

Task Force on APT
Recommendations for Consideration
March 18, 2022

Please accept the following recommendations from the Task Force on APT appointed by the Executive Council of the UW Tacoma Faculty Assembly. The members of the Task Force include the following:

- Diana Falco (Assistant Teaching Professor, SSWCJ)
- Jim Gawel (Associate Professor, SIAS), Chair
- Bryan Goda (Professor, SET)
- Stephen Ross (Associate Professor, SIAS)
- Barb Toews (Associate Professor, SSWCJ)

In addressing the questions in our charge, the Task Force considered the UW Faculty Code, met with the UW Secretary of the Faculty and the current members of APT, and met weekly to discuss and draft these recommendations. Where there was not a consensus of opinion on a recommendation, the majority and the minority opinions are discussed.

1. **SCHOOL AUTHORITY TO HAVE OWN APT COMMITTEE (STRUCTURE):** Can a UW Tacoma school establish its own promotion and tenure committee? If it can and does, should a campus-wide APT continue to advise the Chancellor on the cases from that school?

We recommend that UW Tacoma NOT create school-level APT-type committees at this time.

In our conversation with the Secretary of the Faculty (SecFac), he stated that the Provost would not support such a move at this time. He relayed that there was a directive from the Provost for consideration of changes to the Faculty Code to address the “school” issue at the tri-campus level, which has been temporarily sidelined by COVID issues taking precedence. He did suggest that it would be appropriate for Faculty Assembly to request that this issue again be taken up and moved forward by the tri-campus committee.

The task force also recommends that there NOT be two levels of APT-like review at UW Tacoma as this would add an extra level of review for faculty on our campus not required of any other faculty member at UW, and thus is an undue burden on faculty. Moreover, SecFac also commented that such an extra level of review might not be allowed by the Faculty Code.

2. **CLARIFY APT REVIEW PURVIEW (PROCEDURAL/SUBSTANTIVE/BOTH) (PROCESS):**
Should the APT continue to do “procedural and substantive review” as decided by EC in May 2021 for 2021-22 review cycle? If so, what does substantive review entail?

We recommend that APT carry out a review that is both procedural and substantive, but limited in scope. Per our conversation with the Secretary of the Faculty, this is consistent with

the intent of the Faculty Code and the expectations of the Provost, who views consistency as the goal of the substantive review. **The Task Force recommends limiting APT review to addressing these questions:**

- 1. Was due process followed in creation of the review committee, selection of external reviewers, timeline, and candidate responses?**
- 2. Did the review committee, voting faculty, and Dean sufficiently and explicitly justify their decisions based on the published criteria for promotion of the candidate's school, and within the bounds of any campus-wide published criteria and the UW Faculty Code?**
- 3. Were the school's promotion criteria consistently applied by the review committee, voting faculty, and Dean?**

The promotion review committee and School faculty, considering the input of experts in the field as external reviewers, have already sufficiently evaluated the quality of a candidate's scholarship, whether for Teaching or Tenure-Track faculty. Moreover, it is more likely than not that members of APT have no direct familiarity with the nuances of what connotes quality or excellence in scholarship in a particular candidate's academic field. Although APT members may have field-specific expertise to adequately evaluate the quality/excellence in scholarship for some candidates on a case-by-case basis, individual APT members are not likely to have this expertise for all candidates. Therefore, as the level of scrutiny of ALL candidate files should be equal, APT should not take it upon themselves to delve into determining scholarly quality for ANY candidate, regardless of field, rank, or track.

Rather, APT's review should evaluate whether the promotion committee and school faculty have sufficiently established that the candidate meets the broad criteria of excellence in the Faculty Code, any campus-level criteria written in the UW Tacoma handbook, and the specific criteria of the candidate's School. The candidate's School faculty have interpreted the broad mandates of the University and Campus within the context of their collective fields within the School, and APT should not attempt to project their own interpretations. Nor should APT attempt to apply any qualitative or quantitative measure of excellence (e.g., number or type of publications, teaching evaluation scores or other course evaluation metrics, journal impact factors, years in rank) that is not explicitly stated in the candidate's School criteria.

