Investigator Track

The Investigator Track is designed for faculty whose principal responsibilities involve innovation and discovery. Faculties in this track possess a common commitment to expanding the body of biomedical knowledge. Dissemination of findings is central to success in the Investigator Track.

As the nature of biomedicine evolves, Mount Sinai welcomes and values faculty with a broad range of perspectives, experiences and skills that contribute to achievement of the School's mission and goals. The Investigator Track therefore embraces both traditional academic scholars who conduct original research and subject area experts who have conducted ground-breaking work outside of academia.

The increasingly varied backgrounds, talents and skills of Mount Sinai faculty enrich and expand the scope and quality of our academic endeavors. The diversity requires, however, that a broad range of criteria be used to evaluate accomplishments and suitability for a proposed rank; the specific criteria applied will be reflective of each individual's record of achievement and role at Mount Sinai. Scholarship may take many forms depending on the discipline and type of work conducted.

Appointment to the Investigator Track

Evaluation for initial appointment in the Investigator Track will rely on criteria tailored to an individual's professional profile.

Candidates who have dedicated their careers to academia will be expected to have publications in peer-reviewed journals, to have peer-reviewed extramural support for their work and to present their findings at professional conferences and at other academic centers. Appraisal of the publication record will extend beyond the first and last authorship positions and will consider the candidate's significant contributions as a middle author. Candidates should have a record of contributions as excellent teachers and mentors of medical and graduate students, residents and fellows. Those who engage in clinical care must be excellent physicians.

Recruits whose careers have not been in traditional academic settings will be evaluated based on metrics relevant to their fields. Consideration may be given to performance of pioneering work in their fields of expertise, patenting and commercialization of discoveries, development and leadership of programs, dissemination of information about their work and recognition as thought leaders. Evidence of the impact of their contributions will be important. Publications, funding support, patents and other forms of productivity will be considered if relevant.

Promotion in the Investigator Track

Regardless of their backgrounds prior to joining Mount Sinai, promotion as a faculty member in the Investigator Track requires scholarly output that includes high quality publications, acquisition of extramural funding and evidence of innovation. The reputation of candidates as experts in their fields is expected to broaden over time.

Candidates for promotion are also expected to have a record of increasing service and leadership both within and beyond Mount Sinai. They are expected to demonstrate significant participation in and contributions to major institutional committees that are critical to the mission of the school and its affiliated hospitals, e.g., Institutional Review Board, Admissions Committee, Medical Board. Outstanding service in a significant administrative role (such as Vice-Chair, Training Program Director) will also be considered during promotion review.
Excellence as teachers and/or mentors of medical and graduate students, residents and fellows will be viewed favorably during promotion review. Candidates who engage in clinical care must be excellent physicians.

Success in the Investigator Track will be fostered through an earnest effort by Chairs and senior faculty to guide each junior faculty member, provide the opportunity for scholarly achievement, and encourage choices that will enhance internal and external recognition in his or her field.

1. Assistant Professor

Qualifications: Appointment, reappointment and promotion to the rank of Assistant Professor in the Investigator Track may be extended to individuals who have experienced early success in their chosen field and have demonstrated strong promise for ongoing contributions.

- **Innovation/Research** - Candidates should be innovators who are engaged in or be prepared to embark on careers as independent investigators. They must have sufficient education, training, practical experience and demonstrated competence to be poised for success, including pursuit of extramural funding, technology development and entrepreneurial opportunities in their areas of expertise.
- **Scholarship** - An early track record of publication in peer-reviewed or technical journals is desirable.
- **Education** - Candidates may show evidence of teaching skills and commitment to teaching in the analytical, research and/or clinical arenas. Innovation in, and development of, educational programs will be considered.
- **Clinical** - Those who are clinicians should provide evidence of excellent patient care.

**Appointment and Term:** Appointment, reappointment and promotion to this rank are at the discretion of the Department Chair. The initial term of appointment can be one, two, three or four years.

**Reappointment and Non-Reappointment:** The Chair will provide notice of reappointment or non-reappointment.

If the Chair wishes to reappoint an individual as an Assistant Professor in the Investigator Track, the term length can be one, two or three year. The maximum aggregate time at this rank in this track is seven years. Reappointment to a term greater than one year in length requires approval by the Office of the Dean.

**Track Switching and Promotion:** Track switching will be permitted during the first four years of appointment as an Assistant Professor. Track switching after the fourth year will require justification by the Department Chair and approval by the Dean's Office. Track declaration must be made before a Chair recommends promotion, and cannot be changed once the promotion process is initiated.

