8.1 Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty

A faculty appointment with academic tenure is a privilege awarded by Mines that is earned by a record of superior academic performance and incorporates the expectation that such performance will continue and thrive. The conferral of tenure forms the basis of a long-term contractual partnership between a faculty member and Mines and is recognition of the faculty member's career alignment with the long-term mission of the institution. A faculty member with tenure may be terminated by Mines only for cause or non-renewed for reasons of financial exigency or degree program termination. Academic tenure is conferred by the Mines Board of Trustees based on a recommendation that is framed by the criteria for tenure and developed through the application and review procedures set forth in this section of the Handbook.

The tenure track refers to the status of appointment for faculty who are working toward tenured status. A tenure-track appointment is probationary and term-limited and is granted to an academic faculty member to provide a period of employment within which the faculty member is expected to establish a record of academic achievement that is reviewable for academic tenure. The precise terms and conditions of each tenure-track appointment at Mines shall be explicitly agreed upon by both the Provost and the faculty member and expressed in writing before the appointment is finalized. To ensure continued employment at Mines as a tenured faculty member, tenure must be conferred before the expiration of the tenure-track appointment.

The tenure-track appointment is probationary, and is subject to termination in the following situations:

A. Pursuant to Section 9.1.1 addressing non-renewal of the tenure-track appointment without cause;
B. Pursuant to Section 8.1.4, when the Preliminary Tenure Review reveals the Candidate has made insufficient progress toward achieving tenure to a degree that the candidate's success at Mines is viewed unlikely.

8.1.1 Time Limitations

A. **Tenure-Track Assistant Professors**
Unless extended, see Section 8.1.1 C below, a probationary contract period for a tenure-track assistant professor shall not exceed seven years and a tenure decision must be made by no later than the end of the sixth year of tenure-track service at Mines. In the case of a start date after the Fall semester, the probationary period will be extended to six years after the beginning of the Fall semester following the appointment. Unless extended, a performance evaluation in the form of a Preliminary Tenure Review shall be conducted in the sixth semester of tenure-track service at Mines. At the initiation of either the tenure-track assistant professor or their Department Head, a Preliminary Tenure Review may be conducted before the sixth semester with the written approval of the Dean. The process for a Preliminary Tenure Review is described in paragraph 8.1.4 below.

B. **Tenure-Track Associate and Full Professors**
Unless extended, a probationary contract period for a tenure-track associate or full professor shall be consistent with the termination date on the associate or full professor's tenure-track employment contract. The length of this probationary period shall be set during employment negotiations and shall be no less than four and no more than seven years. A tenure decision must be made no later than one year prior to the termination date on the tenure-track employment contract. In the case of a start date later than the beginning of the Fall semester, the probationary period will be extended to six years after the beginning of the Fall semester following the appointment. A performance evaluation in the form of a Preliminary Tenure Review shall be conducted in the semester that constitutes the midpoint of a candidate's probationary period, normally the sixth semester of tenure-track service at Mines. At the instigation of either the tenure-track associate or full professor or their Department Head, and irrespective of length of the probationary period, a Preliminary Tenure Review may be conducted prior to the midpoint of the probationary period with the written approval of the Dean. The process for a Preliminary Tenure Review is described in paragraph 8.1.4 below.

C. **Request for Extension of Probationary Contract Period**
In the case of an approved extended leave of absence, a tenure-track faculty member may submit a written request to extend the probationary contract period, and additionally, if the requested stoppage occurs prior to Preliminary Tenure Review, postpone the Preliminary Tenure Review.

The request must be submitted to the Department Head and Dean, who will each add their written recommendations and forward the request to the Provost. The Provost will consider the request and recommendations and provide their decision in writing to the faculty member. Any extensions must be taken in one-year increments. However, the faculty member may elect, within six months following their return from leave, to have the leave time count as part of his or her probationary period. Such election must be made in writing to the employee's Department Head and must be approved by the Dean.

8.1.2 Criteria for Tenure

Tenure establishes a long-term contractual relationship between Mines and a faculty member. The granting of tenure represents acknowledgement by Mines that a tenure candidate has convincingly demonstrated the capability for making substantial and important contributions to the goals of Mines throughout the remainder of their career. Since the tenure decision is based on a tenure Candidate's potential for long-term contribution to the goals of the department and Mines, progress toward tenure is reviewed as a part of each tenure-track faculty member's annual evaluation. As departmental and Mines goals change, so, too, will the criteria for the granting of tenure. The factors that shall be considered by Mines in making a tenure decision shall include, but not be limited to, the following: (1) the Candidate's academic degree and other professional attainments; (2) the quality and trajectory of the Candidate's performance in teaching, scholarship and service; (3) the likelihood that the Candidate will continue to produce at or above their current level and continue to grow professionally; (4) the Candidate's progress toward establishment of a national and international professional recognition; (5) the Candidate's potential for achievement of greater professional recognition; and (6) the compatibility of the Candidate's academic expertise with the long-term, programmatic goals and requirements of Mines.

