Committee on Appointments and Promotions (COAP)

Informational Community Meeting

John Sullivan, Chair  April 22, 2019
Adapted From Prior Annual COAP Informational Meetings.
# Current & New COAP Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Sullivan (Chair)</td>
<td>ME</td>
<td>2019</td>
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<td>LRam Ram-Mohan</td>
<td>PH</td>
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<td>Bill Martin</td>
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<td>Eleanor Loiacono</td>
<td>FBS</td>
<td>2020</td>
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<td>Pam Weathers (Sec.)</td>
<td>BBT</td>
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<td>Mike Gennert</td>
<td>CS</td>
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<td>Brenton Faber</td>
<td>HU</td>
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<td>Suzanne Scarlata</td>
<td>CBC</td>
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<td>Jennifer Wilcox</td>
<td>ChE</td>
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<td>Germano Ianacchione</td>
<td>PH</td>
<td>2022</td>
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Penny Rock, Faculty Governance  Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Overview of Promotion Process at WPI

Nominator (usually the Dept Head) proposes candidate via letter to COAP. Peer reviewers are selected by the candidate and the Joint Promotion Committee.

Faculty develop their promotion dossier over summer: time-frame varies with nature of the appointment.

Faculty are reviewed regularly and advised by Department Promotion Committee and the Department Head.

Candidate prepares dossier containing evidence of excellence in areas appropriate to their appointment. The dossier is sent to peer reviewers.

In A Term, the Joint Promotion Committee (JPC) evaluates complete promotion dossier including peer review letters and student evaluations.

Candidate is notified officially by the Provost following the Board meeting.

Provost sends promotion recommendations to the Board of Trustees (APC) for approval at the February meeting.

Provost reviews dossier and JPC analysis in consultation with relevant Dean and President (January).

A unitary recommendation for/against promotion is determined by COAP vote and sent to the Provost by the end of B term.

Overview of Promotion Process at WPI adapted from: Eric Overstrom, presentation to WPI Trustees, February 2015
Outline

1. COAP Overview
2. WPI Promotion Criteria
3. Candidate Dossier
4. Promotion Procedures
5. Promotion Schedules
6. FAQs
1. COAP Overview: Membership and Activities

Faculty Handbook: Part One: Constitution/Bylaws:
- Bylaw 1.VI
COAP Membership

- COAP consists of seven elected faculty members, each holding the rank of Professor.
- Term: 3-years, unless a replacement. No successive elected terms
- No department or program is represented twice
- COAP members are recused from cases regarding candidates in their department
- Not Eligible: Department Heads, Deans and the Provost
Joint Promotion Committee (JPC): reviews all cases

- 6 Elected COAP Members, Voting
- Nominator (Often DH) & Advocate (Often Faculty Member), Nonvoting

Nominator (TTT and NTT):

- Usually Department Head or a Full Professor
- Provides advice and mentoring so the candidate can prepare a strong promotion dossier and select an Advocate and appropriate Professional Associates
COAP Recusal Policy

- Automatic if candidate and COAP member are from the same department
- For direct conflict of interest
- If no overlap or conflict of interest: selection of six COAP members to ensure appropriate participation across COAP
- If two COAP members recused, the most recent qualified past Chair of COAP will serve
Summary of COAP Activities

Reviews **Dossiers** vis-à-vis Faculty Handbook **WPI Criteria** and makes **Recommendations** to Provost on:

- **Promotion** of:
  - **TTT**: Associate to Full Professor
  - **NTT**: Assistant to Associate; Associate to Full Professor

- **Reappointment Reviews**: PoP

- **Initial Appointments** above Assistant Professor

- **Sabbatical** Leave applications

- **Department Heads**:
  - COAP member on **DH Search Committees**
  - COAP surveys department faculty during **DH Reviews** in 2nd and 4th year of first DH appointment, and during 2nd year of reappointment.
2. WPI Promotion Criteria

Faculty Handbook
Part Two: Policies & Procedures:
- Section 1.D. - TTT
- Section 7.F. - NTT
- Section 7.G. - PoP
TTT Criteria for Promotion to Full Professor

1. Continuing high quality teaching and
2. Continuing high quality scholarship / creativity
3. Record of scholarly contributions across the years that demonstrates external impact beyond WPI *
4. Service at a level appropriate to the rank

* High quality and external impact of scholarly contributions must be recognized by peers within WPI and by knowledgeable people external to WPI

