Steps For Minimizing Bias in the RPT Process

Key Suggestions

- Realize that unintentional bias is just like a habit: Difficult but not impossible to break
- Ask yourself "how has this person been successful?" instead of "how successful is this person?"
- GO SLOW—People who are rushed, stressed, distracted, or pressured are more likely to apply stereotypes Reflect at
- each stage of your review
- Document your reasoning behind every decision with evidence
- Awards, fellows, and other prestigious accolades might reflect biases
- Recognize RPT standards are vague, and when ambiguity exists, is when we rely on stereotypes the most

A Model for Personnel Protocols: Increasing Decision-Making Transparency to Promote Equity in Promotion*

Before the Meeting—Preparation

Step 1: Review

- Carefully review dossier materials
- Take notes; don't rely on memory alone.
- Be sure to review and cite the unit criteria as evidence.

Step 2: Initial assessment

- Determine initial rating (without others' influence) in each category: Research, Teaching, Service/Leadership
    - Excellent, Meritorious, Not Meritorious
- Have specific evidence to support your rating

During the Meeting—Decision-Making Steps

Step 1: Start with one category and share initial assessment

- May want to sign a confidentiality agreement
- No one is bound by their initial rating nor are they recorded
- Helps to gauge the temperature of the room, provides guidance on the nature of the conversation, and prevents people from hiding in anonymity

Step 2: Group Discussion

- Share evidence for initial rating
- Ask clarifying questions
- Goal is not consensus, but rather to consider all evidence and make an informed judgement based on the evidence

Step 3: Vote

- Confidential vote ensues
- Recommendation for the review stage
- Again, cite the unit criteria as evidence.

Step 4: Repeat the process for the other categories

After the Meeting—Elaborated Letter with Input From the Committee

- Outlines the discussion and specific evidence that supports the vote and cites the unit criteria
- If support is not unanimous/overwhelmingly in agreement:
    - Should include both majority and minority votes
    - Should include evidence from both sides
- All committee members review and sign the letter

*Haynes-Baratz & Bond (2022)

Impact of COVID on Faculty Workload

Please consider the short and long-term impacts of COVID-19 on the candidate's teaching, research, and service. The following questions are meant to be a starting point for considering the pandemic across a faculty candidate's workload.

Teaching

Did the Candidate:

- Have to move courses online and adopt new technologies?
  - What did the workload entail? How many courses experienced a shift in delivery format?
  - If the course involved lab or studio components, how did the candidate adapt content and pedagogy to accommodate remote learning for non-remote-friendly courses?
- Note their course evaluations were affected by delivery mode and/or the pandemic?
  - Here are known biases with regard to faculty evaluations.
- Experience technical challenges or a lack of technology resources?
- Take on additional teaching responsibilities?
- Assist others with technology?
- Mentor students for independent study or independent research?
- Take on additional advisees?

How is the Candidate:

- Using this experience to inform continued growth in teaching, course delivery, or pedagogy?

Research

Did the Candidate:

- Lose research time due to health issues or caregiving responsibilities?
- Lose access to their research lab, office, computing, studio, or performance space?
- Have no or limited access to equipment, specimens, or in-person research?
- Lose access to start up funds?
- Receive no cost extensions on grants?
- Lose internal or external funding?
- Have grant solicitations cancelled?
- Miss opportunities for field research?
- Have travel cancelled?
- Have cancelled conferences, speaking engagements, performances, or time with collaborators?
- Experience slow review times for journals, manuscripts, or grants?
- Lose sabbatical or leave opportunities (Fulbright, Guggenheim, etc.)?
- Face challenges due to library closures?
- Experience changes with mentoring/supervising student researchers?

How is the Candidate:

- Redirecting research or scholarly priorities and/or productivity?

Service

Did the Candidate:

- Serve on a disproportionate number of departmental and/or university committees compared to other faculty?
- Increase or shift their service/leadership/outreach duties at UCCS, CU System, community, or in the profession?
- Informally or formally mentor and support students from marginalized or minoritized backgrounds during the pandemic?
- Increase their service/leadership/outreach commitment in an effort to increase the diversity of committees?
- Participate in any department or university initiatives related to the pandemic?
- Aid students with coordination of changing requirements for degree completion, or assist students in other ways with their career plans?
- Contribute to public discussions or community engagement during the pandemic? Were these related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)?

How is the Candidate:

- Using this experience to inform continued growth?