University of Wisconsin-Madison
ACADEMIC STAFF AREA REVIEW COMMITTEE
BIOLOGICAL/MEDICAL SCIENCES

Revision date: 16 April 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Directors and Department Chairs

FROM: Biological/Medical Sciences Area Review Committee

RE: Guidelines for Proposing Academic Staff Members for Indefinite Appointments (Last revised May 2012)

The various Academic Staff Area Review Committees have been organized to establish policy and to review the credentials of academic staff persons being considered for indefinite status appointment. The Biological/Medical Sciences Area Review Committee would like to emphasize that the overriding criterion for awarding indefinite status is that of demonstrated professional excellence and a clear expectation of continued significant value to the University and that each case will be reviewed individually for evidence of such excellence. The guidelines that follow are intended to facilitate the process of proposal and review.

Academic staff members in the biological/medical sciences area have varying commitments to teaching, research, clinical activities, outreach, service, and administration. Guidelines for evaluation in each of these areas of activity are attached. It is expected that any single candidate for indefinite status will be strong in one or some of these areas but not necessarily all. In addition to evaluation in specific areas of function, attributes of general quality, such as those listed below, should be incorporated into the documentation. These attributes are not listed in order of importance, nor will all necessarily apply to every candidate:

- initiative/self-motivation
- problem-solving ability/creativity
- technical competence
- productivity and quality of work
- judgment
- ability to communicate and interact with colleagues, patients, students, etc.
- supervisory skills
- willingness to and ability to assume responsibility
- coordinative abilities

Following authorization from the candidate's director or departmental chair and the appropriate Dean/Director, a nomination for indefinite appointment can proceed. In order to facilitate this Committee's consideration of personnel recommended for indefinite appointment, we suggest that, as a minimum, the following material be provided.

MATERIALS TO BE PROVIDED:

1) A letter of nomination from the unit head or department chair, including an indication of the vote of the Executive Committee. Since the most important consideration is the excellence of the candidate, the letter should describe the distinctive capabilities, performance, and contributions of the individual in which excellence has been demonstrated. A statement from the unit or department evaluating the candidate's value in the departmental or unit mission, as well as his/her importance to the program or project he/she is most involved with, would also be helpful. Keep in mind that reviewers get their first and best impression of the candidate from this letter.

2) A job description for the current position including the nature and scope of duties and responsibilities. Documentation should reflect the expected effort in each area (research, teaching, clinical, service) in the position, and contributions of the candidate in each area.

3) A resume (curriculum vitae) indicating background and experience, annotated as appropriate to provide information on previous training and job responsibilities and professional development efforts.

4) Two or more letters of evaluation from those who can speak to the talents of the individual and give an objective performance evaluation. If possible, at least one letter from outside the University of Wisconsin-Madison should be included. Letters should compare the quality and productivity of the candidate with others of similar rank and experience. Include an attachment listing who the reviewer is and their relationship to the candidate.

5) Copy of the soliciting letter to the reviewers so that the Area Review Committee will know on what the reviewer was asked to comment.

6) Copy of the unit's guidelines for promotion. This is especially important for those units that link promotion with indefinite status.

7) Any additional material the candidate or nominating unit may feel would be helpful in the evaluation process.

8) A statement by the appropriate Dean or Director indicating the contributions of the candidate within his/her department/unit and indicating continuing support of the candidate within the constraints of UW-Madison ASPP 2.07.A.3. If the nominee for indefinite appointment holds split appointments within more than one unit, such letters of future support must be obtained from each Dean or unit Director.

The supporting materials should be sent by the nominating department or unit to the appropriate Dean or Director (per UW-Madison ASPP 2.07.A.2.). After adding the letter of support to the materials sent by the nominating unit and including any additional information requested in items 1-8 above, the Dean or Director's office should forward the materials to the Office of the Secretary of the Academic Staff. These letters and supporting materials should be saved or scanned as pdf documents, and then combined into a single file and sent to the Secretary of the Academic Staff (soas@soas.wisc.edu). The Secretary of the Academic Staff will notify the Chair of the Biological/Medical Sciences Area Review Committee of its receipt and availability for review by members of the B/MS ARC.

Recommendations with complete documentation will be reviewed and considered at the earliest possible meeting of the Committee, which typically meets annually in late spring or early summer. The Committee chair (see current roster) will be happy to answer questions concerning the suggested documentation.

The Chair of the Biological/Medical Sciences Area Review Committee will draft a pairing of primary and secondary reviewers for each nominated individual's nomination packet. The primary reviewer will not be from the nominee's division, and ideally not from their Unit, but the secondary reviewer may be from the same division or Unit. Further, the Chair will ask the proposed reviewers to declare any conflicts of interest that may affect an impartial assessment of the nominee's materials and application. If the possible conflict of interest is considered significant by the Chair or, if the proposed reviewer recuses him/herself, the Chair will propose another reviewer.

A majority of the Biological/Medical Sciences Area Review Committee must be present to constitute a quorum. A majority of those present is sufficient to Recommend Indefinite Appointment for the nominee. The Committee may also vote to Not Recommend Indefinite Appointment.

