

## PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE (PC) ANNUAL REPORT, 2020-2021

This was the third iteration of PC following the division of the charge of the Committee on Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure (CAPT) into the Appointments and Tenure Committee (ATC) and the Promotions Committee (PC). PC's role in promotion concerns full-time and shared tenure-track appointments to professorial ranks. PC's primary function is to evaluate candidates for promotion to Full Professor. PC also reviews candidates for honorary degrees and nominees for endowed chairs.

Due to pandemic safety protocols for remote working this year, PC met via Zoom on most Thursdays of the academic calendar, dedicating Tuesdays to asynchronous work—for an approximated total of 30 synchronous meetings. PC conducted the following business.

### I. PREPARATORY WORK

During the Fall semester, PC reviewed the *Faculty Handbook* sections on promotion procedures and evaluative criteria for continued service and advancement in rank; PC also reviewed internal guidelines for our work and studied select literature on diversity, equity, and inclusion pertaining to personnel review.

Members of PC, along with members of ATC, attended a two-day workshop hosted by the Office of the DOF/VPAA focused on bias mitigation, facilitated by KerryAnn O'Meara (University of Maryland). Later, we joined ATC's in-house workshop facilitated by Pushi Prasad (Skidmore); we thank ATC for including us in the session. PC invited Kate Berheide (Skidmore) to speak to the committee about promotion culture at Skidmore within the context of best practices elsewhere and national norms. In preparation for the talk, PC read her published research. We thank Kate for her generosity with both her time and her expertise. The Chair also thanks Maria Lander (World Languages and Literatures) for agreeing to a debriefing on her recent successful promotion candidacy. All this preparatory work was part of PC's self-critique, which informed the policies described below and prepared us for our personnel review work.

### II. PERSONNEL MATTERS

During the Spring semester, PC evaluated the credentials of two tenured Associate Professors for promotion to the rank of Full Professor. In accordance with its Operating Code, PC met with the DOF/VPAA and the ADOF with responsibilities for tenure-track personnel before the committee voted on cases and presented its recommendations to the administration.

PC recommended two candidates for promotion to Full Professor to the DOF/VPAA, who then passed along this recommendation, along with his own, to the President.

The President recommended two candidates for promotion to Full Professor to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.

The members of PC would like to express their gratitude to Javier Perez-Moreno (Physics), who served as a replacement member of PC for one promotion case.

### III. ENDOWED CHAIRS AND HONORARY DEGREES

PC was consulted, and provided comments to the DOF/VPAA, on the appointment of three endowed chairs. PC reviewed six prospective nominees for honorary degrees and passed along its recommendations to the President.

### IV. POLICY MATTERS

Because of the relatively low number of promotion cases this year, PC was able to advance three policy projects. The first concerned letter-writing for faculty who offer courses in departments or programs other than that of their primary affiliation. The motion passed. The second policy project focused on promotion file components; this motion passed, regularizing the inclusion of a Research/Artistic Statement, Teaching Statement, and Service Statement as well as the past six years of Annual Reports. A strategic, albeit housekeeping, change struck the modifier “consecutive” in the following sentence: *the ten most recent consecutive semesters of teaching evaluations* (3 on p. 132 of FHB). PC thanks ATC for its partnership regarding *Handbook* language and process wherever pertinent to both committees’ operations. And we thank FEC, who oversees our *Handbook*.

The third policy project is currently circulating as a white paper for faculty review. It focuses on the two most frequently asked questions PC hears: *When should one stand for promotion? What is considered “early”?* For fairness and equity, studies show that transparency and standardization are essential to effective personnel review process. And all three PC policy projects have been motivated by the objective to strengthen promotion culture at Skidmore. PC thanks Dean of the Faculty Michael Orr for his assistance in our policy work this year, especially regarding the data-gathering that was necessary.

This year brought policy work led by other committees that PC was happy to contribute to. PC’s first meeting with CEPP, to discuss student evaluations for fall, occurred early (August); we consulted again mid-fall with CEPP when it came time to consider teaching assessment for spring semester. CEPP invited us a final time to discuss *Faculty Handbook* language pertaining to teaching effectiveness (April). We appreciated working with CAFR (and the other committees they turned to) on how best to evaluate teaching effectiveness during the pandemic year. Going forward, PC

is ready to work with CAFR regarding how bias reports play a role in personnel review.

Finally, we conducted a year-long diversity audit of the language on the *FHB* pages that pertain to PC's operations. Those potential edits have now been submitted to the Dean's Office, with the aim that they will be passed on to the consultant who will review our *FHB*.

In addition to its regularly scheduled committee meetings and the additional meetings described above, PC held an informational meeting in October for prospective promotion candidates, their Department Chairs/Program Directors, and any other interested parties.

The Chair of PC attended a meeting of governance committee chairs convened by the President (September) and two Committee of Committees meetings convened by FEC (December and May), and presented a summary of PC's work to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees (May). The current PC Chair (and outgoing Chair, Beck Krefting) met with ADOF Pat Fehling and Mary Odekon (ATC Chair) prior to AY 2020-2021 to review choices for an anti-bias consultant. The PC Chair met again with ADOF Fehling and ATC Chair to interview KerryAnn O'Meara, our top choice. Mid-year, the Chair met with ADOF Pat Fehling and ATC Chair Mary Odekon to follow up on DEI and the College's personnel review/*Faculty Handbook* audit (January). Outgoing and incoming PC Chairs met with ADOF Pat Fehling and outgoing and incoming ATC chairs to discuss timeline for future *Faculty Handbook* audit (May).

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Black  
Chair, Promotions Committee

**2020-2021 PC members:**

Barbara Black (English), Chair  
Mark Huibregtse (Mathematics and Statistics)  
Eliza Kent (Religious Studies)  
Rebecca (Beck) Krefting (American Studies)  
David Peterson (Art)

**2021-2022 PC members:**

Mark Huibregtse (Mathematics and Statistics), Chair  
Eliza Kent (Religious Studies)  
Andrew Lindner (Sociology)  
David Peterson (Art)  
Bernie Possidente (Biology)