

**Merit Standards for Teaching Professors**  
**Division of Biological Sciences**  
**March 2021**

The Division of Biological Sciences has determined the normal merit advancement criteria for its members in order to provide a measurement of a candidate's achievements and to aid in evaluation when acceleration is proposed. Teaching Professors are evaluated on their (1) teaching, (2) professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity, and (3) University and public service.

**General**

***“Clearly demonstrated evidence of excellent teaching is an essential criterion for appointment, advancement, and promotion” (from APM 210-3); it is also the primary criterion by which Teaching Professors are evaluated (from APM 285-9).***

The Teaching Professors in Biological Sciences have a wide range of interests and approaches to teaching, and they have shown that teaching excellence can be demonstrated in many different ways. No single set of standards defines excellent teaching but we have identified a number of criteria that all contribute to excellent teaching. Some possible examples of such activities are listed here:

**Possible Examples of Excellence in Teaching**

- Holistic Teaching Evaluations
- Course assessments that document learning
- Evidence of successful mentoring and training of a diverse population of students or faculty
- Evidence of Equity-Minded Teaching Practices
- Teaching awards
- New Course Development
- Major Curriculum Revision
- Evidence-Based Course Design
- New Educational Innovations
- Pre- and post-surveys
- Evidence that teaching has evolved and improved
- Peer Evaluations
- CAPE reviews (understanding the limitations)

Teaching Professors are most often hired by the Division to address teaching needs within our program. While many teaching professors teach laboratory and/or large enrollment lecture courses, teaching these types of courses is not a required element of a strong teaching record. Rather, emphasis should be placed on whether the Teaching Professor has contributed to the needs of the Division's educational mission via outstanding teaching. The majority of teaching professors teach 5

courses/year, and conduct scholarly and service activities outside of the classroom. If a Teaching Professor chooses to teach 6 courses/year, the expectation is that their scholarly and service work would be more limited. Teaching professors, like research professors, may be granted teaching relief for additional substantial needs, including but not limited to directing a degree program, serving as PI on a substantial grant, or leading a campus center. The Division acknowledges that the number of students and weekly contact hours varies depending on the class (e.g. many more contact hours in a lab class for example) and this is taken into account when considering the time a Teaching Professor has available to carry out other scholarly and service related activities.

Teaching faculty are expected to demonstrate evidence of Professional and/or Scholarly achievement and activity, related to either the underlying discipline or to pedagogy. Once again, a broad range of activities satisfies this expectation and some possible examples are listed here:

### **Possible Examples of Professional and Scholarly Activity**

- Developing and maintaining a science education program
- Writing or significantly revising a lab manual
- Being a PI or Co-PI on a grant
- Creating new instructional materials
- Developing and coordinating educational programs across campus
- Developing curriculum that is adopted outside UCSD
- Publishing results in peer-reviewed journals or refereed conference proceedings
- Authoring/co-authoring books or book chapters
- Teaching Professor or trainee presenting talks or workshops at academic conferences
- Development of community outreach or community-oriented programs

Teaching Professors are encouraged to focus on service activities directly related to education and student success, though high quality service in other areas is perfectly acceptable. Service at all levels is encouraged – campus, university, academic fields (e.g. professional societies) and to the public. Possible examples of service at all levels are listed here:

### **Possible Examples of Service**

- Coordinating or co-coordinating a course
- Training/Advising Biology Instructional Assistants
- Participation in faculty & Unit 18 lecturer searches
- Evaluation & mentorship of lecturers
- Serving on thesis committees
- Leadership in biology student organizations
- Contributing to Divisional Diversity initiatives
- Serving on section or university committees

- Organizing a seminar series
- Carrying an exceptional Teaching Load
- Service to UCSD Colleges

It is important to note that there can be many different types of successful files at every stage of promotion and the lists above do not represent all possible activities that would lead to successful promotions. In all cases, documentation of teaching excellence is required, but professional/scholarly activities and service contributions can vary considerably. For example, a file with excellence in teaching, exceptional service, and moderate professional/scholarship activity would be acceptable, as would a file with excellence in teaching, exceptional professional/scholarship activity and moderate service.

### ***Criteria for Specific Steps***

#### **4<sup>th</sup> year appraisal**

Most teaching Professors teach 5 courses a year, usually between 2 – 4 unique courses taught more than once. When first hired, Teaching Professors are almost always teaching these courses for the first time, or developing one or more new courses from scratch. Thus, at the 4<sup>th</sup> year appraisal, the most important expectation is to have shown excellence in effective teaching, as demonstrated by more than one criterion, with only moderate scholarship/professional activity and service required.

There will be many possible scenarios for a positive 4<sup>th</sup> year appraisal. A Teaching Professor might have developed a new course, shown documented evidence that teaching has evolved and improved, and have a demonstrated record of mentoring a diverse group of students. Another possible scenario could be major revisions to a class and a campus teaching award. See the list above for more examples.

We expect progress towards developing professional/scholarly activities. This might be presenting a workshop at a professional conference, or the establishment of a research program and beginning to work with Masters students, or significant work towards a first publication. See the list above for more examples.

