

OAA A&P Workshops: Frequently Asked Questions

When does the review process begin?

(Typically, one year in advance of the appointment end date.)

Who decides whether you'll be reappointed or promoted?

(With input from others, the department chair is responsible for making this decision.)

What is expected in the candidate's statement? Who sees it?

(The candidate's statement is an opportunity to discuss important contributions that have been made in scholarship, teaching and (if any) clinical and administrative activities consistent with criteria in the appropriate faculty line. While it is often appropriate to include background contextual information regarding earlier contributions, it is important that the statement include discussion of achievements during the current appointment term, as well as indications of plans and goals for future work. The candidate's statement is seen by individuals who will be voting on the reappointment or promotion; it is also seen by external and internal referees, along with the c.v.)

Can you quantify a "steep trajectory" (for early promotions)?

(Early promotions are based on the quality, rather than the quantity, of the contributions. Promotions may be initiated at any time when there is unequivocal evidence that the quality and impact of the faculty member's contributions meets the criteria for promotion to the higher rank. In order to avoid potential awkwardness surrounding a negative promotion decision, it is prudent to initiate a promotion review only when a positive outcome can be anticipated with reasonable confidence.)

How many grants and publications do you need (asked by an MCL faculty member)?

(There is no "magic" number. In the MCL, promotion criteria are dependent upon the proportionality of contribution. For example, if the highest proportion of time is dedicated to clinical care, the criteria for scholarship will be different than for someone who concentrates most of his or her time on research. Generally speaking, the quality and impact of the publications are more important than the number. Grants are not required by the School but may be useful evidence of recognition in the field.)

What is the average time for promotions (in the MCL)?

(While this is dependent upon individual circumstances, it is expected that many MCL assistant professors will be ready for promotion during the seventh year of their appointment.)

When do requests for letters go out?

(Candidates are notified of their upcoming reappointment or promotion one year in advance of their appointment end date; referee solicitation letters typically go out within two months of that notification. It is important for candidates to have their curriculum vitae updated and candidate's statement prepared in advance of that.)

Collaborators can't serve as referees, can they?

(For reappointment and promotion to Associate and full Professor, it is expected that a majority of the referees will be independent from the candidate. However, a limited number of collaborators or mentors are usually included.)

Do referees have to be at a certain rank?

(Generally, referees should be at the rank to which the candidate is being promoted or higher.)

Can you contact referees and update them on your activities?

(To encourage candor, Stanford assures referees of the confidentiality of their responses. In this context, candidates should not know (or attempt to learn) the final composition of the referee set and should not contact potential referees in the context of the review. However, candidates are encouraged to seek opportunities to interact with leaders in the field so that their work may be known to potential referees at the time of the reappointment or promotion review.)

Can you ask that certain people not be contacted?

(Candidates may request this, and their recommendations will be given consideration. However, the final composition of the referee set is at the discretion of the department with approval by the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs.)

Can internal letters come from within the department?

(Yes, or from a different department or school within the University.)

What happens when things are published in the seventh year when the tenure review is under way (asked by a UTL assistant professor)?

(Ideally, the body of work on which a candidate will be evaluated for promotion to tenure should have been completed at the end of the sixth year of appointment. This will allow referees to judge the quality and impact of the work rather than speculate about the importance of work in progress. While reviewing bodies at the departmental, School and University levels may be provided with updates on any work published during the seventh year, no such updates are provided to the referees who provide key input into the process.)

How does collaborative work influence the tenure decision?

(At the time of the tenure decision, investigative independence is expected since it can be a useful marker of substantive scholarly contributions. For collaborative work, candidates are encouraged to annotate their curriculum vitae so that the referees and reviewers will be aware of the nature of an individual's substantive contributions to multi-author works.)

Does being a Co-PI hurt or help your tenure case?

(As noted above, it is important for a candidate to have established investigative independence at the time of the tenure decision. In particular, it is expected that the candidate will have established independence from his or her mentor. Such independence is often indicated by "stand-alone" Principal Investigator status on extramural grants. In this context, consistently being a Co-PI with a mentor, and/or the lack of "stand-alone" PI status, could

undermine the case for independence.)

Who decides to whom the clinical excellence forms go?

(The department makes this decision.)

Of all the review levels, which is the highest hurdle?

(Each level of review is important, and it is clear the recommendations forwarded from departments receive close scrutiny by reviewers at the School and University levels. In this regard, substantive, unequivocal support from the candidate's department usually has a positive influence on subsequent review by the School and University.)

What are the odds for success?

(Looking at outcomes for all untenured faculty hires between 1995 and 2001, 72.5% received tenure. It should be noted that in addition to tenure denials, resignations and departures for other reasons are also factored in. While no similar data has been collected on MCL assistant professors, the promotion success rate is likely higher than in the UTL.)

Are decisions ever overturned?

(Negative decisions are subject to appeal by the candidate and, though rare, have been overturned on occasion.)