

CMMB Tenure and Promotion Guidelines

Approved by the CMMB faculty September 25, 2015
Approved by the Dean's Office October 9, 2015
Minor revision June 8, 2020

Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Cell Biology, Microbiology and Molecular Biology (CMMB) at the University of South Florida is to carry out nationally and internationally recognized biomedical research and to prepare students for professional science careers in the areas of Cell Biology, Microbiology, and Molecular Biology.

The CMMB Department has responsibility for the education of undergraduate and graduate students in core cell biology, molecular biology, genetics and microbiology as well as access to research opportunities in more specialized areas that require detailed knowledge of these subjects. To accomplish this mission, CMMB offers curricula leading to Bachelor's of Science degrees in either Cellular and Molecular Biology or Microbiology, Master's of Science degrees in Biology and Microbiology and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in either Cellular and Molecular Biology or Cancer Biology. Some courses are designed to meet the needs of students majoring in other science and non-science disciplines.

The faculty and students of CMMB pursue scientific knowledge through rigorous research programs both within the department and in collaboration with other departments and universities across the nation and around the world. The knowledge gained through these programs is disseminated through seminars at scientific conferences, publications in peer reviewed journals and by mentoring undergraduate and graduate student researchers. CMMB faculty consider their research activities to be integrated with the teaching mission of the department so that students fully understand the topical goals and methodologies within cell biology, molecular biology, genetics, microbiology and other specialized areas within these disciplines. CMMB faculty pursue excellence in biomedical research through strategic hires, grants, and scholarly publications. CMMB serves the University, scientific and greater community by providing intellectual resources and engaging in scholarly activities that are consistent with its education and research missions.

The CMMB department maintains inter-disciplinary relationships with other academic programs including those at the Moffitt Cancer Research Center, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering and Molecular Medicine. We are major participants in the USF Florida Center for Drug Discovery and Innovation, a major instrumentation center located on campus.

This Department is not currently a multi-campus unit. If departmental faculty are hired at branch campuses, we will modify our governance and T&P documents to ensure that those faculty are included in matters of faculty governance and Tenure & Promotion to ensure they have voice in departmental issues. We recognize the principles of equity of assignment, resources and opportunities of faculty across a multi-campus university.

Expectations for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

The expectations outlined in this document are guidelines rather than strict rules. In general, faculty members applying for tenure should demonstrate excellence in teaching and research with a substantive record of service. They should also be collegial and collaborative departmental citizens. Faculty members are advised to have annual evaluations on the order of Outstanding in research and Outstanding/Strong in teaching and service by the time they apply for tenure.

a. **Excellence in research** requires developing a nationally recognized, independent research program involving undergraduate and graduate students that is externally funded by federal and/or private foundation grants that would establish national recognition of the candidate's research program. Without extramural funding, it would be very difficult for a faculty member to provide students with the supplies and equipment needed to carry out significant research in Cell Biology, Microbiology and Molecular Biology once startup funds are exhausted. In the case of tenure, total extramural funding should be at a level sufficient to sustain the candidate's research program with total costs in the same range as the candidate's start-up funds. Candidates should demonstrate high quality scholarship, preferably by having peer reviewed publications in nationally or internationally recognized journals. These papers should clearly originate from USF as evidenced by author correspondence, affiliations, and/or the inclusion of USF students, postdoctoral fellows, or other USF collaborators as authors. The number of publications will vary by discipline and has ranged in number from 7-12 for an Assistant Professor applying for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. The number of papers expected will depend on their quality as described below.

i. **Criteria for publication quality.** Departmental Reviewers will generally examine the following criteria in terms of publications:

1. There should be a core of high quality articles in peer reviewed journals that establish the significance of the research program. The candidate should be first, lead, or corresponding author. External reviews will help determine the quality and significance of the work.
2. There may be additional papers that demonstrate collaboration among colleagues within and/or outside of USF.
3. The quality of the journals will be assessed by examining Impact Factors and discipline specific quartile rankings.
4. The number of times each article has been cited will be assessed with the understanding that more recent articles may not have had a chance to be cited.
5. The types of publication (review vs. original research) will be considered.
6. The affiliation of coauthors will be used to establish whether graduate students and post-docs in the faculty member's lab are productive and well mentored. The institutional home of other collaborators can help determine the quality of those collaborations.
7. Publishing papers exclusively with a former doctoral or post-doctoral advisor could be taken as a sign that the research program is not independent.

b. **Excellence in teaching** requires consistently high evaluations of teaching by students and peers. Both student and peer teaching evaluations are done on a 1 to 5 scale and successful tenure/promotion candidates are expected to score near the low to mid fours or higher by the time they apply for tenure and promotion. Lower scores are indicative of problems in how teaching is approached. Faculty should maintain appropriate rigor in their courses as evidenced by course content, exams, and grade distribution. CMMB faculty members typically have a diverse teaching portfolio by the time they apply for tenure. One of these should be a large enrollment course, as CMMB serves a large student body and the ability to teach large classes is normally expected for tenure in the department. Evidence of attending teaching workshops offered at USF and using innovative teaching methods can help build a case for excellence in teaching.

Another component of excellence in teaching is the successful mentoring of undergraduate researchers and graduate students in the lab. Excellence is evidenced by undergraduate researchers who coauthor papers, make presentations at local or regional conferences, or complete an honors thesis. Faculty members are expected to maintain a reasonable number of graduate students in their lab. Excellence is indicated by significant progress of graduate students to their degrees, completion of their degree, co-authorship of research papers and/or presentations at local, regional, national or international conferences. Mentoring of post-doctoral associates may also enhance teaching profiles.

