

**Faculty Appointment and Promotion Procedure Guidelines  
Heersink School of Medicine – Academic Clinician Track**

## 1. Faculty Appointments

### Ranks and Criteria

The Academic Clinician Track is a HSOM-only track reserved for clinicians who contribute to the HSOM mission and do not have a compensated, UAB appointment as a full-time regular or part-time regular employee. This track is outlined in Table A, and provides the flexibility required for recognizing the contributions made by clinicians across UAB Medicine. UAB Medicine includes the original campus in Birmingham; the regional campuses; the University of Alabama Health Services Foundation; and members, affiliates, associates, and alliances of the UAB Health System Community Networks (<https://www.uabmedicine.org/about-uab-medicine/community-networks/>).

Table A. HSOM Academic Clinician Track

	Academic Clinician Track
Eligibility	Clinicians of UA Health Services Foundation or of members, affiliates, associates, and alliances of the UAB Health System Community Networks or other affiliated community systems or groups
Faculty Appointment Rank (Titles)	Clinical Instructor
	Clinical Assistant Professor
	Clinical Associate Professor
	Clinical Professor
Areas of Excellence for Promotion Above Clinical Assistant Professor	<p>Service (in the form of patient care)</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Faculty on this track may have additional contributions in teaching and/or research that may bolster their application for promotion.</p>

Number of Areas of Excellence Required for Promotion Above Clinical Assistant Professor	One
Minimum Level of Recognition/Reputation Required for Promotion Above Clinical Assistant Professor	Local
Eligible for Tenure	No

Faculty members on the Academic Clinician track are focused primarily on service in the form of patient care and so the expectation is that this would be their area of excellence. Faculty on this track may have additional contributions in teaching and/or research that may bolster their application for promotion. Faculty members on the Academic Clinician Track will typically have unpaid appointments at UAB that are referred to as “voluntary” appointments, and do not have the same rights and responsibilities afforded to UAB faculty. All HSOM faculty members are expected to be engaged in scholarly activities that support these efforts in ways that are consistent with their unique roles and faculty track. For information regarding UAB guidelines please see the [UAB Faculty Handbook](#)

### **Clinical Instructor**

Appointments to the rank of Instructor are non-tenure earning and typically require a doctorate-level degree. In the rare circumstance a department proposes hiring a candidate without a terminal degree, a justification of need must be submitted to the HSOM Dean’s Office to request pre-approval. These appointments are generally for one year and are renewable.

### **Clinical Assistant Professor**

Appointments to this rank usually require the following:

- Board certification or eligibility
- Two or more years of experience following receipt of a doctorate-level degree
- Academic credentials and demonstration of level of specialized accomplishment appropriate to the mission of the Department and the Heersink SOM
- Expectation of collegiality and participation in service in the Department and/or Heersink SOM
- Demonstration of potential for excellence in the area of service in addition to possible contributions to research and/or teaching

### **Clinical Associate Professor**

Appointments to this rank usually require the following:

- Board certification or maintenance of certification
- Five years or more in the rank of Clinical Assistant Professor or equivalent
- Academic credentials and demonstration of level of specialized accomplishment appropriate to the mission of the Department and the Heersink SOM
- Demonstration of collegiality and involvement in the Department and/or Heersink SOM

- Demonstration of excellence in the areas of service appropriate for the Academic Clinician Track in addition to possible contributions to research and/or teaching
- Demonstration of local peer recognition in the conduct of duties

### **Clinical Professor**

Appointments to this rank usually require the following:

- Board certification or maintenance of certification
- Distinguished performance as a Clinical Associate Professor or equivalent, with at least five years in rank
- Academic credentials and demonstration of level of specialized accomplishment appropriate to the mission of the Department and the Heersink SOM
- Demonstration of collegiality and involvement in the Department and/or Heersink SOM
- Demonstration of sustained excellence in the area of service appropriate for the Academic Clinician Track in addition to possible contributions to research and/or teaching
- Demonstration of local peer recognition in the conduct of duties

## **2. Heersink SOM Promotion Standards**

Faculty member contributions to activities in the areas of research, teaching, and service are evaluated for promotion. All faculty members are expected to be engaged in scholarly activities that support the areas of research, teaching, and service in ways that are consistent with their unique roles and faculty tracks. Further, to attain promotion, faculty are expected to demonstrate sustained excellence in the mission areas appropriate to their professional roles. Faculty in the Academic Clinician Track are also expected to demonstrate excellence as evaluated by their local peers. Individuals being promoted in the Academic Clinician Track are expected to demonstrate excellence in any one area designated in their respective tracks (Table A). While promotion is based upon achieving excellence in one area, all faculty members are encouraged to contribute to other mission areas of the HSOM.

