

To:	Steven Filling, Speaker of the Faculty, 2019-2020
From:	Heather Coughlin, Chair, University Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee (URPTC), 2019-2020
Date:	May 2, 2020
RE:	Annual Report of the URPTC, 2019-2020

Members of the 2019-2020 URPTC are Heather Coughlin (Mathematics) [Chair], Marina Gerson (Biology), Steven Filling (Accounting), Scott Davis (English) and Shradha Tibrewal (Social Work).

URPTC requests:

- all members of the University reflect upon how the physical distancing orders, including campus and other closures, have impacted their professional activities. This is crucial for the coming discussions of understanding RPT reviews for future evaluators and candidates.

URPTC requests:

- departments plan for the handling of hard-copy WPAFs should a candidate choose a hard copy binder and the campus closes. WPAFs will have to be scanned in their entirety. Such plans should include input and approval from their Dean.
 - candidates who had their binders scanned this year will have those pdf files emailed/shared with them. We recommend keeping these files as they could be used in future reviews, if appropriate.
- departments follow the proposed RPT Procedures section II, at the writing of this report under consideration in the Academic Senate, and include language in their departmental elaborations concerning earning tenure, promotion to Associate, and promotion to Professor; and language concerning early consideration for each of the three.
 - Due to the large number of expected elaborations to be submitted for evaluation next academic year, the Committee requests departments submit new elaborations by end of October 2020 for approval for 2021-22.

URPTC requests:

- all faculty note AY 2020-2021 will be the last year with a Spring review cycle.
- all faculty note starting AY 2021-2020, all RPT candidates will begin their review cycles at the same time in the Fall semester - both 2-year candidates and 3+ year candidates.

Review of AY2019-2020:

The committee worked very hard, under extraordinary circumstances, to ensure that the RPT process proceeded as specified in policy and procedures. In pursuit of that goal, the committee held multiple workshops for DRPTC members and for candidates to review campus policy and process.

During the URPTC/Provost level of review (late March/early April), the novel Covid19 pandemic forced the campus closure to non-essential personnel. The Committee, Dr. Jake Myers, Associate Vice President, Office of Faculty Affairs, Provost Greer, and CFA representative Dr. Dave Colnic explored a number of options for continuing the review. We concluded the only option was scanning all hard-copy WPAF binders in their entirety. No considerations were required for



WPAFs submitted through Interfolio. The scanning process took the equivalent of a full week's work. The Committee offers our sincerest gratitude to those in the Office of Faculty Affairs and Office of the Provost that came into the otherwise closed campus to complete the scanning. To compensate for the delay in sorting and implementing options, the Committee shifted the calendar for the remaining levels of review (URPTC/Provost and President) by one week.

As noted, this year the FAC Ad-Hoc Committee on RPT convened, charged with evaluating our campus RPT policies and procedures. They examined necessary components of departmental elaborations, the time line, and the role of the president in our process. Changes to our present policy and procedures have been approved by the Senate and are in the next step towards approval. Creation of the AY 2020-2021 calendar will occur after the Senate decision.

Beyond the recommendations of the FAC Ad Hoc Committee, experience from this year is consonant with the last several years – our campus conversation about departmental elaborations continues, and it continues to be the case that while some parties to the conversation feel that some departmental elaborations are too prescriptive, other parties argue that some departmental elaborations do not provide enough guidance for candidates and the various levels of review. URPTC hopes that those conversations will continue and that faculty will continue to assert their primacy over matters of curriculum, research, and faculty status. At the writing of this report, the URPTC is reviewing revised elaborations from two departments, and we are working through the process towards acceptance of those revised elaborations.

Reading the 2019-2020 RPT files was an amazing and inspiring experience. Our colleagues accomplish excellence in the classroom and in their scholarly endeavors with very limited resources. We were impressed with how much the candidates have accomplished and how much they care about our students and our community.

The 2019-2020 cycle consisted of 74 reviews: 20 under Fall review and 54 (35 full and 19 partial) under Spring review. We reached agreement with Provost Greer on recommendations for all candidates. We are optimistic that our agreed recommendations will be supported by the president. This is truly a testament to the strength of our campus RPT policy and process.

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the continued support of Dr. Jake Myers, Associate Vice President, Office of Faculty Affairs and CFA representative Dr. Dave Colnic. We could not have done this job without Ms. Wendy Miller (Office of Faculty Affairs). Ms. Miller has a vast knowledge of the RPT process and procedures and thus provides valuable “institutional memory” to a committee that rotates staggered membership every year. Ms. Miller's patience, advice, commitment to excellence, organization across distance communications, and attention to detail, were very much appreciated.

As Chair of the Committee, I wish to express my gratitude for the support and fortitude of this year's committee. Beyond the normal workload: they were forced to take significant time during their review cycle to create and review options necessitated by the campus closure, they completed 35 reviews while making the switch to distance learning, they reviewed and resolved conflicts in proposed changes to RPT policy with extremely short notice. They are to be commended for the seriousness and commitment with which they served.

Heather Coughlin, PhD
URPTC Chair, 2019-2020