Forward

- Based on the data and assessments detailed above, recommend changes to policies or procedures related to tenure.
- Develop outlines for any processes needed that result from the recommendations regarding tenure.

2. Known Constraints, Criteria, or Design Principles

See above under: On the Merits: Making the Case for Tenure

3. Relevant Strategic Objectives

All three Alamo Colleges' Strategic Objectives are served by this work.

a. Student Success:

Having tenure-track faculty may enhance recruitment and retention of top-quality faculty by rewarding excellence in teaching and service. Student success is the result.

b. Principle-Centered Leadership:

- Tenure is a well-established method among colleges and universities of telling a faculty member with a demonstrated record of excellence: "Good work – we believe in you and want you to continue teaching and serving our students."
- Studying the tenure system now would acknowledge the hard work that has gone into the transformational enhancement of faculty performance evaluation procedures and faculty development efforts since 2011.
- Tenure provides faculty with academic freedom and a shared governance stake in alignment with SASCOC accreditation standards and best practices in higher education across the nation.

c. Performance Excellence:

Tenure creates a process for only the best faculty to remain with a college. It is a reward for sustained commitment and promotes faculty engagement and excellence in teaching and service.

4. Sponsors of the Work¹

Linda Boyer-Owens

5. Internal Stakeholders or Resources

Full-time faculty from each college, including both tenured and contract faculty
College administrators who supervise faculty (College President, Deans, Chairs)
District legal representation

6. Preliminary List of Team Members – all voting members

Two Co-chairs from United Faculty Senates
Two Full-Time Faculty from each college: one tenured, one full-time contract
One Vice-Chancellor of Academic Success
One college Vice President of Academic Success
One college Faculty Chair

7. Deadline for Work Product

Spring/Summer 2021

1 The role of the sponsor is to support the faculty by removing barriers, securing needed resources and providing an administrative lens to the considerations.

Appendix I

District Policies and Procedures that mention tenure:

[D.2.2.1 Hiring Practices \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.2.3.2 Faculty and Department Chair Positions \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.2.5.1 Hiring Authority, Status, Assignments and Duties \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.2.5.4 Full-Time Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty Relocation Between Colleges \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.2.5.5 Faculty Tenure Process \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.3.5 Academic Freedom and Responsibilities \(Policy\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.5.3.1 Holidays, Leaves, and Absences \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.5.4.1 Family and Medical Leave \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.7.1.2 Faculty Performance Evaluations \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.8.2.1 Promotion Process \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.9.1.1 Progressive Discipline: Non-Tenured Employees \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.9.1.2 Progressive Discipline: Tenured Faculty \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.10.2.2 Termination During Contract Term: Non-Tenured Employees \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.10.2.3 Nonrenewal: Non-Tenured Employees \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

[D.10.2.5 Termination: Tenured Faculty \(Procedure\) \(PDF\)](#)

Appendix II

Statistics of Racial/Ethnic Groups – tenured vs. non-tenured Faculty at ACD as of Fall 2019

TENURED FACULTY (including Faculty Chairs)

All Practitioners classified as Tenured Faculty on the first day of class, Fall 2019

Racial/Ethnic Group	Fall 2019	Fall 2019
	#	% of all
American Indian or Alaska Native (Not Hispanic or Latino)	3	0.66%
Asian (Not Hispanic or Latino)	8	1.75%
Black or African American (Not Hispanic or Latino)	21	4.59%
Hispanic or Latino	153	33.41%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Not Hispanic or Latino)	1	0.22%
Two or more races (Not Hispanic or Latino)	33	7.21%
White (Not Hispanic or Latino)	239	52.18%
Grand Total	458	100.00%

NON-TENURED FACULTY (including Faculty Chairs)

All Practitioners classified as Non-Tenured Faculty on the first day of class, Fall 2019

Racial/Ethnic Group	Fall 2019	Fall 2019
	#	% of all
American Indian or Alaska Native (Not Hispanic or Latino)		0.00%
Asian (Not Hispanic or Latino)	14	4.20%
Black or African American (Not Hispanic or Latino)	24	7.21%
Hispanic or Latino	119	35.74%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Not Hispanic or Latino)		0.00%
Two or more races (Not Hispanic or Latino)	14	4.20%
White (Not Hispanic or Latino)	162	48.65%
Grand Total	333	100.00%