

CLAS Personnel Committee Annual Report 2016-2017

27 March 2017

Activity this year

The CPC's charge is to recommend action concerning faculty members' applications for contract renewal, tenure, and promotion to the Dean.

In 2016-2017 the CPC reviewed 27 applications for promotion to Full Professor, 13 for tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor, and 18 for contract renewal for a total of 58 cases.

The Administrative Manual states that "the Committee will normally be expected to accept the recommendation of the unit." Over the past five years the "agreement rate" has averaged 96%; this year the rate was 95%.

As the college now normally provides only one contract renewal review before consideration for tenure and/or promotion to associate professor, the CPC provides candidates with feedback on their portfolios when necessary.

The CPC also completed revisions to our By-laws, which were approved by CLAS faculty referendum in March 2017, and updated the "Portfolio Guidelines" document to provide clearer direction to candidates regarding Personal Statements and portfolio preparation. This was in response to the candidates submitting Personal Statements that do not clearly state how standards have been met and electronic portfolios containing a disproportionately large amount of material to the action under consideration.

Desiderata

The CPC does not desire to set personnel policy, an activity that is beyond the scope of its charge. However, in cases where policies are nonexistent or unclear, the CPC establishes de facto policy with its recommendations. 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. According to university policy, candidates applying for early tenure or early promotion must exceed expectations in all categories of evaluation (i.e., Teaching, Scholarly/Creative Activity, Service). Where unit criteria do not explicitly provide definitions of what it means to exceed expectations, the CPC is forced to rely upon its own definitions. We would encourage unit to develop standards that provide guidance in this area.
2. CLAS standards consider tenure and promotion to Associate Professor to be linked. If units do not consider these actions to have the same standards and criteria, we would encourage them to clearly articulate these differences in the unit standards.
3. Candidates seeking promotion to Full Professor often have more years at the Associate Professor rank than the minimum required for consideration. Under CLAS standards for Scholarly/Creative Activity, "scholarly growth and achievement must be demonstrated within the most recent seven full-time equivalent years." However, as the CLAS standard is general and non-limiting beyond "scholarly growth and achievement" and some unit standards refer to the period since the last promotion or provide no guidance, the CPC would welcome units to provide explicit guidance on the time frame candidates have to meet standards for promotion to Full Professor.

Recommendations to units

Service on the CPC requires intensive work over portions of both the fall and winter semesters. Most committee members spend between 15 and 20 hours per week on CPC work for four weeks of the fall semester, and for five weeks of the winter semester. We feel it is appropriate to recognize CPC members' efforts as part of their "significant focus beyond baseline expectations" for each semester.

We highly encourage units to have representation on the CPC. There are a number of units in CLAS that have had little or no representation on this committee over the last several years. Members of CPC see the critical importance of disciplinary diversity in their work. Unit representation on the CPC not only benefits the committee but it also benefits the departments. Current and former committee members help units understand how the CPC works and can provide important feedback to colleagues on the unit personnel process.

We continue to appreciate early submissions of portfolios by units, especially during the winter semester. This allows us to distribute cases across a wider period of time and assists us in meeting our April 1 deadline.

Acknowledgements

The committee members this year were:

- Mark Williams (MUS, Chair)
- Colleen Lewis (MOV, Assistant Chair)
- Patrick Colgan (GEO)
- Sigrid Danielson (ART)
- David Eaton (HST) - Fall 2016 Semester
- Janel Pettes Guikema (MLL)
- Steven Hecht (BMS)
- Christopher Lawrence (CHM) - Winter 2017 Semester
- Alexey Nikitin (BIO)
- Rick Rediske (AWRI)
- Shelly Smith (MTH)
- Victoria Veenstra (COM)
- Richard Yidana (SOC)
- Gretchen Galbraith (CLAS, Ex Officio, Non-Voting)

The CPC is grateful for exemplary support from Heidi Nicholson in the Dean's office, and to Associate Dean Gretchen Galbraith whose experienced counsel is highly valued.