

# WPI Faculty Handbook: Chapter Four - Promotions

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## Chapter Four - Promotions

### 1. Eligibility, Time in Rank, and Conditions for Promotion

#### a. Eligibility, Time in Rank, and Conditions for Promotion of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty Members

(Amended by the Faculty, *May 10, 2022*)

##### i. For Promotion to the Associate Rank

A candidate for promotion to the associate rank in any tenure track must have completed at least three years and normally will have completed five years at the assistant rank in the same track before a promotion review.

Probationary faculty members with initial tenure-track appointments at the assistant rank in any particular tenure track receive a combined review for tenure and promotion to the associate rank in the same track from a Joint Tenure Committee (as described in Chapter Three: Tenure; Section 5 and Section 7). In these cases, the promotion criteria used will be the same as the tenure criteria for that particular track. Only in cases of early tenure (see Chapter Three: Tenure; Section 2.c) for exceptional professional achievement should a faculty member at the assistant rank be nominated for promotion to the associate rank earlier than the scheduled tenure review.

##### ii. For Promotion to the Full Rank

All Associate Professors and Associate Professors of Teaching should first achieve tenure before seeking promotion to full rank in their particular track.

To be considered for promotion to full professor in any tenured track, an associate ranked faculty member must have demonstrated considerable professional growth while at the associate rank. For this reason, a candidate for promotion to the full rank in a particular track normally will have completed at least five years at the associate rank in the same track and at least three years at the associate rank in that track at WPI before the year of the promotion review.

Only in cases of exceptional professional achievement should a candidate at the associate rank be nominated for promotion to full rank at a date earlier. These exceptional professional achievements must be explicitly documented in the nominator's letter.

## **b. Eligibility, Time in Rank, and Conditions for Promotion of Nontenure-Track Faculty Members**

### **i. For Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor**

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 before a promotion review.

### **ii. For Promotion to (full) Teaching Professor**

To be considered 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.

### **iii. For Promotion to Associate Research Professor**

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

### **iv. For Promotion to (full) Research Professor**

To be considered for promotion to research professor, an associate research professor must have demonstrated considerable professional growth and development of qualities of leadership. This usually requires at least five years as an associate research professor.

### **v. For Promotion to Senior Instructor**

(Approved by the Faculty, *October 9, 2024*)

(Approved by the Board of Trustees, *November 1, 2024*)

The candidate for promotion to senior instructor will normally have completed at least 5 years as an instructor at WPI before a promotion review, and must have completed at least 3 years as an instructor at WPI.

## **2. Promotion Criteria**

The principal reason for establishing academic ranks is to recognize and to encourage the continued professional growth of individual faculty members. The Faculty makes a variety of contributions as educators, scholars, innovators and leaders that advance WPI's mission.

## **a. Criteria for Promotion of Tenured and Tenure-Track Dual Mission Faculty Members**

### **i. Criteria for Promotion to Associate Professor**

The candidate for promotion to associate professor should have demonstrated high quality teaching and high quality scholarship/creativity as well as the promise for continued high quality performance in these areas. Evidence of service at an appropriate level is expected.

The criteria for promotion to Associate Professor are the same as the tenure criteria for Associate Professors (see Chapter Three: Tenure, Section 3.a for the tenure criteria). For this reason, Assistant Professors receive a combined review for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor from a Joint Tenure Committee, as described in Chapter Three: Tenure, Section 5 and Section 7.)

### **ii. Criteria for Promotion to (full) Professor**

The candidate for promotion to full professor should demonstrate continuing high quality teaching and high quality scholarship/creativity as well as a record of scholarly contributions that demonstrates a positive external impact beyond WPI as appropriate to the candidate's area of expertise. Service is a critical responsibility of all tenured faculty members, and thus evidence of service at a level appropriate to the rank is expected.

The specific standards of performance in teaching, scholarship, and service for promotion to full professor are similar to those for promotion to associate professor, with the added expectation of scholarly contributions that demonstrate a positive external impact beyond WPI. Contributions to WPI may demonstrate an external impact if they are disseminated and recognized externally. In every case, the high quality and positive external impact of scholarly contributions must be recognized by peers within WPI and by knowledgeable people external to WPI. While it is expected that these criteria describe the great majority of cases, there may be exceptional candidates whose unique contributions, while not conforming to these guidelines, are deserving of promotion.

### **Definition of Scholarship Used for Promotion to (full) Professor**

To recognize the full range of scholarly contributions by faculty members, for the purpose of applying the criteria for promotion to (full) Professor, WPI endorses an inclusive definition of scholarship. Scholarship exists in a continuum of diverse forms of knowledge and knowledge-making practices. Scholarship may be pursued through original research, making connections between disciplines, building bridges between theory and practice, communicating knowledge effectively to students and peers, or in reciprocal partnerships with broader communities. The common characteristics for any scholarly form to be considered scholarship are: it must be public, amenable

to critical appraisal, and in a form that permits exchange and use by other members of the scholarly community.

Candidates for promotion may make contributions to the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application and practice, the scholarship of teaching and learning, or the scholarship of engagement. Contributions may be in one area or across multiple areas of the continuum of scholarship. Scholarly contributions to any area or areas are valued equally by WPI.

The following descriptions of the continuum of scholarship indicate the scope of each domain, but they are not intended to be exclusive or exhaustive. The forms that scholarship take along this continuum will vary by discipline, department or academic division.

### *Scholarship of Discovery*

The creation or discovery of new knowledge involves creative and critical thought, research skills, the rigorous testing of researchable questions suggested by theory and practice, or active experimentation and exploration with the goal of adding to knowledge in a substantive way. The scholarship of discovery is usually demonstrated through publication in peer-reviewed journals and books, presentations at scholarly conferences, inventions and patents, or original creation in writing or multimedia, artistic works, or new technologies.

