

**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 Promotions**  
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## University of South Carolina School of Medicine

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

#### 1. 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.

#### 2. Procedures

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

1. All non-tenured faculty members are considered for tenure and all tenure-track faculty members below the rank of Professor are considered for promotion each year and will receive written notification at least thirty days before the deadline for submitting their file for consideration. The chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, in collaboration with the department chair, is responsible for notification of the individual faculty members under consideration (with a copy to the Dean's Office).
2. 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 by the University deadline. The department chair, in consultation with the chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, will solicit a minimum of five letters of support from external referees. 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 should not usually be former teachers, coauthors, co-investigators, etc. A minimum of three referees will be independent of the list provided by the candidate and should be selected to evaluate the candidate's teaching, research and service. 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 and (c) representative publications of the candidate. Referees will be asked to comment on whether the candidate meets the unit criteria for tenure and/or promotion. 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 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.

3. Following the deadline for submission of the file, the Tenure and Promotion Committee of the School of Medicine will meet and make its recommendations. The Tenure and Promotion Committee will consist of all tenured faculty with primary appointments in the School of Medicine Basic Science Departments. Exceptions include the candidate's spouse or relatives who will not participate in either the discussion of or the voting on the candidate. The 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.

Tenure and promotion must be considered separately, but the two may be recommended simultaneously. In the matter of tenure, decisions will be made by all tenured faculty members of equal or higher rank. In the matter of promotion, decisions will be by those of higher rank.

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 of identification and will contain the marked ballot and justification. The other 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 two-thirds positive vote 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.

4. 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 department 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 them to the Provost.

5. Additions to the file initiated by the candidate or faculty after the Tenure and Promotion Committee's vote has occurred are limited to the following items:
  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 funding.
  3. Letters submitted directly to the Dean or as part of an appeal may be added.
6. 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.
7. The procedures for appeals to the University Grievance Committee are presented in *The Faculty Manual*.

### 3. Criteria for Tenure and Promotion

#### 1. General Guidelines

1. Criteria will comply with those of the University of South Carolina as outlined in *The Faculty Manual*.
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.
  1. **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.

2. **Research or scholarly activity.** Published, peer-reviewed scholarship that makes 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 candidate should also have demonstrated the ability to direct a self-supporting research program.

3. **Service.** Faculty members are expected to perform service in support of the missions and goals of the School, the University and the scientific community.
4. 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 should be corroborated by additional evidence, such as that listed. Where indicated, documentation of performance should be included in the candidate's supplemental file.

## 2. Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

For tenure at the Assistant or 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. Proficiency 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. Usually, 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

### 1. Required as evidence of proficiency

1. 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, as well as for all instructors in School of Medicine year 1 and year 2 courses, should be provided. A mean, overall student evaluation rating, averaged over all teaching and weighted for the number of hours in each course, of at least 3.0 (on a scale of 1-5 with 1=poor and 5=excellent) is usually expected. Similarly, a minimum overall evaluation of 3.0 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.
2. Development of clear and effective teaching aids such as course handouts and audio-visual presentations. Documentation should be included in the file.

2. Additional evidence of proficiency might include publication of peer-reviewed articles on educational issues; publication of textbooks, laboratory manuals or computer programs designed to aid teaching; direction of postgraduate, graduate or undergraduate students; receipt of School of Medicine or University teaching awards; receipt of teaching grants; acting as the principal investigator for a training grant awarded to the department or graduate program; development and teaching of undergraduate, graduate, professional or postgraduate courses in addition to assigned teaching; attendance at teaching workshops or other efforts to improve teaching quality; and service as a course director in a didactic course. Accomplishments should be documented with appropriate letters of award, copies of documents, etc.

## 2. Research

### 1. Required as evidence of substantial accomplishment

1. 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 with an expected average publication rate of at least one per year. These articles should reflect work accomplished since appointment and conducted 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 file.

