In the Division of the Biological Sciences of the University of Chicago, promotion and tenure decisions require the analysis of external evaluators. It is most helpful when the evaluation includes:

a. An analysis of the scholarship.

b. An estimation of the present and future stature of the candidate. As will be obvious, our decision is couched in terms of whether the candidate will clearly become or is among the leading scholars in a significant field of biology or medicine.

c. Whether the candidate would qualify for a comparable appointment at the evaluator’s institution

A brief summary of criteria is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basis</th>
<th>Outstanding contributions to knowledge</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>Contributions are foreseeable, and faculty member is fully prepared to make them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professor without tenure*</td>
<td>Tenure is highly likely within 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>Outstanding contributions to knowledge that establish (professor) or will establish (associate professor) a faculty member as among the leading scholars in a significant field of biology or medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professor with tenure*</td>
<td>Clearly will become and then remain among the leading scholars in a significant field of biology and medicine, en route to Full Professor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor with tenure</td>
<td>Is and will remain among the leading scholars in a significant field of biology and medicine</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Departments may propose promotion and tenure simultaneously or separately as described below.

An expanded statement is:

Faculty are appointed primarily because of their potential to make world-class contributions to knowledge. They devote the vast majority of their effort to scholarship, and performance is judged primarily by their scholarly contributions. We define scholarship as the creation of knowledge. Probationary faculty on this track must advance towards tenure on the primary basis of outstanding scholarship, or leave the institution.
The topic of the scholarship is secondary to its quality, and all forms of scholarship conducted by our faculty can form the basis for appointment and advancement in this track as long as they meet the expected levels of quality.

The overriding consideration for promotion and tenure is that the faculty member has produced a body of scholarly work of the highest quality characterized by originality, rigor and importance in comparison to others in their respective fields at the same career stage. To be tenured, a faculty member must be responsible for an outstanding body of knowledge. Ordinarily there should be coherence to this body of work, and it should be readily identifiable as that of the candidate. Elements of this achievement in the biological sciences typically include formulation of original research ideas, developing the research methodology, recruiting necessary personnel, obtaining funding through peer-reviewed mechanisms, analysis and interpretation of the results, presentation at significant scientific meetings, and publications in high-quality peer-reviewed journals. Publications in the peer-reviewed literature of which the faculty member is typically the first or senior author are typically the primary basis for promotion or tenure. The number of publications is considered, but of more importance is the quality of the body of work, as evidenced by where the publications appear, the impact of the contributions, and the opinions of experts in the field. Work that has not undergone peer review should not be considered. In areas of scholarship for which external funding is necessary to conduct the research, past and likely future peer reviewed funding success are important considerations. Such success serves as another affirmation that the research is of high quality and forecasts continued productivity.

Where major components of a faculty member’s research accomplishments arise from collaborations, the quality and originality of the faculty member’s individual contributions to the formulation, design, analysis, and interpretation of the published studies must be carefully documented so that they can be evaluated. These contributions should meet the same standards as for faculty whose research is not collaborative.

Associate Professors on the BSD Track should have sufficient stature to be regarded as en route to becoming leaders in their respective research fields by the scientific community when compared to leading faculty members of similar experience and seniority at other top ranked departments and/or institutions. Full Professors must be among the leading national/international scholars in their field.

Promotion to associate professor requires that quality of research is judged to be very high and tenure is judged highly likely to be approved within a specified time. Education and institutional citizenship are also considered. Both promotion and tenure may be proposed simultaneously.

Tenure will be conferred when the faculty member has achieved a record of scholarly accomplishment that warrants an indefinite commitment. That is, the record of past scholarship and proposals for future scholarship should clearly establish that the candidate for tenure at the rank of associate professor will be among the leading scholars in a field, and for tenure at the rank of professor is and will remain among the leading scholars in a field.

Scholarly Requirements for tenure
Quality of scholarship “unambiguously at the highest level”, typically reflected by

• peer review and publication of a body of work in high-quality publications. Scholarship not published in journals or books is allowable, but the case must clearly establish dissemination to the peer community via high-quality routes. Success in meaningful competition for funding can be an important indicator of peer esteem.

• importance and impact of the body of work for a major field, in terms of citations in the peer-reviewed literature, invited speaking, invited service (e.g., on study sections), and/or the opinions of the leading scholars in that field. For recent work, the opinion of leading scholars that the work will be impactful is essential. Irrespective of track, faculty who achieve tenure are expected to be amongst the very best of their peer group nationally defined as tenured faculty at peer institutions.

• coherence and focus; i.e., a program of scholarship. Ordinarily there should be a logical progression from one work to the next, with maturation/refinement/advancement evident, and/or well-reasoned ventures into new areas. A program is not a ‘random walk’ dictated by the patients who happen to present or a number of first steps that are never followed through.

Sustainability of high-quality scholarship, established by

• thoughtful plans and proposals for future scholarship

• where funding is necessary or customary, a track record of successful funding and its likely continuation

• consistency. A track record of ongoing scholarship that is not episodic, one-time, or occasional.

That is, the record of past scholarship and proposals for future scholarship should clearly establish that the candidate for tenure at the rank of associate professor will be among the leading scholars in a field, and for tenure at the rank of professor is and will remain among the leading scholars in a field.

The option to separate promotion to associate professor and the tenure decision is intended to accommodate circumstances such as:

• When a faculty member is pursuing a research problem at the highest level but circumstances unforeseeable or beyond control impede progress (e.g., mouse with no phenotype; bad luck rather than poor performance or defects in contingency planning).

• When a faculty member is pursuing a difficult research problem and making slow progress because the problem is a challenging one. That is, the faculty member is advancing at the same rate as the best in the field.
• When a faculty member’s work is advancing new interdisciplinary science and requires mastery or implementation of multiple laboratory, field, or theoretical techniques from disparate existing disciplines.

• Where the nature of the problem studied requires multiple years for the relevant data to become sufficiently mature to address the scientific issues, or for collaborative, community-based partnerships to mature to levels needed for rigorous community-based scholarship.