### *Scholarship of Integration*

The scholarship of integration includes the critical evaluation, synthesis, analysis, integration, or interpretation of research or creative work produced by others. It may be disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or multidisciplinary in nature. When disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge is synthesized, interpreted, or connected, this integrative scholarly contribution brings new insight. Integrative or interdisciplinary work might include articles, policy papers, reflective essays and reviews, translations, popular publications, synthesis of the literature on a topic, or textbooks. The scholarship of integration may be shared through any form such as those typical of discovery, application, teaching, or engagement.

### *Scholarship of Application and Practice*

Scholarship of application involves the use of a scholar's disciplinary knowledge to address important individual, institutional, and societal problems. The scholarship of application and practice might apply the knowledge, techniques, or technologies of the arts and sciences, business or engineering to the benefit of individuals and groups. This may include translational research, commercialization, start-ups, technology transfer, assistive technologies, learning technologies, or applied research supported by industrial or corporate partners or by government agencies. Contributions to the scholarship of application and practice are shared with stakeholders and open to review and critique by stakeholders and by peers.

### *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*

The scholarship of teaching and learning is the development and improvement of pedagogical practices that are shared with others. Effective teachers engage in scholarly teaching activity when they undertake assessment and evaluation to promote improvement in their own teaching and in student learning. Scholarly teaching activity becomes the scholarship of teaching and learning when faculty members make their teaching public, so that it can be reviewed, critiqued and built on by others, through publications, presentations or other forms of dissemination.

### *Scholarship of Engagement*

The scholarship of engagement involves collaborative partnerships with communities (local, regional, state, national, or global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources. Examples of the scholarship of engagement might include, but are not limited to: community-based programs that enhance WPI's curriculum, teaching and learning; educational or public outreach programs; other partnerships with communities beyond the campus to address critical societal issues, prepare educated citizens, or contribute to the public good. Contributions in the scholarship of engagement are of benefit to the external community, visible and shared with stakeholders, and open to review and critique by community stakeholders and by peers.

## **b. Criteria for Promotion of Tenured and Tenure-Track Teaching Faculty Members**

### **i. Criteria for Promotion to Associate Professor of Teaching**

(Approved by the Faculty, *May 10, 2022*)

Associate Professors of Teaching make a variety of contributions as educators, innovators, and leaders that advance WPI's educational mission and visibility.

The criteria for promotion to Associate Professor of Teaching are the same as the tenure criteria for the Professor of Teaching track (see Chapter Three: Tenure, Section 3.b for the tenure criteria). For this reason, Assistant Professors of Teaching receive a combined review for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor of Teaching from a Joint Tenure Committee, as described in Chapter Three: Tenure, Section 5 and Section 7.

The candidate should have demonstrated high-quality teaching practice with significant impact, maintained a commitment to professional growth and currency that has significant impact, developed creative pedagogical approaches within the context of their discipline or beyond, and showed the promise for continued high-quality performance in these areas. Evidence of quality service to the program/department/school, the WPI community, the field/profession, and/or the local/regional community is



also expected.

The definitions of the primary areas of teaching practice, continuing professional growth and currency, and service along with guidelines for documenting these are detailed in the Tenure Criteria for the Associate and (full) Professor of Teaching (Chapter Three: Tenure, Section 3.b) and in the Guidance for Documenting and Assessing Activities Toward Tenure for Professors of Teaching (Chapter Three: Tenure, Section 3.c).

Regardless of rank, the Professor of Teaching track emphasizes the professional growth and currency of each faculty member, especially when it advances the candidate's teaching and/or discipline more broadly and contributes to WPI's educational mission and visibility. Professional growth and currency include but are not limited to experimenting and exploring for the purpose of innovative teaching (as described in Chapter Three: Tenure, Section 3.b under the tenure criteria for the Associate and (full) Professor of Teaching) and/or remaining continually active as scholars through the scholarship of discovery, teaching and learning, integration, application and practice, or engagement (as defined in the broad Definition of Scholarship Used for Promotion to (full) Professor, Section 2.a.ii).

While it is expected that these criteria describe the great majority of cases, there may be exceptional candidates whose unique contributions, while not conforming to these guidelines, are deserving of promotion.

## **ii. Criteria for Promotion to (full) Professor of Teaching**

(Approved by the Faculty, *May 10, 2022*)

Professors of Teaching make a variety of contributions as educators, innovators, and leaders that advance WPI's educational mission and visibility.

The specific categories of performance in the (full) Professor of Teaching rank and track are teaching practice; continuing professional growth and currency; and service. The candidate for promotion to full Professor of Teaching should demonstrate continuing high-quality teaching practice with significant impact on students as well as a record of contributions and professional growth and currency that includes creative pedagogical approaches within the context of their discipline or beyond and that demonstrates a positive external impact beyond WPI as appropriate to the candidate's area of expertise. The standards for promotion to full Professor of Teaching are similar to those for promotion to Associate Professor of Teaching, with the expectation of continued contributions that demonstrate a positive external impact beyond WPI since becoming an Associate Professor of Teaching. Contributions to WPI may demonstrate an external impact if they are disseminated and/or recognized externally. In most cases, the high-quality and positive external impact of contributions must be recognized by peers within WPI and by knowledgeable experts external to WPI.

The definitions of the primary areas of teaching practice, continuing professional growth and currency, and service along with guidelines for documenting these are detailed in the Tenure Criteria for the Associate and (full) Professor of Teaching (see Chapter Three: Tenure, Section 3.b) and in the Guidance for Documenting and Assessing Activities Toward Tenure for Professors of Teaching (see Chapter Three: Tenure, Section 3.c).

