

Towards More Inclusive Promotion and Tenure

Criteria, Policies, and Processes

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Abstract

Promotion and tenure (P&T) criteria at research-focused universities typically emphasise research scholarship and productivity. Unfortunately, ‘research’ is often narrowly defined as activities specific to a particular discipline. Rarely does ‘research’ include other activities, even when they are supported by external funding or have archival journals dedicated to their subject. These other activities promote professional development of faculty while advancing university goals; however, despite their importance, these activities are rarely acknowledged in P&T criteria. This paper presents the results of a study that investigates how some universities have diversified P&T paths to be inclusive of broader faculty accomplishments. Recommendations are offered regarding steps to update or develop P&T policies and procedures that give credit for a wider spectrum of faculty activities.

Keywords: faculty, promotion and tenure criteria, promotion and tenure review processes, promotion and tenure review policies, broader pathways to faculty advancement pathways

1. Introduction

In most universities where faculty are expected to engage in research and scholarship, promotion and tenure (P&T) criteria often emphasize research scholarship and productivity. While these criteria will vary from university to university and from discipline to discipline, the evaluation of ‘research’ or ‘scholarship’ typically involves the assessment of a candidate’s scholarly works. These can be in the form of, for example, peer-reviewed or juried products, public presentations at appropriate venues, and, in disciplines where extramural funding is available, the ability to secure such funding and use it to advise graduate students who support the candidate’s scholarly activities, etc. Unfortunately, ‘research’ or ‘scholarship’ is very often narrowly defined as those activities which are specific to a particular discipline. Very rarely, if at all, for example, does ‘research’ include the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) – even in those instances where such efforts are supported by externally sourced, nationally competitive funding or have archival, peer-reviewed journals dedicated to their subject matter (see, e.g., <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/josotl>). Two additional ‘non-traditional’ scholarship areas are the scholarship of community engagement (see, e.g., <https://engage.msu.edu/about/overview/common-types-of-community-engaged-scholarship-reported-by-faculty> for an excellent discussion of community-engaged scholarship), and the scholarship of institution building (see, e.g., Haller et al., 2018; Jessani et al., 2020).

These (and other) scholarly activities promote the professional development of faculty while also advancing the goals of the unit and the university as a whole (see, e.g., O’Meara, 1997, and Rose, 2021). However, despite the importance placed on them in various public relations presentations and discourses by a university’s upper administration, these activities are rarely, if at all, acknowledged in P&T criteria. This leaves the faculty who have a calling to engage in these (seemingly) important professional activities feeling under-valued and under-appreciated (O’Meara, 1997; Pololi et al., 2012).

In an effort to provide universities with some basic information regarding how other universities have updated their P&T policies, criteria, and processes to be more inclusive of faculty interests, talents, and accomplishments, a study was performed to investigate how other universities have diversified their available paths toward promotion and/or tenure, including traditional discipline-based research/scholarship, scholarship of teaching and learning, community

service research, contributing to institutional well-being, and others. This, in turn, led to a series of recommendations regarding next steps that could be taken by a university as it updates existing or develops new P&T policies and procedures that recognise and give credit for a much wider spectrum of faculty activities and accomplishments.

As this study evolved, the following aspects of the P&T review process, including criteria and policies, were identified as important points to keep in mind when developing new (or updating existing) policies and criteria to be more inclusive:

(1) Such modifications changes are, in effect, a major cultural change in how faculty view, value, and evaluate the professional contributions of their colleagues. As such, to facilitate the implementation of such changes, a grass-roots effort is required, one that will change ‘the hearts and minds’ of faculty so that they understand the need for and will support the implementation of such changes.

(2) Structural and cultural barriers to developing and implementing changes to P&T criteria are not just possible, they are highly likely (Griffin, 2019). In addition to needing to change possibly long-standing policy, barriers to proposed changes to faculty P&T criteria and policy in the forms of cultural norms, expectations, beliefs, etc., are discussed by Blair-Loy and Cech (2022) and Cheryan and Markus (2020). As such, it is important for universities to be mindful of possible unintended consequences that could result from expanding P&T criteria and evaluation processes.

(3) Faculty demographics, interests, and preferred activities or lines of inquiry are constantly changing. While a constant revision of well-articulated criteria, policies, and procedures may not be necessary, it is reasonable to expect reviews and possibly some revisions every few years to reflect those changes.

