

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 23, 2019
To: Faculty on Term Appointments, Instructors in Science Laboratory and PERA faculty (FIPs)
cc: R&P chairs
From: Committee on Faculty Appointments (CFA), 2018-19
Re: CFA reappointment and promotion process for non-tenure-track faculty

At the suggestion of the Faculty on Term Appointments, Instructors in Science Laboratory, and Physical Education, Recreation, and Athletics Faculty Advisory Committee (FIPAC), the CFA is writing a letter this year (similar to that sent to tenure-track faculty) to FIPs and their R&P chairs to clarify issues that are sometimes misunderstood around the reappointment and promotion process.¹ In the decade since the CFA began reviewing faculty on term appointments and instructors in science laboratory, the committee has been impressed again and again with the depth and breadth of the contributions that FIP faculty make to their departments and programs, and the skill and dedication that they bring to educating our students. It is our hope that in addition to its evaluative purpose, the CFA review process can also serve as an opportunity to recognize FIPs for the important role that they play in the life of the College.

In this letter, it is not the CFA's intent to provide a comprehensive account of the review process or to paraphrase or repeat what is described in the guidelines and checklists for FIP faculty, but to offer a general overview and to address FIPAC's most commonly raised concerns. More detailed information is available in the guidelines and checklists available on the [CFA webpage](#).

General Operations of the CFA

In reappointment and promotion reviews for FIP faculty, the role of the CFA is to respond to the recommendations of Reappointments and Promotions (R&P) committees. The CFA's decisions take the form of either accepting or rejecting a recommendation made by an R&P or by one part of an R&P. In addition, the CFA may choose to reappoint a candidate for a shorter term or smaller FTE than an R&P recommends.

At times, the CFA may need further guidance to interpret material provided by the R&P. If the CFA feels that it does not have sufficient information to respond to a recommendation, the committee may ask written questions of an R&P or request copies of annual conversations and/or class visit reports. Requests for information or

¹ The process and standards for reappointment and promotion for PERA faculty vary significantly from those of FTAs and ISLs, and are described in detail in the *Guidelines for the Department of Physical Education, Recreation and Athletics*. Though the "General Operations of the CFA" section of this letter applies to PERA faculty, the other sections addressing standards for reappointment and promotion do not apply. Additionally, this memo does not apply to first-through-third-year visiting lecturers and first-year ISLs, as those groups are not reviewed by the CFA.

clarification should not be interpreted by candidates as foreshadowing a negative decision. In some cases, the CFA may also request to meet with the R&P in person to discuss a case.

Faculty members on the CFA holding an appointment in the same department or program as a candidate (or who are outside members of a candidate's R&P) are recused from consideration of that case and do not participate in any of the committee's discussions. Instead, they participate as members of the R&P. The Provost/Dean of the College and Dean of Faculty Affairs are the only exceptions to this rule, because they serve on the committee in their administrative capacities.

The College's appointments process for both tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty has long been characterized by its relative transparency, a transparency that is intended to benefit the candidate. The candidate receives a copy of the R&P's recommendation as well as of any correspondence between the CFA and the R&P (with appropriate redactions). It is not the practice of the CFA to meet in person with the candidate, but at any stage of the process, the candidate is free to communicate in writing to the CFA. The CFA does not share such communications with R&Ps, so if candidates wish their R&P to see a copy, they should provide one directly. To further protect candidates' privacy, members of R&Ps and the CFA are instructed to adhere scrupulously to the principle of confidentiality, and the committee does not make any formal announcement of the outcome of a reappointment or promotion decision to the College community.

Each case that comes before the CFA is considered on its own merits. The CFA does not base its decisions on a comparison of the candidates. The College does, however, have rigorous standards for faculty performance in all of the areas of review enumerated in the Guidelines for each category of FIP faculty.

The Provost's office publishes a list of faculty under review each year. This list provides an opportunity for members of the College community, past and present, to write to the CFA about a candidate coming up for review, and letters are shared with both candidates and their R&P chairs as-written or in redacted form. Letters from colleagues and students are welcome, but the CFA does not judge a case based on the number of letters received.

FTA and ISL Standards for Teaching

At the time of a reappointment review, the CFA expects to see evidence of highly effective instruction and a demonstrated commitment to students' learning. The CFA views strong teaching as the most important criterion for a FTA or ISL reappointment case. Reflecting the College's broader commitment to inclusive excellence, the CFA also values evidence that a faculty member is adopting practices that promote an equitable experience for all students in the classroom.

When evaluating a teaching record, the CFA reviews the candidate's personal statement, the R&P's recommendation (which addresses class visits), enrollments, syllabi and other pedagogical materials (if provided), unsolicited letters, and student evaluation questionnaires (SEQs). When reviewing SEQs, CFA members identify themes (positive

and negative) in the student comments and discernible trends in the quantitative and qualitative data. We do not make the assumption that excellent teaching is necessarily synonymous with high scores and laudatory student comments. The committee recognizes that some attributes of excellent teaching (high standards, demanding or challenging coursework) or some legitimate pedagogical methods (for example, cold-calling) might be characterized negatively in some student comments, and that other negative student comments may result from factors beyond the instructor's control. The CFA interprets the SEQ record in the context of all other teaching-related materials available during a review.

FTA and ISL Standards for Scholarly or Professional Development

As noted above, the primary criterion in a FTA or ISL reappointment case is excellence in teaching. However, the CFA also expects to see some form of continued professional development from FIP faculty. The CFA interprets this criterion flexibly, and recognizes that professional development may range from an active research agenda to involvement in pedagogical workshops. The CFA does not have a standard expectation of seeing publications in FTA and ISL records.

FTA and ISL Standards for Service

The CFA understands that opportunities for service vary across the College, and not all service records will look the same. In particular, the fact that a FTA or ISL faculty member has not served on a committee of Academic Council should not be viewed negatively, as such opportunities are limited. The CFA looks favorably upon service contributions to departmental committees and other forms of service, such as advising students and community outreach activities.

Activities sheets have been revised to enable faculty to provide a fuller description of their service contributions, including contributions to racial and ethnic diversity and equity, as well as other forms of service that may have previously been less visible. The CFA values both the formal and informal service contributions of all faculty, and asks that candidates and R&Ps identify noteworthy service contributions in their statements to the CFA, since such contributions may otherwise be difficult for the CFA to recognize and evaluate.

Promotion to Senior Lecturer and Senior ISL

Promotion to Senior ISL or Senior Lecturer requires "conspicuous excellence" in all of the categories required for reappointment. In addition, promotion to Senior ISL requires evidence of leadership in serving the department and the college, and evidence of scholarly and/or professional involvement, as described in the ISL Guidelines. The CFA does not interpret "conspicuous excellence" as requiring publication, research or serving on college committees, as it understands some R&Ps may have required in the past. The CFA encourages R&Ps to take a broad view of a candidate's contributions and the possible ways in which FTAs and ISLs may demonstrate conspicuous excellence in those categories. That said, promotion to the senior rank once eligible is not automatic, and the decision whether to recommend promotion lies with the R&P.

Members of the 2018-19 Committee on Faculty Appointments:

Paula Johnson, President

Andrew Shennan, Provost and Dean of the College (Chair)

Rebecca Bedell, Art

Kristin Butcher, Economics

Alex Diesl, Mathematics

Don Elmore, Chemistry

Michael Jeffries, American Studies

Layli Maparyan, Africana Studies