

# Criterion 4

## Faculty, Staff, and Students

### 4.2 Faculty Policies and Procedures

**CEPH Criterion**

The School shall have a clearly defined faculty which, by virtue of its distribution, multidisciplinary nature well-defined policies and procedures to recruit, appoint and promote qualified faculty, to evaluate competence and performance of faculty, and to support the professional development and advancement of faculty

**CEPH Required Documentation**

- a. A faculty handbook or other written documentation that outlines faculty rules and regulations.
- b. Description of provisions for faculty development, including identification of support for faculty categories other than regular full-time appointments.
- c. Description of formal procedures for evaluating faculty competence and performance.
- d. Description of the processes used for student course evaluation and evaluation of teaching effectiveness.
- e. Description of the emphasis given to community service activities in the promotion and tenure process.
- f. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

#### 4.2.a. Faculty Handbook

**Required Documentation:** A faculty handbook or other written documentation that outlines faculty rules and regulations.

The university provides explicit policies concerning faculty recruitment, promotions, and tenure (<http://tinyurl.com/uncapt>) in *Trustee Policies and Regulations Governing Academic Tenure in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*. These policies are mirrored in the school's *Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure Manual* (see <http://tinyurl.com/sphaptmanual>; a copy can also be found in the Resource File), which provides guidelines, criteria, and standards for all appointments to the school. All new faculty members receive a copy of the manual, and chairs regularly review the manual's contents with faculty members on an individual basis. All other documents relating to policies and procedures for faculty are available at the website of the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (<http://provost.unc.edu/>) and/or at <http://tinyurl.com/uncpolicies> (the website of the Office of Faculty Governance). In the last two years, we have revised the school's manual to be more explicit about expectations for faculty mentoring and also to explicitly require that chairs provide each faculty member with a personal timeline when within 18 months of a promotion milestone, e.g., assistant to associate and associate to full professor. The APT Manual also provides extensive discussion about service and what qualifies as service. Chairs also are developing department guidelines for promotion of research and clinical track faculty.

#### 4.2.b. Faculty Development

**Required Documentation:** Description of provisions for faculty development, including identification of support for faculty categories other than regular full-time appointments.

##### Faculty Mentoring

Faculty/Staff Objective #5 is to “mentor faculty to optimize their success and promote excellence.” To help achieve this objective, each department has its own mentoring program to ensure that new faculty members have opportunities to discuss career planning and personal goal-setting; receive performance feedback; and have someone to help to open doors and identify opportunities. HPM, for example, has a working document describing different types of mentoring and department expectations for regular meetings and discussions. Typically, each new full-time faculty member within a department is assigned to a senior faculty member (or, in some cases, a team of mentors) who provides guidance on discipline-specific issues as the faculty member advances. Some departments have extended their mentoring program to all categories of faculty at all ranks, including part-time faculty.

A schoolwide mentoring program was established in 2005 to supplement departmental activities. This program provides opportunities for new faculty to obtain a schoolwide

perspective and to facilitate multidisciplinary approaches. Mentors and new faculty meet as a group three times during the year. The program also offers participating faculty members assistance with manuscript editing. The program will be scaled back because of the current budget crisis, but schoolwide sessions to orient new faculty and provide them a shared context on such important topics as promotion will be retained.

### **Research Funding**

To pursue its objective of “cultivating the School of Public Health as an environment conducive to outstanding productivity and discovery within a collegial and collaborative context” (Faculty/Staff Objective #4), the school makes every effort to help its faculty acquire external funding. In addition, start-up packages are usually provided for new tenure track faculty members especially for highly recruited positions; the amount is determined on a case-by-case basis, but may be greater than \$100,000 of one-time-only funding from the university. Typical start-up packages provide salary support for highly sought after recruits and may also provide research support such as a lab renovation and upfit, equipment, and research support positions.

State of North Carolina budget allocations for faculty development are limited, and, in times of budget cuts, funding for faculty development tends to be a lower priority. Fortunately, the Gillings gift makes other faculty development opportunities available. For example, the Gillings Innovation Laboratories (GILs) allow faculty members to develop ideas that have the potential to result in innovative solutions to public health problems. The GILs competitions have funded 14 projects to date—two in early 2007, five in 2007-08, and seven in 2008-09; see Criterion 3.1.a. for details on these projects. It is noteworthy that these projects involve faculty and students from several departments in the school and university, advancing the interdisciplinary perspective that the school values.