(4) If only minimal information is provided in the documentation pertaining to P&T review criteria or procedural aspects, that would render that information either open to very broad interpretation (at best) or not particularly useful at all to faculty being reviewed for promotion and/or tenure. In these cases, it can be argued that faculty are not provided sufficient information or guidance regarding their development at key points in their professional careers.

(5) In the event that a department’s P&T criteria or expectations for advancement in rank included any mention of community-engaged scholarship, institution-building, or activities related to SOTL as being acceptable for demonstrating leadership and accomplishment in the area of research / scholarship / creative work, it is imperative that details be provided regarding how such activities would be evaluated, or what would be the performance metrics for such an evaluation. Institutions need to work to ensure that non-traditional scholarship is assessed with the same level of rigor as traditional research, and they need to be aware that there could be some resistance from faculty who have already advanced under existing policies (see, e.g., Hubbart, 2023; Woelert, 2020).

The significance of these issues and the critical need for them to be addressed in updated P&T policies, criteria, and processes has been noted in several ‘best practices’ reports, which are discussed in a following section. Several recent efforts at Seattle University (O’Brien et al., 2023) and St Louis University (Heiden-Rootes et al., 2024) have shown that these kinds of changes to their overall P&T review efforts have resulted in improved faculty morale, thanks in part to a new appreciation of a broader spectrum of faculty activities in those universities’ (and others’) P&T reviews. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has also recently published several articles regarding promotion and tenure that argue in favor of updating evaluation and review processes (see, Tiede, 2023).

In the end, from a review of the experiences of institutions whose P&T policy and criteria updates were reviewed in this study, it is apparent that whatever new or expanded P&T policies are enacted by a university, they would likewise be expected to have a significant impact on faculty morale and well-being. Following the completion of this effort, and with the implementation of the recommendations contained in this paper, a university will be able to take a significant step forward in developing a much healthier work environment with a demonstrated commitment to improving its recognition of the many broad and diverse activities and accomplishments of its faculty. And, as a whole, that university will become known as an equitable and inclusive university that appropriately recognises the many efforts of its faculty, and that it is an environment where all faculty flourish and thrive (see Peachman, 2024, where 44 universities have been so recognized).

2. Review of Promotion and Tenure Policy Revisions

A group of eight (8) universities was identified, each of which having recently amended their P&T criteria, policies, and review procedures that, in particular, would allow consideration of faculty activities and accomplishments in areas other than the traditional motifs of teaching, research, and service. In the discussion that follows, the word ‘research’ refers to any one or more of faculty activities that have elements of research, scholarship, or creative works. These policy changes were reviewed to determine if there were any commonalities among what changes were

implemented, how they, were implemented, and what were some of the positive or negative outcomes resulting from these changes.

The P&T policy changes at these eight (8) universities were reviewed based on information these universities provided in publicly available documents, such as websites, journal articles, or conference proceedings. As such, this study was a qualitative research exercise in that its findings are effectively based on a literature review of the materials describing each university's process revisions. The universities whose policy changes were reviewed for this study were a mix of rural and urban institutions; private and public; and ranged in size and mission from small liberal arts colleges to large and very large comprehensive state colleges and universities. Information regarding the P&R criteria, policies, and processes reviewed can be found in Appendix A. Detailed information regarding the processes used by the institutions discussed in Appendix A to implement changes to their P&T review procedures, as well as lessons learned by those institutions, are also discussed in Appendix A.

2.1 Findings of P&T Policy Revisions Review

Table 1 presents an overview of recent modifications to P&T policies at the eight universities that sought to broaden the pathways to promotion and tenure for their faculty. In Table 1, the information in the 'Year' column refers to when a particular university published a report or some other documentation describing either the changes it had made over the past few years, or a summary of the work it had done in preparing for changes that were intended to be put in place in the next few years. In addition, the column 'CC' refers to that institution's most recent (i.e., 2021) Carnegie Classification (from <https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu/carnegie-classification/classification-methodology/basic-classification/#doc%20for%20all%20universities>).