The Committee may also reach a vote of "Insufficient or Incomplete Information for Consideration". This is not a negative finding, but will reflect receipt of an incomplete nominating packet. In this case, the Chair of the Biological/Medical Sciences Area Review Committee will contact the nominating Dean or Director's office with the findings and list of items missing or incompletely present in the candidate's package. The nominating Dean or Director's office may add these materials to the nominating package for future consideration, **however the ability to quickly reschedule a meeting of the Committee to re-consider these materials cannot be guaranteed.** The Chair of the Biological/Medical Sciences Area Review Committee will review the nominating packet as received and attempt to confirm that the expected elements are present so that obvious deficiencies can be addressed prior to the meeting of the Committee. Given the short timeframe between the submission of the portfolio and the deliberations of the Committee, it is important that any deficiencies found in the nomination packet be addressed immediately.

In past reviews of deficient nominating packets, the Committee has struggled most frequently with an absent or incomplete description of the position (item #2 above), a missing copy of the unit's guidelines for promotion (item #6), or a statement from the Dean or Director of their intent to indefinitely support the candidate within their unit, within the constraints of UW-Madison ASPP 2.07.A.3 (item #8). This is particularly important if the nominee holds split appointments within separate units.

GUIDELINES

The following guidelines for areas of function within the biological/medical sciences area are intended to help develop the documentation for nomination for indefinite appointment. It is not all inclusive, nor will every section necessarily apply to any individual academic staff member. Further, the Dean or Director's statement of the nominee's job description and expectations of promotion for the unit (items 2 and 6, above) will be weighted heavily in the Committee's deliberations.

INSTRUCTIONAL

Evidence should be presented that the candidate has developed and conducted an instructional program of high quality. Instructional activities are not restricted to in-class teaching, but cover a broad scope including other activities such as individual tutoring, management of instructional or tutorial programs and instructional laboratories, development of new educational tools, and outreach functions. Examples of documentation to be provided include:

1) Evaluations by students, faculty, instructional academic staff, or clients of performance of instructional duties.

   Teaching evaluations make a much bigger impact if the candidate organizes them in a table that summarizes the year and scores. This can be done for each course. The same is true with comments.

2) Evaluation by supervisors or colleagues of instructional materials (handouts, examinations, audiovisual aids, etc.) used in the candidate's instructional role.

3) Description of the development or application of new or improved instructional methods.

4) Chronology of instructional assignments.

5) Description of the training or supervision of instructional staff including teaching assistants, practicum-in-teaching students, etc.

6) List of publications or presentations related to instructional efforts.

RESEARCH

Academic staff appointments that include research functions may involve solely research or joint responsibilities of instruction, service, outreach, and/or administration. Research activities are not restricted to classical laboratory research, but cover a broad spectrum of activities including development of methodology, design of experiments and collaboration with other researchers. Examples of documentation to be included are:

1) A list of research publications, including title and full reference and author names in their order on the publication. If the candidate is not an author, but has contributed to the research, signify the role he/she has played. Types of publications include articles in refereed journals, books or chapters in books, and abstracts of papers presented at meetings.

2) Performance evaluation from the candidate's supervisor and/or colleagues stating the candidate's ability to perform the research, assume new responsibilities, etc.

3) List of present and past research support.

4) List of presentations and seminars given.

5) Description of any administrative or management responsibilities or activities of the candidate, including any involvement in obtaining extramural support for the research.

6) Description of innovative techniques or instrumentation developed in support of research activities.

CLINICAL ACTIVITIES

Academic staff clinical appointments are for those individuals whose primary responsibility is for direct provision of patient care service. Examples of documentation that should be included are:

1) Performance evaluation by candidate's supervisor and colleagues in candidate's own and related professional specialties.

2) Documentation addressing the scholarly approach to patient care as demonstrated by the knowledge and/or employment of current concepts and techniques or development of new programs and as demonstrated by the dissemination of the knowledge in the form of presentation of seminars, publications, departmental conferences, involvement in continuing education programs, and production of written materials for use by the patients.

3) Description of any administrative or management responsibilities or activities of the candidate, especially as they relate to function of the clinical area.

4) Description of innovative techniques or instrumentation developed in support of clinical activities.

5) List of clinically related publications and role, if applicable.

SERVICE/ADMINISTRATION

Significant contributions in the form of professional service can serve as a basis for recommendation to indefinite appointment. In addition, many positions in the biological/medical sciences areas include significant administrative duties that depend on expertise in the biological/medical sciences and are therefore appropriately reviewed by this Area Review Committee. Examples of documentation that should be included in these areas are:

1) Department, College, or University Service

   a) service or support activities provided to other members of the unit on an ongoing basis.

   b) major committee assignments, including duties, term and significance of service.

   c) administrative assignments, including duties, term, and significance of service.

   d) program development, including description and significance of program and particular contribution of the candidate.

2) Public Service

   a) professional service to local, state, regional, national and international public service or governmental units.

   b) service directly to the citizens of Wisconsin.

   c) service on local, state, national or international professional committees or societies, including appointment or election to office.

   d) other service which has received local, state, national or international recognition.