However, this substantive review by APT requires that the Schools have established a robust set of promotion criteria for their faculty within the bounds of University and Campus criteria, that the candidate specifically make their case relative to those criteria, and that the promotion committee and School faculty frame their decisions clearly on those criteria. If the School's review committee, voting faculty, and Dean do not provide adequate justification based on their promotion criteria, then APT will be forced to recommend against promotion, rather than take on this evaluation themselves. A comparative review of the various Schools' promotion criteria by APT and the EVCAA, separate from candidate review, should be carried out regularly

in order to ensure consistency of school criteria with any campus-level published criteria and the UW Faculty Code.

We further recommend that Faculty Assembly consider revisions to the UW Tacoma Handbook to explicitly guide the scope of APT review. We also recommend that APT create (or alter existing) working documents/forms that are in alignment with the scope of APT's review. These documents/forms should be secured for use by successive committees to prevent future misinterpretation of APT's scope of review.

3. **VOTING RESTRICTIONS BY RANK (STRUCTURE):** Should members of the APT be allowed to vote on promotion cases above their rank?
4. **RANK ELIGIBILITY & COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION (STRUCTURE):** What rank of faculty should be eligible to serve on APT? Should Teaching Track faculty serve on APT? Should there be an attempt to establish some kind of balance of ranks and tracks on APT?

As charges (3) and (4) are overlapping and related, our recommendations will address both together. The Task Force members are not of the same opinion on some of these matters, and thus we will summarize consensus recommendations of all 5 members, and any majority or minority opinions if consensus was not reached.

The Secretary of the Faculty clearly stated in our meeting that in the absence of specific requirements for voting hierarchy in the Faculty Code, no voting hierarchy is intended to apply. Therefore, there is nothing in the Faculty Code that limits who can vote on whom in APT deliberations. Section 24-54 of the Faculty Code, Procedures for Promotions, states that "Eligibility to deliberate and vote on a recommendation of promotion is limited to voting members of the faculty who are superior in academic rank and title to the person under consideration, subject to the limitations described in [Section 21-32](#), Subsections C and D." The minority opinion states that this applies to departments, and argues that APT should not be different.

Members of APT are elected by their faculty to represent them on APT, and thus it was the SecFac's view that the voting rights of that faculty member should not be infringed, thus lessening their ability to be an effective representative. It is also true that an abstaining member is counted as a negative vote. **Thus, it is our consensus recommendation that once elected to APT, no faculty member should be asked to recuse themselves from voting.** In a related matter, the Faculty Code does not require that APT members with a more direct conflict of interest (e.g., promotion for a family member) give up their voting rights, but we recommend the continued practice of those with such a direct conflict of interest recusing themselves from conversation of a case.

It is in the makeup of APT members that there are two opinions on the Task Force. SecFac stated that some UW schools restrict who can serve on “APT,” while others do not. It was the SecFac’s opinion that there was good reason to allow all faculty ranks and tracks to serve on APT to provide for multiple viewpoints on the gamut of promotion files submitted and help break down the white male dominated power dynamic in the senior TT ranks at UW.

The Task Force is aware that some UWT faculty members believe that Teaching track faculty should not evaluate TT faculty promotion files due to perceived lack of required scholarship in the Teaching track job description. However, SecFac points out that in the Faculty Code scholarship is required of all faculty types, and rather it is the evidence required for this scholarship that differs. *Section 24-32 Scholarly and Professional Qualifications of Faculty Members*, section A, states:

Scholarship, the essence of effective teaching and research, is the obligation of all members of the faculty. The scholarship of faculty members may be judged by the character of their advanced degrees and by their contribution to knowledge in the form of publication and instruction; it is reflected not only in their reputation among other scholars and professionals but in the performance of their students.