Table 1. Review of Changes to Faculty P&T Review Criteria

Institution	Year	New Aspect(s) of Faculty Scholarship or Work to be Considered	CC
Indiana University – Purdue University	2022	Diversity, equity, inclusion	R-2
Purdue University	2019	Community engagement	R-1
Seattle University	2023	Community engagement, institution building	D/PU
St. Louis University	2024	Community engagement, institution building	R-2
University of Colorado – Colorado Springs	2023	Institution building	R-2
University of Maryland	2022	----	R-1
University of Maryland – Baltimore County	2021	Diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility	R-1
Worcester Polytechnic Institute	2020	Clarification/expansion of existing policies	R-2

It is evident from Table 1 and the information in Appendix A that many of the P&T policy revisions appear to elevate activities previously categorised as 'service' into activities potentially worthy of reward in P&T reviews. There is the proviso, of course, that these activities must either be integrated into the traditional faculty activities of 'teaching, research, and service', or if they are to stand alone, then they must be performed in a manner that can be objectively reviewed and assessed by faculty colleagues – service on (or even leading) committees, without any sort of associated scholarship, is not sufficient.

Additionally, the references examined in Appendix A also revealed two common elements among the various processes used to effect this kind of policy reform. These commonalities are (1) the inclusion of faculty in these processes from a broad cross-section of disciplines, teaching interests and levels of involvement, and research emphases and levels of accomplishment; and, (2) the need for a university's upper administration to fully, publicly, and enthusiastically support the efforts of the faculty group that has undertaken the task of reviewing and revising that university's P&T criteria and review processes. These are both clear components of any attempt at sweeping reform, but are especially important where P&T reviews are concerned.

It is also evident from Table 1 that most of the P&T policy revisions aimed at broadening faculty pathways to promotion and/or tenure have occurred within the last 5 years or so. As such, if a university were to engage in a similar activity with a similar desired end state in the near future, it would be at the forefront of such changes as they begin to happen across the nation.

As a final comment on Table 1, it is evident that all the universities considered in this study were classified as

doctoral universities, with nearly all being research-focused (nearly half could be considered research-intensive). Future work in this area could consider a review of recently developed or implemented P&T criteria and policy changes at teaching-focused universities. This would facilitate a comparison among the two groups of institutions to determine whether these kinds of activities are becoming demonstrably valued and evaluated in P&T reviews across a broader spectrum of universities.

3. How to Evaluate Non-traditional Activities of Engaged/Applied Scholarship

Sánchez Gibau, et al. (2022), Abel and Williams (2019), O'Meara, et al. (2022), and Demetry, et al. (2020) provide guidelines for faculty evaluations of non-traditional scholarly activities on their home campuses. These references (and others) can be consulted for more detailed information regarding how non-traditional research can be evaluated in a university's P&T review, including metrics and relative weightings between the various components of such activities. Although these guidelines can vary in their fine points, the following common themes have been identified for these kinds of evaluations:

(1) Clear and strong public statements of support of the campus executive leadership at all levels for these activities as being appropriate to either build or help build a successful promotion and tenure evaluation.

(2) The work performed should involve scholarly components very much like those associated with the more traditional scholarly activities performed by faculty, including.

- 1) high level of disciplinary expertise;
- 2) innovative;
- 3) capable of being replicated and elaborated;
- 4) documented results, along with scholarly peer-review and dissemination; and,
- 5) evidence of impact in the communities served or at the institution.

(3) Clear evidence that the work performed is not general professional or community service, such as committee memberships, etc.

These evaluation criteria can certainly serve as a starting point for a university wishing to craft its own criteria for the evaluation of faculty scholarship in non-traditional areas. They can also be modified or adapted to be in-line with the expectations put forth in campus by-laws or local university system rules and regulations. Individual departments and colleges can work with their campus' tenure policy committees to ensure that whatever policies are developed and adopted by departments are consistent with campus and university system policies. Of course, the weights assigned to individual components of these criteria, or whatever criteria are ultimately adopted by university faculty are the purview of the faculty, are beyond the scope of this study and should be decided by the faculty at each university.

In the end, the primary recommendation of this study is that the upper administration work with college deans, department chairs, and faculty to develop and implement a process whereby department-level P&T criteria, policies, and review processes can be amended to include consideration of a much broader spectrum of faculty interests, activities, and accomplishments. Boyer (1990) also provides an established basis for valuing different forms of scholarly contributions. Incorporating it as part of a university's overall changes to its P&T criteria and processes could be especially beneficial in that the proposed changes could be then viewed as being grounded in a well-established theoretical framework.

