Revisions to Promotion Guidebook
Indiana University School of Optometry

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Promotion Guidelines for Clinical Rank Faculty

Clinical Ranks in the School of Optometry

Faculty appointed to the clinical ranks are academic clinicians distinguished by their commitment to the institutional core values stated in the Indiana University Academic Guide: “The central functions of an academic community are learning, teaching, and scholarship.” (Code of Academic Ethics, Section I-I). Academic clinicians pursue the scholarship of teaching and learning in a clinical context by contributing to the creation, organization, and preservation of knowledge about how to teach optometry effectively. Improving patient care may also be a scholarly activity when academic clinicians engage with a spirit of inquiry, aiming always to find better ways to serve the patient’s needs.

Clinical rank faculty are responsible for clinical teaching, including many of the applied didactic courses, and providing patient care in the school’s clinics. Clinical rank faculty within the IU School of Optometry epitomize the Bloomington Faculty Council’s original intentions for the rank in “fields where particular challenges in teaching and service in a clinical setting have led to specialized career paths (BFC, April 2, 2002).” Like the graduate program, the clinical program at IU School of Optometry requires a low student/teacher ratio in a clinical teaching setting in order to fulfill the teaching mission of the school.

This relatively high proportion of clinical rank faculty in the IU School of Optometry, and their importance to the mission of the school, engenders the need for developing clinical rank faculty in a manner similar to tenure-probationary faculty. Thus, clinical rank faculty are expected to excel in teaching and/or service and to achieve national and international renown in their areas of expertise to enhance the reputation of the School and University. A major distinguishing feature of the clinical ranks is the absence of an expectation for engagement in research.

Clinical rank faculty within the IU School of Optometry are appointed and advance through ranks parallel to tenure-track faculty. Initial appointments are based on the level of experience and long-term contracts are awarded after a probationary period of seven years, as in tenure ranks. Criteria for promotion in-rank from Assistant to Associate and full Clinical Professor are analogous to criteria for tenure-track faculty as set forth in this document.

Responsibilities of Clinical Rank Faculty

The primary responsibilities of clinical rank faculty at the IU School of Optometry are the clinical education of students and demonstration of exemplary patient care. Teaching in the optometric clinical setting is fundamentally different from classroom teaching. The clinical instructor acts as a preceptor for small groups of optometry student clinicians, overseeing the optometric care of the patient and balancing it with the student’s education. The clinical instructor and the student clinician work side by side, in an environment where both patient care is delivered and instruction takes place. The student learns directly from the faculty as well as through their own examination of the patient. Documentation and maintenance of the legal medical record is ultimately the responsibility of the clinical faculty, but reflect the joint involvement of both student and faculty. In addition, the clinical instructor typically holds discussion session at the end of each session to review challenging cases with the 4 or 5 student clinicians attending the session.

Responsibility for the care of the patient ultimately rests with the clinical faculty. As a licensed optometrist, the faculty member is responsible for management of the patient. Missed diagnoses could lead to loss of sight or, with some diagnoses such as hypertension or aneurysm, death could occur without proper and timely care. Clinical faculty must have excellent clinical skills and knowledge to provide appropriate care to patients while training future optometrists. The skills of the clinical faculty go beyond clinical teaching since the reputation of a supervising
clinician is often the draw for patients who come to academic eye care centers such as those
managed by IUSO for its training program. The patients must receive excellent care to keep
patients in the practice, keep a good reputation for the clinic, and keep the training program
flourishing with an adequate number of patients with which the students can gain experience.

Clinical rank faculty are not limited to teaching in the clinics. Many of the didactic courses in
the IU School of Optometry that have substantial clinical and applied components are taught by
clinical rank faculty. Expertise and reputation in a specialized area of optometry often lead to
invitations for clinical faculty to collaborate, lecture or conduct workshops at local, state or
national level. Considerable continuing education is required for renewal of license and many of
these courses are taught by clinical rank faculty. Because of their clinical expertise, clinical rank
faculty are often asked to collaborate on research or clinical trials, which opens opportunities
beyond teaching to improve evidence-based patient-care.

