

## **POLICY REGARDING NON-TENURE EARNING RESEARCH FACULTY**

Non-tenure earning research faculty in the Department of Pathology, defined as individuals holding the rank of Instructor or higher, are important contributors to our research programs. This policy statement addresses faculty that are appointed to the non-tenure earning track with expertise in research commencing May 1<sup>st</sup> 2011.

The role of the non-tenure earning research faculty member in the Department of Pathology is to perform research in a laboratory supported by extramural funding and conduct or develop an independent research program. Because of their seniority and through their interactions with other faculty, postdoctoral fellows and students, non-tenure earning research faculty make a critical contribution to the research interests in the Department and Institution. The importance of creative and well-funded faculty to the Department necessitates the establishment of policies to encourage the appointment and support for non-tenure earning research faculty. This policy applies to the initial appointment to Instructor or Assistant Professor. Evaluation beyond this stage will be undertaken in accordance with the School of Medicine Guidelines and Divisional management within the Department of Pathology.

The non-tenure earning positions of Instructor and Assistant Professor are to be used solely for the purpose of career development for the individuals concerned. They should be regarded as transitional to full professional development as a member of the faculty. They should not be considered for individuals whose career aspirations involve solely research or laboratory management without the intention to develop an independent research program. The position of Research Associate has been specifically generated to support the career paths of the talented researchers that do not have the inclination or potential to develop independent research programs.

### **1. APPOINTMENTS**

All non-tenure earning research faculty members will be appointed to a division within the Department of Pathology. The Division Director will be responsible for evaluations, promotions and terminations, in consultation with the mentor/sponsor of the non-tenure earning research faculty member.

- **Instructors:** This is the first step in the transition to independence for a productive investigator (typically a Post Doc with at least four years experience or a Research Associate with a Doctorate Degree) who has not held independent extramural funding (this criterion excludes individual fellowship awards as a post-doc). The position will be under the guidance and support of a senior faculty member who will act as mentor/sponsor. Non-tenure earning Instructors will be appointed for a minimum of two years with the possibility of renewal determined at the time of the annual evaluation. The precise term and conditions will be explicitly stated in the written letter of offer from the Division Director and Chair.

- **Assistant Professor:** These individuals are expected to have already demonstrated the potential for independence and achieved success in extramural funding. The position will be reviewed and renewed annually if appropriate progress has been made on recommendation of the division director to the Chair. The involvement of the sponsor will depend on the individual career path of the Faculty member and can be modified to encompass the requirements of mentored extramural funding opportunities. The initial appointment is for a minimum of two years and may extend up to 7 years after which time it is anticipated that the individual may be eligible for promotion within the non-tenure track or transfer to the tenure earning track. It is important to note that transfer to the tenure earning position will require an open national search. A tenure track position requires more than one area of excellence including research, teaching and service.

The process for appointment to a non tenure earning Instructor or non-tenure earning Assistant Professor position is outlined below.

- University guidelines with regard to appointments to non tenure earning positions must be followed. The process is outlined as follows:
  - Non tenure earning Instructors:
    - Initial appointment to a non tenure earning Instructor position does not require a national search if the candidate currently holds a position within the University for which UAB has appropriately advertised.
    - Please note that subsequent promotion to non tenure earning Assistant Professor would require a national search if the initial appointment to Instructor was not the result of a national faculty search. Therefore, the School of Medicine recommends, but does not require, that all initial appointments be made via the national faculty search process.
  - Non tenure earning Assistant Professor:
    - Initial appointment to a non tenure earning Assistant Professor position will require a national faculty search.
- It is the responsibility of the senior sponsoring faculty member to propose an individual be considered for appointment to the non-tenure-earning track at the level of Instructor or Assistant Professor. This application must include the cv of both the sponsor and applicant, a training plan identifying areas of research the sponsor is willing to allow the applicant to use as the basis for an independent research program. The division director may elect to appoint a divisional committee to evaluate the potential for independence of the applicant and training record of the sponsor.
- Decisions to approve the appointment are at the discretion of the Chair of the department. It should be noted that the University appointment process will take several months. In submitting research proposals individuals cannot claim faculty status before they are officially notified by the department. Letters indicating the promotion process has been initiated may be provided to funding agencies at the Chair's discretion.

- A non-tenure earning faculty member may be appointed on a recurrent yearly basis pending satisfactory performance. The Division Director in consultation with the mentor/sponsor will evaluate the non-tenure earning research faculty member. After the initial appointment period, new terms will be specified by the Division Director and Chair upon annual review.

## 2. EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

The primary duties of non-tenure earning faculty with a research emphasis are to conduct and direct original research. The nature of these duties also means that non-tenure earning research faculty will participate in the training of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows within the research environment. Any other duties (e.g., teaching courses) will only be determined following consultation of the Sponsor and the Division Director. A non-tenure earning faculty member must demonstrate excellence in at least one domain of expertise (research, teaching or service).

Goals/expectations specific to individual rank are outlined below.

- **Instructor Goals:**
  - Submit proposals for extramural funding as Principal Investigator.
  - Begin to establish independence (as evidenced by presentations at national meetings and universities, publications as senior author, funding proposals independent of sponsor).
- **Assistant Professor Goals:**
  - To achieve significant extramural funding within the initial 5 year period.
  - Participate in recognized scholarly activities consistent with a faculty member. These may include reviewing research papers or grants, serving on external review committees, teaching and participation in service activities.

Goals and expectations for both positions are described in detail below.

- 100% of salary support must be provided through the combination of support from mentor and non-tenure earning research faculty member.
- Annual Review: It is anticipated that the role of the mentor/ sponsor will have evolved to the expected supportive role that senior faculty should play for the career development of junior faculty. Consistent with this degree of independence, annual review should be performed using the same guidelines for tenure earning faculty.
- Although holding significant extramural grant support will not be required for the initial appointment, non-tenure earning faculty are required to apply for extramural funding of their own during the first three years of their appointment. These expectations will be outlined in the appointment letter from the Division Director and Chair. Failure to meet these expectations may result in termination of the non-tenure earning research faculty member.
- Once RO1 funding has been secured, it is anticipated that the faculty member, in discussion with the Division Director and Chair, will exercise the options available

to them for career development. Briefly, these are to stay within the non-tenure earning position or secure a tenure earning position either at UAB or elsewhere. Please note that promotion within the ranks and appointment to a tenure track position requires demonstration of excellence in more than one area.

### **3. PROMOTIONS**

It is the responsibility of the Division Director and Chair to initiate and monitor the promotion process.

- Instructor to Assistant Professor
  - Promotions from Instructor to Assistant Professor rank require approval from The Departmental Committee on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure as well as the School of Medicine and Provost Office.
  - Promotions from Instructor to Assistant Professor rank *do not* require approval from the School of Medicine Faculty Council.
- Assistant Professor to Associate Professor
  - The Departmental Committee on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure, the School of Medicine Faculty Council and the Provost Office must approve subsequent promotions from one level to another beginning with promotions from the Assistant Professor level.

### **4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Non-tenure earning research faculty will typically not be eligible for research space of their own. The mentor in consultation with the Division Director will provide space allocated to a non-tenure earning research faculty member.