Of special note is that the highly successful approach developed by Seattle University (SU) has been similarly implemented at other universities, including St Louis University (SLU) and the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS). In the SU approach, a diverse group of faculties were invited to participate in a year-long workshop. As part of this workshop, faculty would meet and discuss the fundamental activities which are key to a university's survival and growth. This naturally led to discussions of who is responsible for which activity, and how would they get rewarded for their accomplishments in these areas. One workshop module could then be, for example, how to evaluate some kinds of activities that are traditionally not included in P&T criteria, such as different forms of scholarship and work related to institution building.

Successful completion of this kind of workshop will create a critical mass of faculty who can become ambassadors to move any new ideas or proposed revisions forward. It will also be important to teach faculty how to evaluate activities they are not accustomed to considering, let alone evaluating, as part of a promotion or tenure review process. The successful implementation of this process at SU has resulted in the promotion of twenty-seven women and faculty of

colour in the 2020-2023 timeframe, where previously the annual average was two such promotion, with a typically less than 5 such promotions across the preceding 25 years (O'Brien, et al., 2023).

4. Intersectionality Aspects of Expanded P&T Criteria, Policies, and Procedures

A common thread that was identified during discussions with representatives from universities that worked to broaden their pathways to promotion and tenure is that faculty that are doing scholarship in less traditional areas, such as community engagement and institution building, for example, (1) are the least likely to get promoted, and (2) are disproportionately women and faculty of colour (Griffin and Reddick, 2011; Turner, et al. 2011; Wood, et al. 2015; O'Meara, et al. 2017; and, Winslow, 2010). While these activities are vital to the operation and mission of a university, they are often invisible and unrewarded (Griffin and Reddick, 2011; O'Meara, 2011; Hanasono, et al. 2019). The institutionalized invisibility that racially minoritized and other marginalized faculty experience is discussed in more detail by Griffin (2019) and Campbell (2022). It follows, then, that universities where these kinds of efforts are not recognised by other faculty as being meritorious can have the reputation of, for example, simply using racially minoritized and other marginalized faculty to further university missions, discarding such faculty after six or seven years following unsuccessful promotion or tenure reviews, and then hiring a new crop of faculty to continue those efforts.

Updating university or department P&T criteria, policies, and procedures to better reflect and recognise the activities and accomplishments of all faculty should serve to help reduce the feelings of isolation and marginalization experienced by faculty who have, for example, a passion for non-traditional scholarship or research activities. This will, therefore, be especially helpful in the recruitment and retention of women faculty, faculty of colour, and other faculty having intersecting marginalised identities, including ethnic origin, disability, immigration status, cultural traditions, and others. All policy changes should be developed to be meaningful and impactful for a wide range of intersecting marginalised identities, and that they do not favour any particular identity group over another.

5. Concluding Thoughts

A study was performed to determine how it might be possible to broaden P&T criteria, policies, and procedures so that faculty can be recognised and rewarded for activities and accomplishments that go beyond expectations in the traditional areas of teaching, research / scholarship / creative works, and service. This study included a review of the P&T criteria, processes, and policies currently in place at a variety of universities, as well as an examination of how other universities had diversified their available paths toward promotion and/or tenure, including recognition and reward for activities other than traditional discipline-based research / scholarship, classroom / laboratory-based instruction, and professional / university / community service.

As a result of this study, the following recommendations are offered for universities to consider as they seek to expand and improve their P&T criteria, policies, and procedures:

- (1) Recommendation #1 – Review department-level P&T documentation to ensure that it includes information regarding criteria and processes that is sufficiently detailed so as to provide faculty with useful guidance regarding department-level P&T expectations;
- (2) Recommendation #2 – Engage in more regular reviews and updates (if necessary) of departmental P&T criteria, policies, and processes; and,
- (3) Recommendation #3 – Develop a broad-based process through which current P&T criteria, policies, and review processes can be expanded to be more inclusive of faculty interests, activities, and accomplishments.