8.1.3 Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committees

The Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee reviews the promotion and/or tenure application taking into account the standards and practices of the Candidate's discipline. While it is the responsibility of the Department Head to facilitate the development of faculty in the department, candidates are encouraged to seek broader input and guidance from members of their Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee.

Within the preliminary tenure review process and at the time of application for promotion and/or tenure, the Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee shall examine the Candidate's dossier and: (i) in relation to guidelines and criteria established by the institution, evaluate the Candidate's research contributions, teaching effectiveness and service to both internal and external communities; and (ii) make a written recommendation to the Department Head regarding the Candidate's progress toward, or suitability for promotion and/or tenure. The Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee shall determine the process followed in producing this recommendation.

The Promotion and Tenure Committee of each academic department shall consist of:

- In the case of applicants seeking tenure, all full-time tenured faculty with at least a 0.5 FTE appointment in the Department,
- In the case of applicants seeking promotion, all full-time tenured faculty with at least a 0.5 FTE appointment in the Department at the rank being sought and above.

Note in some cases, this may imply two distinct committees. No Committee shall include Department Heads or faculty members of an administrative rank higher than Department Head. Faculty members who are otherwise eligible to participate in Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee activities but are on sabbatical leave may at their discretion choose not to participate. If a faculty member on sabbatical chooses to participate in the promotion and tenure process, they are expected to do so as a full member of the Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee. Faculty who are otherwise eligible to participate in Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee activities, but are on other types of leave (i.e., medical leave, unpaid leave, and administrative leave) are not eligible to participate in the promotion and tenure process.

The committee (or subcommittee) that considers tenure applications shall include at least three faculty members who are at the required academic rank. For departments with an insufficient number of faculty members at the appropriate level, the Department Head shall consult with the Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Vice Provost and select enough tenured associate professors and/or full professors from related departments to bring the total number of Promotion and Tenure Committee members up to three. Non-departmental members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee shall serve one-year terms and must be approved by the Dean overseeing the host department.

8.1.4 Preliminary Tenure Review

The Preliminary Tenure Review is a mandatory step in the tenure review process for tenure-track assistant professors and those tenure-track associate and full professors whose probationary contracts are longer than four years. The process is designed to: (1) inform a tenure-track faculty member and their department of the Candidate's progress toward promotion and tenure; (2) address areas for improvement; and (3) offer guidance, if needed. Academic Affairs shall disseminate the required format of the preliminary tenure review package and the timeline of the review process for the upcoming academic year by the close of each Spring semester. The timeline shall include the deadlines for package submission, completion of the review, and notification of the Candidate regarding the outcome. At the initiation of either the tenure-track assistant professor or their Department Head, a Preliminary Tenure Review may be conducted before the sixth semester with the written approval of the Dean. The review should point out areas of strength, identify areas requiring further development, and recommend strategies for achieving needed improvement. In rare instances, the review may indicate that the candidate's success at Mines is sufficiently unlikely that their appointment should be terminated prior to the end of the full probationary period.

The following is the outline of the Preliminary Tenure Review process at Mines:

A. Candidate must submit applications (i.e. dossiers) in a PDF format via a single email to their Department Head.
B. The Department Head shall convene the Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee, transmit to the Committee a dossier prepared by the Candidate in consultation with the Department Head, and appoint a Committee member to chair deliberations.
C. The Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee shall examine the dossier, prepare a written report containing a recommendation, and forward the dossier and report to the Department Head. If a report is prepared by members of the Committee holding a minority point of view, it shall also be accepted for consideration and incorporated into the package that is transmitted to the Department Head.
D. The Department Head shall prepare a written recommendation that becomes part of the package. The entire package shall be forwarded to the Dean. The Dean will prepare a written report containing a recommendation and notify the Provost that the dossier has been processed.
E. Copies of the reports of the Committee, the Department Head, and the Dean shall be provided to the Candidate.
F. The Department Head shall meet with the Candidate to discuss the above-mentioned reports.

8.1.5 Tenure Application Process

The standard timeline for tenure application is defined by the latest application date set forth in the employment contract. In certain circumstances the tenure application process can begin at the time of hire or upon nomination by the faculty member's Department Head with approval by the Vice Provost, as appropriate and pursuant to the respective sections herein. Under normal circumstances, a tenure applicant holding the rank of assistant professor shall also apply for promotion to associate professor at the time their tenure application is considered, and promotion and tenure decisions are coupled (either granted or denied as a package) for these individuals. Exceptions to this practice may be considered by the Dean and their recommendation is forwarded to the Provost, who will make the final decision for reasons deemed to be in the best interests of Mines.

8.1.6 Tenure Review Process

A. **Nominating Faculty for Early Tenure**
A tenure track faculty member with exceptional performance may be considered for tenure prior to the end of their standard timeline according to the following:

1. The Department Head submits to the Vice Provost a recommendation that includes the candidate's most current curriculum vita and a statement highlighting the candidate's accomplishments that support an early tenure review.

