



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
INSTITUTE FOR GENOMICS,
BIOCOMPUTING & BIOTECHNOLOGY

MEMORANDUM

TO: IGBB Staff and MAFES Administrators

FROM: Daniel G. Peterson
Director
Institute for Genomics, Biocomputing & Biotechnology

DATE: February 24, 2016 (original draft released on October 13, 2015)

SUBJECT: IGBB OP 15.01 – Promotion Policy for Research Faculty

ACRONYMS: IGBB = Institute for Genomics, Biocomputing & Biotechnology; MAFES = Mississippi Agricultural Forestry & Experiment Station; ORED = Office of Research & Economic Development; MSU = Mississippi State University; NSF = National Science Foundation; NIH = National Institutes of Health; DOE = Department of Energy; USDA = U.S. Department of Agriculture; NIFA = National Institute of Food & Agriculture; AFRI = Agriculture & Food Research Initiative; ARS = Agricultural Research Service

1. The IGBB will use [MSU OP 56.06](#) as its guide for promotion policies. Text taken directly from OP 56.06 is italicized.
2. *Promotion is never granted routinely for simple satisfactory performance or for length of service, but reflects progressively higher professional competence and accomplishment. Promotion will normally only be considered after a faculty member has served **at least five years in rank** so that sustained productivity at MSU can be demonstrated.*
3. The promotion process is to be **initiated by the faculty member**. The faculty member will notify the IGBB Director of their intention of going up for promotion no later than August 15. The faculty member will then complete the [Application for Promotion and/or Tenure](#). The application must include all requested information. In addition, the applicant should append copies of those published and/or accepted manuscripts produced since their last promotion. Other supporting documentation can also be appended. Completed applications should be submitted to the IGBB Director by October 1.
4. Once the application has been received, the IGBB Director will send the application to no fewer than three external reviewers. *External review letters will be solicited from professionals in the field who can provide an informed and objective evaluation of the candidate's work and accomplishments. The external reviewers will generally be professors at MSU peer or peer-plus institutions, and should not include individuals who are in a conflict of interest with the candidate. The identity of the external reviewers will be blind to the candidate except as may be required by law or ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction.*
5. Upon receipt of the external reviewer letters, the IGBB Director will select a three member promotion panel consisting of MSU faculty members, each with a rank higher than that of the applicant at the time of application submission. Individuals for this panel can come from IGBB research faculty and faculty from MSU academic departments. The MSU faculty panel will evaluate the application and the external letters and make a written recommendation (for or against promotion) to the IGBB

Director. The decision of the panel need not be unanimous; the overall recommendation will be based upon a two-thirds majority.

6. The IGBB Director will write his/her own letter accessing the applicant's request for promotion. The letter will be used to either provide support for the faculty panel's recommendation or provide arguments against the panel's recommendation.
7. The complete application, external letters, faculty panel's statement, and director's letter will be submitted to the MAFES Director by November 15. The MAFES Director will make a recommendation to the Vice President for ORED by January 15. The ORED VP will submit recommendations to the Provost and President by March 10.
8. Promotion-based salary increases are as follows:
 - a. Assistant Research Professor to Associate Research Professor → \$5,000
 - b. Associate Research Professor to Research Professor → \$7,500

Promotion Criteria

Assistant Research Professor to Associate Research Professor

For promotion to Associate Research Professor the incumbent must have met the criteria for assistant research professor and consistently demonstrated an ability to perform at a very high level in research achievements within their assigned duties. An associate research professor should be developing a national reputation for his/her work by showing potential for sustained contributions to the university and to his/her profession or field. This is normally demonstrated by the pursuit of competitive research (proposals written and submitted), funding awards achieved, and peer reviewed publications. A strong balance of activity is expected (i.e., research awards and publications). Some service activity is expected of all MSU employees. External service activities that contribute to and provide an indication of the development of a national/international research reputation will also be considered during the review for promotion (e.g. national professional society involvement, journal editing, invited lectureships). This evidence must include external letters from academic research professionals in the discipline who themselves have established a national reputation and have no conflict of interest in reviewing the candidate's application for promotion.

Of note, promotion to Associate Research Professor requires that the candidate obtain and serve as principal investigator (PI) on **[a]** at least one intramural or extramural competitive award and **[b]** PI or co-PI on a second competitive award. Intramural competitive awards include those from MAFES and ORED (regardless of the original source of funding). Extramural competitive awards include those from federal (e.g., NSF, NIH, NIFA, AFRI, and DOE) and state agencies and commodity groups with peer-reviewed grants programs (e.g., Corn Promotion Board, Beef Promotion Board, Soybean Promotion Board, and Cotton Incorporated). Conducting research through an MSU specific cooperative agreement (such as a specific cooperative agreement administered by the ARS) is not considered obtaining a competitive award.

Associate Research Professor to Research Professor

For promotion to Research Professor the incumbent must have met the criteria for associate research professor and consistently demonstrated an ability to perform at a sustained very high level of achievement and has developed a national reputation in the person's area of expertise. The expectation to excel in obtaining competitive research awards remains, as well as, publications in peer reviewed journals, and presentations at highly refereed conferences appropriate to the individual's research work which are needed to establish national reputation. Other evidence of national

reputation can be provided in addition to a publication record. This evidence must include external letters from academic research professionals in the discipline who themselves have established a national reputation and have no conflict of interest in reviewing the candidate's application for promotion.

Promotion to full Research Professor requires that the candidate obtain and serve as principal investigator (PI) or co-PI on at least one competitive, federal extramural award. Specifically, an award must be obtained from the NSF, AFRI, NIFA, NIH, DOE, or any other federal agency with a competitive grants program. Awards from commodity groups and funds given to investigators from MSU specific cooperative agreements do not count as competitive federal awards.

APPROVED BY

/s/ Daniel G. Peterson
IGBB Director

February 24, 2016
Date