

Recommendations for Supporting Your Academic Advancement



Drafted for the SASGOG Board by Christine Isaacs, MD and Lee Learman, MD, PhD

When You Are Recruited

As soon as possible (ideally before you accept the position) understand the institution's tracks academic tracks available to medical school faculty, and the track to which you are being appointed, including the impact on compensation, initial term of employment, and goodness-of-fit with your professional goals and objectives. Negotiate for the track the best fits your interests and, realistically, the time you have to spend on clinical, teaching, administrative, and research activities.

- Learn about the academic tracks available to you, including documents describing each track, promotion criteria, length of initial appointment, and impact on compensation. Potential resources include your chair, vice chair, division director/chief, human resources manager, Institution's faculty affairs website, faculty affairs dean.
- Determine the appropriateness of your proposed academic rank and consider whether to negotiate for a higher rank. New faculty may be appointed as Clinical Instructors until they achieve board certification and become Assistant Professors, a policy inherently unfair to specialties such as OBGYN that require experience in practice and an oral certifying examination. Established faculty who are transitioning between institutions may be able to negotiate a higher rank, depending on how many years they served in their current rank and any differences in promotion criteria between institutions.
- Understand the % of time you will be assigned to clinical, teaching, administrative and research activities (your distribution of effort). Access this information through your chair, vice chair, division director/chief, practice manager.
- Identify professional goals in this stage of career through self-reflection, discussions with more senior role models, departmental or institutional mentoring programs for new faculty, national faculty development programs.

Along the Way

Build your CV and update it regularly, according to the institution's guidelines for grouping your accomplishments and reporting your achievements as an educator (portfolio if applicable). Develop a system of accountability for achieving the specific milestones needed for promotion in your track.

- Create mentoring relationships (local, national) focused on your career development. Effective mentoring can be provided by more senior faculty from your division, other divisions in the department, other departments in your institution, and through national organizations. At least one mentor should have been successfully promoted in your track in your institution.
- Network and partner with national colleagues through committee work, scholarly activities, or invitations to present grand rounds to establish your reputation and to identify potential colleagues to provide letters of support for your promotion.
- Learn your institution's policies and procedures for soliciting letters of recommendation for promotion. Some institutions accept peer recommendations, others accept peer recommendations with disclosure of prior professional relationships, and some actually preclude peers who have



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worked together from writing recommendations. Your department's promotions committee chair will know the current policy in your institution.

- Review your CV twice a year with your mentor(s) to identify (1) misalignments between your goals and distribution of effort, (2) faculty development needs, (3) other support.
- Discuss your CV annually with your chair and/or division director/chief to negotiate needed changes to realign your goals and distribution of effort, as well as faculty development and other support. Set a goal for submitting your promotion dossier.

Preparing the Promotion Dossier

The promotion dossier includes your updated CV and many other materials supporting your request for promotion. The format varies greatly across institutions and may include focused narrative summaries and metrics of your achievements in different mission areas, an educator's portfolio, most impactful publications, and confidential letters of recommendation.

The dossier helps the departmental, medical school, and university promotion committees compare your achievements to the checklist of standards for promotion in your particular track. Because multiple approval steps are required, dossiers are due up to a year (or more) before the promotion would actually occur. Dossiers should be written in appropriate language for university committee members who are primarily faculty from non-medical backgrounds.

- Learn the promotion timeline, key deadlines, and materials comprising your dossier from the institution's faculty affairs website or dean, and your department's promotion committee chair.
- Attend seminars developed by your institution to guide faculty seeking promotion.
- Identify faculty who were promoted recently to the same rank you are seeking in the same track, and ask to review the promotion materials they submitted.
- Discuss impressions of your relative achievements with your mentor(s), how to address any gaps, and what to highlight in the different narrative sections of the dossier.

Summary of Contacts for Obtaining Key Resources

Within your Department:

Chair / Vice Chair

Division Director / Chief

Human Resources Manager

Chair, Departmental Promotion Committee

Mentor(s) within the department at the rank you are seeking, focused on your career success

Within your Institution:

Faculty Affairs Dean

Faculty Affairs Website

Chair, Medical School Promotion Committee

Mentor(s) from other departments at the rank you are seeking, focused on your career success

External to the Institution:

Faculty development programs focused on academic career success: AAMC, APGO, others

Mentor(s) to facilitate networking and development of your national reputation