

## Notes From: “Meet Your Vice and Assistant Provosts for Faculty Affairs”

October 4, 2021

**Background:** In partnership with the [UD ADVANCE Institute](#), the Vice and Assistant Provosts for Faculty Affairs offered a question session to allow junior faculty to learn more about faculty policies and procedures at University of Delaware. Because there are a variety of sessions that focus on the promotion and tenure (P&T) process specifically, this event focused largely on non-P&T-related policies and procedures. The notes presented below reflect information provided by the provost’s office during the session.

### 1. Introductions

- a. **Matt Kinservik** ([matthewk@udel.edu](mailto:matthewk@udel.edu)) is *Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs*. Matt is the main administrative point of contact for policies, questions, and assistance regarding faculty work life at UD. Feel free to email Matt with questions regarding policies or practices pertaining to the faculty job, including clarification of information in the Faculty Handbook or Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- b. **Sunaina Soares** ([ssoares@udel.edu](mailto:ssoares@udel.edu)) is *Assistant Provost for Faculty Affairs and Human Resources Director, Academic HR Business Partner*. Contact Sunaina with questions about faculty policies such as leave. She is happy to help faculty figure out how policies work for their specific situations. She is also the systems administrator for the P&T and appraisal systems.
- c. Note: Both Sunaina and Matt will consult with faculty confidentially upon request.

### 2. Policy overview: home assistance and faculty leave

- a. **Home Assistance:** UD has two home-assistance programs that provide faculty financial assistance for home purchases. Both are described on the [Human Resources/Benefits website](#) (UD login required). Programs can be combined when the home being purchased is in an eligible neighborhood.
- b. **Family and Medical Leave:** Faculty are eligible for paid leave for birth or adoption of a child, illness, caregiving, and other reasons. FMLA provides for up to 12 weeks of leave. FMLA leave may be taken on a continuous or intermittent basis. The FMLA leave is typically combined with personal/medical leave of absence to extend the leave for a full semester (paid). During leave there is no obligation to perform work-related duties. You are entitled to leave--you do not have to make up the work later. Contact Sunaina for more information (the earlier the better if you anticipate taking leave). [See FMLA FAQ Document for Faculty](#). Note, faculty leave policies are inconsistent with the Faculty Handbook. Revisions will be brought to the Faculty Senate this year.
- c. **Stop-the-Clock:** Probationary TT or CT faculty can submit a web form for a one-year extension on their tenure or contract clock due to the birth or adoption of a

child, and in response to other circumstances that significantly delay one's progress (lab closure, etc.). See [Faculty Handbook 4.4.15](#) and [Faculty Handbook 4.4.6](#) for more information.

### 3. Q&A (pre-submitted questions from faculty)

#### a. Leave Questions

**Question:** With respect to parental leave policies, what happens if a due date is toward the end of a semester? How is the leave affected?

**Answer:** *This can be accommodated. Contact Sunaina to discuss your situation.*

**Question:** What is the official policy on conducting university business while a faculty member is on family leave?

**Answer:** *You are not obligated to conduct university business while on leave. That doesn't mean you can't check your email, contact students, come to campus, etc. if you want. But you are not required to do so.*

**Question:** If a situation arises such that I cannot work on campus for a period of time (e.g, I or my partner becomes ill), but I can continue all my work duties from home electronically, is that permitted, or am I required to take leave?

**Answer:** *UD is heading toward greater flexibility in this area. The pandemic has shown us that many work duties can be performed remotely. It may be possible to work remotely on a short-term basis rather than take leave.*

#### b. Questions pertaining to CT Faculty

**Question:** Can you clarify the distinction between the review process for CT promotion vs. the 6<sup>th</sup>-year peer review for contract renewal?

**Answer:** *These are separate processes and their outcomes are not linked.*

- *CT faculty contract renewal is conducted within the department/College and occurs in years 2, 4, 6, with increasing intervals thereafter. See Term and Contract Renewal in [Faculty Handbook Section 4.1.6](#).*
- *The promotion review process for CT faculty parallels the promotion review process for T/TT faculty and takes place at the department, college, university, and provost levels.*
- *The dossier for CT faculty promotion is often similar but not identical to the dossier for contract renewal.*
- *The two processes are not linked. A CT faculty member may have a successful contract renewal but may or may not be promoted.*
- *Pay raises for CT faculty members are linked to contract renewals, not promotions.*

**Question:** When are CT faculty eligible for promotion? If one is promoted to associate professor early is that person eligible for sabbatical sooner?

**Answer:** *There is no timeline for CT faculty promotion. CT faculty are eligible for sabbatical on the same timeline as T/TT faculty. UD faculty are eligible for sabbatical after 6 years of service. The sabbatical timeline is not connected to rank.*

### c. Other questions

**Question:** Will assistant professors be able to progress to associate professor after 6 years if they've used the covid 1-year contract extension?

**Answer:** *Yes, faculty can go up for promotion to associate professor after 6 years even if they've taken the COVID 1-year contract extension. Going up "early" in this way does not change the standards for evaluation, which are specified in departmental/college/and university-level documents.*

**Question:** What are the rules for the first sabbatical if I do not make use of the research semester in year 4 of a tenure-track position? Can I take that research semester in a later year, or do I have my first regular sabbatical in year 7 then?

**Answer:** *Pre-tenure research semesters are for TT faculty only. The policy indicates that this semester is taken in years 3 or 5. However, one can apply to take a research semester in a different year (year 4, for example). If one is interested in seeking this type of accommodation, reach out to Matt Kinservik. Taking a research semester "restarts the sabbatical clock." If, for example, you take your research semester in year 3, you are not eligible for sabbatical until year 10. If you do not take a research semester, you will be eligible for your first regular sabbatical in year 7.*

**Note:** *CT faculty are not eligible for pre-tenure research leave but are eligible for their first sabbatical in year 7.*

**Question:** What options does a junior faculty member have if they are experiencing unfair treatment by a senior colleague and are, as a result, concerned about their tenure case?

**Answer:**

- *You have a number of options. You can speak confidentially with Matt or Sunaina. If appropriate, you can share your concerns with your dean or chair. You can come to ADVANCE ([ud-advance@udel.edu](mailto:ud-advance@udel.edu)) for advice. You can contact AAUP-UD to determine whether your concerns are grievable.*
- *Bear in mind that the P&T process at UD involves many levels of independent review and mistakes that are made at lower levels are often corrected at upper levels. So even if your department votes against you, for example, if your record is strong you may get favorable votes up the review chain.*