Regardless of rank, the Professor of Teaching track emphasizes the professional growth and currency of each faculty member, especially when it advances the candidate's teaching and/or discipline more broadly and contributes to WPI's educational mission and visibility. Professional growth and currency include but are not limited to experimenting and exploring for the purpose of innovative teaching (as described in Chapter Three: Tenure, Section 3.b under the tenure criteria for the Associate and (full) Professor of Teaching) and/or remaining continually active as scholars through the scholarship of discovery, teaching and learning, integration, application and practice, or engagement (as defined in the broad Definition of Scholarship Used for Promotion to (full) Professor, Section 2.a.ii).

Because service and citizenship are an integral part of being a tenured faculty member at WPI, a candidate for promotion must also have established a significant record of performance in service and citizenship contributions to the program/department/school, the WPI community, the field/profession, and/or the local/regional community. WPI values both individual and collaborative work within and across the domains of teaching practice, professional growth and currency, and service.

While it is expected that these criteria describe the great majority of cases, there may be exceptional candidates whose unique contributions, while not conforming to these guidelines, are deserving of promotion.

### **c. Criteria for Promotion of Secured Teaching Faculty Members**

#### **i. Criteria for Promotion to Senior Instructor (from Instructor) or to Assistant Teaching Professor (from Instructor of either level)**

(Ammended by the Faculty, *October 9, 2024*)

(Approved by the Board of Trustees, *November 1, 2024*)

Recommendations for these promotions will be made based on evaluations accounting for course evaluations, project evaluations, and other relevant feedback.

The candidate for promotion to assistant teaching professor must possess a PhD. degree (or the recognized highest degree for the discipline) and teaching credentials appropriate to the corresponding tenure-track rank, and must have demonstrated effective teaching ability.

The candidate for promotion to Senior Instructor must have demonstrated effective teaching ability.

## **ii. Criteria for Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor**

(Amended by the Faculty, *April 14, 2022*)

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. The candidate must have exhibited high quality teaching (undergraduate and/or graduate). Professional associate letters of support are required. High quality teaching can be evidenced in many ways, including (but not limited to): course evaluations; faculty peer evaluations; evaluations by alumni; the quality of the Major Qualifying Projects, Interactive Qualifying Projects, the Humanities Inquiry Seminar or Practicum, and graduate student work; freshman advising, academic advising; teaching innovations; new course introductions; and redesign of existing courses. Service is valued and considered in the promotion review. Service can be evidenced in many ways, including (but not limited to): service to WPI (committee work, assistance to administrative offices); service to the candidate's department (curriculum committees, MQP area coordinators, faculty recruitment, seminar series participation and coordination); and service to the profession (participation in national and international committees and panels, in local chapters of professional societies, in conference organization).

## **iii. Criteria for Promotion to (full) Teaching Professor**

To be considered 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. The candidate must have recent accomplishments of high quality in teaching as well as demonstrated leadership in some aspect of teaching. This leadership must be recognized by peers within WPI, and acknowledgement by external peers would be viewed favorably. High quality teaching can be evidenced in many ways, including (but not limited to): course evaluations; faculty peer evaluations; evaluations by alumni; the quality of the Major Qualifying Projects, Interactive Qualifying Projects, the Humanities Inquiry Seminar or Practicum, and graduate student work; freshman advising, and academic advising; teaching innovations; new course introductions; and redesign of existing courses. In evaluating teaching qualifications, the Committee on Appointments and Promotions will consider innovations in teaching and adaptability to the needs of WPI, effectiveness as measured by students, alumni, and colleagues, and the candidate's overall impact and importance in WPI academic programs. Leadership accomplishments in teaching may be demonstrated by some or all of the following: exceptionally high quality teaching that serves as a model for others, development of new courses or other academic activities such as project

experiences, leadership in curricular revisions or other academic initiatives within WPI, leadership of teaching - and learning - related grant proposals and funded projects, publications and presentations related to teaching, and leadership roles in appropriate professional organizations. Service is valued and considered in the promotion review. Service can be evidenced in many ways, including (but not limited to): service to WPI (committee work, assistance to administrative offices); service to the candidate's department (curriculum committees, MQP area coordinators, faculty recruitment, seminar series participation and coordination); and service to the profession (participation in national and international committees and panels, in local chapters of professional societies, in conference organization).

#### **d. Criteria for Promotion of Research Faculty Members**

##### **i. Criteria for Promotion to Associate Research Professor**

The candidate for promotion to associate research professor must have completed at least three years as an assistant research professor, and will normally have completed at least five years. The candidate must have exhibited high quality scholarship. High quality scholarship can be evidenced in many ways, including (but not limited to): peer-reviewed publications such as journal articles, conference papers, and/or book chapters; books; exhibitions, and performances; professional awards; citations in the professional literature; presentations at professional meetings; grant proposals and grants awarded; offices held in professional societies; journal editorships; reviews of papers and proposals; and patents. Service is valued and considered in the promotion review. Service can be evidenced in many ways, including (but not limited to): service to WPI (committee work, assistance to administrative offices); service to the candidate's department (such as faculty recruitment, seminar series participation and coordination); and service to the profession (participation in national and international committees and panels, in local chapters of professional societies, in conference organization).

