

Date: April 16, 2025

To: WPI Faculty

From: Committee on Governance (Prof. Troy, Chair) and Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom (Prof. Wobbe, Chair)

Re: Motion to update the Faculty Handbook re: tenure criteria for dual mission faculty

Motion: The Committee on Governance (COG) and the Committee on Tenure and Promotion (CTAF) recommend, and I move that the criteria for tenure of dual mission faculty be modified as described below.

Description of the Motion: The current language in the dual mission tenure criteria (Chapter Three, Section 3, Section a. Tenure Criteria for Associate and (full) Professors) describing types of evidence of high-quality teaching is outdated. This motion will update the language to match current practice. (Text to be removed is ~~red-struck-out~~. Text to be added is highlighted in yellow.) Text amended in the April 16, 2025 Faculty meeting is shown in teal.

3. THE TENURE CRITERIA

a. Tenure Criteria for Associate and (full) Professors

(Approved by the Faculty, October 13, 1988)

(Amended by the Faculty, March 24, 2011)

(Amended by the Faculty, April 16, 2025)

1. High quality teaching (undergraduate and/or graduate) is an essential (but not sufficient) requirement for obtaining tenure at WPI. The candidate's activities should demonstrate the capacity for continued high quality performance. High quality teaching can be evidenced in many ways, including (but not limited to): evidence provided by a teaching portfolio; ~~course evaluations~~; faculty peer evaluations; evaluations by alumni; student course reports; student reports on project advising; the quality of the Major Qualifying Projects; ~~and~~ Interactive Qualifying Projects; ~~and the Humanities Inquiry Seminar or Practicum~~; ~~and the Humanities Inquiry Seminar or Practicum~~; ~~freshman~~ first-year advising, academic advising and graduate theses advised by the candidate; teaching innovations; new course introductions; ~~and~~ ~~and~~ redesign of existing courses. ~~and course evaluations~~.

Rationale:

CTAF now requests candidates submit a teaching portfolio as part of their materials since it provides the best evidence of high-quality teaching. However, the teaching portfolio is not mentioned in the list of criteria. Additionally, the criteria specify that Inquiry Seminar/Practicum products will be reviewed; however, this is not possible as they are not archived either by the library or the department. . Finally, given the thoroughly demonstrated problems with using student course evaluation data, this item is moved later in the list of items used to evaluate high quality teaching.

Implementation:

The change is effective immediately and will be used by the JTC in tenure deliberations when assessing teaching. Since probationary faculty have been advised and most already include teaching portfolios in their tenure packet materials, this will not change current practices.