Also, as SecFac pointed out, there is no requirement that the UW President or Provost or the UWT Chancellor be faculty members at all. These administrators rely on adherence to published criteria to make their decisions on promotions. For example, in the School of STEM at UW Bothell, Alaron Lewis, Associate Teaching Professor, serves as Chair of the Division of Biological Sciences, which is equivalent to a departmental Chair in the UW system. Thus, a Teaching track faculty member serves currently in a role with distinctive promotion decision-making responsibilities.

Furthermore, as stated above in (2), it is more likely than not that APT members will not be in the same discipline as a candidate for promotion, and thus APT should refrain from evaluating the scholarly impact of ANY faculty member’s file to be equitable, whether TT or Teaching track or other. Rather, APT’s review should be limited to the following:

1. Was due process followed in creation of the review committee, selection of external reviewers, timeline, and candidate responses?
2. Did the review committee, voting faculty, and Dean sufficiently and explicitly justify their decisions based on the published criteria for promotion of the candidate’s school, and within the bounds of any campus-wide published criteria and the UW Faculty Code?
3. Were the school’s promotion criteria consistently applied by the review committee, voting faculty, and Dean?

Therefore, **within the constraints of our recommendations for the scope of APT review in (2) above, the majority of Task Force members (4/5) recommend that all tracks at rank of Associate or above should be eligible to serve on APT.** The majority believe that all faculty

members, regardless of rank/track, can successfully carry out such a review as that suggested in Point 2 of this report. Moreover, the Task Force majority believes that it is the right of each unit's voting faculty to elect the faculty member that best represents their faculty, without influencing who represents another school.

The minority opinion states that it is necessary, but not ideal, to allow tenure track Associate Professors to serve on APT due to the small numbers of TT Professors in some schools, but that this should not be expanded to Associate Teaching Professors and Teaching Professors. In the minority opinion, teaching professors do not have the experience of going through the tenure process, nor have they been involved in the promotion process at the tenured level. In the minority opinion APT is making career level decisions that could be negatively influenced by an unqualified member of the APT. There are also concerns about whether other schools are allowing lower rank professors to vote on tenure/promotion of those in upper ranks, or across tracks, and the discrepancy between voting hierarchies in how merit is occurring at the school level with no such hierarchy at the APT level.

Members of the task force engaged in cursory research about the makeup of APT committees at other universities. This research shows that there is not a universal convention or consensus on who, based on rank and track, should or should not serve on APT committees. The findings reveal that there is support for both the majority and minority opinions.

While all Task Force members believe that Assistant Professors and Assistant Teaching Professors should be protected from excessive committee workload, a 3/5 majority believes it is the school's right to choose their APT representative and thus believe that APT eligibility should include all ranks. The minority opinion (2/5) rejected allowing the Assistant Professor rank to serve on APT. The majority foresee that a new school with primarily junior faculty members could be created (this has happened elsewhere at UW), and thus believe that the option to call on junior faculty to serve on APT may be required in some cases. It was noted in discussion that units may want to consider the amount of experience at UWT and experience with the promotion criteria and process within a school in considering their APT representation, arguing against APT eligibility for junior faculty.

Those holding the minority opinion believe that Assistant-rank faculty lack experience in reviewing colleagues' records in relation to school-level promotion criteria, the UWT Handbook, and the Faculty Code that comes with serving on School-level promotion review committees and/or faculty discussions and voting on junior-faculty promotion cases. Given this lack of experience, the minority opinion believes that this creates significant challenges for these colleagues to adequately complete the type of review recommended in Point 2 of this report. It was suggested that if Assistant-rank faculty are made eligible to serve on APT, then we should limit the number of Assistant-rank faculty that can serve on the committee to ensure that we have this experience represented. This would require coordination across UW Tacoma units in

selecting representatives, but without this coordination it's feasible that APT could have a majority of Assistant-rank faculty. However, it was also noted in discussion that new "senior" faculty are often hired with no more experience at UWT than some junior faculty who may have been here for 4-5 years, although they likely come with promotion experience at their previous institutions. For comparison, Table 1 shows the current eligibility requirements for the various "Schools/Colleges" of the University of Washington. In the minority opinion the UW organization most like the UW Tacoma APT Committee is UW Bothell, whose membership is limited to tenured faculty.