- Contributions to WPI may demonstrate an external impact if they are disseminated and recognized externally

Promotion criteria approved Apr 13, 2017
Scholarly contributions across scholarship, teaching, and service

• **Record** (cumulative) of **scholarship** along a **continuum** (valued equally by WPI):
  — *Scholarship of Discovery*
  — *Scholarship of Integration*
  — *Scholarship of Application and Practice*
  — *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*
  — *Scholarship of Engagement*

• Scholarship is *public, available* to members of the scholarly community, and amenable to *review and critique* by peers
Criteria for NTT Teaching Ranks

Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor

• The candidate must have exhibited **high quality teaching** (UG and/or graduate)
• **Service** is valued and considered in the review

Promotion to Full Teaching Professor:

• **Recent** accomplishments of **high quality** in teaching as well as
• Demonstrated **leadership** in some aspect of teaching
• **Leadership** must be **recognized by peers within WPI**; acknowledgement by **external peers** is viewed favorably
• **Service** is valued and considered in the review

Promotion criteria approved **April 2014**
Criteria for NTT Research Ranks

Promotion to **Associate Research Professor:**

- The candidate must have exhibited **high quality scholarship**
- **Service** is valued and considered in the review

Promotion to **Full Research Professor:**

- **Recent** accomplishments of **high quality** in scholarship/creativity and
- Demonstrated **leadership** in scholarship / creativity.
- **Leadership** must be recognized by **peers within WPI**, and by knowledgeable people **outside WPI**
- **Service** is valued and considered in the review.

Promotion criteria approved April 2014
Criteria for POP Reappointments

Professor of Practice Reappointment:

• High quality teaching

• Continues to bring a unique, current area of expertise, by virtue of non-academic industry-related experiences

Re-appointment criteria approved April 2014
Eligibility

Typically **complete 5 years in rank** before review:

- A candidate for promotion to **Professor** normally will have completed **at least five years as Associate Professor** (and at least three years as an Associate Professor at WPI) before the year of the promotion review.

- The candidate for promotion to **associate teaching professor** must have completed at least three years as an assistant teaching professor, and will normally have completed **at least five years**.

- For promotion to **teaching professor**, an associate teaching professor must have demonstrated considerable professional growth and development of qualities of leadership. This usually requires **at least five years** as an associate teaching professor.
3. Candidate Dossier (TTT):

Should provide clear evidence of:

1. High Quality Teaching
2. High Quality Research
3. External Impact/Leadership
4. Service

Faculty Handbook
Part Two: Policies & Procedures:
- Section 1.D.1.3 - TTT
Materials Provided by Candidate

• Names of **Nominator** and **Advocate**
  – Advocate serves with Nominator and six COAP members on Joint Promotion Committee (JPC)

• List of **Professional Associates**
  – ≥6 Six peers **at WPI and outside** who have **agreed** to write a letter of appraisal
  – Should be in **candidate’s area of expertise** and **qualified** to evaluate promotion dossier

• **Promotion Dossier**
  – **CV** (see suggested format)
  – **Personal Statement**
    ▪ Reflections on Teaching, Scholarship, Service, Future Plans
  – **Teaching Portfolio**
  – **Sample Scholarly Artifacts**
  – **Citation Index/Indicators of Ext. Impact** or Leadership
In addition to the candidate’s material, the Promotion Committee also collects:

1. Summary student ratings for courses and projects
2. Teaching evaluations from former students and alumni
3. Instructional and Sponsored Activity Reports
4. Letters of appraisal from peers: Professional Associates and External Reviewers
Evidence of High Quality Teaching

- Number and Diversity of Courses/Projects (**Quantity**)
- Course Evaluation Forms (**Quality**)
- Faculty Peer Evaluations
- Alumni Surveys of Teaching
- Quality of MQP, IQP, Inquiry Seminar, Practicum, Theses
  - Student Evaluations
- Academic Advising
  - Freshman, UG, and Graduate
- Teaching Innovations
  - New Courses
  - Course Redesign, etc.
- Curriculum Development
- Teaching Related Awards
Evidence of High Quality Scholarship

- Sample Scholarly Artifacts
- Peer-reviewed Publications
  - Journal Articles
  - Quality of Journals
  - Number of Publications
- Conference Papers
- Books, Book Chapters
- Patents
- Exhibitions and Performances
- Grant Proposals and Funded Projects
- Journal Editorships, Offices held in Professional Societies
Evidence of External Impact
Beyond WPI

• External Reviewer Comments on Sample Scholarly Artifacts
• Peer-reviewed Publications
  – Journal Articles
  – Quality of Journals
  – Number of Publications
• Number of Citations
• $h$-index, $i_{10}$-index
• Press and Media Coverage
• Invited Talks at Professional Meetings
• Research Related Awards
• Associate and External Reviewer letters
Evidence of Leadership in Some Aspect of Teaching (Teaching Prof.)

- Exceptionally high quality teaching that serves as a model for others
- Development of new courses/project experiences
- Curricular revisions and other academic initiatives
- Teaching & learning related grant proposals and funded projects
- Publications and presentations related to teaching
- Leadership roles in teaching related organizations
Evidence of Service Contributions

• Service to **Department**
  – Curriculum committees
  – MQP area coordinators
  – Faculty recruitment
  – Seminar series participation and coordination

• Service to **WPI**
  – Faculty governance
  – Ad hoc committees
  – Student welfare
  – Insight Advisor

• Local **Civic Engagement**

• **Professional Societies**
  – Membership/Committees/Panels
  – Local/National

• **Editor, Referee**
4. Promotion Procedures

Faculty Handbook
Part Two: Policies & Procedures:
- Section 1.D. - TTT
- Section 7.F. - NTT
- Section 7.G. - Pop
Nominator Provides

- Initial statement of nomination that leads to the formation of a Joint Promotion Committee
- List of potential External Reviewers for certain promotion cases (for TTT and the NTT Research ranks)
- Detailed letter of nomination
Professional Associates

- **Professional Associates** are contacted by the candidate and must agree at that time to supply a letter of appraisal when asked by the JPC.

- Six professional associates should include a *mixture of internal peers at WPI and external peers* in the candidate’s areas of expertise.

- Professional Associates must be qualified to evaluate the candidate’s promotion dossier (Typically of Full Professor rank).
External Reviewers

External Reviewers are:

• Selected by the JPC after the candidate identifies six Professional Associates
• Competent to judge the candidate’s dossier
• “Arms-length” reviewers: without conflicts of interests or close personal ties to the candidate (such as co-author, co-PI, co-advisor, etc.)

The JPC must receive 5-6 External Reviewers letters
Joint Promotion Committee Activities

• **April/May:** Initial nomination leads to the formation of a Joint Promotion Committee (JPC): six COAP members plus the Nominator and Advocate

• **May before the year of review:** JPC identifies External Reviewers. Invited by Nominator

• **A-Term JPC Deliberative Phase:**
  — Committee reviews the promotion dossier, all letters of appraisal, student evaluations; extensive discussion; identify “homework” (areas that need more information)

• **B-Term JPC Decision-making Phase:**
  — After further discussion, voting members of JPC vote by secret ballot. Nominator and Advocate are non-voting members
Joint Promotion Committee Vote

• B-Term Meeting:
  – All committee members present
  – Discussion of criteria, dossier and any updates or additional information. If not ready, schedule another meeting
  – If ready, vote by secret ballot:
    ▪ Secretary counts the six ballots until either 4 Yes votes (majority), or 3 No votes are seen. Only these ballots are shown to the committee
    ▪ This determines the unitary recommendation for or against promotion
  – The committee sends a letter to Provost conveying its recommendation and summarizing the salient reasons (signed by entire JPC)
5. Promotion Schedules
TTT Nomination Schedule

• April: Initial nomination
  – Department Heads: April 15
  – Non-Department Heads: May 1
• May 1: deadline for the candidate to provide:
  – Name of Advocate
  – List of six Professional Associates
• May: JPC (6 COAP Members+Nominator+Advocate)
  – Identifies potential External Reviewers, who are invited by Nominator until 5-6 agree to write a letter of appraisal
• June 5: Candidate submits promotion dossier
• June:
  – COAP sends to Professional Associates & External Reviewers a cover letter, candidate’s dossier, and promotion criteria
  – Faculty Governance Office solicits student evaluations from former students and alumni
• Mid-August: Deadline for receipt of letters of appraisal
TTT Promotion Review Schedule

• **A-Term Meeting** (~2 h) of Joint Promotion Committee
  – To review dossier for completion, and initiate discussion

• **B-Term Meeting** (~2 h) of Joint Promotion Committee
  – To review additional materials and vote

• **End of B-Term:** COAP sends its recommendation and the candidate’s dossier to the Provost and the Dean

• **January:** Provost meets with Joint Promotion Committee to discuss any cases with potential disagreement

• **January – February:**
  – Provost and President make recommendations to Board of Trustees. Board APC discusses the cases prior to full Board meeting
  – Provost notifies candidates after Trustees meeting (~Mar)
**NTT Teaching Nomination Schedule**

- **July 1:** Initial nomination by Department Head
  - Faculty Governance office solicits student evaluations from former students and alumni over the summer

- **August 15:** Candidate provides:
  - Name of Advocate
  - List of six Professional Associates
  - Candidate’s Promotion Dossier

- **August:**
  - COAP sends to Professional Associates a cover letter, candidate’s dossier, and promotion criteria

- **October 15:**
  - Deadline for receipt of letters of appraisal from Nominator and Professional Associates
NTT Research Nomination Schedule

- **July 1**: Initial nomination by Department Head
- **July 15**: Candidate provides:
  - Name of Advocate
  - List of six Professional Associates
- **August 15**: Candidate provides:
  - Candidate’s Promotion Dossier
- **August**:
  - COAP sends dossier and criteria to Professional Associates and External Reviewers
- **October 15**:
  - Deadline for receipt of letters of appraisal from Nominator, Professional Associates, External Reviewers
## NTT Promotion Review Schedule

- **B-Term**: Meeting of Joint Promotion Committee to review complete dossier and vote

- **End of B-Term**: Joint Promotion Committee sends its recommendation and the candidate’s dossier to the Provost and the Dean

- **January**: Provost must meet with COAP to discuss any cases of potential disagreement

- **January – February**:
  - Provost and President make recommendation to Board of Trustees. Board APC discusses the cases prior to full Board meeting
  - Provost notifies candidates after the Trustees meeting
PoP Reappointment Schedule

- **September 20:** Initial nomination by Department Head
  - Faculty Governance office solicits student evaluations from former students and alumni during the fall
- **October 20:** Candidate for reappointment provides:
  - Name of Advocate
  - List of six Professional Associates
  - Re-appointment Review Dossier
- **October:**
  - COAP sends to Professional Associates a cover letter, candidate’s dossier, and re-appointment criteria
- **December 20:**
  - Deadline for receipt of letters of appraisal from Nominator and Professional Associates
- **Term C:** COAP meets with Nominator and Advocate
- **March:** COAP sends recommendation to Provost, Dean and Nominator
- **May 1:** Re-appointment letters
Questions?

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• COAP website
  https://web.wpi.edu/Campus/Faculty/CAO/coap.html
6. Frequently Asked Questions
FAQ: Eligibility

• *Is it necessary to be in rank for 5 years before being considered for promotion?*
  - No. However, it is rare that an associate professor can demonstrate “considerable professional growth” (Section D.2.2) in a much shorter period.
  - Thus, COAP looks at both the cumulative contributions, including before tenure, as well as a record of continuing high quality teaching and research since tenure.
FAQ: Professional Associates

• **How many Professional Associates should be on my list?**
  – COAP will ask for six. These **must** include a mixture of colleagues at WPI and at other institutions

• **Why should I have letters from colleagues at WPI?**
  – For most candidates, 2-3 letters from colleagues at WPI help to demonstrate the candidate has met the criteria for promotion across teaching, scholarship and service
  – Too many letters from external peers among the Professional Associates may limit the pool of External Reviewers

• **Am I allowed to view the Professional Associates’ letters?**
  – No. All letters received are confidential; the candidates should **not** ask associates to see the letters after they agree to write

• **Do I provide material to my Professional Associates?**
  – No. Faculty Governance sends a cover letter and electronic copies of the criteria and the promotion dossier to all reviewers. If the candidate wishes to make more material available, put it online, with links in the dossier, so that all peer reviewers have access
FAQ: External Reviewers

• Am I allowed to view the External Reviewer List?
  — No. The candidate may provide a list of people not to ask, with an explanation. The candidate should not be asked to suggest names for external reviewers

• What will the External Reviewers see?
  — Cover letter, the promotion criteria, and the candidate’s promotion dossier—including the teaching portfolio and three sample scholarly artifacts. If the candidate wishes to make more material available, put it online, with links in the dossier, so that all peer reviewers have access

• How many External Reviewers are there?
  — 5-6 letters must be received from qualified external reviewers
FAQ: External Reviewers