Like their tenured colleagues, clinical rank faculty also provide service to the School, the IU
campus, the Bloomington community, the state of Indiana and the nation. School vision
screenings, glaucoma screenings, athlete vision examinations, and many other vision-related
services are conducted largely by clinical rank faculty. These services may also extend to the
IUSO clinic in Guanajuato, Mexico and to other national and international efforts. Clinical
faculty may serve on national health care committees setting up eye care policy for various
ocular conditions and other national organizations. These service projects enhance the reputation
of the School of Optometry and IU in the city, state, nation and world.

Policy on Promotion and Long-Term Contracts

Probationary period
The initial appointment to the Clinical ranks is normally for one to three years. Near the end of
the second year of probationary appointment, an administrative performance review is conducted
by the Dean and an academic performance review is conducted by the Optometry Committee for
Promotion, Tenure, and Long-term Contracts. These reviews will include written evaluations
made available to the faculty member. In the case of a favorable outcome, the contract is
extended to a total probationary period of no more than seven years. At the completion of the
fifth year of probationary appointment, a formal review is conducted to evaluate evidence for
promotion to Associate Clinical Professor accompanied by a long-term contract. The promotion
review is performed by the Optometry Committee for Promotion, Tenure, and Long-term
Contracts, by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and by the Dean of Optometry.

Expectations for promotion
Promotion is based primarily on contributions and achievements in teaching (clinical and/or
didactic) and service-related activities. Clinical teaching encompasses a variety of activities
including, but not limited to, the supervision of student clinicians learning effective, evidence-
based, compassionate patient care.

A candidate for promotion should normally excel in either teaching or service, and be
satisfactory in the other. It is appropriate to indicate if a candidate is excellent in both areas. A
balanced case is appropriate if the candidate is ranked “very good” in both categories and, when
taken together, teaching and service activities clearly achieve a level of excellence in optometric
education. Thus, a balanced case for promotion will emphasize the mutual reinforcement that
teaching and service bring to education.

Clinical rank faculty are not expected to conduct research, but research in support of teaching
and service can be a valued component of the candidate’s dossier (BFC, April 2, 2002). If
research is conducted and is included in the candidate’s promotion dossier, the candidate should
indicate and provide rationale for whether that research activity is regarded as teaching or
service.
A successful candidate for promotion will have demonstrated a level of competence or
distinction appropriate to the proposed rank in one area of endeavor, or demonstrate a balanced
case of excellence in the combined category of optometric teaching and service. The School of
Optometry expects faculty to become known outside Indiana University for their contributions to
optometric education made within the University. Career development that leads ultimately to
acknowledged expertise and leadership in the field are highly valued by the University and by
the School of Optometry.

In general, the criteria for excellence in the areas of teaching and service for clinical rank faculty
are the same as for tenured/tenure-probationary faculty, with due consideration given to
important differences in the nature of didactic and clinical teaching. Specific criteria for
promotion in-rank are specified in the following sections.

**Procedures**

Procedures for promotion-in-rank for clinical faculty are the same as for tenure-track faculty,
including peer review by the Optometry Committee for Promotion, Tenure and Long-term
Contracts, by IUSO administration, and by campus promotion (and tenure) committees.
Evaluative letters from external reviewers are of central importance for these reviews. Clinical
candidates for a long-term contract and promotion to Associate Clinical Professor are typically
reviewed at the completion of the sixth year of a seven year probationary period. A written ballot
will evaluate the dossier according to the following scoring system:

- 4.0 to 5.0 = Excellent (promotion is merited even if the other area is no more than satisfactory.
- 3.0 to 3.9 = Very Good (promotion is merited if the other area is also very good, i.e. a balanced
case)
- 2.0 to 2.9 = Satisfactory (promotion merited if another area is Excellent)
- 1.0 to 1.9 = Unsatisfactory (so weak as to exclude promotion regardless of strength in other areas).

Normally the evaluation for long-term contract and promotion occurs simultaneously and, in the
case of a favorable outcome, the granting of a long-term contract is accompanied by automatic
promotion to Associate Clinical Professor. Reappointments after the sixth year review are for
periods of five years, with a formal review during the fourth year of each five-year cycle. Any
decision to not reappoint is subject to IUB policies regarding dismissal, non-reappointment, and
appeal as specified in the “Non-tenure-track Academic Appointee Handbook”.