The Chair may, at any time, recommend promotion to the rank of Associate Professor.

2. Associate Professor

Qualifications: Appointment, reappointment and promotion at this level may be extended to individuals who have demonstrated national recognition for their accomplishments. Candidates for initial appointment who are traditional academic scholars must be acknowledged for their research and/or teaching, with a record of scholarly contributions that are original and widely known; those who have developed and applied their expertise primarily or exclusively outside of academia must have a record of innovative thinking that may be reflected in concepts or products developed that are widely known, utilized and/or studied and are or may prove to be highly influential. Candidates for promotion, regardless of their backgrounds, are expected to meet the standard academic criteria for this rank, e.g., publications, extramural funding, etc. All candidates for the rank of associate professor in the Investigator Track, whether newly appointed to the Mount Sinai faculty or promoted from within, must be recognized by the School and Department as having potential for continued growth and promise for eventual promotion to the rank of Professor in the Investigator Track.

In addition to meeting the qualifications outlined for more junior levels, faculty at this rank are expected to demonstrate skills and accomplishments that may include:

- **Innovation** - Candidates must be known in their fields as expert innovators and creative thinkers. Evidence of innovative accomplishments may vary by discipline, and can include but is not limited to novel approaches to problem solving, product discovery and/or development, patents and patent applications, commercialization of inventions, new and/or collaborative programs.

- **Research**
  - **Appointment** - Candidates recruited from other academic institutions who are involved in basic, clinical or translational investigation must exhibit a record of sustained success in obtaining extramural grant support from the National Institutes of Health and/or other agencies. Candidates with backgrounds largely in industry or other non-academic organizations may offer other evidence of research recognition which may include, but is not limited to, contributions to drug development, the discovery or development of new technologies, patents and other innovative research approaches. For candidates from industry, long tenure with a company, including leadership roles, may be a reflection of value and success. Research support from private foundations and/or from a candidate’s home institution will be viewed favorably. Additional evidence of stature in the field may include participation in professional consultative bodies such as study sections at the National Institutes of Health.
Promotion: Candidates for promotion are expected to be successful in obtaining extramural grant support from the National Institutes of Health and/or other federal agencies.

Scholarship: Candidates should have a record of significant contributions relating to the innovative conceptualization of or novel solutions to biomedical research, to relevant disciplines, or to education. Consideration will be given both to the quality of the work and to the candidate's role in publications and other forms of dissemination; for middle authorship on publications, it is essential for candidates to annotate their contributions. For candidates whose scholarly work is in education, original contributions in excellent journals for educators will be required. Invited presentations at national meetings may be considered as further evidence of growing recognition in the field of expertise. Textbook chapters, analytic studies, development of teaching materials and faculty development efforts may also be presented as evidence of scholarship.

Education: Candidates should exhibit excellence as teachers and role models, whether for students, house staff, postdoctoral fellows, junior faculty and/or other junior colleagues. Innovation and commercialization knowledge imparted to trainees through courses and guided entrepreneurial activities can be presented. Mentoring will most frequently take place on an individual basis, but may on occasion encompass program oversight involving multiple mentees. Participation in curriculum development and innovative educational methods will also be considered as evidence of teaching excellence.

Service: Internal candidates should have a solid record of citizenship within the institution, with evidence of important contributions as a faculty member in furthering the missions of the department/institute, School and Hospital; participation on institutional committees and emerging evidence of leadership abilities, will be viewed favorably. For all candidates, active involvement in professional organizations as a committee member or officer can constitute important evidence of service and national recognition. Service on study sections and editorial boards will be viewed favorably.

Appointment and Term: Appointment and promotion to Associate Professor in the Investigator Track are upon recommendation by the Department Chair, with subsequent approval by the Committee on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure. The initial term of appointment can be one, two, three, four or five years.

Reappointment and Non-Reappointment: The Chair will provide notice of reappointment or non-reappointment.

If the Chair wishes to reappoint the individual as an Associate Professor in the Investigator Track, the term length can be one, two, three or four years. The maximum aggregate time at this rank in this track is nine years for untenured faculty. Reappointment to a term greater than one year in length requires review and approval by the Office of the Dean.

If a decision to reappoint a faculty member is made during a term extension as described in the section on notices of non-reappointment (https://sites.msmid.default/faculty-resources/handbook/appointments/full-time/non-reappointment), the reappointment notice must be in writing from the Chair. The reappointment will commence retroactive to the first day following completion of the original term of appointment.