### **Clinical Assistant Professor**

Promotion to this rank usually requires the following:

- Two or more years of work experience following receipt of doctorate level degree
- Academic credentials and demonstration of level of specialized accomplishment appropriate to the mission of the department and the Heersink SOM.
- An expectation of collegiality and participation in service in the department and/or Heersink SOM.
- Demonstration of potential for contributions in the areas of research, teaching, or service.

### **Clinical Associate Professor**

Promotion to this rank usually requires the following:

- Board certification or maintenance of certification
- Five years or more in the rank of Clinical Assistant Professor or equivalent
- Academic credentials and demonstration of level of specialized accomplishment appropriate to the mission of the Department and the Heersink SOM
- Demonstration of collegiality and involvement in the Department and/or Heersink SOM

- Demonstration of excellence in the area of service appropriate for the Academic Clinician Track in addition to possible contributions to research and/or teaching
- Demonstration of local peer recognition in the conduct of duties

### **Clinical Professor**

Promotion to this rank usually requires the following:

- Board certification or maintenance of certification
- Distinguished performance as a Clinical Associate Professor or equivalent, with at least five years in rank
- Academic credentials and demonstration of level of specialized accomplishment appropriate to the mission of the Department and the Heersink SOM
- Demonstration of collegiality and involvement in the Department and/or Heersink SOM
- Demonstration of sustained excellence in the area of service appropriate for the Academic Clinician Track in addition to possible contributions to research and/or teaching
- Demonstration of local peer recognition in the conduct of duties

**Note:** The requirements above regarding five or more years in rank for promotion to the Clinical Associate Professor-level or Clinical Professor-level applies to faculty hired on or after October 1, 2023. All faculty hired prior to October 1, 2023, must have three or more years in current rank for promotion to Clinical Associate Professor or Clinical Professor.

### **3. Examples of Excellence in Areas of Faculty Activity**

Examples of activities consistent with the above guidelines for each of the three areas are provided below. These are not meant to be comprehensive and all-inclusive listings, but rather to provide examples of what constitutes excellence in each of the areas. A faculty member can be recognized as achieving excellence through a combination of activities listed in each area. Additionally, it is recognized that some activities may be classified into more than one category of activity. Finally, the various individuals and faculty peer review groups may consider additional accomplishments in their judgement of the excellence of a particular faculty member being considered for promotion or tenure.

#### **Service (Clinical Associate Professor)**

- Providing measurably excellent clinical productivity and exemplary patient care
- Providing demonstrable leadership or initiative in administrative or committee roles that augment the missions of the Department and/or Heersink SOM in clinical care, research, and/or education such as originality in problem solving, authorship of guidelines or quality reports and policies
- Providing staff responsibility for a service or specific area of patient care
- Providing demonstrable leadership in quality improvement/assurance or patient safety initiatives
- Serving as editor of a journal
- Serving on a grant review committee
- Serving on committees with the department, school, university and/or affiliated institutions

- Engaging in mentoring junior faculty colleagues
- Serving on committees to develop clinical practice guidelines or to formulate healthcare policies
- Providing service to the professional or lay community through education, consultation or other roles

**Service (Clinical Professor)**

- Continued demonstration of excellence of measurably excellent clinical productivity and exemplary patient care.
- Serving on committees with the department, school, university and/or affiliated institutions
- Serving on committees to develop clinical practice guidelines or to formulate healthcare policies
- Providing service to the professional or lay community through education, consultation or other roles
- Sustained exemplary leadership in administrative committee roles that augment the missions of the Department and/or Heersink SOM in clinical care, research and/or education such as originality in problem solving, authorship of guidelines or quality reports and policies
- Providing sustained responsibility for a service or specific area of patient care or clinical teaching
- Sustained excellence in the leadership of quality improvement/assurance or patient safety initiatives
- Recognition as an authority by other schools and departments within UAB and by local, state, regional and national organizations or institutions
- Appointment to responsible position(s) within the institution or its affiliates (e.g., chairs a committee, department, or division; membership on major Department or Heersink SOM committees)
- Extensive and excellent mentorship of faculty colleagues
- Continued service on committees to develop clinical practice guidelines or to formulate regional or national healthcare policies
- Election to responsible positions on civic boards or organizations concerned with health care issues at the local, state, regional, national, or international levels

**Research (Clinical Associate Professor)**

- Demonstration of initiative and independence in research activities in basic or translational science, clinical outcomes, quality improvement or population-based research.
- Publication of independent research findings and scholarly papers in peer reviewed journals. (Publications as first, senior or corresponding author is regarded as stronger evidence of research independence.)
- Obtaining grants and/or contracts for support of research.
- Presentation of research and other scholarly findings at scientific and professional meetings.