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Criteria for Promotion from Assistant to Associate Clinical Professor

The criteria for granting long-term contracts and promotion in-rank are the same as the criteria for granting tenure and promotion, except that clinical rank faculty earn the right to promotion and a long-term contract on the basis of their excellence in teaching and/or service only.

Promotion to any rank is recognition of past achievement and a sign of confidence that the individual is capable of greater responsibilities and accomplishments. The emphasis in evaluation for the purpose of awarding a long-term contract is the prognosis for the future. Long-term contracts should be based on a prognosis of the candidate’s future achievements, as determined by his or her dependability, growth, originality, potential, and versatility. Granting of long-term contracts takes into account the mission of the School of Optometry and the candidate’s contribution to that mission.

The following descriptions of the categories “Excellent” and “Satisfactory” represent the two extremes of acceptable performance. The category “Very Good” is interpreted as a performance level between these extremes. “Unsatisfactory” means a failure to achieve a satisfactory level of performance.

Teaching

Satisfactory
To be considered satisfactory in teaching, the dossier should contain documentation showing the substantive aspects of the various teaching modalities in which the faculty member has engaged. This documentation should reveal no significant, uncorrected deficiencies or continuous faults in teaching methods and no evidence of clinical incompetence. It should show a continued effort to improve teaching performance regardless of the ability to show immediate outcomes.

Excellent
To show excellence in teaching, the documentation should indicate an outstanding ability to engage students in a didactic, clinical and/or continuing education setting. The candidate’s dossier must show evidence of teaching effectiveness, creativity, and innovation in the organization or dissemination of knowledge consistent with the faculty member’s job description and assignments. There should be evidence of progress towards achieving a reputation for excellence in clinical education outside the IU School of Optometry.

Service

Satisfactory
To be considered satisfactory in service, the dossier must show evidence of good academic citizenship, contributing constructively to the mission of the School and University through service activities. This can include service on school committees and fulfillment of the responsibilities involved. Clinical faculty members are expected to participate in professional activities and provide professional service to patients in the IU School of Optometry clinics with no evidence of incompetence.

Excellent
To be considered excellent in service, the dossier should show evidence of more than a routine amount of service activities. The dossier must show evidence of effective performance that impacts highly visible or important aspects of the School’s mission. Relevant service activities should be tied to the candidate’s field of knowledge and the candidate should relate this knowledge to professional activity for the betterment of the field of clinical education or patient care. The dossier should show evidence of the candidate’s growing visibility outside the school.
Criteria for Promotion from Associate to Full Clinical Professor

Promotion from Associate to Full Clinical Professor should be based on continued development of expertise in teaching and service beyond the level expected for Clinical Associate rank. The criteria for judging excellence in teaching and service are the same as for promotion to Associate level, but the expectations for achieving these criteria are higher for promotion to full rank. Accordingly, there should be evidence of national and/or international prominence in some aspect of teaching and/or service that brings recognition to Indiana University, and honor to the candidate.

Documentation is similar to that described for promotion to Associate Clinical Professor. Based on the documentation, a decision will be made if the teaching is unsatisfactory, satisfactory, very good, or excellent. Satisfactory and excellent are defined below and very good is defined as beyond satisfactory, but not yet attaining excellence.

Teaching

Satisfactory
Candidates should show evidence demonstrating the substantive aspects of the teaching modalities in which the faculty member has engaged. This documentation must show evidence of continued growth as a teacher in each of the areas of teaching beyond the level attained on promotion to Associate Clinical Professor.

Excellent
To demonstrate excellence in teaching, the dossier should provide evidence of the candidate’s national or international visibility as a teacher based on effectiveness, creativity, and innovation in the organization and/or dissemination of knowledge.

Service

Satisfactory
To be deemed satisfactory in service, candidates should show a record of service that is greater than considered satisfactory for promotion to Associate Clinical Professor. It is expected that faculty in the Associate rank will assume a greater role in service activities, and will become more engaged in academic affairs outside the IUSO, compared to faculty in the Assistant rank.

Excellent
Faculty members deemed excellent in service should show evidence of national or international reputation in some area of service, clinical practice and/or patient care. Service activities should be related to the candidate’s area of knowledge or clinical expertise and should contribute to the mission of the IU School of Optometry.