

Update of Promotion and Tenure Procedures at the College of Medicine for Academic Year 2012 – 2013

Please note the following clarifications of promotion and tenure procedures for AY 2012-2013. Information is also available on the Office of Faculty Affairs website: <http://www.pennstatehershey.org/web/facultyaffairs/home>. Questions may be directed to the Office of Faculty Affairs (cweisman@psu.edu; cdevine@hmc.psu.edu).

Clarification of Stay-of-Tenure Policy

Department chairs are urged to ensure that tenure-track faculty members are aware of Penn State's stay-of-tenure policy and that they request stays when appropriate. This will help ensure equity in the tenure review process.

HR23 includes a provision for stopping the tenure clock for one year for such reasons as ***“the birth or adoption of a child, serious personal illness, or the provision of care for a close family member”*** (HR23 Administrative Guidelines, page 25). Note that stays of tenure are not linked to a leave of absence.

The procedures for a faculty member to request a stay of tenure can be found in HR23 Administrative Guidelines, Appendix G. Whenever possible, the request should be submitted *prior to* the start of the academic year in which the stay will occur. The steps are: (1) the faculty member writes a letter to the chair requesting the stay, stating the reason and timeline, and providing a current CV; (2) the chair reviews the request and writes a letter to the Dean, which is submitted to the Office of Faculty Affairs; (3) the Dean reviews the request and, if approved, forwards it to the Provost; (4) the Provost makes the final decision. In the past 4 years, we have never had a case turned down by the Provost.

We have recently learned that it is also possible to request a 2nd one-year stay of tenure. This might occur, for example, for a second birth/adoption within the faculty member's family. A request for a 2nd stay of tenure is likely to be approved as long as the faculty member is making satisfactory progress toward tenure.

Any questions about stays of tenure may be directed to the Office of Faculty Affairs.

Hiring Faculty Members with Credit Toward Tenure

Department chairs are urged not to offer credit toward tenure when hiring a faculty member on the tenure track unless the candidate has a strong record of scholarship that is highly likely to be continued at Penn State. Candidates should be fully informed that credit toward tenure shortens the time available to meet criteria for tenure. Cases reviewed by the College of Medicine Promotion and Tenure Committee over the past 4 years provide evidence that faculty members who are researchers need the full provisional tenure

period to establish a solid record of performance in preparation for the 6th-year tenure review. Establishing a record of external research funding is rarely accomplished in less than 6 years for a newly hired Assistant Professor for whom research is one of the areas of excellence.

Credit toward tenure should not be offered to justify a higher salary for newly recruited faculty members. Rather, the faculty member's experience and market factors should be used to justify the initial salary request.

External Letters of Evaluation for Promotion or Tenure Reviews

Department chairs are strongly urged to more carefully scrutinize the list of potential external evaluators for possible conflicts of interest before submitting the list to the Office of Faculty Affairs. A number of external letters of evaluation received in the past few years were from individuals who either had conflicts of interest or were not experts in the candidate's field. External evaluators must be experts in the candidate's field who can objectively evaluate the candidate's contributions. Conflicts of interest that could interfere with objectivity include: having provided prior training, mentorship, or supervision of the candidate, and having close collaborations with the candidate (e.g., co-investigators on projects, co-authorships). Individuals who know the candidate well but are not experts in the candidate's field should not be recommended as potential external reviewers.

Any questions about eligibility of an external reviewer may be directed to the Office of Faculty Affairs.

Clarification of Procedures for Appointment of Emeritus Professors and Endowed Positions

Appointments as Emeritus Professor and to endowed positions must be approved at the campus level before being sent on to the Executive Vice President and Provost of the University.

The Office of Faculty Affairs has posted the procedures for these types of appointments on its website. All requests for these appointments should be submitted to the OFA.

Clarification of Patient Care Evaluation Letters

Patient care evaluation letters are required for the dossiers of all clinical faculty members undergoing review for promotion or tenure.

Letter soliciting evaluations of the quality of patient care may be solicited from internal and/or external evaluators, at the discretion of the Department Chair. Internal letters may be solicited by the Chair and must be from faculty members of higher rank than the candidate; external letters must be solicited by the Office of Faculty Affairs (based on contact information provided by the Chair) and may be from any physician who is familiar with the candidate's practice (i.e., academic appointment is not required). There is no minimum number of letters required.

The patient care evaluation letters are placed in the Patient Care section of the dossier and must be in the dossier when the candidate reviews it and signs off on it.

Letters of thanks or appreciation for patient care are not allowed in the dossier (see HR-23 Administrative Guidelines III.C.10). No patients should be identified.