

## **Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine (VTC SOM)**

### **Faculty Affairs Guidelines Section Three – Promotion of Faculty in the Tenure to Title Track**

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#### **1 Purpose**

To ensure that all faculty promotions follow all requirements stipulated in the VTC SOM faculty bylaws and guidelines as well as the corresponding guidelines of the Virginia Tech faculty handbook.

#### **2 Guidelines**

##### **I. Description of Tenure to Title**

Tenure to title is the conferring of permanent appointment to the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. Tenure to title is recognition by VTC SOM of service and accomplishment of the faculty member to VTC SOM, and also represents the expectation of a continuing high level of service and accomplishment by the faculty member. Tenure to title is granted only to faculty who are not employed by Virginia Tech.

Tenure to title is awarded in recognition of a body of accomplishment in teaching, clinical care (if relevant), research/scholarly activity and service to the missions of VTC SOM and the university. As the criteria for tenure to title are virtually identical to criteria for promotion, tenure to title typically is awarded at the time of promotion. The promotion process shall recognize and reflect the individual faculty member's current involvement in all four domains of faculty activity and the achievement of significant progress and/or excellence over time within two of the four domains of faculty activity. Faculty should show sustained, and preferably increasing, scholarly activity as their career progresses.

Most commonly, tenure to title is considered at the promotion of Assistant Professor to Associate Professor. Tenure to title may or may not be awarded at the initial appointment of a faculty member with demonstrated accomplishment. Most commonly, awarding tenure to title at the initial appointment would occur upon the transfer to VTC SOM of a faculty member who had attained tenure at another peer academic institution and has a truly exemplary dossier. On rare occasions, tenure to title at VTC SOM may be "uncoupled" from appointment or promotion under several circumstances:

- New appointment to VTC SOM, despite having tenure at a previous academic institution;
- New appointment to VTC SOM with awarding of promotion from one rank at another academic institution to a greater rank at VTC SOM (delaying of tenure to title may occur so that VTC SOM can evaluate ongoing scholarship);
- Accelerated promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor or Associate Professor to Professor within the VTC SOM system (such a promotion may take into account time spent in rank at another academic institution, so that VTC SOM can evaluate ongoing scholarship);
- Other circumstances.

Awarding of tenure to title at the time of appointment is contingent on consensus of the VTCSOM APT committee and the Dean, and is subject to further review by the university.

While lengthy service to VTCSOM is honorable and noteworthy, promotion with tenure to title is based upon tangible accomplishment.

Additionally, VTCSOM values collaboration as critically important to academic work in all settings. To recognize and reward faculty members who assume collaborative roles and/or perform collaborative work across disciplines, colleges and/or fields of interest, VTCSOM invites evidence of collaboration as an important component of the promotion review process. Letters regarding potential promotion should feature documentation of collaborative activity undertaken by the faculty candidate.

A criterion for tenure to title that is additive to criteria for promotion is the expectation that the faculty member will continue to provide teaching and/or clinical care (if relevant) and/or scholarship and/or service to VTCSOM. Hence, tenure to title is not only recognition of duties, accomplishments and service to date, but also is an expectation that duties, accomplishments, and service will continue.

Promotion and tenure to title are based on the totality of the promotion dossier. While the totality of scholarship is relevant, recent evidence of scholarship is also expected. The awarding of tenure to title is not limited to a single department, since it applies to the overall VTCSOM appointment; faculty who have a co-appointment may hold tenure to title in both departments.

Once conferred, tenure-to-title is subject to review by the department and school committees on appointment, retention, promotion, and tenure (to title) and can only be rescinded for imposition of a severe sanction or dismissal for cause, for an equivalent personnel action by the faculty member's employer, or upon a change of employers.

## **II. Tenure to Title Track**

Promotion on the tenure to title track affects two ranks – Assistant Professors seeking promotion to Associate Professor, and Associate Professors seeking promotion to full Professor. Candidates for promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor must demonstrate **significant progress** in the chosen domains of faculty activity. Candidates for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor must demonstrate **excellence** in the chosen domains of faculty activity.

Teaching is a core expectation of all VTCSOM faculty, and is of particular relevance to faculty in the tenure to title track. Peer observation of teaching is also a time-honored tradition of Virginia Tech. All candidates for promotion in the tenure to title track must undergo a process of peer evaluation of teaching. This process involves working with a faculty peer observer selected by the candidate. Peer observation is offered by the TEACH Academy; or the candidate may choose an observer within one's own academic department. A key component of the process is the provision of feedback on how teaching performance can be improved. Candidates for promotion on the tenure to title track will be expected to undergo this process twice during the time period prior to each promotion sought. The two peer reviews must represent different points of time in the review period and differing instructional events. Documentation of these peer reviews must be included in the promotion dossier (see observation guidelines provided by the Office of Faculty Affairs).

## **II.A. Assistant Professor to Associate Professor**

Faculty members on the tenure to title track at the Assistant Professor rank will most often have a maximum of seven (7) years since initial appointment to achieve promotion with tenure to title at VTCSOM (in some circumstances, it may be eight (8) years). It is required that the faculty member will be active in all four (4) domains of academic activity: teaching, clinical care (if relevant), scholarship, and service. For the faculty member who is a clinician, significant progress should be evident in at least two of the domains. For the faculty member who is a non-clinician, significant progress should be evident in two domains, one of which must be research/scholarly activity.

