

University of South Carolina School of Medicine

**Tenure and Promotion Procedures and Criteria for
Tenure-Track Basic Science Faculty**

**Approved by the University Committee on Tenure and Promotion
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I. Introduction

The mission of the University of South Carolina School of Medicine is to improve the health of the people of South Carolina through the development and implementation of programs for medical education, research and the delivery of health care. The faculty of the Basic Science departments supports this mission primarily through teaching of the basic biomedical sciences to medical and graduate students, performing biomedical research and other scholarly activity, and providing service to the academic, scientific and lay communities.

This document provides a structure for evaluating candidates for tenure and promotion in the Basic Science departments of the School of Medicine.

II. Procedures

All School of Medicine procedures will comply with the University of South Carolina procedures and conform to the University Tenure and Promotion Calendar.

- A. All non-tenured faculty members in the tenure track are considered for tenure and all tenure-track faculty members below the rank of Professor are considered for promotion each year. Candidates for tenure and/or promotion will receive written notification before April 1. The Dean is responsible for notification of the individual faculty members under consideration (with a copy to the Department Chair).
- B. Any faculty member who does not wish to be considered in any given year must notify the chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Department Chair in writing by the stated deadline. Faculty in the decision year must be considered. The faculty member desiring consideration must submit a file, using forms provided by the Provost's office, to the Department Chair at least one week before the University deadline. The Department Chair will solicit sufficient evaluation letters from external referees to secure a minimum of five. No more than two of these will be selected from a list of five provided by the candidate. Referees suggested by the candidate should be so indicated in the file. Referees must be able to write an objective review and should not be former teachers, thesis advisors, co-authors, or co-investigators. A minimum of three referees will be independent of the list provided by the candidate and should be selected to evaluate the candidate's scholarly activity. The candidate may solicit additional letters that will be filed in a section separate from that of the external referees' letters. The referees will be sent (a) the criteria for tenure and promotion of Basic Science faculty members, (b) the candidate's curriculum vitae, (c) the candidate's personal statement and (d) representative publications of the candidate. In the personal statement, the candidate should address his/her contribution to collaborative work. Referees will be asked to comment on whether the candidate meets the unit criteria for tenure and/or promotion with regard to research/scholarly activity.

Referees will also be asked to indicate the candidate's contribution in the field of research or scholarly activity and to state if the candidate is developing a national reputation with the likelihood of continued success or, for promotion to Professor, has attained a national or international reputation. When placed in the candidate's file, a biographic paragraph that states the referee's qualifications to comment on the candidate or a copy of the referee's abbreviated *curriculum vitae* should accompany each letter. The Department Chair will forward the information, along with his or her personal recommendations, a description of what the candidate's position has been within the department from the date of hire or date of prior promotion, and a statement of the distribution of the candidate's time and effort in teaching, research/scholarly activity and service, to the chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee by the deadline for files to be complete. The Department Chair or his/her designee will add a summary of the candidate's teaching accomplishments to the file. This summary should include a synthesis of student and peer teaching evaluations and a comparison of the candidate's teaching evaluations with those of others obtained in similar courses in the School of Medicine. The file should also contain copies of the student evaluation form and peer evaluations of teaching as outlined below.

- C. Following the deadline for submission of the file, the Tenure and Promotion Committee of the School of Medicine will meet to discuss the candidate. The Tenure and Promotion Committee will consist of tenured faculty members with primary appointments in the School of Medicine Basic Science Departments, as follows:

Only tenured members of the unit may vote on an application for tenure or promotion. Faculty members of equal or higher rank may vote on a candidate for tenure but only faculty of higher rank may vote on promotion. Emeriti professors may not vote. A faculty member on leave may vote only upon written notification to the chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee or Dean of a desire to do so before beginning the leave

Exceptions include the candidate's spouse, partner or relatives who will not participate in the discussion of or the voting on the candidate or attend meetings at which the candidate's file is discussed. Unit department Chairs or other administrators, who have written or will write a Chair's or Dean's letter for the file, may not vote as part of the Tenure and Promotion Committee. However, they may attend the Tenure and Promotion Committee meeting.

The Tenure and Promotion Committee will elect a chair for a two-year term before the end of the spring semester in alternate academic years. A simple majority vote can remove the chair from office at any time. The chair must be a tenured professor but cannot be a Department Chair or an administrative officer (Associate Dean, Vice Dean or Dean) of the School of Medicine.

At the meeting of the unit Tenure and Promotion Committee, the candidate's file will be presented to the committee by the chair of the committee or his/her designee.

