

# WHO VOTES? Frequently Asked Questions regarding Appointment, Promotion and Tenure in the College of Medicine

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## Committee of Eligible Faculty

Who are the members of the “eligible faculty” for voting on APT decisions?

The members of the “eligible faculty” are different for different APT actions. The actual membership is dependent upon multiple factors:

1. The specific “track” under consideration (Tenure-track, Clinical Faculty, etc.)
2. The proposed rank of the candidate (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, etc.)
3. The specific action being taken (appointment, reappointment, promotion, etc.)

Information regarding the membership in the eligible faculty is detailed in the APT documents of the College of Medicine and the individual departments, as well as in the OSU Faculty Policies and Procedures Handbook.

General guidelines state the track is the first consideration and rank is the second when determining who votes.

- The tenure track faculty may vote on all tracks (rank dependent)
- The clinical track faculty may vote on clinical and associated faculty (rank dependent)
- The research faculty may vote on research and associated faculty (rank dependent)
- The associated faculty may not vote

Additionally, there are certain unusual situations in which the membership or procedure is unclear. For those unusual circumstances, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions reported in the remainder of this document.

## Meeting Structure & Format

Is a formal meeting of the eligible faculty required for all APT actions?

Yes. OAA requires discussion of each APT proposed action, so a formal meeting is required.

### Can this meeting be virtual (example conducted via Zoom)?

Yes. Please refer to [OAA's Virtual P&T Guidance](#) on P&T Committee meetings and voting.

### Can eligible faculty members vote on promotion and tenure decisions by proxy?

No. The fundamental condition for voting is that faculty members must participate in the discussion of the candidates at a meeting of the eligible faculty in order to vote.

### When does the actual vote and results take place?

The actual vote must take place after the discussion of the faculty candidate at the meeting. The person responsible for tallying the votes must let the eligible faculty know the results of the vote before the end of the meeting.

## Quorum

### What constitutes a quorum for an APT vote?

OAA recommends that a quorum consist of 2/3 of the eligible faculty members. However, OAA also permits departments to set their own criteria for a quorum, and several departments at the College of Medicine have established a simple majority as the quorum. Similarly, departments may determine what percentage of the votes cast constitutes an affirmative vote for the candidate. Refer to your own department's APT document for department-specific standards.

### How many "eligible faculty" members constitute the minimum number for official actions on APT matters?

Three. In certain circumstances, especially in small departments and/or for actions on senior level positions, a department may not have three eligible faculty members. In that case, the following guidelines from the OAA Handbook apply: "The TIU (Tenure Initiating Unit) head, after consulting the dean, will appoint a faculty member from another department within the college." More than one ad-hoc member can be appointed if needed to meet the three-person committee minimum.

## Conflicts of Interest

### How do you determine conflicts of interest?

Prior to the start of a review process, all eligible faculty must be asked to indicate any conflicts to the committee of eligible faculty chair, the Procedures Oversight Designee (POD), or the Department/TIU head. Members of the eligible faculty with a conflict of interest must recuse themselves from the review process.

### A member of the committee of the eligible faculty has co-authored an article with the candidate under review for promotion. Is this a conflict of interest?

Maybe. OAA's position is that a conflict exists when the faculty member is co-author on a significant portion (at least 50%) of the candidate's published work. In instances where the collaboration is less significant, the guiding principle is whether or not the collaborator's individual, professional investment in the candidate's success could cloud their reading of the dossier. The committee of the eligible faculty should discuss the potential conflict and the chair of the committee, or the department chair (depending

on the unit's APT Document) should rule on the conflict before discussion begins on the candidate's dossier.

### What type of "mentor" is considered a conflict of interest?

A mentoring committee assigned in a department is fine. The mentors who should recuse themselves from the vote are mentors under whom the candidate trained either in a laboratory or in a clinical setting who the candidate directly reported to. Why? There is perception that a mentor will not be objective. Often success of a mentee is viewed as a reflection of their mentor as well. E.g. when my first graduate student went up for promotion and tenure as a faculty even though it had been years, I as their former mentor, did not participate in the review because of the perception that even in a discussion I could sway the vote one way or the other (for example if we had parted on not great terms).

### What happens when there is a question about potential conflicts?

The committee of the eligible faculty chair, in consultation with the POD, shall determine whether it is appropriate for the faculty members to recuse themselves from a particular review. Based on that determination, faculty members with a conflict of interest who do not voluntarily recuse themselves will be removed by the Department/TIU head.

## Eligible to Attend and Vote

### Our department chair wants to attend the meeting of the committee of the eligible faculty. Is this permitted?

OAA requires that Department/TIU heads be ex officio members of every department/school committee, including the committee of the eligible faculty. As a member of the committee, the Department/TIU head has the right to attend and speak at these meetings, though the Rules of the University Faculty prohibit the Department/TIU head from voting. In some units, the Department/TIU head runs the meeting, while in others they attend primarily to listen and answer questions that arise.

### Who is eligible to vote for granting of tenure to a non-tenured professor?

Only tenured professors are eligible to vote on the granting of tenure to a non-tenured Professor.

### Who is eligible to vote on clinical track reappointments?

The first re-appointment review for probationary clinical track faculty members, regardless of rank, requires a vote of the faculty. Non-Probationary Clinical and Tenure track faculty at or above the rank of the faculty being considered for reappointment are eligible to vote. For the second and subsequent reappointment reviews, a vote of the faculty is not required, except in the case of a recommendation for non-reappointment.

### Who is eligible to vote on research track reappointments?

The first re-appointment review for probationary research track faculty members, regardless of rank, requires a vote of the faculty. Non-Probationary Research, and Tenure track faculty at or above the rank of the faculty being considered for reappointment are eligible to vote. For the second and subsequent reappointment reviews, a vote of the faculty is not required, except in the case of a recommendation for non-reappointment.

If a person has a joint appointment, is he or she able to participate in APT voting in both departments?

No. This individual is considered only part of the eligible faculty in the Department/TIU.

Who is eligible to vote for initial faculty appointments?

The OAA Handbook states, "For faculty recommendations on initial appointment, the committee of the eligible faculty includes assistant professors. Senior-rank faculty under consideration, regardless of type (tenure-track, clinical, research, associated), may be reviewed only by faculty of the rank at or above consideration (associate and professor for associate, and professor for professor)." (example: associate professor with or without tenure)

Are associate professors without tenure considered to be "eligible faculty" for promotion and tenure actions?

No. Only associate professors WITH tenure may vote on promotion to associate professor and/or tenure.