Candidates on the tenure to title track will undergo formal review at the end of year two (2) and year four (4). If at the time of these reviews it is felt that the candidate has not made sufficient progress toward tenure to title at VTCSOM, s/he will be strongly encouraged to switch to a non-tenure to title track.

Each candidate is judged on abilities in *Teaching*. There must be documentation of teaching activities and good to excellent evaluations of performance from students, peers, block or rotation directors, administrators, or others. For this to be a domain of significant progress, evaluations must be laudatory and preferably indicate innovation and creativity. Teaching awards are evidence of significant progress, as are requests by learners for additional teaching contact. Non-clinician candidates may submit evaluations from former post-doctoral trainees, graduate students, or pre-clinical students working in the candidate's area of scholarship.

For the clinician candidate, there must be documentation of *Clinical Care* in the presence of learners. Metrics of clinical abilities such as surveys, questionnaires, and "scorecards" are helpful for a broad picture, but the provision of clinical care is not relevant to promotion without occurring as an attending physician or preceptor in the presence of learners. Significant progress in clinical care must also show evidence of considerable clinical teaching time over an extended period. Significant progress in clinical care must also show evidence of leadership in areas of clinical practice activity, clinical techniques or operations, or patient advocacy.

Each candidate must show evidence of significant progress in *Scholarly Activity/Research*; there must be sustained, and preferably increasing, examples of scholarship in the dossier. To demonstrate significant progress there must be evidence of more than one type of scholarship. Candidates for promotion to Associate Professor must show dissemination of *Scholarly Activity/Research* with publications in journals, books, online collections, or other sites beyond local outlets. The candidate must also produce examples of scholarly presentations at regional and/or national meetings. The candidate may wish to demonstrate other scholarship that has been distributed, even if not in published forms. The scholarship must be sustained, and preferably increasing, over time and with increasing evidence of expertise in the area(s) of focus. Scholarship in development and presentation of education / teaching/curriculum is not only acceptable but strongly encouraged. While the totality of scholarship is relevant, recent evidence of scholarship is also expected. non-cliniciannon-cliniciannon-cliniciannon-clinicianevaluation Showing sustained external funding in support of scholarship is noteworthy and should be demonstrated wherever possible. Candidates should also be recognized by peers as a thought leader as evidenced by positions of responsibility in their professional area.

Faculty members must provide *Service* to the School, the hospitals or research institutes, the community and/or the broader medical community. Examples of service must be included in the dossier. For this to be a domain of significant progress, the candidate must demonstrate leadership in service activities such as chair, chief, director or coordinator, innovative or creative applications to the work involved, or new initiatives addressing School, local, regional, national and/or international issues. Certain areas of service, such as

Boards of local, regional, national or international organizations, requests to participate in national or international task forces, or research study groups are examples of significant progress in service. Service must reflect on the mission and activities of VTCSOM; service by the faculty member in an otherwise laudable activity that is not congruent with the mission and activities of VTCSOM is not relevant to the academic promotion process.

Except in rare circumstances, granting of tenure to title at VTCSOM is considered at the time of promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor.

Both the department Appointment, Promotion, Retention and Tenure (APRT) committee and the VTCSOM Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) committee will judge each candidate on the totality of the dossier. While the totality of scholarship is relevant, recent evidence of scholarship is also expected.

#### Letters of Evaluation

##### Assistant Professor to Associate Professor

The dossier of the candidate for promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor on the tenure to title track must include at least three external letters of evaluation. All letters must be written by people from outside academic institutions, and preferably from Virginia Tech peer institutions. To elicit these letters, the candidate is permitted to forward to the chair of the department Appointment, Promotion, Retention and Tenure (APRT) committee up to six names of persons who may be appropriate to write letters. The candidate may select these individuals from any location and from any source of contact. evaluation

In addition to the external letters, the dossier can include a letter from one or more local persons who would be able to comment from personal knowledge on the candidate's teaching, clinical and service abilities. This internal letter is optional. Members of a departmental APRT Committee may not write letters of evaluation for inclusion in promotion dossiers.

Letters of evaluation are always solicited by the chair of the departmental APRT Committee, never by the candidate. Promotion candidates are not allowed to know the identity of persons who ultimately write internal or external review letters. There is to be no contact of any kind between the candidate and any person who writes internal or external review letters; contact between candidates and letter writers may lead to disqualification of the candidate from further consideration until a future promotion cycle.

All letters of evaluation must be received from persons at the rank of Associate Professor or higher. The Department APRT committee shall solicit all letters of evaluation. External letters must come from entities outside of Carilion Clinic, Virginia Tech and Radford University and, in some cases, the Salem VA Medical Center. The Department APRT committee should balance the letters such that there is no more than one external letter from the individuals whose names were forwarded by the candidate. The committee must ensure that three external letters are available for review. All letters received must be included in the promotion dossier, regardless of whether a given letter meets criteria. Departmental APRT committees shall solicit the letters in accordance with university and VTCSOM guidelines for the solicitation of such letters, including furnishing the potential letter writers with key information concerning the promotion requirements. Guidelines for the processes of soliciting and preparing letters of evaluation are maintained by the VTCSOM Office of Faculty Affairs.

