

Update on the Clinical Practice Series

The First Four Years

May 1, 2018

In 2012 the Regents approved the addition of the Clinical Practice Series as a new promotion pathway for School of Medicine (SOM) faculty members who specialize in direct patient care. The request for this new series was made after a SOM Blue Ribbon Task Force conducted a comprehensive examination of the SOM's promotion and tenure rules, ultimately recommending development of a promotion pathway for clinicians that does not require scholarship. This recommendation was approved by the SOM Faculty Senate, Executive Committee and the SOM faculty-at-large.

Promotion Criteria for Faculty in the Clinical Practice Series

Faculty members whose duties are focused primarily in direct patient care, with limited or no scholarship activities, may be given titles in the Clinical Practice Series, including Associate Professor of Clinical Practice or Professor of Clinical Practice. Because scholarship is not required, these faculty members are not tenure-eligible.

The requirements for promotion to Associate Professor of Clinical Practice include excellence in clinical care, at least meritorious teaching and a local or regional reputation for clinical excellence. The requirements for promotion to Professor of Clinical Practice include excellence in clinical care, at least meritorious teaching and excellence in at least one of the following: (1) teaching; or (2) "leadership of structured projects that have assessed and improved the quality, value or efficiency of clinical care." In addition, Professors of Clinical Practice must demonstrate a national or international reputation for clinical excellence. Scholarship is encouraged but is not required for promotion to either rank; however, relevant scholarship is included in the matrix for clinical excellence and can strengthen the clinician's promotion portfolio.

Process for Promotion in the Clinical Practice Series

Instructors and Assistant Professors are "undifferentiated" and are not assigned to either the Clinical Practice or Regular series. Prior to undergoing departmental review for promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, all faculty members, in consultation with their chair and mentors, must choose whether to seek promotion to Associate Professor in the regular or clinical practice series. Normally, they will make this election after undergoing a comprehensive (mid-course) review, based on their interests and accomplishments in clinical work, service, teaching and scholarship. However, faculty members who are recruited at the Associate or Professor level may be recommended for appointment in the Clinical Practice Series.

Promotion Results

The SOM began implementation of the Clinical Practice Series in academic year 2013-2014. In the past 4 years (2013-2017), 85 appointment or promotion recommendations have been considered; of these, 84 were approved.

- Eleven appointments or promotions were originally submitted for approval in the Regular Faculty Series; after these recommendations were tabled or disapproved, they were eventually reviewed and approved in the Clinical Practice Series.
- Two appointments or promotions were originally submitted for approval in the Clinical Practice Series; however, based on a finding of at least meritorious scholarship, the FPC recommended approval in the Regular Faculty Series. The respective departments agreed, and both were then approved in the Regular Faculty Series.
- Faculty reviewed in the Clinical Practice Series over the last four years have held the following degrees: MD; DO; PhD; DPM; PsyD; RPH; DMD; MBB; and MPH.
- Figures 1 and 2, below, provide a comparison of Regular Series and Clinical Practice Series promotions at the Associate Professor level according to employer (CU vs. affiliated hospital) and according to gender.
- Figure 3 provides a comparison of the two series at the Associate Professor level with respect to the numbers of peer-reviewed publications (through 2016).

Overall Statistics Clinical Practice Series 2013-2018					
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	Totals
Total # Associate Prof of Clin Practice Reviewed	8 (88% approved)	19 (100% approved)	17 (100% approved)	20 (100% approved)	64
Total # Prof of Clin Practice Reviewed	4 (100% approved)	7 (100% approved)	2 (100% approved)	8 (100% approved)	21
Degrees held by candidates	MD, RPH, DPM, PhD	MD, PhD, DMD, DO	MD, PsyD, DO, PhD	MD, DMD, DO, MBBS, PhD	
Total # originally submitted in Regular Faculty Series and disapproved or tabled, reviewed in CPS (included in above numbers).	4	4	1	2	11
Total # originally submitted in Clinical Practice Series and recommendation made to consider in Regular Faculty Series (not included in above number).	0	0	0	2	2

