

Committee on Teaching and Research Faculty (CTRF) Annual Report for the 2022-2023 Academic Year

Membership

Committee members included Professors Joseph Aguilar (HUA), Drew Brodeur (CBC), Althea Danielski (COG appointee, HUA), Suzanne LePage (COG appointee, CEAE), and Izabela Stroe (PH).

Officers

Drew Brodeur served as chair; Joseph Aguilar served as secretary.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

CTRF was created as an *ad hoc* subcommittee of COG with three elected and two appointed members; the committee received its charge and elected officers during the summer of 2022, and the 2022-2023 academic year was the inaugural year for CTRF.

Committee members established an initial weekly meeting frequency and this was continued throughout the academic year as time and personal circumstances permitted.

1. The committee began by addressing several items that were particularly salient or time-sensitive, informed by the committee's charge, communication with current and former members of the TRT Council, and personal experience by committee members. Notably, the committee "inherited" the FAQ page that had been prepared and maintained by the TRT Council with Kimberly LeChasseur's assistance, and Secretary Aguilar became the admin of the TRT mailing list used for direct electronic communication with that subset of Faculty relevant to the committee's work. The list will be maintained by CTRF and updated annually.
2. The committee worked with Kimberly LeChasseur to create a survey used to solicit community input for agenda items for CTRF, as well as to allow colleagues the opportunity to meet with the committee to discuss a broad variety of topics within our purview. These results helped shape our agenda for months, including several meetings with invited guests.
3. The committee identified several high priority items from the survey results and other events occurring within Faculty Governance and the broader landscape of WPI:
 - a. A smooth transition of responsibility from the TRT Council and the TRT representative(s) on the JCC, maintaining lines of communication among all.
 - b. Continued support and advocacy for our colleagues selected for the first and second cohorts on the Teaching Path to Tenure (TPT)
 - c. Support and direct assistance for any colleagues intending to apply for selection to the third cohort of TPT faculty
 - d. Continued support and advocacy for colleagues in other positions – including Instructors – to ensure equity, adequate resources, uniformly applied requirements, etc.
4. The committee met with Provost Heinricher to discuss several aspects of the selection process for the previous TPT cohorts in an effort to provide the best support to prospective applicants

for cohort #3, as well as to obtain confirmation that TRT faculty are allowed and expected to participate in administrator reviews and provide input as appropriate for colleagues' tenure cases (i.e. meet with members of the DTC to give peer evaluations).

5. The committee invited several colleagues to join in weekly meetings to discuss matters of personal or collective interest. These matters were addressed in the moment and/or CTRF followed up in the months to come, and mostly related to navigating the current landscape of roles, titles, promotions, and expectations for faculty members not on the traditional/dual-mission tenure track.
6. A Canvas site (TRT-TENURE) was created as a repository of helpful information for anyone applying to the TPT cohorts 1 and 2; this has essentially replaced the FAQ referenced in item #1 above and was made available for anyone intending to apply for cohort 3. Committee members reached out to colleagues and identified several volunteers from cohorts 1 and 2 who were willing to be personally contacted by those applying to cohort 3 to obtain targeted support.
7. Kimberly LeChasseur attended multiple CTRF meetings to share a comprehensive slideshow with the results of her TPT Process Evaluation. The content was organized into the various categories of findings, such as: where progress was minimal or inconsistent between the selection process for the first cohort in comparison to the second; the manner in which decisions are communicated; preparing for the initial wave of tenure review for TPT Faculty; applying TPT lessons to dual-mission faculty; and equity. The committee discussed how Kimberly could present her findings and recommendations at a regularly-scheduled meeting of Department Heads, and what the key takeaways should be for their reference as they prepared to evaluate and rank candidates for the next cohort of TPT applicants. This occurred on January 25th – in advance of the application and selection period for cohort 3 – and Chair Brodeur reminded attendees that CTRF remains available as a resource for consultation on matters related to Teaching and Research Faculty.
8. The committee met with Secretary of the Faculty Mark Richman to discuss rationale behind certain processes in the Faculty Handbook related to promotion and tenure of Teaching and Research Faculty, and noted that CTRF can add agenda items to COG for further discussion and broader action. A weekly update from Profs. Danielski and LePage was added as a standing agenda item in order to inform the entire committee of relevant items being discussed by COG.
9. Provost Art Heinricher and Kimberly LeChasseur met with CTRF to distribute copies of the projected timeline for selection of the third cohort for the Teaching Path to Tenure and to discuss aspects of Kimberly's process evaluation and suggested improvements. The Provost talked through the timeline step by step while CTRF asked for points of clarification, raised questions, and offered minor language-level recommendations. As a follow-up to the committee's earlier discussion about hosting a town-hall style meeting for interested applicants in January, CTRF planned to host an informational session to any colleagues interested in applying to the third cohort. The meeting took place on Wednesday 1/18 from 12-1pm in OH107 and a recording of the session was made available on the TRT-TENURE Canvas site. When discussing selection of the third TPT cohort, the committee agreed that a robust pool of applicants would be desirable, so all members planned to give encouragement to any colleagues considering applying. Notably, the Provost was willing to consider candidates who were still in

their probationary period but who showed great promise, and CTRF strongly encouraged women and faculty of color to apply.

COAP forwarded CTRF some questions about the format requested for candidates applying for promotion. After some discussion, both committees agreed that keeping the section on Teaching first in the portfolio is fair.

10. The committee was asked to provide input on Secretary Richman's proposed changes to the faculty handbook, with a special focus on appointments and promotions as these two chapters were most relevant to our charge. Over the following weeks, we discussed the proposed updates and reorganization and offered suggestions for clarification or correction as needed. Particularly, we noted the inclusion of a universal definition of scholarship as it pertains (or does not) to promotions or tenure review.
11. During review of the Faculty Handbook reorganization, the committee discussed a future goal of expanding sabbatical eligibility to all full time secured faculty. Logistical aspects of this are still under discussion and will be a focal point of the 2023 - 2024 academic year.
12. Elections were held for open seats within Faculty Governance; a note was sent by CTRF to the TRT mailing list with encouragement to consider volunteering to serve on committees, reminding everyone that all full time secured faculty are eligible to participate. An invited guest at an earlier weekly CTRF meeting (see note #5 above) had raised questions about the process by which people are nominated and put on ballots for committee membership, specifically the desire to learn more about how this is accomplished. Profs. Danielski and LePage provided eyewitness reports about the robust process, wherein COG considers the list of volunteers and their preferences for committee participation, which must be balanced with Committee membership requirements and a desire for diversity across Department and faculty track representation for each committee. Colleagues who were not placed on their preferred ballots were contacted by COG to determine willingness to participate in other committees with open seats.

Academic Year 2023-2024 Membership transition

Prof. Suzanne LePage completed her 1-year COG term (2022-2023). Prof. Stephen Kmiotek was elected to a 3-year term on COG and was appointed to serve on CTRF.

Academic Year 2023-2024 Officers

Drew Brodeur will continue as chair; Joe Aguilar will continue as secretary.

-Drew R. Brodeur, Chair of CTRF 2022-2023