# CLAS Personnel Committee Annual Report 2012-2013

18 March 2013

### Activity this year

The CPC’s primary task is to evaluate faculty members’ applications for contract renewal, tenure, and promotion, and to recommend to the Dean an appropriate action for each.

In 2012-2013 the CPC evaluated 33 contract renewal, 19 tenure/promotion, and 20 full professor applications for a total of 72.

The Faculty Handbook indicates that “the Committee will normally be expected to accept the recommendation of the unit.” Over the past five years the “agreement rate” has been above 90%; this year that rate was 95%.

### Changes this year

At the request of several departments, the CPC worked with staff in the Dean’s office to develop a clear set of formats and procedures for submission of personnel dossiers entirely in electronic form. The new system was implemented in the winter semester. Candidates from several units elected to use this approach. We expect to continue to offer this option to candidates while still supporting submission of traditional paper dossiers, at the discretion of candidates and/or units.

### Desiderata

The CPC prefers not to set personnel policy, an activity it regards as outside its charge. However, in cases where policies are nonexistent or unclear, the CPC effectively does set policy with its recommendations whether it wants to or not. We have identified a set of situations where explicit university and college policies are lacking. Written guidance, either in the form of explicit discussion in unit criteria or formal recommendations from university governance, would be welcome.

1. The faculty handbook gives suggested timetables for applications for tenure and promotion with the phrase “ordinarily, at least six years…”. However, early applications are not infrequent and there is often no clear policy as to how such cases should be evaluated. Individual faculty opinions about treatment of early cases vary widely. For the past four years the CPC has been operating with the following policy: first, if the unit criteria describe criteria for treatment of early applications, we use the approach indicated there; second, if the unit criteria do not treat early applications but the unit has a consistent approach to them that is spelled out in the unit report, we use that; finally, in the absence of those forms of guidance, we apply the normal unit criteria equally to “ordinary” and early applications. We encourage all units to develop explicit standards for evaluation of early personnel actions.
2. We encourage units to clearly explain any differences in unit evaluation criteria for tenure and for promotion to Associate Professor, if the unit does not regard these actions as linked.
3. It is not always clear to what extent work done before a candidate arrives at GVSU may be used to satisfy requirements for scholarship and professional service. This policy lacuna is especially challenging when evaluating candidates who arrive with credit on the tenure clock. Should a candidate who was granted two years credit toward tenure be permitted to use papers published in the two years prior to arrival to argue for professional recognition for scholarship? Individual faculty opinions vary on this point. The question also arises when a candidate completes most of the work for a project as part of a dissertation or postdoctoral work, but makes minor changes after arriving at GVSU, as part of the publication process. In this second case, standard practice varies among disciplines, so the question might best be addressed in unit criteria rather than with a broad university policy. Sometimes this question is resolved with clear statements in the initial offer letter. In other cases, the CPC sees a need for clearer guidance for both candidates and evaluators.

### Recommendations to units

Service on the CPC requires intensive work over portions of both the fall and winter semesters. Most committee members spend between 12 and 18 hours per week on CPC work from week 6 through week 11 of the winter semester, and for three weeks of the fall semester. We feel it is appropriate to recognize CPC members’ efforts as part or all of their “significant focus beyond baseline expectations” for the winter semester.

We continue to encourage units that have not had recent representation on the CPC to nominate candidates, as we value breadth of perspective and the opportunity to learn from all units.

### Acknowledgements

The committee members this year were:

* Donovan Anderson (MLL)
* Jason Crouthamel (HST)
* Tim Fisher (ART)
* Avis Hewitt (ENG)
* Pablo Mahave-Veglia (MUS)
* Melissa Morison (CLA, chair)
* Michael Ott (SOC)
* Richard Rediske (AWRI)
* Russ Rhoads (ANT)
* Victoria Veenstra (COM)
* Gang Xu (GPY)
* Peter Wampler (GEO)

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