

## **Molecular Biology Normal Merit Standards: Fourth Year Appraisal**

We have included a copy of our School normal merit standards with this letter. In addition to those broad standards, the Department of Molecular Biology has established expectations for faculty at the fourth-year appraisal review. We expect clear progress towards establishing scholarly independence from mentors. This is ideally documented by 1 primary peer reviewed research article as corresponding or co-corresponding author independent of training mentors and 1 grant from a federal agency and/or major research foundation. In addition, there should be evidence that the faculty member is developing an independent research program with the potential for significant future impact. Further, we expect a strong teaching effort, and service appropriate to the Assistant Professorial rank. Such service is typically serving on a committee within the School, active participation in the Department's functions such as faculty meetings, faculty searches, science chalk talks, and involvement with the Biological Sciences Graduate program. Teaching includes making a commitment to establishing an effective teaching style and utilizing campus resources (e.g. Teaching and Learning Commons) as needed, as well as developing a record of mentorship particularly in building an active laboratory to both support their research program and educate the next generation of scientists. Faculty with a federal or major foundation grant and at least 1 independent and impactful corresponding or co-corresponding authored research article, with no weakness in teaching or service, may receive a Favorable appraisal.

## **MB Normal Merit Standards: Promotion to Tenure**

We have included a copy of our School normal merit standards with this letter. In addition to those broad standards, the Department of Molecular Biology has established expectations for faculty being evaluated for tenure. We expect establishment of outstanding scholarly reputation in the field along with evidence of an independent ongoing research program with strong trajectory and potential for significant impact. We expect at least 2 independent peer reviewed research articles as corresponding or co-corresponding author in high-quality journals, 1 grant from a federal agency and/or major research foundation, a strong teaching effort, and service appropriate to the Assistant Professorial rank. Such service is typically serving on a committee within the School, active participation in Department functions such as faculty meetings, faculty searches, science chalk talks, and involvement with the Biological Sciences Graduate program. Teaching includes a clear commitment to and record of an effective teaching style, as well as a record of mentorship particularly in establishing an active laboratory to both support their research program and educate the next generation of scientists.

## **MB Normal Merit Standards: Promotion to Full Professor**

We have included a copy of our School normal merit standards with this letter. In addition to those broad standards, the Department of Molecular Biology has established

expectations for faculty eligible for consideration for promotion to Full Professor. We expect a strong record of innovative research, generally measured by primary peer-reviewed research articles. We expect an average of one to two research papers per year in high-quality journals, at least one of which is corresponding or co-corresponding authored, that make important contributions to both special subject areas and broad fields in molecular biology; MB emphasizes the quality and impact of publications over their numbers and therefore fewer but more impactful publications will also satisfy expectations. We also expect a strong record of external funding support, e.g. being a primary PI on at least one active grant from NIH or equivalent agencies in the review period, a record of excellence in teaching, student education and strong mentorship to trainees, a growing record of service to the Department and to the School, as well as meaningful contributions to the campus and the profession. Their research program should reflect broad recognition and impact, nationally or internationally, as reflected through a variety of metrics such as invited research talks and participation in conferences, service as an advisory board member or consultant on reviews of research grants or institutions, etc. Campus service includes consistent and active participation in faculty governance, such as impactful committees in the School, contributions to UC San Diego's principles of community, and sustained engagement in the Department's functions such as faculty searches and training students within the Biological Sciences Graduate program. Faculty at this level should have a record of teaching excellence reflecting a commitment to undergraduate and graduate education, along with a growing record of mentorship that demonstrates that graduate and postdoctoral mentees have gone onto successful careers.

### **MB Normal Merit Standards: Advancement to Professor Step VI**

We have included a copy of our School normal merit standards with this letter. In addition to those broad standards, the Department of Molecular Biology has established expectations for faculty eligible for consideration for advancement to Step VI. We expect a strong record of innovative research, generally measured by primary peer-reviewed research articles. We expect an average of one to two research papers per year in high-quality journals, at least one of which is corresponding or co-corresponding authored, that make important contributions to both special subject areas and broad fields in molecular biology; MB emphasizes the quality and impact of publications over their numbers and therefore fewer but more impactful publications will also satisfy expectations. We also expect a strong record of external funding support, e.g. being a primary PI on at least one active grant from NIH or equivalent agencies in the review period, sustained excellence in teaching, student education and strong mentorship to trainees, a strong record of service to the Department and to the School, as well as important contributions to the campus and the profession. Their research program should demonstrate national or international recognition and significant impact, as reflected through a variety of metrics such as invited research talks and leadership roles in conferences, service as an advisory board member or consultant on reviews of research grants or institutions, service in editorial roles, etc. Campus service includes consistent and active participation in faculty governance with campus-wide impact separate from their research area, such as serving