##### **ii. Criteria for Promotion to (full) Research Professor**

To be considered for promotion to research professor, an associate research professor must have demonstrated considerable professional growth and development of qualities of leadership. This usually requires at least five years as an associate research professor. The candidate must have recent accomplishments of high quality and demonstrated leadership in scholarship/creativity. This leadership must be recognized by peers within WPI, and by knowledgeable people outside WPI. Scholarship and/or creativity can take many forms. It may be demonstrated, for example, by publications in respected research or scholarly journals, by non-routine presentations at meetings of professional or scholarly societies or at seminars at other colleges, or by authorship of well-regarded textbooks or monographs. Creativity may be shown, for example, by applying knowledge as a consultant or inventor, and through artistic

publications, exhibitions, or productions. In evaluating this activity, the Committee will consider how it is regarded by knowledgeable peers. Service is valued and considered in the promotion review. Service can be evidenced in many ways, including (but not limited to): service to WPI (committee work, assistance to administrative offices); service to the candidate's department (curriculum committees, MQP area coordinators, faculty recruitment, seminar series participation and coordination); and service to the profession (participation in national and international committees and panels, in local chapters of professional societies, in conference organization).

### **3. Promotion Procedures: to (full) Professor; to (full) Professor of Teaching; to (full) Teaching Professor; and to Associate Teaching Professor**

#### **a. Process**

##### **i. Nomination**

All candidates for promotion to (full) Professor, (full) Professor of Teaching, (full) Teaching Professor, and Associate Teaching Professor must be nominated for promotion. The Nominator is normally the Department Head or a tenured full professor at WPI. For promotion to (full) Teaching Professor or to Associate Teaching Professor, the nominator must be the Department Head and/or Program Director (with input from department and/or program faculty members).

Before nomination, the Nominator should discuss with the candidate the strengths and weaknesses of their case based on the promotion criteria and eligibility including time in rank. Departmental promotion procedures should assure equitable treatment of all eligible candidates and should be selective so that only well-qualified candidates are nominated.

The Nominator's initial statement of nomination of a candidate for promotion must be received by the Committee on Appointments and Promotions from the Department Head by April 15 or from nominators other than the Department Head by May 1. The nominator must submit a more detailed letter of nomination, with a description and analysis of the candidate's teaching, scholarship/creativity, service and impact, during the summer prior to the academic year of the promotion review.

##### **ii. Summary of Candidate's Submissions**

After the initial statement of nomination, the Candidate is invited to submit the name of an Advocate and a list of internal and external peers known as Professional Associates, as well as the materials for the promotion dossier (described in Section 3.b).

- The Advocate is normally a full-time faculty member who agrees to serve with

the Nominator as a non-voting member of a Joint Promotion Committee. The candidate submits the name of the Advocate by May 1.

- Professional Associates are contacted by the candidate at the time of the initial nomination and must agree, at that time, to supply a letter of appraisal when later asked by the Joint Promotion Committee.
  1. In cases of promotion to (full) Professor and (full) Professor of Teaching, the six professional associates should include a mixture of internal peers at WPI and external peers in the candidate's areas of expertise.
  2. In cases of promotion to (full) Teaching Professor and Associate Teaching Professor, the six professional associates should be internal peers at WPI. While external peers are not required, they would also be viewed favorably.

All professional associates must be qualified to evaluate the candidate's promotion dossier, and they must have agreed to write a letter of appraisal when asked by the candidate before they will be contacted by the Joint Promotion Committee. The candidate should seek advice from the Nominator, Advocate and other mentors well in advance of the nomination deadline in order to submit an appropriate list of Professional Associates. The candidate submits the name of the list of Professional Associates by May 1.

- The promotion dossier is described in detail in Section 3.b. The candidate should seek advice from the Nominator, Advocate and other mentors well in advance of the nomination deadline in order to develop a strong promotion dossier. The candidate's promotion dossier is due in June prior to the academic year of the promotion review.

### **iii. Formation of Joint Promotion Committees, Recusals, and COAP Member Participation**

- *Joint Promotion Committees:* For the purpose of considering each promotion case, a Joint Promotion Committee is formed, consisting of six voting members of COAP, and a non-voting Nominator and a non-voting Advocate. The Joint Promotion Committee is chaired by the Chair of COAP.
- *Recusals:* If the candidate and one of the COAP members are from the same department, then that COAP member is recused from the Joint Promotion Committee automatically. The Joint Promotion Committee also will consider whether any of its members should be recused due to direct conflict of interest. If recusal of two COAP members is necessary, then the most recent qualified past Chair of COAP will serve for that particular case. If the Chair is recused, then the Joint Promotion Committee is chaired by the senior-most elected

member of COAP participants.

- *COAP Member Participation:* In the event of no recusals due to departmental overlap or conflict of interest, the selection of the six COAP members to sit on each Joint Promotion Committee will be governed by COAP procedures developed to lead to an overall pattern of recusals distributed over the COAP membership so as to ensure appropriate participation for each COAP member.

#### **iv. Summary of Materials Collected by The Joint Promotion Committee**

(Amended by the Faculty, *February 14, 2024*)

In all promotion cases covered in this Section 3, during the summer before the academic year of the promotion review, in addition to the materials submitted by the candidate, the Joint Promotion Committee will add four other sources of information to the complete promotion review dossier:

1. Summary student ratings for all courses and projects taught at WPI in the last five years.
2. Responses to a teaching evaluation sent to a random selection of former students and alumni whom the candidate has taught in the last five years.
3. Instructional Activity data for the last five years when available.
4. Letters of appraisal solicited by the Joint Promotion Committee (see Section 3.a.v) from Professional Associates identified by the candidate (see Section 3.a.ii), each for an independent confidential evaluation of the materials submitted by the candidate for the promotion dossier (see Section 3.b.i).