Voting will be by secret ballot. Written ballot justifications are mandatory and must address how the candidate either meets or fails to meet unit criteria. Ballots with

justification will be returned to the chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee (or a designee) using a double envelope system. The inner envelope will have no marks identifying the individual completing the ballot and will contain the marked ballot and justification. The outer envelope will contain the sealed inner envelope and will have the name and signature of the voting faculty member on the outside. The two envelopes will be separated upon receipt by a mechanism that prevents pairing of the two envelopes.

Votes will be recorded as favorable, unfavorable, or abstain. **A favorable decision will require a simple majority of the justified “yes” or “no” votes of all members.** Ballots marked “abstain” and those lacking justification will not be counted in determining a majority. The chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee (or a designee) will compile and send to the Dean a list of all eligible faculty casting ballots and of those failing to vote. The chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee will forward all recommendations to the Dean with supporting material.

- D. It is the responsibility of the chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee to notify the faculty member under consideration and the faculty member’s departmental chair of the favorable or unfavorable recommendation by the Committee. In the case of an unfavorable recommendation, a summary of the ballot justifications, prepared by the chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, will also be provided to the candidate.

A faculty member receiving a negative recommendation by the Tenure and Promotion Committee may appeal the recommendation by notifying, in writing, the chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee of the intention to file an appeal within the schedule given in the University Tenure and Promotion Calendar. If the candidate appeals the committee’s recommendation, the chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee will invite further written comments from the faculty.

The Dean will review the files of all candidates receiving a positive recommendation from the Tenure and Promotion Committee, candidates who are appealing a negative recommendation from the Committee and candidates for tenure in their decision year. The Dean will add an assessment and recommendation to these files and forward the file with his or her recommendation to the Provost.

- E. Additions to the file initiated by the candidate or by unit faculty members after the Tenure and Promotion Committee’s vote has occurred are limited to the following:
1. The list of publications submitted or under review may be amended to indicate acceptance for publication.
 2. The list of grant proposals submitted may be amended to indicate award and/or funding.
 3. Letters submitted directly to the Dean or Provost or as part of an appeal may be added.
- F. Failure to recommend favorably at a particular time, except in the case of tenure in a decision year, is without prejudice with respect to future consideration.

G. The procedures for appeals to the University Grievance Committee are presented in *The Faculty Manual*.

III. Criteria for Tenure and Promotion

A. General Guidelines

1. Criteria will comply with those of the University of South Carolina as outlined in *The Faculty Manual* and *The University Committee on Tenure and Promotions Guide to Criteria and Procedures*.
2. In agreement with *The Faculty Manual*, the award of tenure and promotion will depend upon the candidate's level of performance in teaching, research or scholarly activity, and service. Candidates must provide evidence that their work consistently meets the standards established in this document.
 - a. **Teaching.** Faculty members in the Basic Sciences are responsible for educating and training medical students and graduate students in the basic biomedical sciences. They may also participate in the education of undergraduate students, residents, fellows and other professional students. Although the number of contact hours may be less than those typical of academic units with responsibility for undergraduate teaching, assigned teaching loads for Basic Science faculty members in the School of Medicine are consistent with those at medical schools of major research universities. Faculty members are expected to be effective teachers.
 - b. **Research or scholarly activity.** A record of original scholarship supported by substantial extramural funding and resulting in peer-reviewed publications that make a major intellectual contribution is the foremost criterion for award of tenure and promotion. Usually, at least 50% of a faculty member's effort should be devoted to this area if tenure and promotion are desired.

Although independence of the faculty member from graduate, postdoctoral and other advisors is required for tenure and promotion, it is recognized that biomedical research increasingly involves collaborative efforts. Candidates for tenure or promotion may have conducted their research/scholarly activity in collaboration with other investigators. Nevertheless, the candidate must be recognized by collaborators, internal peers and external referees as an independent, original and substantive investigator who has made critical contributions to, and served as a full participating member of, the collaborative effort. The nature of the candidate's contribution to collaborative grants and publications should be included in the lists of these items and documented in the candidate's personal statement. Where possible, this should also be addressed in the letters of referees.

- c. **Service.** Faculty members are expected to perform service in support of the missions and goals of the School, the University and the scientific community.
- d. In each area, the level of performance necessary for award of tenure and/or promotion is given below. The minimum required evidence of accomplishment for each area is listed. Documentation of performance (copies of publications, teaching aids, student and peer evaluations of teaching, award letters, chair's statement of departmental service, record of committee service, letters outlining collaborative efforts etc.) should be included in the candidate's supplemental file.

B. Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

The criteria for promotion to Associate Professor and for award of tenure are the same with the exception of early promotion based on service at another institution, as indicated below.