Figure 1

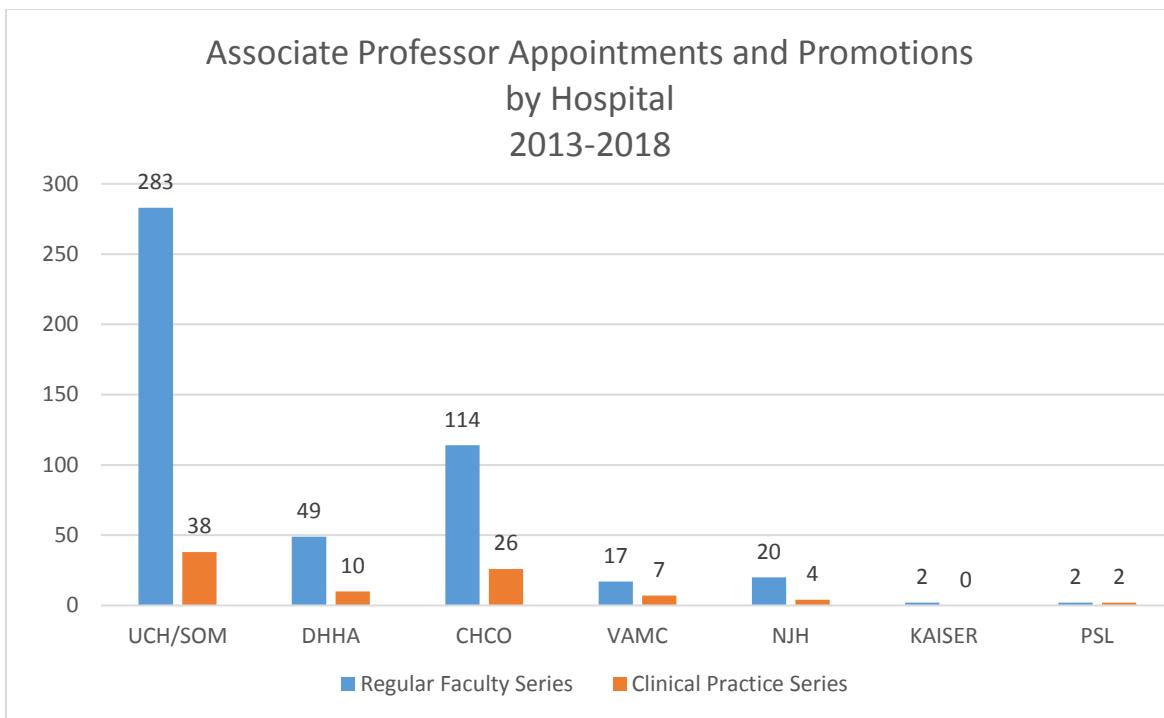


Figure 2.

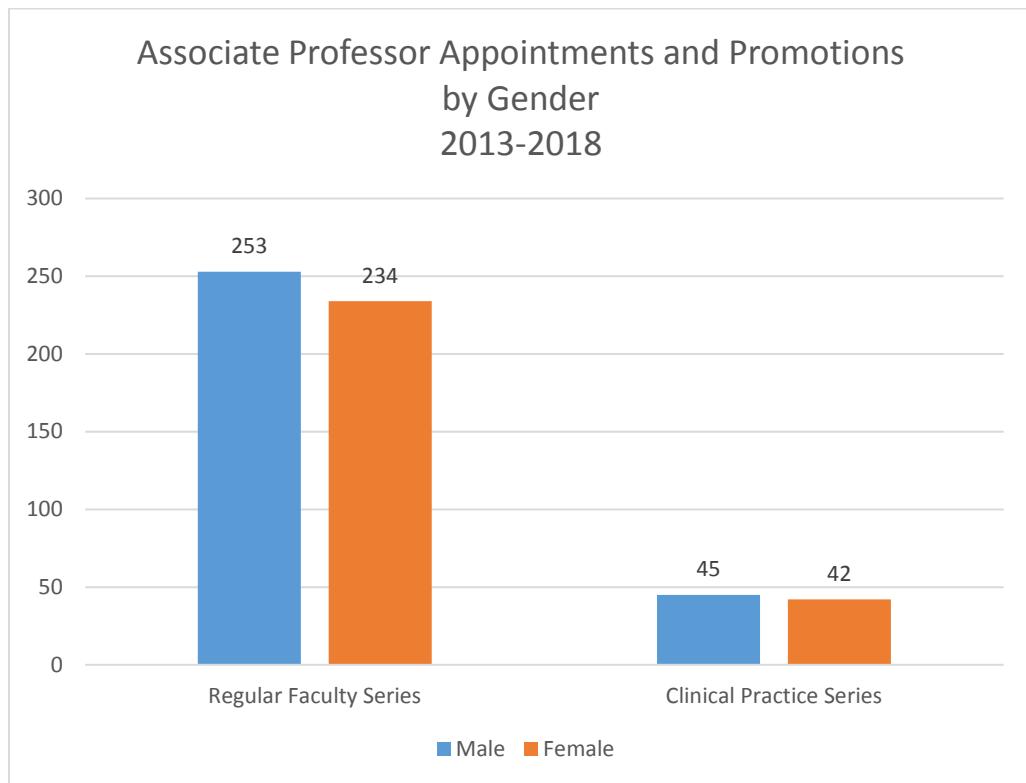
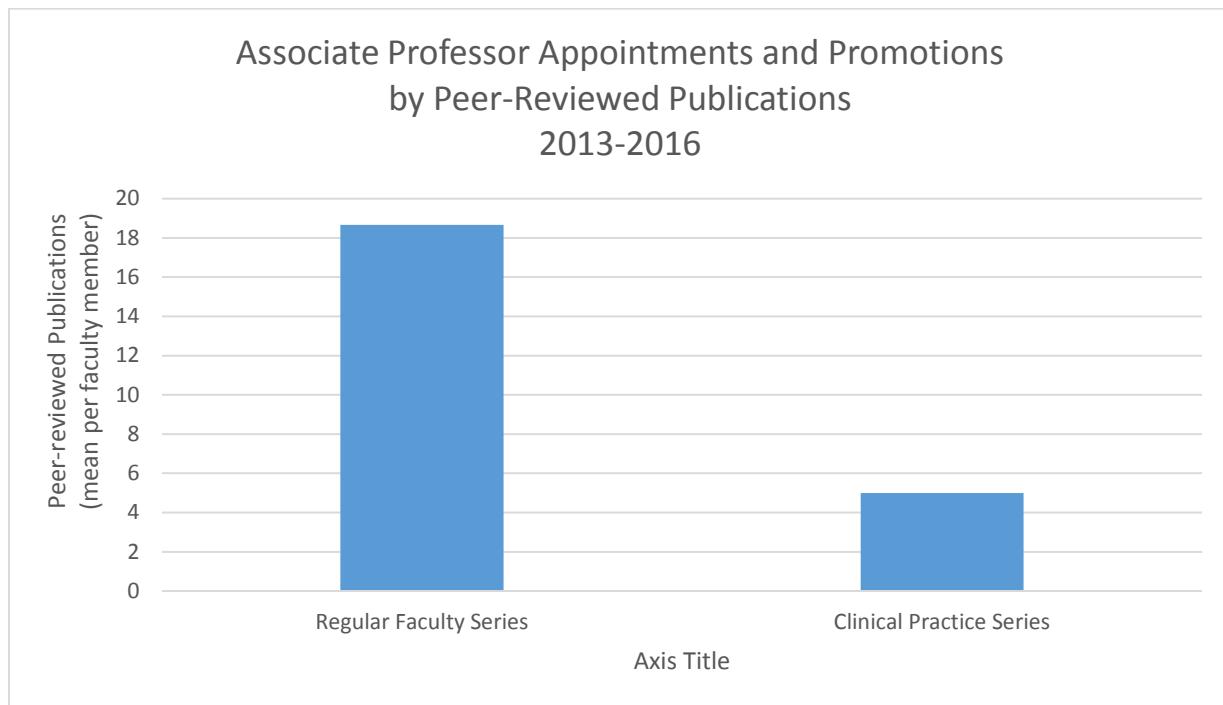