2. The Vice Provost will review each request on a case-by-case basis. If the Vice Provost supports the request to consider early tenure, the Department Head will advise the candidate to prepare the documentation for tenure review according to section 8.1.6.B, without any guarantee that the candidate will receive tenure through an early review. If the decision is not to support the request, the Department Head will be so advised with reasons for the evaluation and the candidate will not be eligible for an early tenure review. This decision is final and not subject to further review or appeal.

3. If a candidate is not successful in receiving tenure through an early review process, they are not penalized in any way or disadvantaged from the standard tenure review timeline at a later time.

B. **Tenure-Track Faculty**
The following is the outline of the tenure review process for tenure track faculty at Mines:

1. Candidates must submit applications (i.e., dossiers) in a PDF format via a single email to their Department Head and Academic Affairs (academic-affairs@mines.edu). Academic Affairs shall disseminate the required format of the dossier, and the submission and tenure review process deadlines prior to the close of each Spring semester.
2. The Department Head shall convene the departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee as defined in Section 8.1.3, transmit the dossier to the committee, and appoint a committee member to chair deliberations.
3. The Department Head shall solicit external reviewer evaluations from experts in the Candidate's field. All received letters become part of the dossier. The updated dossier shall be forwarded to Department Promotion and Tenure Committee.
4. The Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee shall examine the dossier and prepare a written recommendation including the results of the vote, which becomes part of the dossier. In the case of a split vote, the written recommendation(s) must reflect all viewpoints. The updated dossier shall be forwarded to the Department Head.
5. The Department Head shall prepare a written recommendation that becomes part of the dossier. The Department Head shall share their recommendation and the recommendation(s) of the Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee with the Candidate. Prior to sharing the recommendations with the Candidate, information that could disclose the identities of external reviewers or individual committee members shall be redacted. The Candidate may respond to the recommendations in order to correct factual errors. This response must be provided in writing to the Department Head within three (3) business days. This response shall be included in the dossier before being forwarded to the next level for review.
6. The Department Head shall forward the dossier to the Dean(s) overseeing the Candidate's department or departments in the event of a split appointment. The Dean(s) shall review the dossier and prepare a written recommendation. This recommendation is added to the Candidate's dossier, which is then forwarded to the Provost for transmission to the University Promotion and Tenure Committee.
7. The University Promotion and Tenure Committee shall conduct a thorough and independent review of the dossier and prepare a written recommendation for the Provost.
8. The Provost shall review the entire dossier and submit their recommendation to the President. In assessing the dossiers, the Provost may confer with any other parties who have relevant information on a pending application.
9. The President shall convey the Provost's recommendation to the Board of Trustees, which has the final authority to grant or deny tenure for each Candidate.
10. If a need for clarification arises at any stage of the review process, any of the parties reviewing the dossier (Department Head, Department Promotion and Tenure Committee, etc.) may contact the Candidate to request more information, which shall be included in writing in the dossier before proceeding to the next step of the review process. In addition, a reviewing party may request clarification from any previous reviewer who has evaluated the dossier.
11. The Provost shall provide written notification to each applicant of the results of their tenure application. Decisions shall be reflected in the official records of Mines. Any compensation adjustments resulting from a favorable decision shall be made effective at the beginning of the next academic year. However, Candidates may begin professional use of their new status, faculty rank, and exercise the responsibilities of the new rank immediately. Written recommendations produced by the Deans and the University Committee may, upon candidate request, be made available at the conclusion of the review process.
12. In the case of a tenure application denial, the Candidate may appeal the decision pursuant to the Promotion and Tenure Decision Appeal Procedure set forth in Section 8.5.

C. **Tenure Review at the Time of Employment**
Candidates for tenure at the time of hiring are subject to the tenure review process defined in Section 8.1.6A with the following modifications:

1. The application package shall consist of the Candidate's extended curriculum vitae, and the Candidate's written summaries of their research and teaching experience and interests.
2. External evaluations from experts in the candidate's field should include (but usually not be limited to) the reference letters provided as part of the candidate's employment application package.
3. Review of the Candidate's dossier may occur outside of the published promotion and tenure review cycle.

8.1.7 Criteria for Promotion

Promotion in rank at Mines for tenured and tenure-track faculty is based on the quality of a faculty member's overall performance in teaching, scholarship and service, and the likelihood of continued growth in their accomplishments and their professional reputations nationally and

internationally. [The minimum qualifications for appointment to the relevant academic faculty ranks are set forth in Section 4.4.]

The decision whether or not to promote a faculty member lies solely within the discretion of the Board.

8.1.8 Promotion Application Process

At the time a promotion is desired, it is the responsibility of the faculty member, in consultation with their Department Head, to submit a formal promotion application with appropriate supporting documentation to Mines for promotion review pursuant to the process specified in Section 8.1.9. Under normal circumstances, a promotion applicant holding the rank of assistant professor shall also apply for tenure at the time of their promotion application is considered, and promotion and tenure decisions are coupled (either granted or denied as a package) for these individuals. The Provost may make exceptions to this practice on a case-by-case basis for reasons deemed to be in the best interests of Mines.

8.1.9 Promotion Review Process

Review of promotion applications shall follow the process defined for tenure applications in Section 8.1.6A.