**Research (Clinical Professor)**

- Sustained and outstanding performance in the examples cited for the associate professor level
- Serving as mentor, co-author, or senior author of student or resident presentations at local, regional, or national meetings
- Receipt of invitations to preside over sessions at national or international scientific meetings
- Receipt of recognition of excellence in research by professional or scientific institutions or organizations

**Teaching (Clinical Associate Professor)**

- Demonstration of mastery of content and method, documented by student, resident, postdoctoral fellow, and/or peer evaluation (All teaching activities should receive consideration.)
- Taking responsibility for the design, organization, coordination, and evaluation of an educational program
- Developing and/or presenting effective continuing education or other professional programs, including invited presentations
- Providing effective supervision, guidance, and/or counseling to trainees, including graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and/or house officers
- Participation in educational program planning and general curricular activities
- Publication of papers and/or presentations at professional meetings on topics related to education
- Demonstration of innovation in teaching methods and production of texts, educational software or courseware
- Receipt of recognition as an exemplary scientist or clinician whose mentoring and teaching activities provide an outstanding role model for students
- Serving as principal investigator on grants or contracts for educational projects

**Teaching (Clinical Professor)**

- Sustained and outstanding performance in the examples cited for the associate professor level
- Leadership through design, organization, coordination, and evaluation of educational programs
- Administrative responsibility at the school or departmental level for curriculum
- Leadership in continuing education or other professional programs; invitations as visiting professor at other institutions
- Supervision of staff teaching within a course, division, department, or within the school
- Sustained productivity in publication of papers and/or presentations at professional meetings on topics related to education
- Sustained innovation and leadership in production of texts, educational software, or courseware
- Record of sustained ability to maintain external funding to support innovative educational projects

- Sustained recognition as an exemplary scientist, teacher or clinician whose activities provide an outstanding role model for students

#### **4. Promotion of Academic Clinician Track Faculty**

For this track, promotion to Clinical Instructor and Clinical Assistant Professor do not require review by the Clinical Faculty Council. Promotion to the rank of Clinical Associate Professor and Clinical Professor require full department-level review (Department Clinical Appointment and Promotion Committee) and school-level review (Clinical Faculty Council).

Faculty promotion on the Academic Clinician Track is based on a faculty member's training, experience, and activities. Faculty must demonstrate excellence in the area of service in the form of patient care for this track.

A faculty member's achievements will be evaluated using the academic clinician criteria in the Heersink SOM Faculty Handbook. Promotion candidates will be reviewed by similar clinical colleagues.

The promotion guidelines for the Academic Clinician Track will be provided annually by the Heersink SOM.

#### **5. Clinical Faculty Council for Academic Clinician Track**

The Clinical Faculty Council will serve as the Appointment and Promotion Committee for UAB Medicine and the UAB Heersink SOM. In this capacity, the Clinical Faculty Council will make recommendations to the Dean on the merits of appointment and promotion of UAB Medicine Faculty on the Academic Clinician Track. The Clinical Faculty Council will review and approve/disapprove the initial appointment and promotion of Academic Clinician Track faculty to the rank of Clinical Associate Professor and Clinical Professor.

The Clinical Faculty Council shall consist of between eleven (11) and fifteen (15) clinical faculty (Academic Clinician Track and/or dually appointed clinical faculty). Approximately 70% (between eight (8) and eleven (11)) of members are elected by the clinical faculty. The Dean shall appoint the remaining (between three (3) and four (4)) members. The Dean of Faculty Affairs will serve as an ex officio, non-voting member and provide guidance and oversight to the council. Efforts should be undertaken to ensure diversity and inclusion in membership of the Clinical Faculty Council. Department Chairs and faculty with Dean appointments may not serve as members. The Dean shall invite nominees for the elected positions and will construct a ballot of eligible faculty for distribution to and election by all clinical faculty in the UAB Heersink SOM.