2. 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.
  3. Demonstration of the ability to sustain a high quality research program. Generation of funding through external grants or other sources such as contracts or fees from license of intellectual property, sufficient to accomplish the research objectives, is the norm.
2. Additional evidence of substantial accomplishment might include invitations to present seminars, lectures or addresses on the area of the candidate's research specialty; presentations at scientific meetings; 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; reviewing grants for local, regional or national funding organizations; and ad hoc refereeing of papers for scientific journals or membership on journal editorial boards. Accomplishments should be documented with appropriate letters of award, copies of documents, etc.

### 3. Service

1. Required as evidence of accomplishment
  1. Satisfactory performance of assigned departmental service. This should be documented by the department chair.
  2. Current or previously completed service on at least two School of Medicine or University committees or the Faculty Senate. Active participation should be documented by the published record of committee attendance and/or a favorable letter from each committee chair.
2. Additional evidence of accomplishment might include service as a course director in a didactic course; service on thesis or dissertation committees; service as a student advisor; service in an administrative capacity in the School of Medicine or the University; leadership in national scientific or professional organizations; peer-reviewed publications on service/administrative issues; consultation; organization of symposia, conferences, etc.; professionally relevant community service; and awards for School of Medicine, University of South Carolina or professionally relevant community service. Accomplishments should be documented with appropriate letters of award, copies of documents, etc.

### 3. Promotion to Professor or Tenure at the Rank of Professor

For promotion to the rank of professor or tenure at this rank, 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 or tenure at that rank. 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 institutional and multiple student 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 effective teaching and research.

#### 1. Teaching

##### 1. Required as evidence of substantial accomplishment

1. 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, as well as for all instructors in School of Medicine year 1 and year 2 courses, should be provided. A mean, overall student evaluation rating, averaged over all teaching in the three-year period and weighted for the number of hours in each course, of at least 3.5 (on a scale of 1-5 with 1=poor and 5=excellent) is usually 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.
2. Development of clear and effective, course-specific teaching aids such as course handouts and audio-visual presentations. Documentation should be included in the file.



3. One or more of the following indicators:
  - (1) Direction of a major didactic 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.
  - (2) Receipt of School of Medicine or other awards for excellence in teaching.
  - (3) Direction of graduate student dissertation research.
2. Additional evidence of substantial accomplishment might include receipt of teaching grants; acting as the principal investigator for a training grant awarded to the department or graduate program; development of significant teaching aids such as textbooks or computer-aided instruction; and development and teaching of undergraduate, graduate, professional or postgraduate courses in addition to assigned teaching. Accomplishments should be documented with appropriate letters of award, copies of documents, etc.

## 2. Research/Scholarly activity

1. Required as evidence of outstanding, sustained scholarship
  1. 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 file.
  2. 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.
  3. Demonstration of the ability to sustain a high quality program of research or other scholarly activity. Generation of funding through external grants or other sources such as contracts or fees from license of intellectual property, sufficient to accomplish the research/scholarly objectives, is expected. Sustained funding from federal granting agencies or national funding organizations is the norm.
2. Additional evidence of outstanding, sustained scholarship might include invitations to present seminars, lectures or addresses on the area of the candidate's specialty; presentations at scientific or professional meetings; invitations to participate in symposia; authorship of review articles; authorship/editorship of an academic or scholarly book or monograph; service on national grant review panels; service on editorial boards or editorship of scientific or professional journals; awards or special recognition for research/scholarly accomplishments; patents; receipt of career

development awards, senior faculty fellowships or grants; and direction of postgraduate, graduate or undergraduate students. Accomplishments should be documented with appropriate letters of award, copies of documents, etc.

### 3. Service

#### 1. Required as evidence of substantial accomplishment

1. Active leadership within the department or graduate program. Examples are service as a course director, graduate director or committee chair. This should be documented by the department chair.
2. Active (present or past) participation in at least three School of Medicine or University committees or the Faculty Senate. 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. Current or previously completed service should be documented by the published record of committee attendance and/or a favorable letter from each committee chair.
3. 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.

2. Additional evidence of accomplishment might include service on thesis or dissertation committees; 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. Accomplishments should be documented with appropriate letters of award, copies of documents, etc.