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Appointments, Promotions & Tenure

A few months ago, I charged the Appointments, Promotions and Tenure (APT) Committee to review the School of Medicine's promotion and tenure guidelines and to recommend efficient and consistent standards that could be followed across departments within the scope of the UAB Faculty Handbook. The APT committee has devised a consolidated set of criteria for appointments, promotions and tenure, re-defined the approval process and clarified the definition of scholarship in the SOM. The Provost has granted approval to implement these changes effective immediately. The new guidelines are listed below and will also be published in the SOM's new faculty handbook, which is scheduled to be completed and distributed later this month. Many thanks to the APT committee (**Tika Benveniste, Cleve Kinney, Lanning Kline, Robert Koehler, Jay McDonald, Margarete Roser and Tim Townes**) and committee chair, **Bruce Korf** for conducting this study. Additionally, by consensus of the SOM Executive Committee and with the approval of the Provost, we will discontinue use of qualifying adjectives for members of the full-time faculty. For example, the previous title of Research Assistant Professor will here forth simply be Assistant Professor, etc. The qualifier "clinical" and "adjunct" will continue to be used for voluntary faculty members.

Recommendations of the Committee

1. Standards for Appointment, Promotions, and Tenure

The committee proposes that the SOM adopt criteria that would be used by all departments, replacing department-specific criteria. Proposed criteria are provided in **Appendix B**. The following principles guided the process of formulating these criteria:

- Appointment, promotion, and tenure decisions must be based on assessment of an individual's scholarly contributions. The committee embraces the concept of an expanded view of scholarship, as articulated by Ernest Boyer (Boyer, E.L. Scholarship Reconsidered. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990) (**Appendix C**). Four categories of scholarship are recognized: scholarship of discovery, scholarship of teaching, scholarship of application, and scholarship of integration. The committee believes that these categories capture the essence of scholarship and can be applied to faculty across a wide variety of disciplines, including both clinical and basic science faculty.
- Promotion and tenure decisions must be based on thorough assessment of an individual's scholarly contributions. A distinction should be made between scholarly *contributions* and scholarly *activity*. This is discussed further in **Appendix C**.
- APT criteria should be clear, yet be non-prescriptive, allowing for flexibility that recognizes the diverse missions of the School of Medicine and the corresponding diversity of faculty.
- Decisions for appointment/promotion and those for tenure may be made at the same time or may occur at separate times, but two distinct decision-making processes should occur.

2. Process for Consideration of APT Decisions

The committee proposes that a single faculty committee be constituted to consider appointment, promotion, and tenure decisions, replacing the current Faculty Council and JHS Faculty Status Committee. The constitution of a single faculty committee would be consistent with the principle, described above, that the expanded view of scholarship can be applied to faculty across a wide variety of disciplines, including clinical and basic science faculty. The APT committee believes that these unified criteria can be fairly applied to a diverse faculty by a single faculty committee; indeed, a single committee will increase the likelihood that criteria are applied consistently and fairly. In order to insure that committee members gain sufficient experience with the process, it is recommended that faculty be appointed to three year terms, renewable once. Therefore, most members will serve a total of six years. It will be important in constituting the committee that attention be given to inclusion of faculty representing diverse scholarly pursuits and from multiple departments.

The committee considered whether Department Chairs should be engaged to review tenure decisions following recommendation by the faculty committee. A process was discussed wherein the chair of the faculty committee would present the case for the tenure decision, the proposal would be discussed by two reviewer chairs, and then a final vote would be taken by the committee of chairs. The APT committee recognized that such a system would further engage chairs, provide a rigorous forum of peer review of tenure decisions, and familiarize chairs with critical tenure decisions being made in the SOM. The APT committee, however, had reservations about the proposal. It was felt that a second tier of review would undermine the authority of the faculty committee and could result in a politicization of the process. It was also noted that significant changes in the APT review criteria and review process were being proposed, and that the effect of these changes should be monitored. If, after a reasonable period of time with the new process it appears that further changes are warranted, further involvement of the chairs with the tenure process can be reconsidered.