For tenure at the Associate Professor level and for promotion to Associate Professor, the primary criteria are substantial accomplishment in the candidate's area of research with evidence of a developing national reputation and the promise of continued success. Effectiveness in medical and graduate teaching and some accomplishment of service must also be shown.

The candidate must show integrity, good judgment, and reasonable cooperation with others. The faculty member is expected to hold an earned doctoral degree and to have at least four years of independent teaching and research. Although early promotion to Associate Professor based on outstanding performance or faculty service at another institution is possible, it is unlikely that a faculty member will be awarded tenure before the end of the probationary period.

1. Teaching

a. Required as evidence of effective teaching

- i. Positive evaluations of assigned teaching in didactic (versus primarily research) courses documented with student and peer evaluations. Student and peer evaluations must be provided for each year since appointment to the tenure-track. Where available, comparative data for other instructors in the same course, or comparable courses in the School of Medicine, should be provided. A mean, overall student evaluation rating (on the question pertaining to overall effectiveness as a teacher) of at least 3.5 (on a scale of 1-5 with 1=poor and 5=excellent) is expected. Similarly, a minimum overall evaluation of 3.5 by peer evaluators is expected. These minimum ratings should be attained in the year preceding application for tenure or promotion or should be typical for the period since appointment.
- ii. One or more of the following indicators:

- (a) Direction of student dissertation or thesis research.
 - (b) Direction of other research projects involving undergraduate, graduate or postdoctoral students.
 - (c) Development and teaching of undergraduate, graduate, professional or postgraduate courses in addition to assigned teaching.
 - (d) Serving as course director for a medical or graduate didactic course
- b. Additional evidence of effectiveness might include publication of peer-reviewed articles on educational issues; publication of textbooks, laboratory manuals, web sites or other teaching aids; receipt of School of Medicine or University teaching awards; receipt of teaching grants; acting as a principal investigator for a training grant awarded to the department or graduate program; service on student thesis committees; participation in national/international medical teaching symposia; and attendance at teaching workshops or other efforts to improve teaching quality.

2. Research

a. Required as evidence of substantial accomplishment

- i. A record of original research in recognized, peer-reviewed publications having a national or international scope. Publications should be judged by quality as well as by quantity and their indication of the development of a national or international reputation. These articles should reflect work accomplished since appointment and should have been conducted primarily at the University of South Carolina. The candidate should indicate clearly his/her role in each published report as well as the role of collaborators. Articles in which the candidate has made a substantial contribution will be given more consideration than articles in which the candidate played a minor role. Copies of all articles published before and after appointment to the faculty of the University of South Carolina School of Medicine should be included in the secondary file.
- ii. Demonstration of the ability to sustain a high quality research program. Current funding, awarded to the candidate as Principal Investigator or co-Principal Investigator, from federal granting agencies or national funding organizations or comparable funding from contracts or fees from license of intellectual property, sufficient to accomplish the research objectives, is expected. The candidate should add a summary of his/her contribution to grants/research projects on which he/she is not principal investigator.
- iii. Presentation of results at scientific conferences (voluntary posters or oral presentations), invited presentations at regional or national symposia or invited seminars at institutions other than USC.

- iv. Positive evaluations by the external referees. Letters should indicate substantial research accomplishment by the candidate with a developing national reputation and the probability of continued success.
- b. Additional evidence of substantial accomplishment might include authorship of review articles or other articles in books and journals lacking peer review; authorship or editorship of an academic or scholarly book or monograph; elected membership in a scientific or professional society; patents; awards or special recognition for research accomplishments.

3. Service

- a. Required as evidence of accomplishment
 - i. Participation in departmental and School of Medicine activities and performance of assigned departmental service.
 - ii. Current or previously completed service on at least two School of Medicine or University committees.
 - iii. Professional service including one or more of the following:
 - (a) Committee member or officer in a scientific or professional organization.
 - (b) Organization of symposia, conferences, etc.
 - (c) Professionally relevant university or community service.
 - (d) Review of manuscripts for scientific journals.
 - (e) Review of grant applications for regional or national funding organizations.
- b. Additional evidence of accomplishment might include service in an administrative capacity in the School of Medicine or the University; publications on service/administrative issues; consultation; and awards for School of Medicine, University of South Carolina or relevant community service.

C. Promotion to Professor

For promotion to the rank of Professor, outstanding, sustained scholarship is required. The candidate must have made a major intellectual contribution in the area of specialization and have attained a national or international reputation for research/scholarly activity. Substantial accomplishments in teaching and service are also required.