Gillings Visiting Professorships (GVPs), also funded by the Gillings gift, have provided the opportunity so far for two SPH faculty members to promote their professional development, with the expectation that they also must give back to the school through seminars, interactions with students, and projects. In addition, three people outside the school, also were awarded GVPs. GVPs are awarded to (1) faculty from the School of Global Public Health who may undertake focused working sabbaticals in an approved organization, working in the field of study anywhere around the world, and (2) experts from outside the school, who are invited or competitively selected from think tanks, businesses, nongovernment organizations, and academic institutions from across North Carolina and around the world to come to the school to work on important public health problems. Professor Sheila Leatherman was the first GVP; she is visiting HPM to work on a project to use microcredit organizations to enhance access to health education and services in developing countries. Professor Tom Ricketts (HPM) received two years of funding to assist the École des Hautes Études en Santé Publique in Paris and Rennes to create a National School of Public Health that will involve faculty members from all departments in the school. Dr. James Merchant is a GVP in ESE; he is immediate past dean of the University of Iowa

College of Public Health and will facilitate rural health and prevention work at UNC. The fourth award was made in early 2009 to Dr. Rohit Ramaswamy (PHL) to develop a pilot distance-based global health learning program for public health professionals around the world. Finally, Don Holzworth, CEO Futures Group and Adjunct Professor HPM, was made Executive in Residence in 2009—a variant on the GVP; Mr. Holzworth has a very strong practice orientation, and a company that delivers public health programs around the world.

UNC and its many centers and institutes offer a variety of kinds of research support, particularly for pilot projects. One avenue of support for faculty scientific and scholarly efforts is the university's Junior Faculty Development Awards. These grants (up to \$7,500 in 2008) may be used for supplies, equipment, salaries of assistants, travel, or to assist with any other dimension of faculty development (<http://tinyurl.com/jrfacdev>). The university encourages the use of these grants as a steppingstone to extramural support. Publication grants are also available to help pay the costs of publishing scientific and scholarly work.

The SPH has partnered with the School of Medicine as part of the CTSA initiative to offer support for both large-scale pilot projects and smaller projects; see also, Criterion 3.1.b. One of our faculty members just received support for a community-based diabetes initiative.

In 2007, UNC's Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center obtained a commitment from the NC legislature to receive about \$50M/year in perpetuity for a variety of activities—the University Cancer Research Fund (UCRF; <http://ucrf.unc.edu>). The population sciences, which include the School of Public Health, is one of the key components of the program. Already, we have received significant research support, including critical funds for several faculty recruitments and student support. Funds should grow dramatically over the next several years, as the result of a strategic planning process of which the school is a fundamental part. UCRF support includes funds for innovative pilot projects, two significant cohorts, and infrastructure, and will also include support for several major projects.

### **School-Based Faculty Development Opportunities**

Several *schoolwide* events are open to all faculty members, students, and others. Among the most notable is the Minority Health Conference (see Criterion 1.4.b.). The 41<sup>st</sup> Fred T. Foard Memorial Lecture, last held April 2009, hosted William McDonough, FAIA, world-renowned architect and Time magazine's "Hero for the Planet," who presented his vision of an environmentally and economically intelligent future of design that draws inspiration from natural systems. Each year, we present two of our most important school awards at the Foard Lecture. In most cases, one of the two awards is given to a public health professional with strong practice ties. The 2009 Barr Award for Distinguished Alumni was given to Rebecca King, DDS, PhD (MPH '87), chief of the Oral Health Section, NC Department of Health. In 2008, the award was given to Charles McGrew (MPH '73), head of the Arkansas Department of Health.

Some department-initiated events are co-sponsored by the school and are made available schoolwide. The half-day “Team-Based Learning” workshop, led by expert Larry Michaelsen of the University of Central Missouri, was hosted by HPM. Other events are more disciplinary focused, but are open to all, such as the symposium sponsored by EPID in honor of Dr. Barbara Sorenson Hulka, “The Molecular Epidemiology of Cancer: Perspectives and Approaches.”