on academic senate or college committees. In addition, service on high impact committees in the School, contributions to UC San Diego's principles of community, and sustained engagement in the Department's functions such as faculty meetings, faculty searches, mentoring junior faculty, and training students within the Biological Sciences program is expected. Faculty at this level should have a record of teaching excellence reflecting a commitment to undergraduate and graduate education, along with a record of mentorship that demonstrates that graduate and postdoctoral mentees have gone onto successful careers.

### **MB Normal Merit Standards: Advancement to Above Scale and Advancement Further Above Scale**

We have included a copy of our School normal merit standards with this letter. In addition to those broad standards, the Department of Molecular Biology has established expectations for faculty eligible for consideration for advancement to above scale or advancement further above scale. We expect a strong record of innovative research, generally measured by primary peer-reviewed research articles. We expect an average of one to two research papers per year in high-quality journals, at least one of which is corresponding or co-corresponding authored, that make significant contributions to both special subject areas and broad fields in molecular biology; MB emphasizes the quality and impact of publications over their numbers and therefore fewer but more impactful publications will also satisfy expectations. We also expect a strong record of external funding support, e.g. being a primary PI on one active grant from NIH or equivalent agencies in the review period, sustained excellence in teaching, student education and mentorship to trainees, a strong record of service to the Department and to the School, as well as significant contributions to the campus and the profession. Their research program should consistently demonstrate international recognition and significant impact, as reflected through a variety of metrics such as invited research talks and leadership roles in conferences, service as an advisory board member or consultant on reviews of research grants or institutions, service in editorial roles, and election to scientific societies, etc. Campus service includes consistent and active participation in faculty governance at the highest level with campus-wide impact separate from their research area, such as serving on academic senate or college committees. In addition, leadership roles in the School, contributions to UC San Diego's principles of community, and sustained engagement in the Department's functions such as faculty meetings, faculty searches, mentoring junior faculty, and training students within the Biological Sciences Graduate program is expected. Faculty at this level should have a record of teaching excellence reflecting a commitment to undergraduate and graduate education, along with a record of mentorship that demonstrates that graduate and postdoctoral mentees have gone onto successful careers.

## **Discipline-specific Impacts Statement**

The research areas of the Department of Molecular Biology are inherently hands-on disciplines. Faculty in these fields study living things – animals, plants, cells, microbes – that require in-person care and attention around the clock, 7 days a week. The work requires dedicated lab personnel, which include graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, undergraduate students, and research staff. Research opportunities for all MB faculty were severely hindered by a number of external events since the beginning of 2020. First, the restrictions on campus access and limitations on personnel density that were in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic from March 2020 until Summer 2021 placed great stress on our faculty and their research programs. The impact was particularly significant on our junior faculty that were just launching their independent research programs, and was greatly exacerbated by the campus's poorly-managed Enterprise System Renewal (ESR) transition, including a new payroll system, timekeeping system, and financial system, that was launched in the midst of the pandemic. The negative effects of the pandemic and the ESR transition continue to reverberate and have negatively impacted the ability of MB faculty to advance their research agendas and generate timely publications. In particular, the inability to accurately monitor lab finances following the ESR transition has impacted decision-making, hiring, and in turn research productivity. Compounding these two events, the UAW strikes and collective bargaining agreements for graduate students and postdocs in late 2023/early 2024, which both disrupted normal work plans and significantly and suddenly increased costs for graduate students and postdocs that work in MB faculty research groups, negatively impacting MB faculty research programs. The pandemic and the UAW strike also disrupted teaching and significantly increased the time burden placed on MB faculty to abruptly adjust their courses, which further affected their research productivity. These events have also had an outsized impact on our Teaching Professors, as these faculty are responsible for teaching multiple courses each year including, for most Teaching Professors, laboratory courses. More recently, the disruption of federal funding and the uncertainty associated with it has added yet another significant stress to the research efforts of MB faculty that rely on federal support for their research programs. Altogether, these events have had a substantial negative impact on the scholarly opportunities available to faculty in our fields. During the current academic reviews, we will therefore carefully consider achievement relative to opportunity for each MB faculty member.