
INSTRUCTOR RANK POLICY

Revised November 2024

The purpose of the Instructor rank is to provide a faculty appointment path that bridges the transition from completion of medical and/or scientific training to a faculty appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor on the tenure or professional tracks. The Instructor rank is intended for entry-level appointees with terminal degrees who are completing or have just completed their medical and/or scientific training and demonstrate strong potential for impactful faculty careers in academic medicine. The Instructor rank allows for increased responsibility associated with a faculty appointment, which is expected to be time-limited, for further development of clinical and/or scientific skills or credentials.

The Instructor appointment is a 1-year appointment that may be renewed by the Department Chair upon successful annual faculty evaluation. From the rank of Instructor, faculty may be appointed to either professional-track Assistant Professor or professional-track Clinical Assistant Professor after review and approval by the department chair and Dell Med Office of Faculty Academic Affairs. Faculty may be appointed as tenure-track Assistant Professor after review and approval by the departmental executive committee, the department chair, Dell Med Office of Faculty Affairs, and the Dell Med Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee (see regular [Faculty Appointment Policy](#)). The rank of Instructor is not a promotable rank.

Faculty who have held the rank of Instructor who are then appointed as a tenure-track Assistant Professor may request to include up to 3-years of time at the rank of Instructor that immediately precedes their appointment as tenure-track Assistant Professor towards their probationary period. Including time at the rank of Instructor towards the probationary period would only be appropriate for a faculty person whose career trajectory was exceptional and who is expected to be on-track for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure at the time of mandatory review. Faculty are advised to solicit candid feedback from their department chair and/or dean (dean designee) before electing to combine years of service in the rank of Instructor as years in their probationary period. The faculty member must inform their department chair, Dell Med Office of Faculty Academic Affairs, and the Faculty Affairs team in the Provost's Office that they have elected to combine years of service in this way no later than February 1st in the year immediately preceding the year of the review. The case is considered a mandatory review ("up-or-over") when the faculty member's record of combined service (in rank as an Instructor and as a tenure-track Assistant Professor) is eight years of probationary service. The decision to elect to combine years of service may be rescinded at the faculty member's discretion. A request to rescind this election to combine service should be submitted in writing to the department chair and Dell Med Office of Faculty Academic Affairs no later than February 1st prior to the intended fall promotion review.

Candidates for the rank of Instructor:

- Must hold a terminal degree, have completed clinical or post-doctoral training (where appropriate), and demonstrate strong potential for academic achievement.
- Must be board-eligible or have their board certification or its equivalent, as applicable to the field.

- May include:
 - Physicians (MDs or DOs) finishing their clinical training or who have just finished their clinical training who have strong potential for faculty careers in academic medicine with a focus on clinical expertise and/or educational leadership, but who either are not yet eligible for appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor and/or would benefit from a transition period with greater responsibility and continued close mentorship before consideration of a faculty appointment on either the tenure or professional tracks.
 - Individuals with terminal degrees who are pursuing research-oriented career paths and would benefit from a transition period with greater responsibility and continued close mentorship to further develop research skills prior to appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor.