

## **Report of the 2019-20 Faculty Personnel Committee Carol Silverman, Anthropology, Chair**

The 2019-2020 FPC consisted of 12 members:

Carol Silverman, Chair (Professor, Anthropology and Folklore)  
Marcin Bownik, (Professor, Mathematics)  
Sangita Gopal (Associate Professor, Cinema)  
Vsevolod Kapatsinski (Associate Professor, Linguistics)  
Donnalyne Pompper (Professor, School of Journalism and Communications/Public Relations)  
Ofer Raban (Professor, School of Law)  
Brandon Julio (Associate Professor of Finance, LCB)  
Kent McIntosh (Professor, Special Education and Clinical Sciences, COE)  
Jason Silveira (Associate Professor, Music Education, SOMD)  
Kevin Van Den Wymelenberg (Professor, Architecture, Design)  
Scott Bridgham (Professor, Biology), joined winter term 2020  
Lisa Wolverton (Professor, History) served until January 2020, when she resigned  
Richard York (Professor, Sociology) served February-June 2020, appointed by CAS

Marcin Bownik, Vsevolod Kapatsinski, and Brandon Julio also served as the subcommittee for Expedited Tenure Reviews.

We would like to thank our liaison with the Provost's office, Ellen Herman who tirelessly answered our questions and monitored our work, and the Provost's Executive Assistant Rachel Tischer, who helped our committee run smoothly.

The committee reviewed 66 promotion and tenure files: 3 expedited, 3 for tenure only, 3 accelerated for tenure only, 32 for tenure and promotion to Assoc. Prof., and 25 for promotion to Full Professor.

Note that this is a significant increase in the number of cases compared to 2018-9 (26 more cases, over 50% increase). Due to more work, I suggest increasing the meager compensation for serving on and chairing this committee. I also suggest informing new Chairs that they will automatically serve on the Academic Council. For me, this was a huge obligation because the Academic Council helped formulate all academic policies regarding COVID.

The committee's work began during Fall quarter with orientation sessions, one expedited case and one accelerated case. Our main workload was carried out in 2-hour weekly meetings between January and mid-June. In mid-March we pivoted to virtual meetings due to COVID. Committee attendance was generally good. We upheld the practice of recusing members from cases in their own units; nevertheless, we were able to maintain a quorum of 8 members for every case. The Chair assigned cases to members on a rotating basis based on availability and lack of recusal. I also mentored new members about how to write up case reports.

Each committee member read reviewed the files for the cases on which they voted, and each of us, including the chair, wrote 5-6 committee reports that summarized individual cases. Reports

ranged in length from 2-4 pages. After thorough discussion, we revised the reports and sent them with our votes to the Office of the Provost. FPC members freely and confidentially expressed their opinions and respectfully listed to other members. Our reviews were generally positive, but many votes were mixed. We asked the Provost to inform us of his decisions; we were informed of his decisions in June.

Many times we needed to ask for more materials (letters, peer previews, etc.) or for clarification of items in the files. Most of the time we received what we asked for, but on one occasion Ellen Herman used her discretion to decline a request. This decision caused one FPC member to resign in January.

In February the Senate approved a policy extending the eligibility of expedited tenure to faculty members who are already tenured at other universities who are appointed at UO at the rank of Associate Professor, so long as they have been at that rank for a minimum of three years.

A number of issues regarding external peer reviewers came up repeatedly. We questioned the objectivity of a number of reviewers and disqualified several because their relationship to the candidate was deemed too close. These included reviewers who did not conform to the Provost's criteria (see below) and also reviewers (especially in the humanities) who had published chapters in volumes edited by the candidate; reviewers who edited volumes with a contribution from the candidate; reviewers who had written a blurb for a candidate's book; and reviewers who taught or trained the candidate.

With our feedback, the Provost modified his policy as follows:

Appropriate Reviewers: Avoid reviewers with close relationships to the candidate. The following relationships should be viewed as disqualifying: dissertation advisor or member of doctoral committee, former departmental colleague, research collaborator within the review period, co-author within the review period. Close personal relationships are also problematic. Many other relationships are generally acceptable, but prospective reviewers who express concern about their ability to present an unbiased evaluation or are uncomfortable playing the role of an evaluator should be excused. <https://provost.uoregon.edu/external-letters-evaluation>

This is a step in the right direction. However, we feel that training sessions should emphasize "best practices," not merely acceptable practices; the goal should be securing the most objective reviewers. We also feel that the Provost's liaison should spot these problems (and indeed all problems) before the files reach the FPC. It would save us much time and effort.

We also had some problems regarding departmental/unit expectations for research or creative activity. The FPC compares the candidate's record to the department's P/T policy. When the P/T policy specifies numbers, such as a book and two or three articles, our task is easier. We realize that such quantification is not possible or desirable in every field but, in every case, we do need guidelines for excellence and how to evaluate it. One example is citation indices; the FPC needs to know if they are relevant for each unit or not; and if relevant, which indices to consult.

We noticed that co-authorship of publications/creative work is not always explained in files. Trainings should emphasize that units need to clearly spell out the role that the candidate played in co-authored publications/creative work. Units should also indicate what the order of authors reveals about contributions.

Evaluating teaching was challenging because we had to rely on the old course evaluation system as well as the new system. Sometimes the required numbers of peer reviews were lacking.

We also note that files from the Knight Campus tended to be incomplete.

Finally, although May 1 is the notification date, we reviewed many files in May and June.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to present our committee's work and our suggestions for improving the promotion and tenure process.