

# Operational Guidelines for the Perelman School of Medicine Departmental Committees on Appointments and Promotions

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## A. Purpose

In accord with the University Faculty Handbook, this document provides uniform operational guidelines for PSOM Departments and their Departmental Committees on Appointments and Promotions (D-COAP). D-COAP's review and recommend all initial faculty appointments to ensure that the qualifications and experience of each candidate align with the faculty track and rank for which the candidate is being recommended, and review and vote on all faculty appointments, reappointments, voting secondary appointments, and all promotions.

The Chair of the D-COAP must make every effort to ensure compliance with the policies and procedures of the University of Pennsylvania and the Perelman School of Medicine relating to faculty appointments, reappointments, and promotions, including timely filing requirements. The Chair of the PSOM COAP meets annually, and as necessary, with the D-COAP Chairs to review administrative matters related to faculty appointments, reappointments, and promotions.

All D-COAP business is confidential.

## B. Role of the Department Chair

The Department Chair has the responsibility, after consultation with appropriate members of the department, for recruiting and retaining faculty members of high caliber and recommending those to whom tenure should be granted and to whom promotions should be awarded. The Department chair appoints all members of the D-COAP. **The Department Chair shall not participate in D-COAP meetings.** Department chairs should meet in advance with the D-COAP chair and Faculty Coordinator to discuss the D-COAP committee agenda. The draft Chair Recommendation letters should contain any chair level concerns that can be discussed at the D-COAP meetings. Following the D-COAP meeting, the summary paragraph in the Chair's recommendation letter shall be completed and signed by the chair reflecting the final recommendation for the candidate.

## C. Membership

- Departmental COAP Chair
  - Is appointed by the Department Chair and cannot be the Department Chair.
  - Whenever possible, should be a Professor with tenure in the Perelman School of Medicine.

- Shall have a 3-year term that can be renewable.
- Generally, and if not, in consultation with the Office of Academic Affairs, should not hold a leadership role such as Vice Chair, Division Chief, etc. In departments with fewer than 10 standing faculty professors, Departmental Vice Chairs can serve as the D-COAP Chair.
- Committee Members
  - Are appointed by the Department Chair in consultation with the D-COAP Chair.
  - Generally, it is expected that D-COAP members are at the rank of Professor, however the inclusion of faculty at the rank of Associate Professor may be warranted to promote more contemporary views regarding trajectory and impact of proposed faculty actions. Assistant rank faculty shall not be members of D-COAP.
    - For consideration of Associate Professor participation, the roster of current and proposed D-COAP members (Name, Track, and Rank) should be discussed with the Executive Vice Dean so the school understands the composition the D-COAP feels necessary to achieve departmental goals.
    - Associate Professors in the tenure track must have been granted tenure to serve on D-COAP at this rank.
  - If Associate rank faculty are included for membership, departments must ensure Associate Professors do not engage in the assessment of candidates proposed for appointment or promotion to Professor (all tracks). Specifically,
    - Associate rank members must not be present during discussion and cannot vote on Professor cases.
      - Options to manage this include exiting the room if in person or moving to a “Break out” room if virtual. Alternatively, the meeting could occur in two parts – discussion and vote for Associate Professor cases before Professor rank cases are presented.
    - Separate file sharing must occur for dissemination of draft dossiers:
      - Professor rank members provided all dossiers.
      - Associate Professor members only provided dossiers for Assistant rank actions and promotion/appointment to Associate Professor.
  - The Committee shall comprise at least three faculty members in addition to the D-COAP chair qualified to vote on the faculty candidate under consideration.
    - For smaller departments, in order to meet the PSOM voting requirements, it may be necessary to invite qualified senior tenure or clinician-educator faculty from other departments to become regular voting members of the D-COAP. Such faculty would need secondary appointments with voting rights prior to serving.
  - The Education Officer shall provide reports of teaching for candidates with teaching responsibilities. EO’s may have formal dossier review and voting responsibilities.
  - The Vice Chairs of Faculty (unless acting as D-COAP chair), shall be ex officio members.
  - Senior AC faculty must be represented.
  - If the department has Research Track faculty, consideration should be given for senior representation on the D-COAP.
  - Retired/emeritus faculty shall not be members.
- D-COAP members shall have 3-year terms with the option to renew. Annually, the Department Chair should submit a list of the Departmental COAP members (including rank and track) to the Office of Academic Affairs.
- All members must sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of their terms.

- Members are encouraged to participate in development programs offered by Academic Affairs to remain current on policies and procedures.