3. Change in status from non-tenure earning to tenure-earning

The committee was asked to consider the questions of a) when is a decision made to appoint a faculty member as tenure-earning or non-tenure earning; b) under what circumstances can a faculty member's status be changed from non-tenure-earning to tenure-earning. The committee finds that these issues are covered in the UAB Faculty Handbook, relevant passages of which are quoted below. Appointment to a tenure-earning position can occur only after a national search for a tenure-earning position. Hence the decision to appointment an individual to a tenure-earning position would ordinarily occur at the time of initial appointment. Moving from a non-tenure earning position to a tenure-earning position would require conducting a new national search, unless the original search was for a tenure-earning position.

From UAB Faculty Handbook:

2.6.3.2 Initial Appointments of Faculty

For all full-time regular tenured or full-time regular tenure-earning positions, recruitment at the national level is required. For all full-time or part-time regular non-tenure-earning positions, recruitment at the national level is required unless otherwise justified and approved by the dean or library director and Provost.

2.6.6.3 Tenure by Faculty Rank

Tenure may be conferred at any time but only upon appointees holding the ranks of Associate Professor, Associate Librarian, Professor, or Librarian and only in accordance with policies stipulated for the awarding of tenure.

Tenure may be awarded to someone initially appointed at a rank below Associate Professor or Associate Librarian only after promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, Associate Librarian, or higher, and provided the original search which resulted in recruitment of the individual solicited candidates for a tenure-earning or tenured position.

2.6.6.5 Changes in Tenure-earning Status

Individuals appointed to faculty positions at UAB may be appointed to the tenure-earning faculty only once during a period of continuous employment at UAB. That is, with appropriate approval, (a) individuals initially appointed to the tenure-earning faculty may later be appointed to the non-tenure-earning faculty, but they may not subsequently return to the tenure-earning faculty during a period of continuous employment; or (b) individuals initially appointed to the non-tenure-earning faculty may later be appointed to the tenure-earning faculty position provided that the search under which he or she is selected is for a tenure-earning faculty position. When appropriate, these individuals could then return to the non-tenure-earning faculty. Appointment change from a tenure-earning to a non-tenure-earning faculty position requires notification of the faculty member whose status is to change and the approval of his/her chair, dean or library director, and Provost.

Appendix B

UAB School of Medicine Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion & Tenure

Criteria for Appointment or Promotion

Criteria for appointment or promotion include contributions in the areas of research, teaching, and service. Individuals appointed in a tenure-earning track are expected to demonstrate excellence or potential for excellence in at least two of these three areas; those in a nontenure-earning track are expected to demonstrate excellence or potential for excellence in any one area.

Assistant Professor

The following criteria are generally used for appointment to the rank of Assistant Professor:

- Two or more years experience following receipt of Doctorate
- Academic credentials and demonstration of level of specialized accomplishment appropriate to the mission of the Department and the SOM
- An expectation of collegiality and participation in service in the Department and/or SOM
- Demonstration of potential for scholarly achievement in areas of research, teaching, and/or service, as appropriate

Associate Professor

The following criteria are generally used for appointment or promotion to Associate Professor:

- Three or more years in the rank of Assistant Professor
- Academic credentials and demonstration of level of specialized accomplishment appropriate to the mission of the Department and the SOM
- Demonstration of collegiality and involvement in the Department and/or SOM
- Evidence of scholarly achievement in areas of research, teaching, and/or service, as appropriate, documented by peer recognition at a national level

Specific examples of activities that are consistent with the above guidelines follow for each of the three academic activities:

Research

1. Demonstration of initiative and independence in research activities in basic science, clinical, outcomes, or population-based research.
2. Publication of independent research findings and scholarly papers in peer-reviewed journals.
3. Obtaining grants and/or contracts for support of research.
4. Participation as a member of large research team(s), providing documented critical contribution(s).
5. Presentation of research and other scholarly findings at scientific and professional meetings.
6. Service on thesis or dissertation committees.