In cases of promotion to (full) Professor and (full) Professor of Teaching, the Joint Promotion Committee will add a fifth source of information:

5. Letters of appraisal solicited by the Joint Promotion Committee (see Section 3.a.v) from External Reviewers identified by the Nominator and the Advocate on the Joint Promotion Committee (see Section 3.a.v), each for an independent confidential evaluation of the materials submitted by the candidate for the promotion dossier (see Section 3.b.i).

Solely for cases of promotion to (full) Professor, only, the Joint Promotion Committee will add a sixth source of information:

6. Sponsored research activity data for the last five years when available.

The Joint Promotion Committee also collects other materials in the summer or the fall, as necessary, to arrive at a fair and equitable evaluation of the candidate.

## v. Selection and Solicitation of Peer Reviewers

The Joint Promotion Committee develops a list of peer reviewers to evaluate the candidate's promotion dossier. In all promotion cases included in this Section 3, these peers include six Professional Associates who are selected by the candidate. In cases of promotion to (full) Professor and (full) Professor of Teaching, these peers also include five to six External Reviewers who are selected by the Nominator and the Advocate on the Joint Promotion Committee.

- *Professional Associates:* In all promotion cases included in this Section 3, professional associates are contacted by the candidate at the time of the initial nomination and must agree, at that time, to supply a letter of appraisal when later asked by the Joint Promotion Committee.
  1. In cases of promotion to (full) Professor and (full) Professor of Teaching, the six professional associates should include a mixture of internal peers at WPI and external peers in the candidate's areas of expertise.
  2. In cases of promotion to (full) Teaching Professor and Associate Teaching Professor, the six professional associates should be internal peers at WPI. While external peers are not required, they would also be viewed favorably

All professional associates must be qualified to evaluate the candidate's promotion dossier, and they must have agreed to write a letter of appraisal when asked by the candidate before they will be contacted by the Joint Promotion Committee.

- *External Reviewers:* In cases of promotion to (full) Professor or to (full) Professor of Teaching, external reviewers are selected by the Nominator and the Advocate on the Joint Promotion Committee after the candidate has identified the Professional Associates. External reviewers must be competent to judge the candidate's promotion dossier and not have conflicts of interests or close personal ties to the candidate (such as co-author, co-PI, co-advisor, etc.). The candidate may not suggest names for the list of external reviewers, though they should tell the Nominator if there is anyone who should not be asked, with an explanation. The Nominator and Advocate each identify potential external reviewers and the Joint Promotion Committee then develops a priority list of reviewers. On behalf of the Joint Promotion Committee, the Nominator invites individuals from this priority list to serve as external reviewers until at least five to six external peers agree to write letters of appraisal.

These peer reviewers should be experts in or experienced practitioners of, and therefore appropriate evaluators of, the area or areas of the candidate's contributions. Where appropriate, external reviewers may include experts whose institutional affiliation is beyond the academy if they are well-placed to testify to or evaluate the



quality and impact of the candidate's contributions.

The Joint Promotion Committee sends electronic copies of the candidate's promotion dossier as well as the criteria for promotion to the applicable peer reviewers both within WPI and external to WPI early in the summer for an independent assessment of the candidate's professional activities with respect to quality, impact, and commitment, as applicable (see Section 3.b.ii). All of these peer reviewers are asked to submit confidential letters of appraisal to the Committee before the beginning of the academic year of the promotion review (typically by August 15). These letters of appraisal will be read only by people who are directly involved in the evaluation of the nomination for promotion and they will not be shown to the candidate or to anyone else.

#### **vi. Review by the Joint Promotion Committee and the Promotion Recommendation**

The Joint Promotion Committee reviews each nomination for promotion in order to make a recommendation to the appropriate Dean and to the Provost. The welfare of the candidate must be protected by all members of the Joint Promotion Committee by observing strict rules of confidentiality during all phases of the promotion review.

In A-Term and B-Term of the academic year of the promotion review, the Joint Promotion Committee meets to consider the merits of the nomination for promotion. The Joint Promotion Committee reviews the complete promotion dossier (described in Section 3.b.i) including the letters of appraisal from Professional Associates and (if applicable) External Reviewers as well as all other materials collected by the Joint Promotion Committee (described in Section 3.a.iv).

When all the members of the Joint Promotion Committee agree that there has been sufficient discussion, a vote is taken by the six voting members of the Joint Promotion Committee for or against promotion (no abstentions) by means of a secret ballot, with a majority (i.e., at least four votes) in favor of promotion required for a positive promotion recommendation. By the end of B-Term, the six voting members of the Joint Promotion Committee forward to the Dean and to the Provost a letter conveying the result of their vote as a unitary recommendation for or against promotion and summarizing the salient reasons for its recommendation.

#### **vii. Review by the Provost, Consultation with the Dean and the President, Final Decision, and Possible Appeal**

The Provost reviews each case and consults with the appropriate Dean and the President. Subsequently, the Provost may ask to meet with the Joint Promotion Committee to discuss any of its recommendations, and the Provost must meet with the Joint Promotion Committee in the case of potential disagreement. The Provost sends to the Board of Trustees the names of candidates for whom the Provost recommends

that promotion be granted. At no time shall the identity of any faculty member who was not recommended for promotion be disclosed to the members of the Board of Trustees. The Board votes on the Provost's positive promotion recommendations. The Provost will inform the candidate of the Board's decision.

In the event of a negative decision on promotion, a letter to the candidate discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the case for promotion will be written by the Dean and the Provost. The purpose of this letter is to provide constructive advice to the candidate so that they may address any deficiencies and resubmit the case for promotion consideration in the future. The candidate may meet with the Provost, Dean, or the Nominator to discuss reasons for the promotion decision.