- c. **Substantive Record in Service** can be demonstrated in a number of ways. For example, assistant professors should serve on some departmental committees, review manuscripts for journals, and review grant applications for granting agencies. Some community service such as outreach to local schools is usually carried out by assistant professors. Service to professional organizations may be included. Service is typically 5% of an assistant professor's assignment, and a reasonable amount of service is expected.

Mid-Tenure Review

This review is normally completed during the third year and is similar to the tenure review and uses similar forms. The main differences are that external letters are not requested, and the timeline is different, with the application made in early January of the third academic year with a final recommendation in late spring. CAS holds mid-tenure review workshops early in the Fall semester and publishes the timeline, requirements, and forms. The purpose of the mid-tenure review is to determine if the faculty member is making adequate progress toward tenure in terms of teaching, research and service. The CMMB T&P Committee and the Chair recommend to the Dean whether or not the faculty member should be continued or non-renewed. If non-renewed, the faculty member may complete another year before leaving CMMB.

Promotion to Full Professor

Promotion to Full Professor should normally be considered after 5 full years as Associate Professor. The process is nearly identical to that of applying for Associate Professor except that if an application for Full Professor is not granted, the candidate may apply again in subsequent years. The review only considers accomplishments achieved since becoming Associate Professor. The criteria are similar to those for Associate Professor but with higher expectations. The candidate's research program should be funded by federal and/or private foundation grants at a level similar to or greater than those required for tenure and the lab should be nationally and/or internationally recognized. In general, research quality and productivity should be higher than expected for an Assistant Professor applying for tenure. The teaching portfolio should be sufficient to meet the needs of the department. There should be strong evidence of graduate students who have completed their degrees. Service is expected to include national and international duties such as serving as an officer within a scientific society, editing of journals, organization of symposia or conferences and serving on federal grant panels.

Departmental Tenure and Promotion Timeline and Process

1. Spring of the year prior to tenure evaluation
 - a. The candidate should attend a CAS tenure and promotion workshop and obtain the current schedule for the tenure review process. They should review the process, the schedule and read both CAS and CMMB tenure guideline documents.
 - b. The candidate confers with the Chair regarding the application. This is especially important if there is time-toward tenure, a question of eligibility, or if the likely success of the application seems uncertain.
 - c. The candidate submits a list of 8-10 potential external reviewers according to the guidelines above. This list should include the name, rank, institution, contact information and sufficient biographical information for the Chair and Associate Dean to assess their qualifications for the review. The list must be approved by the Dean's office and by the CMMB Chair. The candidate may not contact potential reviewers immediately prior to the application or during the evaluation process.
 - d. At this time, the candidate should contact the seminar committee and reserve the first available departmental seminar time in the fall to present a seminar summarizing their accomplishments during their time at USF.
 - e. Candidate submits an extended cv to the Chair in May along with 3 pdf reprints of significant research publications. These materials are to send to external reviewers who will evaluate the candidate's research program. The publication and grant listings should be annotated to be clear about who did the work, where it was done, and in the case of grants, the status of the candidate (e.g. co-PI or PI), the total amount of the grant, and what share of the grant funding (direct + indirect costs) is expected to come to the candidate. There should be a general description of the research program and projects in the candidate's laboratory.
2. The Chair of CMMB sends requests to potential external reviewers beginning in May.
3. In early August (date set by the current year tenure evaluation schedule), the completed full tenure applications are brought to the CMMB Chair, who reviews them and forwards them to the CAS Dean's office for a format and content check. *Note that a table should be completed by the candidate (and verified by the CMMB Chair) that lists all journals in the publication list (with author position), journal impact factor, journal rank within field (to control for differences between fields within CMMB), and citation counts. This table should be included on a separate page at the end of the publication list in the tenure application.*
4. Verified T&P files come back from CAS Dean's Office.
 - a. T&P committee assembles automatically from all eligible faculty (committee of the whole). For promotion to Associate Professor it includes all Associate and Full Professors. For promotion to Full Professor it includes all Full Professors. For Instructors it includes all tenured faculty and all instructors at a higher level than the applicant. The CMMB Chair does not participate in the T&P committee. The committee elects a chair according to the CMMB governance document and has 3 weeks to review the applications. The chair's responsibility is to schedule the review of the applicant's files and meetings needed to discuss each case. The chair of the T&P committee should ensure that the review is completed on time. The T&P committee should attend the departmental seminar given by the candidate during this time.

- b. T&P committee of the whole meeting takes place toward the end of the review period.
 - i. Applications are discussed with regard to research, teaching, service
 - ii. Per applicant, three faculty members volunteer (or are assigned by the committee chair) to summarize the discussion at the meeting in the areas of research, teaching, and service.
 - iii. T&P committee of the whole votes on granting tenure/promotion by secret ballot.
 - c. T&P chair collects and compiles the statement drafts and circulates them to the T&P committee of the whole for review.
 - d. T&P chair is responsible for inserting evaluations and vote counts in application package prior to submission deadline to CAS Dean's Office for the CMMB Chair's review.
 5. The Chair then completes the evaluation. At this point there are votes from the CMMB T&P committee of the whole and a recommendation from the Chair. The completed application goes to the CAS office. With this, the Departmental input is complete.