Most candidates will have specialized in biomedical research, but specialization in biomedical education is also acceptable if the candidate's performance meets the criteria for outstanding research/scholarly activity. Outstanding performance in teaching at the local level alone is *not* sufficient for promotion to Professor. However, a sustained, outstanding performance in School of Medicine education programs (an unusually high percentage of effort in teaching, successful directorship of major medical or graduate courses as evidenced by outstanding course evaluations, receipt of multiple awards for excellence in teaching, consistently outstanding teaching evaluations by students and peers) *combined with* evidence of a national or international scholarly reputation *and* substantial research/scholarly activity would be acceptable for promotion to Professor.

The candidate must show integrity, good judgment, and reasonable cooperation with others. Evaluation will include the entire professional record, but will emphasize performance since promotion to (or appointment at) Associate Professor. Usually, the faculty member is expected to hold an earned doctoral degree and to have at least nine years of substantial accomplishment in teaching and research.

1. Teaching

a. Required as evidence of substantial accomplishment

- i. Positive evaluations of assigned teaching in didactic (versus primarily research) courses documented with student and peer evaluations. Student evaluations should be provided for each of the preceding three years. Where available, comparative data for other instructors in the same course, or comparable courses in the School of Medicine, should be provided. A mean, overall student evaluation rating (on the question pertaining to overall effectiveness as a teacher) of at least 3.5 (on a scale of 1-5 with 1=poor and 5=excellent) is expected. At least one peer evaluation, performed within the preceding three years, for each major course taught should also be provided. A minimum evaluation of 3.5 by peer evaluators is normally expected.
- ii. Two or more of the following indicators:
 - (a) Consistent record of directing student dissertation or thesis research.
 - (b) Consistent record of directing research projects involving undergraduate, graduate or postdoctoral students.

- (c) Direction of a major, multi-instructor course for medical or graduate students. Results of course evaluations in comparison with other courses taught at the School of Medicine should be included in the file.
 - (d) Receipt of School of Medicine or other awards for excellence in teaching.
 - (e) Development and teaching of undergraduate, graduate, professional or postgraduate courses in addition to assigned teaching.
- b. Additional evidence of substantial accomplishment might include receipt of teaching grants; acting as a principal investigator for a training grant awarded to the department or graduate program; service on student thesis committees; and development of significant teaching aids such as textbooks, web sites or computer-aided instruction.

2. Research/Scholarly activity

- a. Required as evidence of outstanding, sustained scholarship
 - i. A sustained record of original scholarship in recognized, peer-reviewed publications having a national or international scope. Publications should be judged by quality as well as by quantity. These articles should reflect work accomplished primarily at the University of South Carolina. The candidate should indicate his/her role in each published report. Articles in which the candidate has made a substantial contribution will be given more consideration than articles in which the candidate played a minor role. Copies of the articles should be included in the secondary file.
 - ii. Demonstration of the ability to sustain a high quality program of research or other scholarly activity. Sustained and substantial funding, awarded to the candidate as Principal Investigator or co-Principal Investigator, from federal granting agencies or generation of funding through other external grants or other sources such as contracts or fees from license of intellectual property, sufficient to accomplish the research/scholarly objectives, is expected.
 - iii. Consistent presentation of results at scientific conferences (voluntary posters or oral presentations), invited presentations at regional or national symposia or invited seminars at institutions other than USC.
 - iv. Positive evaluations by the external referees. Letters should indicate outstanding accomplishment in scholarly activity by the candidate with attainment of a national or international reputation.
- b. Additional evidence of outstanding, sustained scholarship might include authorship of review articles; authorship/editorship of an academic or scholarly book or monograph; awards or special recognition for research/scholarly

accomplishments; patents; receipt of career development awards, senior faculty fellowships or grants.

3. Service

a. Required as evidence of substantial accomplishment

- i. Active leadership within the department or graduate program. Examples are service as a course director, graduate director or committee chair.
- ii. Active (present or past) participation in at least three School of Medicine or University committees. At least one of these must be a major committee (e.g., Curriculum Committee, Admissions Committee, Graduate Committee, Institutional Review Board, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee). Service should also include appointment or election to chair or other office for at least one such committee.
- iii. Professional service of one or more of the following types: leadership in scientific or professional organizations, organization of symposia or conferences, service on national grant review panels or editorial boards, or consultation with government or industry.

- b. Additional evidence of accomplishment might include service as a student advisor; service in an administrative capacity in the School of Medicine or the University; peer-reviewed publications on service/administrative issues; professionally relevant community service; and awards for School of Medicine, University of South Carolina or professionally relevant community service.

D. Evaluation of faculty hired with or without tenure at the Associate Professor or Professor level

The whole career of persons hired to the faculty of the School of Medicine at the level of Associate Professor or above, with or without tenure, will be evaluated under the same criteria described above.