If a candidate for promotion wishes to appeal a negative decision, faculty grievance procedures are available to the extent provided by the Procedure for Complaints of Academic Freedom Violations (see Chapter Five: Faculty Grievance Procedures, Section 1; and Chapter One: Governance, Bylaw Three, Section II) and by the Faculty Grievance Procedure (see Chapter Five: Faculty Grievance Procedures, Section 2; and Chapter One: Governance, Bylaw Three, Section IX).

## **b. The Promotion Dossier: Documentation and Evaluation**

### **i. Documentation Submitted by the Candidate**

(Approved by the Faculty, *May 10, 2022*)  
(Amended by the Faculty, *March 13, 2024*)

Candidates for promotion to (full) Professor, (full) Professor of Teaching, Associate Teaching Professor, and (full) Teaching Professor will submit a promotion dossier representative of their overall career. For promotion to (full) Professor, (full) Professor of Teaching, or (full) Teaching Professor, the emphasis will be on work since tenure and/or promotion to the associate rank in the appropriate track. Overall, all candidates included in this Section 3 should use this documentation to present the case that they have achieved the criteria for promotion. All candidates are invited and encouraged to use the promotion dossier to make arguments for the quality and impact of their work using the categories appropriate to their promotion criteria or in other ways if those other ways are appropriate to the form and impact of their contributions.

The candidate's promotion dossier will include the following: a curriculum vitae (CV); a personal statement; a teaching portfolio; relevant sample artifacts and other indicators to demonstrate the high quality and external impact of the candidate's contributions.

The CV provides comprehensive documentation of the candidate's professional experience and accomplishments.

- For promotion to full Professor, the emphasis is on accomplishments in teaching, scholarship/creativity, and service.
- For promotion to full Professor of Teaching, the emphasis is on accomplishments in teaching practice, continuing professional growth and currency, and service.
- For promotion to Associate Teaching Professor, the emphasis is on accomplishments in teaching and service.
- For promotion to (full) Teaching Professor, the emphasis is on accomplishments in teaching, professional growth, leadership, and service.

The personal statement provides a reflective summary and description of the candidate's professional accomplishments and contributions. The statement should provide a narrative arc that helps the committee and the Provost understand the candidate's activities to date, how those activities benefit the candidate and enhance WPI's educational mission and visibility, and how they will lead to the next stage of the candidate's career.

- For promotion to full Professor, the personal statement (10 pages maximum) includes a reflective summary and description of the candidate's scholarly contributions, and it typically will include sections on teaching, scholarship/creativity, service, external impact, and future plans.
- For promotion to full Professor of Teaching, the personal statement (10 pages maximum) includes a reflective summary and typically will include sections on teaching practice, professional growth and currency, service, external impact, and future plans. The statement should provide a narrative arc that helps the committee and the Provost understand the candidate's activities to date, how those activities benefit the candidate and enhance WPI's educational mission and visibility, and how they will lead to the next stage of the candidate's career.
- For promotion to Associate Teaching Professor, the personal statement (5 pages maximum) includes a reflective statement and description of the candidate's contributions to teaching, and it typically includes sections on teaching, service, and future plans.
- For promotion to (full) Teaching Professor, the personal statement (10 pages maximum) includes a reflective statement and description of the candidate's contributions to teaching with a focus on professional growth and leadership, and it typically includes sections on teaching, professional growth, leadership, service, and future plans

The teaching portfolio provides documentation of the candidate's teaching. The teaching portfolio presents representative teaching materials and evidence of their effectiveness. Typical elements in a teaching portfolio include a reflective statement

of the candidate's approach to teaching and learning (4-6 pages maximum), samples of teaching materials and teaching innovations, and measures of teaching effectiveness or materials that demonstrate student learning. The teaching portfolio should not exceed 50 pages (including the 4-6 pages of the reflective statement).

- For promotion to full Professor, the teaching portfolio provides documentation of the candidate's high quality teaching.
- For promotion to full Professor of Teaching, the teaching portfolio provides documentation of the candidate's high-quality teaching practice with significant impact.
- For promotion to Associate Teaching Professor, the teaching portfolio provides documentation of the candidate's high-quality teaching.
- For promotion to full Teaching Professor, the teaching portfolio provides documentation of the candidate's high-quality teaching practice, professional growth and leadership in teaching.

The sample artifacts provide documentation of the high quality and external impact of the candidate's contributions.

- For promotion to full Professor, the sample scholarly artifacts provide documentation of the high quality and external impact of the candidate's scholarly contributions. The choice of artifacts should reflect the standard of the discipline and not exceed three examples that have been published during the period of their current rank. Scholarly contributions may be documented and disseminated through a variety of peer-reviewed or other discipline specific critically reviewed artifacts. 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.
- For promotion to full Professor of Teaching, the sample artifacts provide documentation of the high-quality and external impact of the candidate's contributions to teaching practice and their commitment to and successes in professional growth and currency especially as those successes demonstrate innovative teaching and creative pedagogical development, exploration, and experimentation within and/or beyond the context of their discipline. Contributions may be documented and disseminated through a variety of artifacts. The continuum of artifacts through which successful contributions may be documented and disseminated matches, in its inclusiveness and variety, the continuum of ways one may demonstrate impact and quality of teaching practice and impact and commitment to professional growth and currency.
- For promotion to Associate Teaching Professor or (full) Teaching Professor, sample scholarly artifacts that the candidate has shown provide evidence of excellence of teaching are welcomed but not required.

Candidates for promotion to full Professor must submit a citation index and any other indicators of external impact appropriate to their scholarly contributions. The citation index should include all citations of the candidate's publications, presentations or other scholarly contributions. Additional indicators of external impact might include reviews of the candidate's work, press and media coverage, downloads of scholarly materials, awards and recognition, or any other indicators that the candidate's scholarly contributions have had an impact beyond WPI.