In the event of non-reappointment, the Chair will provide written notice. The timing of notices of non-reappointment (https://sites.msmid.default/faculty-resources/handbook/appointments/full-time/non-reappointment) to the full-time faculty is determined by the length of the term of appointment and, in some cases, by rank.

Track Switching: Following the initial appointment or promotion to this rank, track switching will be allowed only for compelling reasons, upon recommendation by the Chair and approval by the Office of the Dean. In all cases, track switching will only be allowed for highly productive faculty who will continue to contribute to the departmental and institutional missions.

Tenure: Associate Professors in the Investigator Track are eligible to be considered for tenure at any time, including at the time of appointment/promotion to this rank. Eminently qualified faculty should be considered for tenure at the earliest possible time. If an untenured Associate Professor is a candidate for reappointment, consideration for tenure will take place simultaneously with the reappointment process.

Consideration for tenure requires not only that candidates fulfill all of the requirements for Associate Professor, but also that they demonstrate the ability for continued superior productivity and leadership in their field, as well as demonstrable excellence in the dissemination of knowledge.

Tenure recommendations are initiated by the Chair and require approval by the Committee on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure.

Promotion: The Chair may, at any time, recommend qualified faculty for promotion to the rank of Professor.

3. Professor

Qualifications: Appointment, reappointment and promotion to the rank of professor may be extended to individuals who have attained broad national recognition for excellence and are competitive in the international arena. A continuous high level of productivity is expected. In addition to meeting the qualifications outlined for more junior levels, faculty at this rank are expected to demonstrate skills and accomplishments that may include:

- Innovation - Candidates should have demonstrated excellence in investigation and discovery over a sustained period of time, resulting in highly significant, innovative contributions to the field of study. Evidence of innovation will vary by discipline, but may include novel approaches to problem solving, product discovery and/or development, patent applications and patents, commercialization of inventions, and new/collaborative programs; the actual or anticipated impact of such innovations should be
explained.

- **Research**
  - **Appointment** - Candidates engaged in basic, clinical or translational research who are recruited from other academic institutions should have a sustained record as principal investigator of a scholarly research program funded in large part by external agencies such as the NIH. Candidates recruited from industry or other non-academic institutions should demonstrate comparable evidence of their sustained accomplishments in their discipline and attendant recognition; sizable financial and resource support for their program from their own institution or from other external sources may be presented as an indication of their stature in the field. Other evidence may include but is not limited to contributions to: drug development and/or discovery; development of new technologies, patents and other innovations; introduction of new analytical approaches to and tools for the manipulation, analysis and presentation of data.

- **Promotion** - Candidates for promotion are expected to have extramural funding from agencies such as the NIH.

- **Scholarship** - Scholarship may take the form of publications, patents and other forms of communication. The quality and impact of output, particularly related to the development and dissemination of new concepts, techniques and methodologies, will be a primary consideration; the temporal distribution should be a reflection of the candidate's continuous productivity. Explanations of the candidate's contributions as middle author on publications or co-inventor on patents is essential. For individuals whose scholarly work is in education, original contributions that receive national/international recognition and result in publications in the highest quality journals and in textbooks for educators as well as in invited presentations at premier professional meetings will be used as criteria.

- **Education** - Candidates who are teachers and mentors should perform with excellence. Candidates for promotion must demonstrate the capacity to attract degree candidates and/or postdoctoral fellows and to provide comprehensive mentoring to guide trainees' research and scholarly endeavors, while candidates for appointment must demonstrate similar abilities applicable to their fields and settings. Management of large programs with many junior scientists, physician-scientists or other relevant learners may be cited if the candidate can demonstrate that he/she plays a significant role in mentoring junior members towards achievement of individual or collective goals. Evidence of being significant role models is valued. For candidates whose careers have been primarily in academic settings, success of former students in becoming independent investigators is an important indicator of success; recruits from non-academic environments may show comparable evidence of the success of junior colleagues whom they have mentored.

- **Service** - Distinguished service and leadership in administrative, committee or policy-making functions of the home institution, whether Mount Sinai, another school industry or other institution, are important for appointment at this rank. Election to an office in or receipt of awards from, leading national or international scientific societies can serve as evidence of international stature. Appointment to government committees and/or other policy making bodies will be viewed favorably.

**Appointment and Term:** Appointment and promotion to the rank of Professor in the Investigator Track are upon recommendation by the Department Chair, with subsequent approval by the Committee on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure. For untenured Professors, the initial term of appointment can be one, two, three, four or five years.

