Achieving the level of full professor is a reflection of outstanding clinical care, teaching, mature scholarship and a national/international reputation. While aspiring to this goal, individuals may make prolonged, respected and significant contributions to the missions of the school and the department without fulfilling the criteria for professorship.

Promotion on the clinician/scholar pathway requires evidence of outstanding clinical care, outstanding teaching and mature scholarship with national recognition. Promotion on the physician/scientist pathway and in the research track requires outstanding, mature scholarship with significant, sustained scholarly productivity and research funding, duration and significant scientific contributions and national/international recognition. For those on the physician/scientist pathway, excellence in both teaching and clinical care (for clinicians) is required.

National prominence is an important criterion on both pathways. Examples include leadership in national/international societies or clinical trial networks, invited lectures, authorship of a prominent text or website, study section or editorial board membership, R01 or equivalent grants or ASCI membership.

Outstanding achievement is defined both quantitatively and qualitatively and there is no single benchmark. However, the Department of Medicine uses some quantitative data for assessing excellence in scholarly and pedagogic work. To offer some guidance to associate professors, we provide the following data regarding faculty who were promoted to full professor from 1999-2020.

Years in rank
Time in rank is not a criterion for promotion, but time is needed to develop outstanding mature scholarship. The mean time for promotion to professor for clinician/scholars is 8.3 years, 7.3 for physician/scientists and 8.2 for research faculty. Since 1999 the department has promoted two people at three years in rank, and five at four years in rank.

Scholarly output
For clinician/scholars, the median number of peer-reviewed publications, book chapters, and educational videos or software is 52. For physician/scientists, the median number of peer-reviewed publications is 61. For research scientists, the median number of peer-reviewed publications is 72. It is important to acknowledge that the number of publications is not the sole factor in determining excellence in scholarly work. The quality of the scholarly work is essential. In addition, there are scholarly contributions that are not represented in the above data such as service on scientific advisory committees or grant review.
committees, syllabus contributions or development, editorial board duties, etc. If you have questions about your scholarly progress, it would be best to discuss with your division head.

Teaching evaluations (2010-20)
For clinician/scholars, the median evaluation (from residents and fellows) for overall teaching effectiveness is 5.6 (scale 1-6). For physician/scientists, the median evaluation is 5.5 (scale 1-6). There are many other ways of assessing teaching excellence including the number of intramural and extramural presentations, the prestige of intramural and extramural presentations, numeric evaluations of presentations, student evaluations, and qualitative evaluations. If you have questions about your teaching portfolio, it would be best to discuss with your division head.

Professionalism
Professionalism is an essential attribute for Department of Medicine faculty. All faculty promoted to professor must demonstrate professionalism. We have gathered data for all Department of Medicine faculty who are on an inpatient service or outpatient service from 2019-20 for trainee responses to the following questions: 1) I was treated with respect by this individual; 2) I observed others (students, residents, staff, patients) being treated with respect by this individual. On a scale of 1-5, the mean score was 4.96 and 4.95, respectively. Less than 1% received a score of 4 or less on each question. If you have questions about your professionalism, it would be best to discuss with your division head.

None of these data are absolute benchmarks for promotion to professor and should not be applied strictly to evaluate an individual faculty member. These data are touchstones that might be useful for discussing your achievements and academic progress when you meet annually with your division head. Your division head can help identify what you need to focus on for successful promotion. Each faculty member has different professional responsibilities, talents and achievements. Some faculty members might also be eligible for promotion based on national prominence as an administrative leader. The path to promotion to professor differs for individuals, but all must succeed in achieving a national reputation of excellence in academic medicine.

Our faculty members of the University of Washington Department of Medicine are some of the best in the world, and promotion to the rank of full professor represents the highest level of academic achievement.

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