Teaching

1. Demonstration of mastery of content and method, documented by student and peer evaluation. All teaching activities should receive consideration.
2. Taking responsibility for the design, organization, coordination and evaluation of a course or series of lectures.
3. Developing and/or presenting effective continuing education or other professional programs, including invited presentations.
4. Providing effective supervision, guidance, and/or counseling to trainees, including graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and/or house officers.
5. Participation in educational program planning and general curricular activities.
6. Publication of papers and/or presents at professional meetings on topics related to education.
7. Demonstration of innovation in teaching methods and production of texts, educational software or courseware.
8. Receipt of recognition as an exemplary scientist or clinician whose mentoring and teaching activities provide an outstanding role model for students.
9. Serving as principal investigator on grants or contracts for educational projects.

Service

1. Providing exemplary patient care and/or serves in administrative or committee roles that augment the missions of the Department and/or SOM
2. Providing staff responsibility for a service or specific area of patient care.
3. Serving as critical member or director of a research core laboratory.
4. Serving on committees with the department, school, university and/or affiliated institutions.
5. Engaging in mentoring junior faculty colleagues.
6. Serving on committees to develop clinical practice guidelines or to formulate healthcare policies.
7. Providing service to the professional or lay community through education, consultation or other roles.

Professor

The following criteria are generally used for appointment or promotion to the rank of Professor:

- Distinguished performance as an associate professor, at least 3-5 years in rank.
- Academic credentials and demonstration of level of specialized accomplishment appropriate to the mission of the Department and the SOM
- Demonstration of collegiality, involvement, and leadership as a citizen of the Department and/or SOM
- Evidence of sustained scholarly achievement and productivity in the areas of research, teaching, and/or service, as appropriate
- Demonstration of nationally recognized excellence in the conduct of academic duties

Specific examples of activities that are consistent with the above guidelines follow for each of the three academic activities:

Research

1. Continued demonstration of initiative, independence, and sustained activity in basic science, clinical, outcomes or population research.
2. Sustained productivity as author of papers reporting independent research findings in peer-reviewed journals.
3. Record of sustained ability to obtain grants and contracts for support of research.
4. Receipt of recognition for excellence in research by professional or scientific institutions or organizations.
5. Continued critical contribution(s) to large research team(s)
6. Receipt of invitations to preside over sessions at national or international or scientific meetings.
7. Participation in external review committees, study sections, or service as editor of scientific or professional journals.

Teaching

1. Sustained and outstanding performance in the examples cited for the associate professor level.
2. Leadership through design, organization, coordination, and evaluation of a course or courses.
3. Sustained excellence or demonstrated improvement in teaching.
4. Administrative responsibility at the school or departmental level for curriculum.
5. Leadership in continuing education or other professional programs; invitations as visiting professor at other institutions.
6. Supervision of staff teaching within a course, division, department, or within the school.
7. Sustained productivity in publication of papers and/or presentations at professional meetings on topics related to education.
8. Sustained innovation and leadership in production of texts, educational software, or courseware.
9. Record of sustained ability to maintain external funding to support innovative educational projects.
10. Sustained recognition as an exemplary scientist, teacher or clinician whose activities provide an outstanding role model for students.

Service

1. Continued demonstration of excellence in patient care and/or service in critical administrative, core laboratory, or committee roles that augment the missions of the Department and/or SOM.
2. Senior staff responsibility for a service or specific area of patient care or clinical teaching.
3. Recognition as an authority by other schools and departments within UAB and by local, state, regional and or national organizations or institutions.
4. Appointment to responsible position(s) within the institution or its affiliates (e.g., chairs a committee, department, or division; membership on major Department or SOM committees).
5. Engages in mentoring of faculty colleagues.
6. Continued service on committees to develop clinical practice guidelines or to formulate regional or national healthcare policies.

7. Election to responsible positions on civic boards or organizations concerned with health care issues at the local, state, regional, national or international levels.