Full Professor only	Associate/Full or tenured	Assistant or higher/voting faculty
College of Arts & Sciences Foster School of Business College of Education College of Engineering School of Medicine School of Pharmacy	College of Built Environments College of Environment School of Law* School of Nursing* UW Bothell	School of Dentistry* Information School* Evans School of Public Policy & Governance* School of Public Health School of Social Work*

TABLE 1: Restrictions on eligibility for membership on "APT Committee" in the Schools/Colleges at University of Washington. *denotes that the school has "balance" requirements stipulating the number of TT Professors that must be on the committee or that those of lower rank must recuse themselves from voting on cases of those higher in rank. [See Appendix A for additional information on this table.]

As to whether there should be "some kind of balance of ranks and tracks on APT," the consensus opinion (within the bounds of disagreement over APT eligibility described above) was that this is not practical nor recommended for the APT committee as currently structured. It is the school's right to elect their representative, and striking some balance on APT as currently structured would require dictating what rank/track would be supplied by a particular school, thus infringing on that right.

If eligibility to serve on APT is opened to Assistant Professors (TT and/or Teaching) and/or teaching faculty without legislating a "balance" in membership, it is conceivable that APT could consist solely of junior faculty or teaching faculty. While maybe not likely it is still possible, and the task force does not think this would provide the multiple perspectives desired on APT, just as all TT senior faculty currently limits those perspectives. However, with the existing design for choosing one representative from each school without consideration of the overall mix from all schools, the task force does not see a way to remedy this. We suggest that Executive Council consider other options for APT representation that allows for a guaranteed "balance" of perspectives.

The Task Force did consider whether two separate APT committees were warranted to better serve the needs of tenure track and teaching track faculty. The minority opinion (1/5) supported this idea, stating that this would give the teaching faculty a voice and representation. In the majority opinion (4/5) this idea was rejected for several reasons: it would add unnecessarily to workload, it would create further schism between appointment types rather than working toward creating unity in our faculty, and it would seem to justify a separate APT for every appointment type (i.e., research faculty, clinical faculty). It should be noted that the Task Force did find multiple examples of institutions where separate APT-like committees exist for tenure-track vs. teaching faculty (e.g., University of Denver, Georgia Tech University, Colorado School of Mines), or where Teaching faculty serve on APT but only vote on Teaching Faculty cases (e.g., IUPUI).

5. **PROVIDE CANDIDATE OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND TO APT REVIEW (PROCESS):** When the APT recommendation is negative or it conflicts with the faculty vote, “APT Committee submits recommendation with reasons to candidate.” In these cases, should the faculty member be allowed to respond?

We recommend that the promotion process be altered on the UW Tacoma campus to allow 1 week for candidate review of and response to APT’s letter to the candidate in the event that a letter is warranted by the Faculty Code requirements. We also recommend that a copy of the candidate letter be provided to the candidate’s Dean. However, as recommended by SecFac, this should be preceded by a request for consideration of this change by the UW Advisory Committee on Faculty Code and Regulations. SecFac believes that this change is not prohibited by the Faculty Code and is consistent with supporting an open and fair promotion process, and the Task Force concurs. We noted that although it is possible that the candidate could respond to the APT letter in a subsequent promotion-related meeting with the EVCAA allowed in the Faculty Code, that meeting is not guaranteed, nor is the scope of that meeting, and allowance for response to the letter should be made before the EVCAA considers all materials, not afterward, to minimize decision-making bias. We do recognize potential time constraints involved in implementing this step in the promotion process, but we feel it is warranted and thus recommend that the EVCAA should allow time for this step within the time allotted for their review of candidate files.

APPENDIX A

UW College of Arts & Sciences College Council - Only **full Professors** are eligible to serve on the Council.

- [College Council | College of Arts and Sciences - Administrative Gateway \(u.washington.edu\)](#)

UW College of Built Environments College Council - Only voting members of the faculty who hold the rank of **Associate Professor or Professor** shall be eligible for election to the College Council.

