

Developing an Academic Promotions Peer Support Workgroup at Your Institution

Contact Information: Casey MacVane, MD, MPH (macvac1@mmc.org); Tania Strout, PhD, RN, MS (strout@mmc.org); Michael Baumann, MD (baumam@mmc.org) – All at: Department of Emergency Medicine, Maine Medical Center, 22 Bramhall Street, Portland, ME 04102.

Thanks for your interest in developing an Academic Promotions Peer Support Workgroup at your own institution. We have found this strategy to be very helpful in our own Department and have expanded to include a group for all of our Institution's faculty as well as other department-specific groups across our Medical Center.

We have a **toolkit of resources** available at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6jdn8c4it3wutlw/AACq8CarO083EnMjpTw98GPEa?dl=0> or by **scanning this:**

Scan this code with your
smartphone to access our toolkit



Please feel free to use and customize these resources as you create your own group!

Our hope is not only that faculty members will participate in the workgroups as they are preparing their own promotion dossiers, but also that they will then be available to **support other faculty as mentors** post-promotion. In addition, we invite new and junior faculty to our workgroups so that they can learn strategies that will help them organize and begin preparing their materials early in their careers.

We have found it useful to have a few **materials and resources** available to support our groups. First, having a **brochure or talking points covering the many reasons that academic promotion is important** to help encourage those who might be skeptical. Second, having a **basic slide set** covering the institution-specific promotions process, required materials, information on tracks and prototypes, and any helpful resources is very useful for updating new members.

We structure our sessions as **monthly, two-hour working blocks**. We typically spend **20-30 minutes introducing new topics, sharing examples, and discussing** amongst the group before settling in to **90-100 minutes of productive work time**. Participants are encouraged to ask questions as they work, to share drafts for peer feedback, and to plan for some scheduled time to keep working before the group's next formal meeting.

The **general monthly topics** we cover include: *Introduction to the Academic Promotion Process, Readiness Assessment, and Understanding Tracks; Preparing Your Curriculum Vitae – Format, Contents, and Organization; Developing Your Educational Portfolio Part I – Introduction and Teaching Philosophy; Developing Your Educational Portfolio Part II: Documenting Your Teaching; Developing Your Educational Portfolio Part III: Documenting Your Roles in Course Development, Faculty Development, Medical Education, and Curricular Affairs; Learner Evaluations, Peer Teaching Evaluations, and Letters of Support; Documenting Scholarship: Research, Education, and Clinical; and Portfolio Critical Review and Feedback.* These topics are **customized to reflect the materials required at our Institution**, so your Institution-specific topics may differ. As time goes on, group members progress through their preparation at different rates, but we have not found this to be disruptive to the flow of the group.

We have found it very helpful to have a **shared electronic space** – Dropbox, Box, GoogleDocs – someplace to locate all of our Institution's **templates, instructions, promotion requirements, exemplar materials**, and so on. Each faculty member has an **individual sub-folder** for their personal materials. Early in the development of our group, we invited our Institution's Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs to come and present to our group, covering

the in's and out's of the process and documents, and fostering a collegial relationship. In addition, several of our faculty were **elected to the medical school standing committee** that reviews promotion dossiers, providing us with valuable insight and expertise.

As we have progressed, we have collected a **bank of exemplars** from successful candidates representing a variety of areas of focus: research, education, administration, and clinical scholarship. We recommend collecting helpful materials such as **didactic schedules** so that faculty will have easy access to lists of internal lectures. Our program coordinator provides each faculty member with their **individual evaluations** and we encourage faculty to create an electronic folder for all evaluation materials. Our group is available to each other for **peer evaluations** during didactic conferences – not only do we receive meaningful feedback from colleagues, but we also have formal peer evaluations of our teaching to include with our dossiers. Our **medical librarians** support our work by gathering PDF-format copies of our **publications**, which are saved in each faculty member's individual shared sub-folder for ease of access. If you are able to access an **administrative support person** to assist with organization, scheduling, and document formatting, it will be very helpful.

We have developed a series of **workshop agendas**, with goals and objectives, to support our ability to provide **CME credit for workshop attendance**. Our agendas are available at the [link](#) above; please feel free modify these as necessary to support your own application for CME. Depending on the size and interest of your faculty group, we would encourage you to consider developing **groups for junior, mid-career, and female-identifying faculty** in order to support and focus on the unique needs of faculty sub-groups.

Most importantly, creating a **collegial and supportive environment** is key to a successful group! We find that our faculty really enjoy attending these sessions. We relax, provide **refreshments**, and spend some well-deserved time together as faculty, focused only on faculty development goals. Group members are supportive and encouraging, always sharing advice, offering constructive feedback, and helping other faculty highlight the very best of their accomplishments. Our meetings have resulted in some fantastic new ideas, collaborations, time for reflection on career development, and successful promotions.

In evaluating the **outcomes** of our workgroups, faculty have reported increased knowledge and understanding of the promotions process, improved understanding of the individual documents required, and satisfaction with the workgroup structure and process. Faculty supported the utility of the workgroups and reported that they would recommend them to a colleague. Multiple faculty members have successfully prepared dossiers and received their academic promotions, and others' documents are nearly complete. We recommend administering a pre-post survey and evaluation at your Institution to help you assess both successes and areas for improvement.

Toolkit documents include:

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| 1. Workgroup goals & objectives | 9. Summary of educational roles template |
| 2. Workgroup agendas for CME application | 10. Tufts courses taught summary |
| 3. Promotions summary slide set | 11. Referee tracking template |
| 4. Brochure on importance of promotion | 12. Tufts FAQs for referee letters |
| 5. MMC portfolio checklist | 13. Teaching philosophy reflection questions |
| 6. Tufts CV format, new | 14. Teaching philosophy brainstorming worksheet |
| 7. Tufts CV format, traditional | 15. Teaching philosophy exercises |
| 8. Tufts teaching portfolio instructions | |