**Motion on Required Review Timeline Extension due to COVID-19 disruption**

**Background:**

On April 1, 2020, Provost Schwaig wrote in an email to KSU Faculty:

“tenure-track faculty may apply to their dean, with final approval from the provost, for a one-year extension to the remaining probationary period leading up to their required tenure and promotion or required tenure review. This option is available to all current tenure-track faculty with a required tenure and promotion or required tenure review in 2020-2021 or later. Additionally, tenure-track faculty who are required to have a pre-tenure review beginning in either fall 2020 or fall 2021 may apply to their dean for a one-year postponement of this review, advancing it to the next year. Application details are currently under development by the Faculty Affairs Office. Our intent is that these steps will ease any anxiety that faculty may feel about the implications this unique situation may have on their careers.”

On April 12 AVP Matson emailed the following to Faculty Senators:  
“KSU is deeply committed to the continued success of faculty and is taking steps to ensure that the coronavirus pandemic does not impede tenure-track progress. To this end, tenure-track and tenured faculty may apply to their dean, with final approval from the provost, for a one-year extension to the remaining probationary period leading up to their required tenure and promotion review, required tenure review, or required post-tenure review. This option is available to all current tenure-track and tenured faculty with a required tenure and promotion review, required tenure review, and required post-tenure review in 2020-2021 or later. Additionally, tenure-track faculty who are required to have a pre-tenure review beginning in either fall 2020 or fall 2021 may apply to their dean for a one-year postponement of this review, advancing it to the next year.  The Provost or designee will provide final approval.  If you wish to rescind your decision in the future, you must do so on or before 01 January of the year you are submitting.

You have been identified as one of those faculty members whose tenure decision could possibly be impacted by KSU’s response to COVID-19. **Your decision needs to be made by June 15, 2020.**

**Note:  Please refer to your Yearly Unit Data screen in Activity Insight for your current promotion and tenure review dates.”**

**PROPOSED MOTION:**

The Faculty Senate thanks Provost Schwaig and AVP Matson for their communications regarding required review timeline extensions and requests this decision be implemented in the following ways:

1. Opt out instead of Opt in

Provide an automatic one-year extension for all faculty with required tenure and promotion, tenure, pre-tenure, and post-tenure review in 2020-2021 or later. Affected faculty will be given the option of “opting out” of the extension through a notification process.

1. Timeline for decision
   1. For faculty with required reviews in Fall 2020, the deadline to notify KSU of a faculty member’s preference to “opt out” of the extension and keep their original review schedule should be:
      1. Tenure and Promotion reviews: June 15 2020 (in order to accommodate the external letter requirement).
      2. Pre tenure reviews and Post tenure reviews: August 21 2020 (once faculty are back on contract for 2020-2021).
   2. For faculty with required reviews originally scheduled for 2021 or later, the deadline to notify KSU of a faculty member’s preference to “opt out” of the extension and keep their original review schedule will be the end of the Chair review period during the ARD cycle in the year the faculty seeks to be reviewed (March of each year).

**Rationale:**

1. Opt out instead of Opt in

This approach sends the message that "normal progress" is not expected of anyone under current circumstances (while still allowing those who wish to seek the security and small pay increase of tenure sooner to do so if they wish) and can help to avoid any unintended inequities or stigmatization that arise from putting the burden on faculty to "opt in" for this extension.

The recent addition of an option to rescind the extension decision on Jan. 1 of the review year, provides added flexibility to faculty and is much appreciated. It would still be preferable to have this extension be applied automatically and leave the “rescinding” option to those faculty who want to stay on their prior review schedule due to the reasons included above.

1. Timeline for decision

Given the current uncertainties related to the duration and scope of COVID-19 related disruptions, faculty should have the longest possible timeframe to make their decision about their required review timelines.

The addition of the Jan. 1 “rescind” option in the process presented by Academic Affairs goes some way towards addressing the above concerns. However, it still requires all faculty to make an initial decision about their required review timeline much earlier than is realistic given the current uncertainty and during a time period when most faculty are off contract.

For these reasons, a different set of deadlines would be preferable:

Faculty whose original required review dates are in 2020-2021 will need to notify their Chairs and Deans soonest if they wish to be reviewed in the coming academic year.

A June 15 2020 deadline for Tenure and Promotion review allows the external letter process to move forward (though it will be on a shortened timeline). [Note: another option would be to consider waiving the external letter requirement for 2020-2021 reviews, if possible]

An August 21 2020 (Friday of the first week of Fall 2020 classes) deadline for Pre-Tenure and Post Tenure review allows faculty to make this decision when they are back on contract for 2020-2021 and able to consult with their Chairs and Deans about the decision. [Note: this deadline is approximately 3 weeks before pre-tenure portfolios are due and 6 weeks before PTR portfolios are due assuming review timelines will be similar to 2019-2020.]

Making the deadline for future “opt outs” the end of the Chair review period of the ARD cycle (March of each year), allows faculty to receive feedback from their Chairs on their performance in the previous year, and consult their chairs about their opt out decision. It also keeps to the normal timing of when faculty notify chairs of the need to solicit external letters related to tenure and promotion reviews.

Reference:

2019-2020 Review Timelines:

<https://facultyaffairs.kennesaw.edu/docs/resources/t_p/2019-2020%20Promotion%20and%20Tenure%20Review%20Schedule.pdf>