#### D. Functions of the Departmental Committee on Appointments and Promotions

- The Committee shall hold scheduled meetings at a frequency dictated by need.
  - Meetings may be in-person, held via a virtual platform, or hybrid.
- The D-COAP reviews and recommends all initial faculty appointments to ensure that the qualifications and experience of each candidate align with the faculty track and rank for which the candidate is being recommended.
  - If department Chairs wish to have broad faculty participation in the recruitment process, the following best practice may be followed: Department Chairs may conduct a “faculty meeting” to discuss candidates for hire. Only the CV, Grants, and Cover Letter should be reviewed in this setting. The full draft dossier must subsequently be moved to an official D-COAP meeting for assessment and vote on the proposed appointment.
- The D-COAP reviews and votes on all proposed faculty appointments, reappointments, and promotions on all tracks (including secondary faculty with voting rights).
- Senior ranking appointment and promotion cases should be assigned to a member to review and to present a summary of the case at an assigned meeting, ahead of discussion and vote.
- The following materials, as applicable by track and action type, shall be included in a dossier for D-COAP review:
  - Personal statement
  - Up-to-date CV
  - Grants pages, if applicable
  - Education Portfolio
  - Academic Plan
  - DRAFT Chair’s Recommendation without the summary paragraph. Following the D-COAP discussion, the chair or chair’s designees shall complete the Chair’s Recommendation based on the case discussion.
- All elements in a dossier are confidential. If material is circulated at an in-person meeting, all material must be returned and destroyed at the conclusion of the meeting. Materials should not be distributed electronically but may be uploaded to a shared folder (e.g. Pennbox).
- D-COAP members should help inform the departmental mentoring program by reviewing the outcomes for reappointment (advisory letters, track changes, etc.) and promotion each year to determine if their review processes are working.
- Official note taking, if necessary, shall only be performed only by the D-COAP chair. Such notes shall be confidentially saved and retained for a period of 7 years after the individual has left the institution.
- D-COAP agendas should be documented, with the date of the meeting and vote outcome for each case and maintained in confidentially held departmental files.
- The Department Chair oversees the preparation of appointment, reappointment, and promotion dossiers for all faculty members in the Department and is responsible for meeting all deadlines.

## E. Voting Procedures

- D-COAP members shall vote as follows:
  - Tenured faculty may vote on decisions involving the granting of tenure and all other faculty appointments and promotions.
  - Clinician-Educator faculty may vote on all faculty appointment and promotions. They cannot vote on the award of tenure.
  - Academic Clinician and Research track faculty may present cases for their tracks and participate in the discussion of any case on the agenda. AC members may vote on AC actions.
  - Members may only vote on cases where the candidate is proposed for the same or lower rank. i.e. Associate rank members, if any, may only vote on Assistant rank actions and promotion or appointment to Associate rank.
- D-COAP Chairs shall only vote if there is a tie.
  - Vice Chairs for Faculty shall not vote unless they serve as the D-COAP Chair,
- Committee members with a self-perceived conflict of interest for a given candidate should recuse themselves from the meeting during discussion and voting.
- D-COAP votes are required for all appointments, reappointments, and promotions to the standing faculty, standing faculty CE, and associated faculty at the level of assistant professor and above.
- A minimum of three faculty members, appropriate for the vote, are required to vote on any proposed action.
- In order to vote, committee members must be present for the discussion of the case under review during the meeting. Absentee voting is prohibited.
- Voting must be anonymous, submitted through a school-approved electronic system (such as Qualtrics), and occur immediately following each case presentation and discussion.
- All votes must have only 2 options: approve or disapprove.
  - When voting to disapprove a case, members must provide a brief explanation for the negative vote (exclusively used by the D-COAP Chair and the Department Chair).
- Voting outcome:
  - A majority favorable vote of the D-COAP is required for a dossier to be transmitted to the PSOM COAP.
  - Cases resulting in a majority of negative votes are considered to be turned down (not approved) by D-COAP and will not be submitted to PSOM COAP.
  - Department Chairs cannot override a D-COAP decision to turn down a case.
  - Cases that have been turned down can be reconsidered only in the event of errors in process and/or omission. Such appeals for reconsideration must be preliminarily reviewed by the Executive Vice Dean.
  - When a proposal for Associate Professor is brought forward prior to the candidate's mandatory review year and is declined by the D-COAP, the case cannot be reviewed/voted on again until the mandatory review year.
  - When a proposal for promotion to Associate Professor on the AC track is declined by D-COAP, the case may be brought forward again, but not sooner than 3 years from the date of the case presentation at D-COAP.
  - When a proposal to Professor is declined by D-COAP, the candidate may be brought forward again, but no sooner than three (3) years from the date of the case presentation at D-COAP.

### **Additional Promotion-specific considerations:**

Generally, no faculty will be eligible for promotion to Associate Professor until

after the approval of their first reappointment unless they have completed at least 2 years in a faculty position in a peer institution. Such proposals will be rare and should be pre-reviewed by the PSOM COAP chairs prior to initiating a request for promotion in the department.

A faculty member is eligible for consideration for promotion to Professor **three years** after their appointment or promotion to Associate Professor. This is the start of the eligibility window. Such proposals will need to demonstrate extraordinary trajectory and will be rare.

- The effective date of the professor rank must be at least three years after the previous promotion became effective. For example, if the candidate's promotion to Associate Professor was effective July 1, 2025, the earliest effective date for promotion to Professor would be July 1, 2028.
- Because the academic review process begins in the department, the process may begin in the D-COAP the year before the proposed effective date.
  - PSOM COAP will only review proposals for promotion to Associate Professor on the Tenure, CE, and Research tracks once. If PSOM COAP turns down a case (does not approve the proposed action), it cannot be resubmitted to the school, even if the case was submitted prior to the candidate's mandatory review year.
  - If PSOM COAP-ACC turns down a promotion proposal, the case may be resubmitted to the school again but no sooner than three (3) years from proposed effective date of the original submission.
- In the event a D-COAP discussion determines that further information is needed before a vote can be taken, the case may be deferred by the D-COAP Chair without a vote and be reconsidered at future date.

#### F. Transmittal Statement to the Perelman School of Medicine

- Each departmental Dossier transmitted to the Perelman School of Medicine must have a letter of recommendation written (Chair's Recommendation) either by the Department Chair or by the candidate's division chief or vice chair, as designated and co-signed by the Department Chair.
  - The letter must include the D-COAP vote and comments describing the possible reasons for negative votes.