- [CODE OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE \(u.washington.edu\)](#)

UW Foster School of Business - The faculty representatives will be **full professors**

- [WORKSHEET FOR BYLAWS \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

UW Allen School of Computer Science & Engineering - ???

UW School of Dentistry - Committee members must be **assistant professor or above, and there shall be no more than one assistant professor and not more than two associate professors on the committee.** Any member below the rank of full professor shall not participate in the annual promotion session if s/he is being considered for promotion at that time.

- [Bylaws-SOD-Final.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

UW College of Education College Advisory Council - The CAC shall be composed of 5 faculty members who are **Full Professors** in the College of Education and may include faculty in research positions.

- [Procedures for Promotion and-or Tenure Updated January 2021.docx \(live.com\)](#)

UW College of Engineering Council on Promotion & Tenure - Membership: Each departmental representative shall hold the rank of **full professor**.

- [Faculty Bylaws | UW College of Engineering \(u.washington.edu\)](#)

UW College of Environment College Council - Members of the College Council shall have attained the **rank of Associate or Full Professor (including WOT Associate and Full Professors)** who do not hold the following administrative positions within their Departments or Schools: Associate/Assistant Deans, School Directors, Department Chairs, Associate/Assistant School Directors, and Associate/Assistant Department Chairs. **Research faculty may sit on the College Council but because these faculty are not eligible to vote on Promotion/Tenue (PT) matters,** their represented faculty groups shall elect an alternate member that is able to vote on PT matters.

- [College By-Laws | College of the Environment \(u.washington.edu\)](#)

UW Jackson School of International Studies - ???

UW School of Law Promotion & Tenure Council - Each year, the Faculty shall elect a Council of at least five tenured Faculty members, at least three of whom are full Professors.

- [bylaws_sol.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

UW The Information School - The chair and members of the Personnel Committee shall be elected by the faculty for a term not to exceed three years. The **chair should be a full professor**, and cannot be the Dean or an Associate Dean. The Chair of the Personnel Committee chairs the Extended Personnel Committee meeting.

- [iSchool Bylaws \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

UW School of Medicine - The voting members of the Council on Appointments and Promotions shall consist of sixteen elected members of the faculty, including **fifteen full regular professors, and one research professor**.

- [CODE OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURES \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

UW School of Nursing - The chair of the School of Nursing APT Committee shall be elected from among the full professors. The School of Nursing APT Committee shall be composed of one (1) chair, six (6) regular members, and three (3) alternate members with two regular members and one alternate elected from each department. A **minimum of one associate professor and one full professor shall be elected from each department**

- [Microsoft Word - SoN Bylaws 05-20-13.doc \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

UW School of Pharmacy - All members shall be at the **rank of Professor**

- [Microsoft Word - SOP Bylaws 10-13-2009 Final.doc \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

UW Evans School of Public Policy & Governance - The Faculty Council shall appoint at least 4 Evans School voting members of the Faculty to serve on the Faculty Affairs Committee, **including two Professors, one Associate Professor, and one Assistant Professor**. From one of the members with the rank of Professor the Council shall appoint the Chair of the committee. Additional members may be appointed by the Faculty Council as it deems appropriate. Members **must recuse themselves** in matters that relate specifically to their own case (or where a conflict of interest is present) for reappointment, promotion or tenure, and from matters relating to specific **cases of faculty superior in rank** to them including cases of promotion to superior rank

- [A9b By-laws Final 5-9-07 FM amend-proposal 03_15_08 \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

UW School of Public Health Faculty Council - **Professors of a department with voting privileges**, excluding professors in the research track.

- [bylaws_sph.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

UW School of Social Work Retention, Promotion & Tenure Subcommittee - composed of **three (3) full professors and two (2) others from any other faculty rank and category eligible to vote** according to the UW Faculty Code.

- [Social-Work_ByLaws_10.15.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

UW Bothell Campus Council on Promotion & Tenure - The membership of the CCPT shall consist of seven **tenured voting faculty members**.

- [CCPT-Reference-Manual-2019-\(003\).pdf \(uwb.edu\)](#)