

# BEST PRACTICES IN MENTORING AND PROMOTION OF ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

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## Communicating the Promotion Process

The institutional policy on faculty promotion and tenure, including eligibility criteria, expectations, and process is codified in the Faculty Handbook, Chapter 5. In addition, each college and department will communicate to faculty what their criteria and expectations are for promotion from associate to full professor. This information must be documented in college and department governance documents and easily accessible to faculty. While college and departmental governance documents may expand upon the promotion and tenure expectations documented in the Faculty Handbook, they may not contradict it.

Review of progress towards promotion to Professor and planning for advancement is expected to be part of every faculty member's annual performance evaluation. Department chairs will discuss planning and preparing for promotion to professor to the rank of Professor, in the context of the faculty member's individual Position Responsibility Statement (PRS).

The department chair should indicate to an associate professor when they believe the faculty member is ready to stand for promotion. Good mentors can provide input and serve as an advocate at the department-level for the candidate.

## Mentoring and guidance

The average time from promotion to professor is 8.16 years after promotion to associate professor. The institutional median for promotion from associate to full professor is 7 years.

When an associate professor believes they are ready for promotion, they should discuss next steps with the department chair and mentor. If the department chair has concerns about promotion, the faculty member and chair should discuss these. In some cases, the faculty member may choose to postpone promotion review until they have a stronger portfolio.

Associate professors should develop a plan for advancement towards promotion with input from valued mentor(s) and their department chair.

In addition to departmental mentoring, associate professors are encouraged to identify successful senior colleagues (within or beyond department) to serve as mentors.

Associate professors seeking advancement need

to demonstrate significant institutional service ([Faculty Handbook Sections Associate Professor and/or Tenure 5.2.3.2. and Professor 5.2.3.3](#)). They should increase strategically their involvement in and leadership of service activities within the department and to the college and university. For example, they might consider focusing on assignments that can build their leadership skills (chairing a P&T committee or a faculty search committee, etc.).

Associate professors should seek to enhance their national/international reputation by engaging in prominent roles/activities in their professional societies and or other professional entities (e.g. leadership positions for conferences, societies, editorial board membership, grant review panels, etc.).

The department chair, mentor, or senior colleague should nominate the faculty member for appropriate college, university and professional society awards with the goal of progressively prestigious recognitions.