### University-Based Faculty Development Opportunities

The mission of the university’s newly created (2008) *Center for Faculty Excellence* is to provide holistic support to individual faculty members across the broad spectrum of professional development (<http://cfe.unc.edu/events.html>). The center describes itself as “a springboard so that good researchers will become great researchers, good instructors will become great instructors, and faculty members will become leaders.” Many instructional resources are available through the center, such as publications and workshops. Peggy Leatt, the school’s associate dean for academic affairs, is on the center’s Advisory Board. The university’s *Academic Leadership Program* is a university-sponsored faculty development opportunity for tenured faculty members (<http://tinyurl.com/acadlead>).

The university does not have a sabbatical or other system of faculty leaves. Internal university-wide competitive research and scholarly leaves pay the full salary of a full-time faculty member for one semester, or half salary for two semesters (up to \$60,000) (<http://tinyurl.com/facleaves>), but there are only a limited number of these leaves available. Gillings Visiting Professorships now offer another way for SPH faculty members to obtain sabbatical experiences.

#### 4.2.c. Faculty Evaluation

<b>Required Documentation:</b> <i>Description of formal procedures for evaluating faculty competence and performance.</i>
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The school provides guidelines for faculty expectations and standards of performance in its *Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure (APT) Manual* (see Resource File), where criteria for promotion and tenure are clearly spelled out. At the time of consideration for promotion, required documentation includes the individual’s curriculum vitae, a teaching portfolio, a career focus statement, and external letters of reference. To proceed, the candidate must first receive approval for promotion within his/her department with a vote of the full professors; in some departments, this could include associate professors voting on assistant to associate promotions. Each department tailors the guidelines to its specific expectations, e.g., numbers of published papers expected, amount of grant support.

At the school level, the APT Committee reviews candidates for promotion (see Criterion 1.2.a. for additional details on the APT Committee). The committee first assigns each

candidate to primary and secondary reviewers who report back to the committee. The full committee then votes and makes a recommendation to the dean, who in turn makes a recommendation to the provost and to the universitywide APT Committee. It would be extremely unusual for the dean not to support the committee's recommendation; in fact, the current dean has accepted all the committee's recommendations to date.

Department committees conduct post-tenure reviews, which can be carried out at any time but should occur five years post-tenure. A plan of action for the faculty member's professional development is recommended, as necessary. In addition, department chairs meet at least annually with faculty members on an individual basis. Although there is some variation, most departments expect faculty members to prepare a progress report to summarize their achievements for the preceding year in research, teaching, and service, and to delineate goals for the next year. The progress report and the discussion are recorded and are used by the department chair when making judgments about salary increases.

#### 4.2.d. Course and Teaching Evaluation

<p><b>Required Documentation:</b> <i>Description of the processes used for student course evaluation and evaluation of teaching effectiveness.</i></p>
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All courses are evaluated using both informal and formal mechanisms. Informal mechanisms include regular feedback from students in classes and at brown bag lunch discussions, as well as regular meetings between students and program directors and chairs. Some departments also conduct focus groups, exit interviews, and/or midprogram evaluations.

Each semester, students also formally evaluate all courses that they have completed. Course evaluation results are made available to the faculty member(s) teaching the course, the teaching assistants, the department chair, and, in some cases, students. Historically, course evaluations have been a paper-and-pencil exercise, although some departments are experimenting with electronic surveys.

In 2006, the school volunteered to participate in a pilot project to develop a *university-wide* electronic course evaluation system. The school recognizes the value of a single course evaluation system that can provide consistent data to students and faculty and can be used as part of dossiers for promotion and tenure. Although the system met with considerable success in some departments, the school's overall experience in the pilot project was mixed. Some faculty members, for example, expressed dissatisfaction with the way questions were worded, and others noted the system's inability to evaluate multiple teachers in one course. Moreover, the student response rate was lower with the electronic system than with paper-and-pencil evaluations. The school is now experimenting with a number of strategies to accommodate these limitations. Meanwhile, the university has established a committee, including representatives from the school, to identify a new course evaluation system that

schools throughout the university can use. The provost has identified this effort as a high priority.

