

# FACULTY PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

**Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology**  
**Adopted March 23, 1995**  
**Updated October 31, 2019**

## **A. PRIORITIES FOR FACULTY ACTIVITY.**

**1. Original Research/Scholarly Achievement.** For the large majority of basic science faculty at a Medical School/Health Sciences Center, such as the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, this activity is expected to be laboratory research. We are primarily scientists, laboratory investigators whose primary activity (typically >70% effort) is to acquire new information and to expand the biomedical knowledge-base. One successful outcome and documentation of original research is the publication of our research results in first-rate peer-reviewed journals. Development and maintenance of a long-term research program depends on the ability of the investigator to obtain external funding. Although developing a research program is often difficult, it is clearly the core of our academic activity; it is necessary to ensure that our teaching programs remain current and up-to-date and our teachers remain competent. The Departmental expectation for average faculty performance in the area of research activity is that each faculty member has external (off-campus) funding for his/her research program and publishes at least one peer-reviewed original paper per year.

***Excellence in Research/Scholarly Achievement.*** Excellence in research is indicated by:

1. Sustained and substantial research funding. For example, receiving as Principal Investigator two or more major external peer-reviewed grants (including renewals) from the National Institutes of Health, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Diabetes Association, JDRF, National Science Foundation or similar agency (for our purposes a major grant is defined as \$70,000 direct costs per year for 3 years),
2. Multiple publications per year in major, first-rate peer-reviewed journals. For example, an overall productivity of 6-9 independent publications from OUHSC as first author or senior author, with a sustained average publication rate of 2 papers per year for the two years prior to promotion.
3. Development and support of a research group comprised of students, postdoctoral fellows and/or technical staff,
4. Service on national peer review boards, study sections, Journal editorial boards and/or other Professional organizations and
5. Invitations to speak at national or international meetings.

The attainment of excellence will be judged not only by overall publication productivity (*i.e.* the number and length of papers) but also by the quality of Journals in which papers are published, the number and nature of invited talks and meetings chaired, evaluations by external nationally and internationally known scientists, citations to publications, and reviews of the individual's grant applications. It is also expected that the individual's research program will have developed an emerging or substantial national and international reputation for high quality. In exceptional cases, scholarly achievement could be satisfied by the systematic development and implementation of novel and original courses or teaching methods, which would be described in appropriate professional journals.

**2. Teaching.** This priority is second only because our Departmental teaching load does not represent our major time commitment and long-term teaching excellence may not be maintained if the teachers are not also scholars engaged in original, and creative research. *Nonetheless, the teaching missions of the Department provide the reasons we are employed by the State of Oklahoma.* Without the students in our Professional programs, there would be no need for the University or the Department. We are a University, not a research institute. The expectation for average faculty performance is that we perform this mission in a competent and professional manner, with at least average performance based on student evaluations. The average teaching load within the Department is presently ~15 contact (lecture) hours per year, which is <10% effort.

***Excellence in Teaching.*** Excellence in teaching is determined in part by the response and evaluation of students and faculty, particularly the course directors for our Professional courses. As part of the Annual Performance Evaluation process for nontenured junior faculty, the Dental/Pharmacy and Preclinical Medical Curriculum course directors will formally evaluate their teaching skills and performance; this faculty evaluation will be in addition to the student evaluations. Excellence can also be achieved by performing an above average teaching load in a competent manner. Furthermore, excellence is also indicated by external recognition of the teacher's skill and creativity, such as being nominated for or receiving awards within the University or community or by receiving small grants from outside the Department.

**3. Departmental Service.** All faculty must share the responsibilities and burdens of participating in the various committees and functions within the Department that constitute our programs and define us as a faculty of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology. We are a community and those who do not share in performing these tasks, or who do not perform them well, place a greater and an undue burden on their fellow faculty. The expectation for average faculty performance is that we all serve on Departmental committees and that we participate in a responsible and professional way to implement and enable the functions of those committees and the Programs involved. Service activities, such as being a course or graduate program director, have very high value for the Department. Service usually represents a small portion of our time commitment, typically ~10%.

***Excellence in Department Service.*** Excellence in Department-based service may be indicated by the amount of Departmental service performed, by chairing a committee, by the quality and impact of the service contribution on Department programs and by the nature of the faculty member's role in the process.