Although universities will likely approach the discussion and implementation of these recommendations that reflects their history, culture, and administrative structures, the following suggestions are offered regarding the individuals and / or committees who could be tasked to do the work involved:

- (1) Recommendation #1 – Department P&T committees should review department level P&T documentation at regular intervals in order to have adequate time during department meetings to talk about criteria as well as processes and to obtain anonymous feedback as a means of encouraging early career faculty input.
- (2) Recommendation #2 – An Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, or someone in a similarly charged position, should engage Deans and Department Chairs at regular intervals to ensure that department level reviews and updates have occurred and that the Deans and Provost have the latest versions of P&T criteria policies and procedures in central locations.
- (3) Recommendation #3 – As the Chief Academic Officer, it is reasonable to presume that it would be the Provost's responsibility to convene whatever group is appropriate, depending on the approach selected, to develop and facilitate

the implantation of expanded P&T criteria and processes.

Future work on this topic might involve longitudinal studies to track faculty success rates under revised P&T policies as compared to success rates of faculty evaluated under more narrow criteria and processes. The development of a “lessons learned” website where universities can contribute information regarding challenges they faced and (hopefully) overcame in their effort to develop and implement more broadly defined advancement criteria for their faculty. A conversation with faculty as well as university administrators in a follow-on study (which was not done in this investigation, and so is one of its limitations) would provide additional important information on potential barriers that might be encountered during such an effort.

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Appendix A

Review of P&T Policy Changes

1. Indiana University Purdue University (Sánchez Gibau et al., 2022)

Near the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IUPU faculty undertook the task of creating a new pathway to promotion and tenure that explicitly recognises and rewards excellence for faculty accomplishments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This pathway allows faculty, ‘... to make a case for excellence that demonstrates an integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion work across two or more traditional domains of faculty work: research, teaching and/or service.’ The faculty considered but rejected the idea of DEI work constituting an additional stand-alone area of endeavour (alongside teaching, research, service) because, ‘... it was too divergent from existing policy.’ In the end, this new pathway was seen as centering rather than marginalizing faculty work related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, allowing faculty accomplishments to be assessed ‘holistically.’ Moreover, the creation of this pathway, which integrates faculty work related to diversity, equity, and inclusion with the other traditional areas of faculty endeavor, has allowed the university to make the case that DEI work is a key element of how IUPU defines faculty excellence.

Implementation process steps:

- (1) Provost engaged academic deans in conversations regarding possible changes
- (2) Committee formed to review current practices and policies
- (3) After lengthy discussions, the committee put forth recommendations on suggested policy revisions
- (4) Another faculty committee reviewed proposed policy changes and suggested edits before final implementation

Lessons learned:

- (1) Seek and secure support for planned changes at multiple levels throughout the university
- (2) Campus leaders must demonstrate enthusiastic support for committees’ work
- (3) Work within shared governance structures to ensure broad faculty support
- (4) Elicit and listen to criticism to ultimately strengthen proposed changes
- (5) Carefully plan all implementation details, and maintain transparency
- (6) Prepare example of how the revised policy or procedure can be fairly implemented
- (7) Set reasonable and attainable goals for policy and process changes
- (8) Express sincere gratitude to all involved who helped make the change possible

2. Purdue University (Abel & Williams, 2019)

In 2011, the Purdue University administration charged a faculty task force with examining its P&T policy, which had not been updated since the 1970s. The task force identified the need for a process to reward faculty who apply their knowledge in the form of community engagement. The task force also noted that when counting what is important in promotion and tenure reviews, ‘... peer judgments on the merits of faculty research are over-emphasised at the expense of community judgments about engagement.’ Following the completion of the task force’s work, new criteria for promotion and tenure, as well as the associated procedures for the granting of such were developed that specifically called out ‘the scholarship of engagement.’ In a manner similar to what had been traditionally expected as evidence of faculty excellence in the area of research or scholarship, faculty seeking promotion for engagement activities are required to provide, ‘... a record of scholarly engagement-related publications and evidence of national/international visibility.’ This may include, ‘innovation and creativity when developing and delivering programs, products and services that promote informed decisions and/or improve quality of life.’