The students' course evaluations and other forms of feedback are used extensively by individual professors to make improvements in courses on an ongoing basis, and chairs and program directors discuss the evaluations for discussion during annual faculty reviews. In addition, evaluation of teaching is a very important part of faculty assessment for promotion and tenure. As previously noted, the school expects faculty members to maintain a teaching portfolio documenting the courses they have taught and how they have used course evaluation feedback to change the course and reshape students' learning experiences.

In addition, as part of preparation for promotion, faculty members are subject to peer evaluation. Typically, two faculty members attend the promotion candidate's class(es) on more than one occasion and document their appraisal of the candidate's teaching in terms of course design, pedagogy, and participation (see, for example, "Peer Teaching Evaluation, Department of Health Policy and Management," updated September 2008 in the Resource File). This peer evaluation then is shared with the faculty member for continuous quality improvement purposes. Excellence in teaching is a significant factor in consideration for promotion, and is considered along with the faculty member's research productivity and service contributions; teaching excellence is weighted more heavily for fixed-term clinical faculty, whose primary role is teaching.

A number of university-wide and SPH awards recognize teaching excellence. Students have the opportunity to nominate any faculty member for any UNC award (<http://provost.unc.edu/teaching-awards>), however these awards are very competitive, and it is difficult for the school's faculty to compete successfully because of the much larger course enrollments (and votes) in the College of Arts and Sciences. Within the school, teaching awards include the McGavran Award for outstanding teaching, the E. Larsh Jr. Award for mentoring, and department-specific recognitions for teaching excellence.

**4.2.e. Faculty Community Service**

**Required Documentation:** *Description of the emphasis given to community service activities in the promotion and tenure process.*

As noted in Criterion 4.1.c., one of the school's primary objectives for faculty and staff is active service at the state, national, and international levels. The school considers "contributions to practice or service" to be one of the three main criteria for promotion (along with research and teaching), although, historically, it has been rare for a faculty member to be promoted primarily on the basis of excellence in practice. The APT Manual, which delineates the relevance of community service activities in the promotion and tenure process, spells out some of the links between practice and other areas of endeavor. For example, research in "collaboration with public health agencies and/or communities for the purpose of helping them assess public health problems, assure the delivery of public health services, or develop public health policies" is included as a basis for promotion (page 16).

The amount of community service provided by faculty members varies across individual interests and departments. Faculty members are inherently more practice-oriented in departments such as HBHE, HPM, and MCH, as well as within the PHL Program. Involvement of faculty in practice is frequently facilitated through NCIPH (see Criterion 3.2.b.). As noted in Criterion 4.1.c., the school also created the position of professor of the practice of public health as a way of signifying the importance of practice in its mission.

**4.2.f. Assessment of Faculty Policies and Procedures**

**Required Documentation:** *Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.*

**Strengths**

- An excellent set of published documents regarding appointments and promotions, which have been further modified by individual departments to meet their department-specific needs
- A comprehensive faculty review system, with a multipronged approach for monitoring and assisting faculty member's progress through the ranks
- Department-level mentoring to assist junior faculty in understanding and preparing for promotion
- A schoolwide orientation program that supplements department mentoring
- Support for innovative and potentially high-impact ideas through Gillings Innovation Laboratories
- Support for other developmental activities for faculty, such as visiting professorships provided by the Gillings gift
- Availability of various levels of funding, including start-up funding and small research grants, including through the University Cancer Research Fund
- Significant school-led efforts to raise awareness about the urgent need for an online, university-wide course evaluation system, and the school's major role in developing and implementing such a system

**Challenges**

- Providing sufficient resources to support professional development for faculty, such as workshops and training; travel to, and participation in, conferences; professional association membership, and so on
- Operationalizing an online course evaluation system for all departments

**Future Directions**

- Seek external sources of funding for faculty development
- Refine mentoring programs so that all departments have consistently strong programs, supplemented by schoolwide resources
- Participate in development, testing, and implementation of university new online course evaluation system

**This Criterion is met.**

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