**University Service.** The broader missions of the College and the University require faculty participation. Although not all members of the Department may be serving at the same time on University-wide committees, the Department must do its share and be represented well, when the opportunity arises. Normally senior faculty may be more involved than junior faculty in this activity. The expectation of average faculty performance is that all of us should be able to serve on appropriate committees with competence and reliability.

***Excellence in University Service.*** Excellence in University Service may be indicated by the amount of University-wide service performed, by chairing a College- or University-wide committee and/or by the feedback to the Chairman and Department from the Administration or faculty outside the Department about the faculty member's role in the process and the quality of the contribution.

**Entrepreneurial Activity.** Within the University, our Department is relatively unusual and unique because of our level of involvement with intellectual property issues, patents, consulting for pharmaceutical and other companies and the formation of biotechnology companies.

*Currently our institution, including the University-wide Tenure Committee does not recognize this activity as having academic value or as appropriate to consider in matters of promotion or awarding tenure.* Although there will be exceptions, it may be risky for nontenured faculty to expend significant time or effort in this activity.

*We consider SRAs to be of value to the Department and OU if they include indirect costs, particularly at the standard rate negotiated with the NIH, and if they allow the faculty member to publish the results without undue delay after satisfying the intellectual property interests of the company and OU. Inherent within the development of intellectual property and obtaining patents is the discovery of new knowledge, which is our major academic activity.*

The acid test and primary consideration for whether there is academic value associated with an activity supported by an SRA is that publications result from the activity. Without publications there is no academic, scholarly component and the activity has intrinsically less value to the faculty member, Department and University. In this case the activity should probably not occur in Departmental laboratory space and ethical issues may also arise related to percent effort, the source of compensation for the activity or whether a full-time academic appointment is appropriate.

**B. EXPECTATIONS FOR FACULTY PERFORMANCE.** The expectations for evaluating faculty success and performance in the three broad areas of activity described in **A** (research/scholarly achievement, teaching and service) center around three components: work ethic, goals and the pursuit of excellence.

**1. Work Ethic.** Hard work does not guarantee success, but without it failure is certainly more likely. To succeed as an academic faculty member requires several skills and the commitment to work long hours. An academic faculty member is in a profession and has a career, not just a job. As in any profession, faculty, students or postdoctoral fellows who work only 40 hours per week at a "job" will likely not be successful in scientific research, academics, or this Department. Hard work and serious effort to achieve the above goals and to attain excellence will be recognized.

**2. Goals.** All professionals, certainly those of us in academics, should have well defined professional goals throughout their careers. Although these goals will likely evolve and change over time, they can provide direction, motivation, priorities and a measure of progress. As part of the standard Faculty Performance Evaluation process faculty will formulate specific short-term (1 year) and longer-term (3-5 year) objectives for their professional activities and career development.

**3. Excellence and Promotion/Tenure.** The University's expectation for a faculty candidate for tenure to be successful is that they "...must have displayed a record of substantial accomplishment in each of the three areas (teaching, research/scholarly achievement, and service) and evidence of excellence in two areas." (Faculty Policies and Information: section 3.9.4, January 1999)

*In the Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology a recommendation for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure will require performance at the level of excellence in the two areas of research/scholarly achievement and teaching as well as performance at a satisfactory level in the area of Department and University Service.*

**4. Excellence and Annual Faculty Performance Evaluations.** The expectation for "average" overall performance by established, tenured faculty is that they maintain excellence in one of these areas, in particular in research/scholarly achievement, which will usually represent ~70% of their time and effort. Failure to achieve excellence in any of the three areas will be considered below average performance. Poor evaluations in all three areas would indicate incompetence.

\* \* \* \* \*

Currently, each nontenured faculty member meets annually with the Department Appointment, Promotion and Tenure (APT) Committee, which provides input to the Chair for the Annual Faculty Performance Evaluation process. In the year preceding the bid for promotion, the candidate will be asked to provide a formal research seminar describing their current and future work. This seminar must be accomplished prior to submitting the candidates name to the College of Medicine for consideration.

Any faculty member with questions or concerns about their Performance Evaluation or about their possible candidacy for promotion or tenure should consult with the Department Chair at any time. The Chair will then consult with the APT committee or direct the faculty member to this Committee or other senior faculty for feedback and constructive evaluation of their status. An important role of the Chair is to help nurture and mentor the professional development of nontenured, as well as established, faculty whenever possible to help them achieve their maximum potential as researchers, scientists, scholars and teachers.