The Clinical Faculty Council will recommend a Chair and Vice-Chair, who then must be appointed by the Dean. These individuals must have previously served at least part of a term as a regular member of the Clinical Faculty Council (this requirement will be waived for the inaugural appointments). This prior service may have occurred in an earlier appointment to the Clinical Faculty Council. The term of service for the Chair and Vice-Chair is three years. With the endorsement of the Clinical Faculty Council membership and the approval of the Dean, the Vice-Chair will become the Chair at the completion of the Chair's 3-year term, and then will

serve one 3-year term as Chair. A new Vice-Chair will then be selected. Terms of appointment for Clinical Faculty Council members are three (3) years with one possible three (3) year renewal. In order to ensure consistency of the council's reviews, the inaugural terms of appointment of council members will vary between one (1) to three (3) years or four (4) and six (6) years to stagger the timing of members rotating off the committee. Ideally, no more than a quarter of members should rotate off the committee annually. The term of the Vice-Chair may extend beyond six-years so the Vice-chair may serve one term as Chair. It is the responsibility of the Clinical Faculty Council to review each appointment and promotion application applying the standards of the Academic Clinician Track.

Criteria for Clinical Faculty Council are provided below:

- Committee members should be clinical faculty (Academic Clinician Track and/or dually appointed clinical faculty) at the Associate Professor and Professor ranks.
- Only committee members at or above the rank to which the faculty member under consideration is to be appointed or promoted may vote on such actions.
- Committee members must recuse themselves from discussions or votes of any individual where the member has a conflict of interest. It is the responsibility of the council members to disclose potential conflicts.

## **6. Scholarship Defined**

Heersink SOM has a multifaceted mission that includes providing healthcare, conducting research, applying new knowledge to improve healthcare and delivery, and educating healthcare providers, masters and doctoral level students, etc. This mission requires the commitment of a diverse faculty who are engaged in a full range of scholarly activities. As articulated in contemporary conceptualizations of scholarship, this range of activities includes the scholarship of discovery, application, teaching, and integration. The scholarship of discovery, teaching, and application relates directly to the Heersink SOM's major missions in research, teaching, and service. The scholarship of integration is related to all three areas and should be considered relative to contributions in the three primary areas.

While overlap may exist, a distinction exists between scholarly activity and scholarship. For example, delivering a good lecture in a medical school course is expected of a faculty member and is an example of scholarly activity. To qualify as scholarship in teaching, it is expected that the faculty member publicly disseminates the development of new courses, curriculum, and/or approach to teaching through publication or website posting. In service, a distinction can be made between one faculty member who provides competent clinical care and another who is viewed as an authority in a specific area of clinical medicine. Scholarly activity in research includes delivery of scientific presentation at regional, national, and international meetings or universities. Scholarship in research is achieved through peer reviewed publication of newly developed techniques, methods, or novel scientific discoveries. Application of the same method in support of the research mission of the Heersink SOM might be an example of scholarship in service if this method was judged by the faculty member's peers to be integrally important to the research mission.

Provided below is articulation of Scholarship at Heersink SOM, which is derived from an expanded view of scholarship set forth in Dr. Ernest L. Boyer's book *Scholarship Reconsidered*



(Glassick, C.E., Huber, M.T., Maeroff, G.L., Scholarship Assessed: Evaluation of the Professoriate. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1997.). It is hoped that this statement will inform both the career development of faculty at Heersink SOM and the process of making decisions regarding appointments, promotion, and tenure. Boyer's expanded view of scholarship includes the following:

#### Scholarship of Discovery

"... the scholarship of discovery... comes closest to what is meant when academics speak of "research." No tenets in the academy are held in higher regard than the commitment to knowledge for its own sake, to freedom in inquiry and to following, in a disciplined fashion, an investigation wherever it may lead... Scholarly investigation... is at the very heart of academic life, and the pursuit of knowledge must be assiduously cultivated and defended."

#### Scholarship of Teaching

"When defined as scholarship... teaching both educates and entices future scholars. As a scholarly enterprise, teaching begins with what the teacher knows... Teaching is also a dynamic endeavor involving all the analogies, metaphors, and images that build bridges between the teacher's understanding and the student's learning... Further, good teaching means that faculty, as scholars are also learners... In the end, inspired teaching keeps the flame of scholarship alive... Without the teaching function, the continuity of knowledge will be broken and the store of human knowledge dangerously diminished."

#### Scholarship of Application

"The third element, the application of knowledge, moves toward engagement as the scholar asks, 'How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as to institutions?'... To be considered scholarship, service activities must be tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and relate to, and flow directly out of, this professional activity. Such service is serious, demanding work, requiring the rigor – and the accountability – traditionally associated with research activities."

#### Scholarship of Integration

"By integration, we mean making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating non-specialists, too... Today, interdisciplinary and integrative studies, long on the edges of academic life, are moving toward the center, responding both to new intellectual questions and to pressing human problems. As the boundaries of human knowledge are being dramatically reshaped, the academy surely must give increased attention to the scholarship of integration."