

Summary of Faculty Comments on Collaborative Investigator Criteria

- Leadership in a research program, or significant, essential and independent contributions to the work of at least several principal investigators on multiple projects primarily or exclusively at the University of Connecticut. My only comment is that “several” investigators is a loose term. Do you want to specify 2 or more?
- Thank you for this update. Am I to understand from the highlighted sections that all work must include the University hospital /medical center, or does research at one of the teaching hospitals of UCONN (i.e. (Hartford Hospital) qualify for promotion/tenure?
- Based upon my own experience with SAPC, I would be opposed to the new guidelines as they confuse / blur the lines between an independent investigator and an investigator who makes valuable contributions to a research effort but who is unlikely to develop a program of research or lead a program of research. I do think reviewers would have difficulty applying the criteria in a consistent manner. The end result will be a penalty for anyone coming up in either the investigator or clinical investigator categories. With that said, I think the proposed criteria change in 2e has some merit, particularly for those individuals employed by the SOM to provide technical expertise – statistical, a particular lab skill, etc. - to a group of individuals/projects. However, this isn’t always the case. A person with a particular skill may only provide collaborations with a single individual/project. This could happen when the technique provided is very new – a new statistical method (SEM; analysis of daily process events, etc) or when a new lab technique has been developed such as micro array analysis, the development of iPS cell technology. etc) In these cases, it may take *years* for other investigators to be able to use the new technology/expertise. This would then penalize the person providing new, novel technical contributions to a program of research or a single project. Just my thoughts, but I think a collaborative researcher/senior scientist track would allow for more clear criteria to be specified.
- Having recently been through the process, I agree with the sentiment of these changes!
- With the addition of the Multi-PI Leadership possibility on NIH grants now, it seems as though somewhere in the document we considered yesterday that the faculty could be reminded of this as a possibility. Perhaps this funding mechanism could serve as a significant indicator of "collaboration" and as such, should be encouraged by the institution. It is truly quite painless and the multi-PI leadership plan is very straight forward. All PIs have access to the grant on the commons and get the automatic emails. It is a great opportunity to work with a scientist with different expertise on a new project. I have found that I have really learned a lot, allowing deeper knowledge and insight into my other research projects. Also, it is a way to build that bridge between expertise that NIH is looking to achieve. Just a thought for your consideration.
- I think there are contradictions in the preamble: "these individuals are themselves not the principal investigator or even the "prime mover" for research," yet below we would expect them to "demonstrate significant contributions to their own fields." If we are to consider promotion and tenure for these individuals, we should create a separate professional category given the suggested guidelines for promotion and tenure because the information that we need to gather will be very different than what we usually ask from reviewers. It would also be fair for the individuals to declare their chosen category from the start so that there is no confusion as to what criteria they will have to meet at the time of promotion or tenure.

The suggestions to obtain evaluation may not be all that practical, although this is the kind of information that is needed. Finally, have individuals who are practically already in such category been consulted?

- This is OK, but I fear abuse/misuse of this category. In the first document, biostatistician is misspelled.
- I begin by excluding option #2, namely, *Create a separate professional category for collaborative investigators*. This seems to be a maneuver that one can resort to in order to have particular individuals fill a particular position and benefit only a small lab or group.

There are two options to consider.

1) Retain the current promotion/tenure criteria. This is simple (and will keep us “pure”) but will likely lead to an inability of most individuals of this type to be promoted/tenured. If they are in a medical educator track, then there is no up or out proviso, so they would not be lost after 7+ years. However, it seems likely that this “option” would make it more difficult to attract and retain top-notch individuals of this type.

An advantage of this is to allow the faculty member to have an appointment that permits promotion and tenure AND has the faculty member in a track that serves the educational needs of students at the graduate school and/or undergraduate medical/dental school. We certainly need the latter. I think it less likely that a ‘top-notch’ candidate would be reluctant to consider a faculty appointment under this condition.

This is a disadvantage if the faculty member were not interested in teaching assignments and wished to remain in the lab or statistician’s/modeler’s office.

3) Modify current promotion/tenure criteria to recognize the essential and valuable contributions of collaborative individuals to our research enterprise.

This option has the advantage of allowing current faculty in a collaborative arrangement to be considered for promotion and tenure. Whether it would be an advantage for recruitment is problematic for some types of individuals. I suppose statisticians and modelers might find this useful. However, why would a ‘top-notch’ scientist wish to come under circumstances where s/he is relegated to a less than independent position?

The disadvantage of this category is that it tailors the promotion/tenure criteria to fit an individual. The criteria for evaluation are ‘fluid.’ and I am concerned that their application will be difficult. What is the limit for designing particular solutions to a general problem, namely, for the School to recruit ‘top-notch’ individuals who can fulfill the needs of an academic institution?