Guidelines for Tenure

Tenure decisions should be made separately from appointment or promotion decisions. These decisions may be made at the same time or at separate points in time. General guidelines or criteria for the granting of tenure include the following:

- Achievement of rank of at least Associate Professor
- Academic credentials consistent with the missions of the department and the School of Medicine
- National reputation reflected by peer recognition, presentations at national professional meetings, and productivity in published works
- Evidence of positive institutional citizenship, manifest as effective participation in service activities, mentoring of more junior colleagues, support of university missions and values, collegiality and leadership initiative.
- Evidence of sustained, significant scholarly achievement in at least two of three areas, including research, teaching, and service.

Appendix C

Scholarship at UAB School of Medicine

UAB School of Medicine (UABSOM) has a multifaceted mission that includes providing healthcare, conducting research, applying new knowledge to improve healthcare delivery, and educating healthcare providers. The ability of UABSOM to achieve this mission requires the commitment of a diverse faculty. As an affirmation of this principle, we provide the following articulation of Scholarship at UABSOM, which is derived from an expanded view of scholarship set forth in Dr. Ernest L. Boyer's book *Scholarship Reconsidered*¹, published by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. It is hoped that this statement will inform both the career development of faculty at UABSOM and the process of making decisions regarding appointments, promotion, and tenure.

Boyer's expanded view of scholarship includes contributions in four domains: *scholarship of discovery*, *scholarship of teaching*, *scholarship of application*, and *scholarship of integration*. These are defined by Boyer as follows:

Scholarship of Discovery

"... the scholarship of discovery... comes closest to what is meant when academics speak of "research." No tenets in the academy are held in higher regard than the commitment to knowledge for its own sake, to freedom in inquiry and to following, in a disciplined fashion, an investigation wherever it may lead... Scholarly investigation... is at the very heart of academic life, and the pursuit of knowledge must be assiduously cultivated and defended."

Scholarship of Teaching

"When defined as *scholarship*...teaching both educates and entices future scholars. As a *scholarly* enterprise, teaching begins with what the teacher knows...Teaching is also a dynamic endeavor involving all the analogies, metaphors, and images that build bridges between the teacher's understanding and the student's learning...Further, good teaching means that faculty, as scholars are also learners...In the end, inspired teaching keeps the flame of scholarship alive...Without the teaching function, the continuity of knowledge will be broken and the store of human knowledge dangerously diminished."

Scholarship of Application

"The third element, the *application* of knowledge, moves toward engagement as the scholar asks, 'How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as to institutions?'...To be considered *scholarship*, service activities must be tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and relate to, and flow directly out of, this professional activity. Such service is serious, demanding work, requiring the rigor – and the accountability – traditionally associated with research activities."

Scholarship of Integration

"By integration, we mean making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating nonspecialists, too...Today, interdisciplinary *and* integrative studies, long on the edges of academic life, are moving toward the center, responding both to new intellectual questions and to pressing human problems. As the boundaries of human knowledge are being dramatically reshaped, the academy surely must give increased attention to the *scholarship of integration*."

The scholarship of discovery, teaching, and application relate directly to UABSOM's major missions in research, teaching, and service. Examples of each are provided in the guidelines for appointment or promotion and tenure. The scholarship of integration relates to all three areas and should be considered relative to contributions in the three primary areas.

Since the publication of *Scholarship Reconsidered* there has been much discussion of how scholarship in Boyer's four domains should be assessed (e.g., see Glassick et al.²). The committee recognizes that rigorous standards must be applied, including assessment of both published and unpublished work. We believe that the guidelines in Appendix B can serve as examples of criteria that can be used to judge scholarly contributions for making promotion and tenure decisions.

¹ Boyer, E.L. *Scholarship Reconsidered*. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. 1990.

² Glassick, C.E., Huber, M.T., Maeroff, G.L.. *Scholarship Assessed: Evaluation of the Professoriate*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1997.