Service appropriate to the Assistant Professorial rank is also expected. Examples of such service might include serving on a committee within the Division, active participation in the Division's functions such as faculty searches, organizing seminar series, or helping to run educational activities for the Division. Campus level service is highly valued but not expected at this stage. Additional examples can be found in the list above.

### **Appointment to Associate Teaching Professor (or Lecturer with Security of Employment)**

***“Under no circumstances will security of employment be conferred unless there is clear documentation of consistent and sustained excellence in teaching”. (APM 210-3)***

The most important criterion by which we evaluate our Teaching Professors when considering appointment to Associate Teaching Professor is documented, sustained excellence in teaching as demonstrated by more than one criterion. At this stage we would expect some demonstration of teaching excellence in the majority of classes taught (which is a total of 5 for most TP). A strong record of mentoring multiple students is also expected – possible examples could include training Instructional Assistants for multiple classes, working with students through Academic Enrichment Programs, or training Masters students.

For promotion to Associate Teaching Professor, we expect evidence of sustained professional and/or scholarly achievement with more than one activity. For example, a TP might have developed significant new instructional materials, have at least one first, co-corresponding, or corresponding author publication, and have disseminated work at one or more professional conferences or to the broader scientific community.

We also expect service appropriate to the Assistant Professorial rank. Such service could include membership on a committee within the Division or on campus, efforts to increase diversity at the Division or campus level, active participation in the Division’s functions such as faculty searches, organizing seminar series, or helping to run educational activities for the Division or campus. While not required at this stage, service beyond campus (i.e. to professional societies, journals) would be greatly valued.

### **Appointment to Full Teaching Professor (or Senior Lecturer with Security of Employment)**

***“Appointment or promotion to the Senior Lecturer with Security of Employment title requires evidence of sustained excellence in effective teaching and demonstrated distinction in the special competencies appropriate to teaching that particular subject.” (APM 210-3)***

For appointment to Full Teaching Professor in the Division of Biological Sciences, we expect a strong record of sustained teaching excellence in the majority of classes, using criteria from the list above (or equivalent). We also expect mentorship to trainees (e.g undergraduates, Masters students, Instructional Assistants) and a clear commitment to education. At this stage it would be common for a Teaching Professor to have taken a leadership role in one or more courses.

Continued professional or scholarly contributions to the discipline or to the field of education are necessary for advancement. This could take many forms. A Teaching Professor might, for example, have senior or primary authorship on one or more publications since becoming Associate Teaching

Professor, or they or their trainees might have given presentations at professional meetings. Alternatively, they might have developed educational materials that are disseminated beyond the campus and been involved with the leadership of educational programs on campus or beyond.

We also expect a growing record of service to the Division, campus, or University and beyond, with significant contributions in any category. This service might include consistent and active participation in faculty governance on impactful committees in the Division or on campus, sustained engagement in the Section's functions such as faculty searches and mentoring junior faculty, involvement with efforts to increase diversity at the Division or Campus level, and membership or leadership on Academic Senate Committees. While not required, leadership on one or more committees would be common.

### **Appointment to Full Teaching Professor Step VI**

***Advancement to Step VI involves an overall career review and will be granted on evidence of sustained and continuing excellence in each of the following three (3) categories, with teaching excellence receiving primary weighting above the others: (1) extraordinary effectiveness and excellence in teaching and teaching-related tasks; (2) professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity; and (3) University and public service. (APM 285-19)***

For appointment to Full Teaching Professor Step VI, in the Division of Biological Sciences we expect a strong record of sustained teaching excellence in the majority of classes, as judged using multiple criteria. Teaching Professors at this stage would be expected to hold a leadership role in one or more courses. A strong record of mentoring multiple students or faculty is also required, as well as demonstrated positive impact of both teaching and mentoring. As one example, a Teaching Professor at this stage might have earned top teaching evaluations in all classes, have developed research-based educational strategies for multiple courses, have documented learning outcomes for students, be a mentor to multiple undergraduates and graduate students, and be course director for a lab.

For advancement to Step VI, we expect evidence of sustained professional and/or scholarly achievement to the discipline or to the field of education, as judged by more than one criterion. This could take many forms, including but not limited to senior or primary authorship on one or more publications since becoming Full Teaching Professor, presentations at professional meetings by themselves or their trainees, leadership of educational programs on campus or beyond, or any other activities that contribute to the discipline or to education. The scholarship should impact the educational programs on campus but should also demonstrate recognition beyond the campus as reflected through a variety of metrics such as peer-reviewed publications and presenting talks or workshops at conferences.

A strong record of service at the Divisional and Campus levels is required; outreach and service to the profession is also highly valued. Campus service includes consistent and active participation in faculty

governance, such as serving on senate committees, high-impact committees in the Division, and sustained engagement in the Section's functions such as faculty searches, mentoring junior faculty, and training students within the Biological Sciences Masters program.

**Accelerations** are considered when contributions to all 3 areas are excellent, and truly exceptional in one or more of the areas. Truly exceptional performance and accomplishments may include, but are not limited to: receipt of a campus teaching award, at least one high impact publication on which they are a primary contributor, a significant teaching innovation, or substantial leadership in a service effort that has a major impact to the educational mission of the Division or campus or beyond. It is not possible to provide a simple metric for productivity and teaching excellence, as all aspects of a file must be considered together in assessing the quality and impact of contributions.