Implementation process steps:

- (1) Committee formed to review current practices and policies
- (2) A survey was conducted among the faculty to gain sense of faculty sentiment regarding possible changes to P&T policies
- (3) After lengthy discussions, the committee put forth recommendations on suggested policy revisions, as well as a rubric for use by future P&T evaluation committees
- (4) The committee report included several examples of faculty who had been promoted based on their non-traditional

scholarly activities

Lessons learned:

- (1) There can be a significant knowledge gap between how to document non-traditional scholarship and how to evaluate such scholarship that must be addressed
- (2) Additional resources are needed to support faculty engaged in non-traditional scholarship, including their development of P&T documentation and facilitating the evaluation of such documents by P&T committee members
- (3) There is a need for greater clarity concerning the definitions of scholarship when applied to non-traditional areas of faculty scholarly activity

3. Seattle University (O'Brien et al., 2023)

In 2020, Seattle University began an effort to revise its guidelines for promotion to Full Professor to include a range of faculty activities that typically, until then, did not count toward promotion. These activities included, '... community engaged scholarship, applied scholarship, student-faculty research, and institution building.' The Seattle University programme was motivated by the realization that while faculty and administrators, '... appreciated diversity-centered, student-oriented, institution-building contributions, they usually equated these contributions with 'service' and discounted them as not being 'real' accomplishments worthy of promotion.' This programme consisted of 'strategic communications' to disrupt entrenched faculty ideals about what 'counts' for promotion, identifying and training a change-maker faculty cohort, cultivating a critical mass of support across multiple institutional levels, and finally implementing numerous activities aimed at creating enhanced levels of faculty awareness of and appreciation for such activities. Since revising their guidelines, Seattle University has successfully promoted twenty-seven women and faculty of colour in the past three years (previously the annual average was two, with a range of 0-4 across the past twenty-five years).

Implementation process steps:

- (1) Committee formed to review current practices and policies
- (2) Conduct in-depth interviews with various focus groups at different levels within the university
- (3) Create a critical mass of "faculty change agents" to raise awareness and engage with individuals or groups appearing to not be supportive of the process
- (4) Come to a campus-wide consensus on the need for the changes being discussed

Lessons learned:

- (1) Identifying a training a change-maker faculty cohort is critical to the success of the program
- (2) Cultivating a critical mass of support at multiple institutional levels is vital to program success
- (3) Faculty need to be encouraged to become more aware and appreciative of their colleagues' scholarly endeavours

4. St Louis University (Heiden-Rootes et al., 2024)

In 2022, Saint Louis University initiated a programme to, '... re-imagine the professoriate and the associated implications for faculty evaluation and advancement (i.e., promotion and tenure; P&T).' The aims of the project included identifying appropriate, evidence-based approaches to evaluating traditionally undervalued faculty activities, specifically, community engaged research and institution building. For the purposes of that effort, community-engagement research was defined as the creation of '... partnerships and coalitions that help mobilise resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programmes, and practices through research and scholarship.' Likewise, institution building was defined as, '... service, leadership, and other activities that sustain and grow the institution, in this case the university.' The task force charged with this activity also defined the elements of academic rigour that would be expected to be present in each of these activities for them to be considered in a promotion or tenure review. As seen from the publication date of this report, this effort has only recently concluded. The university is expecting to be implementing the recommendations of the report in the near future.

Implementation process steps:

- (1) Two faculty "think tanks" were formed on two specific non-traditional faculty scholarship areas
- (2) The think tanks met three times in a single semester
- (3) Think tank recommendations for next steps were prepared and submitted in the following semester

Lessons learned:

- (1) Faculty are yearning for changes in what appears to be an out-dated P&T review process
- (2) Faculty are concerned that the changes that may be made to their P&T review process might not be equitable because of a possible lack of transparency in the process
- (3) Faculty biases against recognizing non-traditional areas of scholarship need to be addressed early in the process
- (4) Non-traditional scholarship areas and how faculty work in those areas is to be recognized and evaluated must be clearly defined

5. University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (Creswell Báez et al., 2023)

A Promotion Think Tank was established in Fall 2022, consisting of faculty from a variety of departments. Its objective was to engage in conversations about faculty promotion processes, and thereby be inspired to transform the process of promotion to full professor at UCCS. At the conclusion of its work, the think tank drafted a roadmap for possible reform strategies in the promotion process which would include, ‘... forms of scholarship that involve a variety of ... institution- and community-building [activities].’ This effort was motivated by the realization that many faculty members are already actively engaged in activities related to sustaining the university, engaging with industry, and being involved in local government, community organizations, etc. There was then the potential to establish criteria that recognised and rewarded faculty for these endeavours as part of the review process for promotion to Full Professor. As the work of this think tank has only recently concluded, the university is expecting to be implementing the recommendations of the report in the near future.