## **II.B. Associate Professor to Professor**

Candidates on the tenure to title track at the rank of Associate Professor are strongly encouraged to seek promotion to the rank of Professor. However, there is no specification for minimum or maximum time of service in the rank of Associate Professor with tenure to title. Consideration for promotion to Professor with tenure to title may be requested by a faculty member at any time, with most such requests being made approximately six (6) to ten (10) years after promotion or appointment to Associate Professor. It is expected that the candidate will be active in all domains of activity – teaching, clinical care (if relevant), scholarship, and service. For the clinician candidate, excellence should be evident in at least two of these domains; for the non-clinician candidate, excellence should also be evident in two domains, one of which must be scholarship.

Each candidate is judged on abilities in *Teaching*. There must be documentation of teaching activities and good to excellent evaluations of performance from students, peers, block or rotation directors, administrators, or others. For this to be a domain with excellence, a majority of evaluations should be exemplary. Innovation and creativity is expected. Leadership roles in teaching at VTCOM would be expected for the candidate anticipating promotion to Professor. Teaching awards are also evidence of excellence as are requests by learners for additional teaching contact. Non-clinician candidates may submit evaluations from former post-doctoral trainees, graduate students, or pre-clinical students working in the candidate's area of scholarship. The non-clinician candidate must have sponsored or mentored a number of trainees (e.g., medical students, doctoral candidates, post-doctoral trainees) in their area of expertise.

For the clinician candidate, there must be documentation of *Clinical Care* in the presence of learners. Metrics of clinical abilities such as surveys, questionnaires, and "scorecards" are helpful for a broad picture, but even excellent clinical care is not relevant to promotion without occurring as an attending physician or preceptor in the presence of learners. Excellence in clinical care must also show evidence of considerable clinical teaching time over an extended period. Excellence in clinical care must also demonstrate more than one leadership role in the clinical domain. Awards or other recognitions are also evidence of excellence in clinical care.

Each candidate must show evidence of excellence in *Scholarly Activity/Research*; there must be sustained examples of scholarship in the dossier. To demonstrate excellence there must be evidence of more than one type of scholarship. Candidates for promotion to Professor must show dissemination of scholarship with publications in journals, books, online collections, or other sites beyond that achieved in promotion to Associate Professor. The candidate must also produce examples of scholarly presentations at national and/or international meetings. The scholarship must be sustained over time, with a large portion focused on an area of expertise. The candidate may wish to demonstrate other scholarship that has been distributed, even if not in published forms. The scholarship must be sustained, and preferably increasing, over time and with increasing evidence of expertise in their area(s) of focus. Scholarship in development and presentation of education/teaching/curriculum is not only acceptable but strongly encouraged. It is also expected that the candidate be recognized by peers as a thought leader as evidenced by positions of responsibility in their professional arena. Showing sustained external funding in support of scholarship is noteworthy and should be demonstrated wherever possible. Candidates should also be recognized by peers as a thought leader as evidenced by positions of responsibility in their professional area.

Faculty members are expected to provide *Service* to the School, the hospitals or research institutes, the community or the broader medical community. Examples of service should be included in the dossier. For this to be a domain of excellence, the candidate must demonstrate leadership in service activities such as chair, chief, director, or coordinator, innovative or creative applications to the work involved, or new initiatives

addressing School, local, regional, national and/or international issues. Some examples of service, such as Boards of national or international organizations, requests to participate in national or international task forces, or research study groups are examples of excellence in service; the candidate must have leadership roles in such organizations. Service must reflect on the mission and activities of VTCSOM; service by the faculty member in an otherwise laudable activity that is not congruent with the mission and activities of VTCSOM is not relevant to the academic promotion process.

Both the department Appointment, Promotion, Retention and Tenure committees and the VTCSOM Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) committee will judge each candidate on the totality of the dossier. While the totality of scholarship is relevant, recent evidence of scholarship is also expected.

#### Letters of Evaluation

##### Associate Professor to Professor

The dossier of the candidate for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor on the tenure to title track must include at least four external letters of evaluation. All letters must be written by people from outside academic institutions, and preferably from Virginia Tech peer institutions. To elicit these letters, the candidate is permitted to forward to the chair of the department Appointment, Promotion, Retention and Tenure (APRT) committee up to six names of persons who may be appropriate to write letters.

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The Department APRT Committee should balance the letters such that there is no more than one letter from the individuals whose names were forwarded by the candidate. The committee should ensure that at least four external letters are available for review. All letters received must be included in the promotion dossier, regardless of whether a given letter meets criteria. Departmental APRT committees shall solicit the letters in accordance with university and VTCSOM guidelines for the solicitation of such letters, including furnishing the potential letter writers with key information concerning the promotion requirements. Guidelines for the processes of soliciting and preparing letters of evaluation are maintained by the VTCSOM Office of Faculty Affairs.