Scholarly contributions made by candidates for promotion to full Professor may combine or cut across traditional categories of teaching, scholarship/creativity and service.

Professional contributions made by candidates for promotion to full Professor of Teaching may combine or cut across traditional categories of teaching practice, continuing professional growth and currency, and service.

All candidates are welcome to submit any metric of external impact they wish so long as the context is explained.

## **ii. Standards for Evaluation**

Joint Promotion Committee members, the Provost, and peer reviewers should provide their independent assessments of the candidate's professional activities with respect to quality, impact, and commitment, as appropriate to the rank and track of the candidate. This section provides guidance that will be shared with all those involved in these assessments.

An assessment of the candidate's professional activities may be based on any and all material in the promotion dossier. Traditional measures to assess quality do not necessarily accommodate all areas of professional activity. Nonetheless, the following six standards have been identified to evaluate quality across diverse areas: clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation, and reflective critique (Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff, *Scholarship Assessed*, 1997). Since the dossier includes the candidate's reflective critique in their personal statement, all reviewers are invited to apply these six standards to assess the candidate's professional activities described in the promotion portfolio.

- For promotion to (full) Professor, the focus should be on an assessment of high quality teaching, high quality scholarship/creativity, and service to WPI, the field/profession, or community outside of WPI. The assessment may be based on any and all material in the promotion dossier, including the CV, personal statement, teaching portfolio, peer-reviewed scholarship, peer reviews of sample scholarly artifacts, or indicators of external impact, and indicators of service.
- For promotion to (full) Professor of Teaching, the focus should be on an assessment of high-quality teaching practice with significant impact, commitment

to and significant impact of professional growth and currency, and service to WPI, the field/profession, or community outside of WPI. The assessment may be based on any and all material in the promotion dossier, including the CV, personal statement, teaching portfolio, sample artifacts, or indicators of external impact, and indicators of service.

- For promotion to Associate Teaching Professor, the focus should be on an assessment of high-quality teaching and service to WPI, the field/profession, or community outside of WPI. The assessment may be based on any and all material in the promotion dossier, including the CV, personal statement, teaching portfolio, and indicators of service.
- For promotion to full Teaching Professor, the focus should be on an assessment of high-quality teaching, professional growth, leadership, and service to WPI, the field/profession, or community outside of WPI. The assessment may be based on any and all material in the promotion dossier, including the CV, personal statement, teaching portfolio, and indicators of service.

External impact beyond WPI, when relevant to the criteria for the particular promotion, should be assessed based on the relevant standards in the areas of the candidate's contributions. Thus, the starting point to assess external impact is the candidate's personal statement.

- For promotion to (full) Professor, the personal statement should identify the area or areas of the candidate's scholarly contributions across teaching, scholarship and service and indicate examples of external impact beyond WPI. Evidence of external impact beyond WPI might include: funding from multiple sources; peer-reviewed articles or presentations in well-regarded journals or conferences; books; reviews, citations or impact factors; downloadable curriculum; patents; films, broadcasts, software, or computer games; discussion of research in legal cases, policy reports, or the media; keynote addresses; workshops for other institutions, regional, national or international societies; artistic exhibitions, performances or productions; K-12 outreach and educational programs; journal editorships; leadership of academic programs or centers; or impact on external communities through teaching, scholarship or service.
- For promotion to (full) Professor of Teaching, the personal statement should identify the area or areas of their contributions across teaching practice, professional growth and currency, and service and indicate examples of external impact beyond WPI.
- In all cases, while quantitative measures will remain important indicators of quality and impact, WPI recognizes that the weight assigned to quantitative measures and documented evidence of impact varies widely between academic fields as well as along the continuum of contributions and accomplishments of candidates. Consequently, candidates are not limited in the relevant evidence

they may provide to demonstrate external impact.

### **iii. Caution Concerning Implicit and Explicit Bias**

All reviewers - internal and external peers, members of promotion committees, or academic decision-makers - are reminded that implicit and explicit bias has been shown to occur in every aspect of a faculty career that is evaluated. Empirical studies have shown that letters of recommendation for women and men differ in gendered ways: letters for women are often shorter, less detailed, and reinforce gender stereotypes. Women faculty members and faculty members of color also may face bias in student ratings of teaching or in mentoring and sponsorship. The choice of area or areas for professional contributions (e.g., interdisciplinary, qualitative, community-engaged, theoretical, or digital) may result in comparatively traditional recognition but nevertheless demonstrate high quality and impact in forms appropriate to those contributions. The Committee on Appointments and Promotions highlights potential sources of bias in this description of the standards for evaluation of the promotion dossier so that all reviewers at every stage of the review process will be aware of potential implicit and explicit bias and take care to limit opportunities for such bias to influence the consideration of each nomination for promotion.

## **4. Promotion Procedures: to Senior Instructor; to Assistant Teaching Professor; to Associate Research Professor, and to (full) Research Professor**

### **a. Procedures for Promotion to Senior Instructor (from Instructor) or to Assistant Teaching Professor (from Instructor of either level)**

(Amended by the Faculty, *October 9, 2024*)

(Approved by the Board of Trustees, *November 1, 2024*)

Recommendations for promotion from Instructor to Senior Instructor or from Instructor (of either level) to Assistant Teaching Professor will be made by the Department Head and/or Program Director (with input from departmental and/or program faculty members) and the appropriate Dean, and presented to the Provost for action.

Candidates for promotion to Senior Instructor should prepare a dossier for their Department Head or Program Director similar to that described in Section 3b: a current CV, teaching portfolio, and personal statement. Each of these should focus on the candidate's demonstrated effectiveness in teaching, detailing any teaching innovations, course improvements or developments, providing summary data of student course evaluations, and could include plans for future contributions to the academic mission of their department or program.