Implementation process steps:

- (1) A faculty “think tank” was formed to discuss the university’s P&T review process, including policies, criteria, and procedures
- (2) The think tank met during the course of one semester, and submitted its report to campus during the following semester
- (3) The committee report consisted of suggestions for possible change efforts and a possible roadmap for future reforms to the current P&T review process

Lessons learned:

- (1) It is important to collect information on what tasks/responsibilities faculty are currently doing that are not easily categorized within current P&T criteria
- (2) Change agents are important to leading conversations forward, including conversations about ways to include recognition of faculty work beyond teaching, research, and service
- (3) It is important for faculty to learn and explore Boyer's multiple and overlapping categories of: Instruction and Mentorship; Scholarly Activity and Professional Development; and University Leadership and Institution-Building

6. University of Maryland (O’Meara et al., 2022a,2022b)

Faculty and administrators took on the task of developing a process through which universities can create, ‘... better, fairer, equity-minded workloads.’ Specific tasks included working with academic units to improve workload transparency (which is especially helpful to faculty from historically minoritised groups), make visible core university-related work that is often invisible, and help departments to identify and remedy workload imbalances by implementing policy and procedure reforms geared towards equalizing faculty workload within departments. Although not explicitly called out via any suggested changes to P&T criteria, policies, or procedures, the processes developed more equitably distribute department and university workload, and then appropriately recognise the faculty for all their work. This should undoubtedly lead to follow-on changes and modifications to P&T policies, criteria, and procedures.

Implementation process steps:

- (1) A group of faculty worked through an NSF-funded project to establish equity-minded workload reform
- (2) This faculty group worked to develop strategies for improving how faculty workload is taken up, assigned, and/or rewarded
- (3) Fifty-one departments at a variety of twenty public universities were recruited for this purpose

Lessons learned:

- (1) The following conditions support equitable workloads: transparency; clarity; credit; norms; context; and, accountability (details and explanations can be found in the referenced reports)
- (2) The more faculty members agreed that these conditions were present in their department, the more likely they were to be satisfied with their teaching and service loads, and the more likely they were to agree that their workload was fair
- (3) Departments should create faculty work activity dashboards, so that faculty members have a sense of the range of effort in teaching, mentoring, and service by relevant appointment or career stage
- (4) Departments must have transparent, published policies for service, advising, and teaching assignments

7. University of Maryland (Baltimore County)

The University of Maryland Baltimore County revised its Faculty Handbook (<https://facultydeia.umbc.edu/revisions-to-umbcs-faculty-handbook/>) to allow recognition of and reward for faculty accomplishments in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. New text in their handbook clearly states that ‘faculty achievements that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, or accessibility should be given due recognition in academic review processes, and should be evaluated and credited in the same way as other faculty achievements.’ However, consistent with the ideals of shared governance, each department was charged with developing its own approach to meeting this requirement. To assist its departments in crafting language that might meet this requirement, the UMBC faculty handbook also provides examples of how the University of Oregon and the University of California at Santa Cruz have implemented similar criteria, policies, and procedures related to recognizing and rewarding faculty activities related to DEIA.

8. Worcester Polytechnic Institute (Demetry et al., 2020)

In 2017, after three years of concerted effort, the WPI faculty approved a new promotion policy for tenured faculty that aimed to achieve better alignment with the mission of that university. This policy stressed valuing a broader range of faculty work, thereby enabling multiple paths to promotion. The biggest change in the WPI promotion policy was to define and recognise multiple forms of scholarship, also adopting many aspects of the model proposed by Boyer (1990). As a result, all WPI faculty now benefit from being able to pursue, and be rewarded for, scholarly contributions in teaching, leadership, and service in addition to traditional disciplinary research.

Implementation process steps:

- (1) An external audit was conducted of the current P&T review criteria, policies, and procedures
- (2) A workshop was run to discuss possible changes to the P&T review processes
- (3) A working group was convened to develop a preliminary implementation plan on a subset of the audit and workshop results
- (4) The working group provided its results and recommendations for next steps to the university’s leadership team

Lessons learned:

- (1) Early wins in the form of relatively simple process revisions are important to build momentum in the overall process
- (2) It is important to connect the products of faculty scholarship with the metrics by which they will be evaluated
- (3) Annual orientation/training sessions for promotion committee members, nominators, etc., are required to reduce bias literacy and to practice evaluating multiple forms of scholarship

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