

Committee on Rank, Tenure and Promotion
Report to the Faculty Council
May 24, 2017

Committee Membership

During the 2016-17 academic year, the following individuals served on the Committee on Rank, Tenure and Promotion (RTP): Jaleh Fazelian (LIB, representative from the Committee on Gender and Diversity), Angie Jones (PS), Linda Koch (AH), Paul Murphy (MML), Naveed Piracha (PH), John Rausch (ED), Mark Waner (CH) and Tom Zlatoper (EC/FN, RTP Committee Chair).

Counting of Time Served at Rank of Instructor or Higher Towards Tenure

According to prior practice at JCU, whether or not years in a visiting position or years at other institutions were to be counted in the probationary period on the tenure track was negotiable. The Provost and Academic Vice President and the Chair of the Faculty Handbook (FH) Committee provided an October 2012 reply to a request for an interpretation on the following:

Question One: Do all years served at the rank of instructor or higher with the status of visitor count as probationary years in service toward the automatic conferral of tenure on any faculty member who enters their eighth year of full-time service?

Question Two: Another issue related to the first concerns faculty with prior service at other institutions. Are all years, up to three years, of service at other institutions automatically counted in the probationary period if the service is full-time and equivalent in professional character to the Faculty member's service here?

The October 2012 reply was that, according to the FH, the answer is "yes" to both questions. In the 2012-13 academic year, the RTP Committee expressed concern that the change in practice required by the reply is not in the best interests of the faculty or the University. It investigated possible changes during the 2012-13 through 2015-16 academic years. In an April 2015 reply to a request from the RTP Committee, the Provost and Academic Vice President and the Chair of the FH Committee reaffirmed that, based on the FH, the answer to both questions remains "yes." They also noted that if the possibility of negotiations on years to be counted in the probationary period is desired, the FH will have to be amended.

During the 2016-17 academic year, the RTP Committee continued its investigation on the possibility of negotiations on years to be counted in the probationary period. Given that the current in-depth review of the FH could affect the formulation of future proposed amendments, the Committee discussed how best to proceed in its pursuit of an amendment before the review is completed. It decided to ask two groups for their thoughts on the current practice regarding the counting of previous service: department chairpersons and members of

the Untenured Faculty Organization (UFO). An email message was sent to each department chairperson with the following questions:

1. Has the current treatment of prior service at the rank of instructor or higher in the tenure probationary period at John Carroll impacted recent faculty searches by your department? Please explain.
2. Do you anticipate that the current treatment of prior service will be an issue in your department in the future? Please explain.

An email message was sent to each UFO member with the following question:

Do you have any concerns about the current treatment of prior service at the rank of instructor or higher in the tenure probationary period at John Carroll? Please explain.

In addition, a RTP subcommittee solicited feedback at a UFO meeting in May 2017. The RTP Committee set a tentative deadline of December 2017 for submission of a proposed amendment to the FH Committee.

University Committee on Tenure and Promotion

At its meeting on November 2, 2016, the Faculty Council charged the RTP Committee with the task of reaching out to the Office of the Provost, the FH Committee, and the Deans of CAS and Boler to start a discussion about a university committee on tenure and promotion. The RTP Committee located, reviewed and discussed relevant materials pertaining to the most recent (2012) University Tenure Committee proposal. Given current circumstances (e.g., various personnel changes in academic administrative positions at JCU, a pending vote to change voting requirements for proposed FH amendments, and other FH changes under consideration), the Committee decided to wait until the fall of 2017 to schedule a meeting of the various parties to commence discussion about a university committee on tenure and promotion.

Term Faculty Proposal

Since there are parallel considerations (e.g., the issue of rank) in the treatment of prior service and the potential creation of non-tenurable, term appointment faculty ("term faculty") positions, the RTP Committee expressed an interest in meeting with those working on the term faculty proposal. In May 2017, it met with three members (Drs. Rebecca Drenovsky, Pam Mason and Walter Simmons) of the *ad hoc* committee on the term faculty proposal to provide feedback on the proposal.