Figure 3.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is promotion possible for clinicians who *only* participate in direct patient care?

Usually, no. Excellence in clinical care is judged using the same promotion matrix that is used in reviewing candidates for promotion in the regular series. Thus, “Regularly assumes greater than average share of clinical duties” (*just being busy*) is unlikely to be sufficient to qualify as “excellent” in clinical practice. As outlined in the promotion matrix, successful candidates will usually need to demonstrate at least some of the following: a) clinical activities that are highly effective; b) development of new techniques, therapies, clinical guidelines; c) active participation in projects that evaluate the effectiveness of care; d) recognition of clinical excellence at the local, regional or national level; e) leadership of clinical programs, task forces and other “structured activities that promote quality of care and patient safety;” f) involvement in health care advocacy or other public policy activities; or g) examples of health-care related scholarship. Full Professors will have accomplished more of these activities “or in greater depth.” Refer to the promotion matrix for details and explanations.

Is this the proper promotion track for most clinician-educators?

Usually, no. The clinical practice series was approved with this caution --- that it is not the “clinical teaching track.” Indeed, historically, the vast majority (97%) of our school’s clinician-teachers have been successfully promoted in the regular series, because they participate in meaningful scholarship related to their teaching and clinical responsibilities.

What types of external letters are required for promotion in the Clinical Practice Series?

External letters are required for faculty members seeking promotion in the Clinical Practice Series. These letters may be solicited from referring physicians or others (for example, state task force or policy leaders) who are qualified to judge the candidate’s clinical work or his or her local, regional or national reputation.¹ External evaluators may comment on the candidate’s clinical skill, quality improvement activities, responsiveness, teaching ability, professionalism, service to the community, contributions to the professional organizations or leadership in the field. Individuals who hold clinical or other faculty appointments at the University of Colorado may not serve as external evaluators.

¹ Faculty members seeking appointment or promotion in the Clinical Practice Series are required to demonstrate a regional reputation (for appointment or promotion to Associate Professor of Clinical Practice) or a national reputation (at the rank of full Professor).

When it comes to “meritorious teaching,” are the standards the same for faculty members in the Clinical Practice and Regular Series?

Yes. Candidates for promotion to Associate Professor in the Clinical Practice Series must meet the same criteria for “meritorious teaching” as candidates in the regular series.

Is the Clinical Practice Series the appropriate “destination” for newly-hired faculty at Highlands Ranch and other community sites across the UC Health and CHCO systems?

Possibly, but only for faculty members who are likely to meet the requirements for promotion to Associate Professor within the 7-year time frame. Mentorship, a career plan, meaningful teaching opportunities and an opportunity to participate in the other clinical leadership activities listed in the matrix will be required. Many clinical providers who are practicing at remote sites (and who are employed by the University) may be more appropriately appointed as “permanent” Sr. Instructors.

Has the Clinical Practice Series become a “second-class” promotion pathway?

For discussion.