**Reappointment and Non-Reappointment:** The Chair will provide notice of reappointment or non-reappointment.

If the Chair wishes to reappoint an untenured Professor in the Investigator Track, the term length can be one, two, three, four or five years. The maximum aggregate time at this rank for untenured faculty is ten years. Reappointment to a term greater than one year in length requires review and approval by the Office of the Dean.

If a decision to reappoint a faculty member is made during a term extension as described in the section on notices of non-reappointment ([sites/smsw/default/about/faculty-resources-handbook/appointments/full-time/non-reappointment](http://sites/smsw/default/about/faculty-resources-handbook/appointments/full-time/non-reappointment)), the reappointment notice must be in writing from the Chair. The reappointment will commence retroactive to the first day following completion of the original term of appointment.

In the event of non-reappointment, the Chair will provide written notice. The timing of notices of non-reappointment ([sites/smsw/default/about/faculty-resources-handbook/appointments/full-time/non-reappointment](http://sites/smsw/default/about/faculty-resources-handbook/appointments/full-time/non-reappointment)) to the full-time faculty is determined by the length of the term of appointment and, in some cases, by rank.

**Tenure:** Any candidate who does not have tenure when he/she is proposed for appointment or promotion to the rank of Professor in the Investigator Track can be considered for tenure in conjunction with the appointment or promotion process.

An untenured Professor in the Investigator Track should be proposed for tenure when all qualifications are met, at any time during his/her term of appointment.

Any candidate who does not have tenure when he/she is proposed for reappointment to the rank of Professor in the Investigator Track shall be considered for tenure in conjunction with the reappointment process.

Consideration for tenure requires not only that candidates fulfill all of the requirements for Professor, but also that they demonstrate the ability for continued superior productivity and leadership in their field, as well as demonstrable excellence in the dissemination of knowledge in research, educational or clinical settings.
Tenure recommendations are initiated by the Chair and require approval by the Committee on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure.

**Conversion to Part-Time Status:** See Faculty Handbook Chapter V section on "Part-Time Faculty" for discussion of conversion of full-time professors to part-time status.

4. Adjustment of Academic Clock

Adjustment of the academic clock addresses the unique "up-or-out" provisions of the Investigator Track by giving faculty in this track an opportunity, under certain circumstances, to request additional time to meet the criteria for advancement to the next rank or to tenure.

**Eligibility for Academic Clock Adjustment**

Faculty must meet two sets of criteria to be eligible for a clock extension:

1. Faculty must be:
   - Employed full-time in their current position for at least six consecutive months; and
   - In good standing; and
   - Assigned to Investigator Track; and
   - Untenured

2. One of the following must have occurred within the last year:
   - A major change in family-care responsibilities, e.g., child birth or adoption; assumption of primary care giving role for an immediate family member; or
   - Other compelling personal circumstances that have a significant impact on productivity.

**Productivity Expectations**

Faculty who are approved for clock adjustments will continue to be subject to the productivity expectations of the School and their Department(s)/Institute(s). These include but are not limited to the Faculty Compensation Plan and Procedures (https://msm/default/about/faculty-resources/handbook/faculty/compensation), Annual Faculty Performance Evaluations (https://msm/default/about/faculty-resources/handbook/faculty/evaluation) and resource allocation requirements.

**Clock Adjustment**

Each approved request for an academic clock adjustment will add one year to the maximum allowable time at the individual's current academic rank. A maximum of two requests may be approved.

Granting of a clock extension refers specifically to the maximum number of years allowed at a particular rank, and is separate and distinct from an individual's term of appointment. In order for a term extension to be applied in full, the individual must remain an active full-time faculty member throughout the period covered by the extension. If an individual receives notice of non-reappointment, the clock adjustment is no longer relevant.

**Applying for a Clock Adjustment**

Approval of clock adjustment requests is not automatic. An Investigator Track faculty member may apply for an adjustment by:

- Discussing the clock adjustment request with his/her Department Chair (and Institute Director if relevant) and reaching mutual agreement regarding timeframe, productivity expectations and other relevant conditions.
- Completing the Clock Adjustment Request Form (https://msm/default/about/faculty-resources/handbook/faculty/Assets/About the School/Faculty-Resources/Form for Stop Clock Draft_distributed.pdf)
- Submitting the Clock Adjustment Form – signed by both faculty member and Chair – to the Office of the Dean, which will record the request and confirm the adjusted clock date with both the faculty member and his/her Chair.

**Related Options**

Faculty wishing to consider a reduced work schedule can refer to the part-time options (https://msm/default/about/faculty-resources/handbook/appointments/part-time) described in the Faculty Handbook.

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