• What are External Reviewers asked to provide?
  – an independent assessment of the candidate’s contributions to, and standing in, the professional community; the quality of the scholarly artifacts; and the candidate’s strengths and weaknesses
  – “We would appreciate receiving a letter from you that summarizes the nature of your professional relationship with the candidate, if any, and appraises the candidate’s professional achievements. We are not asking you to make a recommendation for or against promotion, and we ask you not to speculate about whether the candidate might be promoted at another institution. Rather, we would like you to share with us your assessment of the candidate’s strengths and weaknesses.”
FAQ: Professional Associates

• *Who does what with the reviewers?*
  
  – The Candidate contacts **Professional Associates** to ask if they are willing to write a letter
  
  – The Joint Promotion Committee, including the Nominator and Advocate, identifies and contacts **External Reviewers**
  
  – The Faculty Governance Office (Penny Rock) sends all peer reviewers a cover letter and electronic copies of the promotion criteria, and the candidates’ dossier—including the candidate’s sample scholarly artifacts
  
  – Reminders to peer reviewers for late letters should come only from the Faculty Governance Office or the Joint Promotion Committee
FAQ: Dossier Scholarly Artifacts

• What are sample scholarly artifacts?
  – For most candidates, the sample scholarly artifacts will be three peer-reviewed articles that have been published since tenure and/or promotion. A candidate might substitute a book or other artifacts.
  – Scholarly contributions may be documented and disseminated through a variety of artifacts besides peer-reviewed articles.
  – Sample scholarly artifacts must be publicly available, amenable to critical appraisal, and in a form that permits exchange and use by other members of the scholarly community.
FAQ: Dossier Scholarly Artifacts

• My main scholarly artifact is a book. Will COAP buy copies of my book for all the reviewers?

— No. The candidate is responsible for providing electronic copies of all the material for the promotion dossier. If a scholarly artifact is best presented through a hard-copy (a book or something else), then the candidate is responsible for providing a sufficient number of hard copies of the artifact for all of the peer reviewers (Professional Associates and External Reviewers) as well as several copies for the Joint Promotion Committee.
FAQ: Scholarship/External Impact

• How important is external funding?
  – It depends. In some areas or fields, external funding is critical to support a research program. In other areas, it is not. External funding demonstrates external recognition and impact through peer review.
  – What you do with funding matters more than its source.
  – Are you PI? or Co-PI? Principal Investigator is more impressive and is one of many possible indicators.
  – Is external funding more important than the number of publications? PhD students? citations? patents? new commercial enterprises? exhibitions? sales of computer games? other indicators? Any indicators are contextual to each case.
FAQ: External Impact

• How is external impact assessed?
  – According to the criteria (section D.1.4), external impact should be assessed based on the relevant standards in the areas of the candidate’s scholarly contributions. The candidate’s personal statement should identify the area or areas of their scholarly contributions across teaching, scholarship and service and indicate examples of external impact beyond WPI.
  – While quantitative measures such as the number of refereed publications and citations or the level of external funding will remain important indicators of quality and impact for many scholars, WPI recognizes that the weight assigned to such measures varies widely between academic fields as well as along the continuum of scholarship.
FAQ: External Impact

• May I use “altmetrics” to demonstrate impact?
  – Yes. Candidates should provide whatever evidence of external impact is appropriate for their case. If an article or teaching module is among the most read or downloaded at a journal or repository, say so.

• What are altmetrics?
  – An alternative or supplement to indicators such as citations, journal impact factors, h-index: ask librarians

[Image: http://altmetrics.org/manifesto/]

Worcester Polytechnic Institute
FAQ: Deadlines for TTT candidates

• What are my deadlines, again?
  — May 1: List of Professional Associates, name of Advocate
  — June 5: Candidate’s Promotion Dossier
  — Beginning of A term: updates, if any
  — Beginning of B term: updates, if any

• When is the last time to update my dossier?
  — Before the start of the decision-making term, usually B term. If the candidate has significant news, it may be shared with the committee at any time
FAQ: More

• **What if I don’t get promoted?**
  – A letter jointly written by the Joint Promotion Committee, the Dean, and the Provost should provide constructive advice to the candidate so that they may address any deficiencies and resubmit the case for promotion consideration in the future
  – Usually wait 2-3 years, then you may be nominated again
  – Discuss a strategy with your Department Head and department promotions committee