

# **Best Practices in Mentoring and Promotion of Associate Professors**

## Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost

### **Communicating the Promotion Process**

- Each college and department will communicate to faculty what the criteria and expectations are for promotion from associate to full professor. This information should be provided in writing, for example in college or departmental P&T guidelines, and must be easily accessible to faculty.
- Each college and department will communicate to faculty what the promotion review process entails. This information should be provided in writing in college or departmental P&T guidelines or other governance documents, and must be easily accessible to faculty.
- Review of progress towards full professor and planning for advancement is expected to be part of every faculty member's annual performance evaluation with their department chair. Department chairs will discuss planning and preparing for promotion to professor. Any shifts in responsibilities or expectations should be documented in a revised PRS.
- The department chair should indicate to an associate professor when he/she believes the faculty member is ready to stand for promotion. A good mentor can provide input and serve as an advocate at the department level for the candidate.

### **Mentoring and guidance**

- The general timeframe for promotion to full professor is 5-9 years after promotion to associate professor. The institutional average for promotion from associate to full professor is 7.4 years.
- When an associate professor believes he/she is ready for promotion, he/she should discuss next steps with the department chair and mentor. If the department chair has concerns about promotion, the faculty member and chair should discuss these. In some cases, the faculty member may choose to postpone promotion review until he/she has a stronger portfolio.
- Associate professors should develop a plan for advancement towards promotion with input from valued mentor(s) and their department chair.
- If no formal mentoring program exists in the department, associate professors are encouraged to identify a successful senior college (within or beyond department) to serve as a mentor.
- Associate professors should ensure that they understand the department and college criteria for promotion. Their PRS and their efforts must be in alignment with these criteria.
- Associate professors should track the success of their graduate and undergraduate trainees

after graduation and include that information as part of their CV and promotion materials.

- Associate professors seeking advancement need to demonstrate significant institutional service (*Faculty Handbook* 5.2.3.3). They should increase strategically their involvement in and leadership of service activities within the department and to the college and university. For example, they might consider focusing on assignments that can build their leadership skills (chairing a P&T committee or a faculty search committee, etc.).
- Associate professors should seek to enhance their national/international reputation by engaging in prominent roles/activities in their professional societies and or other professional entities, e.g. leadership positions for conferences, societies, editorial board membership, grant review panels, etc.).
- The department chair, mentor or senior colleague should nominate the faculty member for appropriate college, university and professional society awards with the goal of progressively prestigious recognitions.

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