## **b. Procedures for Promotion to Associate Research Professor**

Recommendations for promotion to Associate Research Professor will be made by the Department Head and/or Program Director (with input from members of the WPI Faculty whose research is most relevant to the work done by the candidate and from other departmental faculty members as is appropriate) and the appropriate Dean, reviewed by COAP, and then passed on to the Provost for action.

## **c. Procedures for Promotion to (full) Research Professor**

Recommendations for promotion to (full) Research Professor will be made by the Department Head and/or Program Director (with input from members of the WPI Faculty whose research is most relevant to the work done by the candidate and from other departmental faculty members as is appropriate) and the appropriate Dean, reviewed by COAP, and then passed on to the Provost for action.

# **5. Mentoring and Professional Development of Professors at the Associate Level**

(Approved by the Faculty, *October 4, 2018*)

## **a. Overview**

Strategic professional development opportunities will empower faculty members to engage in career planning, seek productive collaborations and build communities to accelerate and promote their work. Mentoring is a key component of faculty professional development. It is defined here as a process by which an experienced faculty member serves as a guide to an individual (usually with less experience) for the purposes of socializing them to disciplinary norms, fostering their acquisition of institutional and scholarly knowledge, and providing professional opportunities and personal and/or professional support. Hence, to foster continuing professional development and promotion in academic rank, all tenured associate professors and continuing (i.e., full-time) non-tenure track associate professors are encouraged to establish a Mentoring Team.

## **b. Mentoring Team Makeup**

Associate Professors, Associate Professors of Teaching or Associate Teaching Professors seeking mentorship are encouraged to choose a Mentoring Team consisting of two faculty members. Individuals are encouraged to also include their respective department head as a third member of their Mentoring Team, when appropriate and to strengthen their relationship with their department head.

Mentoring Team members will be selected by individual faculty members based on their mentoring needs. It is anticipated that most Mentoring Team members will



be at a higher rank (e.g., full professor); however, individual faculty members are encouraged to choose those members who they feel will best serve as mentors. Associate professors are encouraged to discuss their Mentoring Team member choice with trusted colleagues.

Faculty members are free to change their selected mentors as their professional interests, goals, and needs evolve.

### **c. Mentoring Team Model and Frequency of Interaction**

Mentoring Teams will assist tenured associate professors and continuing (i.e., full-time) non-tenure track associate teaching and associate research professors in their professional development, help them reflect on their longer-term accomplishments and future goals, and provide feedback in a confidential and collegial setting.

Individual associate professors with a Mentoring Team are encouraged to meet with their Mentoring Team every two years. In addition, Mentoring Team members are expected to meet regularly (ranging from once per month to twice per year) with the faculty member on an individual basis where meetings may involve informal conversations about professional development, a discussion of the faculty member's Professional Development Plan (PDP)<sup>1</sup>, or a more formal assessment of the faculty member's readiness for promotion in rank.

It is expected that Mentoring Team members will advise on the criteria for promotion in academic rank and potentially serve as members of the Joint Promotion Committee. Meetings with the Mentoring Team are not to be considered performance reviews; they are not a substitute for annual meetings with department heads or for regular consultation with other mentors. Rather, Mentoring Team meetings held at regular intervals are intended to facilitate continued professional development and promotion. The results of Mentoring Team meetings are advisory and will be shared exclusively with the faculty member.

### **d. Mentorship Training**

Each Mentoring Team member (including department heads) is encouraged to undergo training (as described below).

Mentor training consists of three components: 1) understanding and proper interpretation of WPI's promotion criteria (for both TTT and NTT faculty members); 2) being an effective mentor including the use of Professional Development Plans; and 3) handling implicit bias <sup>2</sup>. Training is designed, customized, delivered and refined

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<sup>1</sup>The template for Professional Development Plans is available through the Morgan Teaching and Learning Center.

<sup>2</sup>Implicit biases are unconscious thoughts that are automatically activated without conscious awareness that can inadvertently influence thoughts, decisions, and behaviors. Implicit biases are pervasive, but they do not necessarily align with explicit beliefs, biases, or motivations.

to meet program needs. Training is administered through the Morgan Teaching and Learning Center and offered biannually to a cohort of identified Mentoring Team members. This training is also required of the provost, deans, department heads and program directors.

#### **e. Mentoring Team Meeting and Reporting**

Mentoring Team meetings will focus on discussions of the professional development of the faculty member (using the Professional Development Plan, where appropriate) and serve as a group mentoring experience. If desired, the faculty member may draft a summary of the meeting and ask the Mentoring Team to verify that they agree with the contents of the drafted summary. This summary of the meeting is only for their personal communication and will not be shared with anyone else unless agreed to by all parties. The Mentoring Team meeting should take place before the end of the academic year.

All faculty members choosing to establish a Mentoring Team should address career goals, align those goals with the criteria for promotion, and set objectives or milestones that they intend to achieve (using the Professional Development Plan, where appropriate). Faculty members should also maintain annual updates to two forms of vitae: 1) following the more detailed requirements of COAP (organization and categories available from Faculty Governance); and 2) one that is more appropriate for sharing with the faculty member's outside professional community.

The Morgan Teaching and Learning Center will maintain a record mentoring program participants. The content of the meetings will be confidential. Periodically, COAP and COG will request from department heads and the Morgan Teaching and Learning Center reports on actions taken to support mentoring and professional development.

#### **f. Administration**

The Associate Professor Mentoring Program will be administered through the Morgan Teaching and Learning Center. Periodic program assessment will be administered through the Center.