

Professional Standards Committee (PSC) 2019-2020 Year-End Report

Committee Members: David Andresen (Chair), Laura Behling, Suzanne Holland, Jim Jasinski, Pepa Lago-Grana (Fall only), Andreas Madlung, Jennifer Neighbors, George Tomlin (Fall only), Jennifer Utrata

A note of context for this report

The members of the PSC would like to make clear that this academic year has been unusual in two significant ways that have impacted our ability to complete the usual work of the PSC on Standing Charges. In addition to the major disruption caused by Covid-19 in Spring 2020, we also had more time-sensitive faculty and administrative requests that necessarily preempted our usual work for the majority of our meetings.

PSC Standing Charges - The duties of the Committee shall be:

1. To recommend and improve continually the instruments and methods of Faculty evaluation and to facilitate their use in the University community. In performing this duty the Committee shall have the authority to call upon any part of the University for assistance.
2. To fulfill responsibilities assigned by the Faculty Code.
3. To recommend to the Faculty any changes in the Code and Bylaws when needed.
4. To establish standards of professional performance, including those for promotion and tenure, and responsibilities for members of the instructional staff.
5. To perform such other duties as may be assigned to it.

PSC YEAR-END REPORT - ACADEMIC YEAR 2019-2020

This report is divided into four parts:

- I. Current Senate Charges
- II. Additional work in response to requests from departments and individuals
- III. PSC work regarding the impact of Covid-19
- IV. Suggestions for future work and charges.

PART I: CURRENT SENATE CHARGES

1. Review departmental evaluation standards and criteria according to the published review cycle, including those that remain outstanding from previous review cycles (Psychology, German Studies, Sociology and Anthropology, Religious Studies, and Exercise Science).
 - a. Psychology - received and approved
 - b. German Studies - have yet to submit anything

- c. SOAN - revision received 11/13/19
 - d. Religious Studies - received and approved 10/23/19
 - e. Exercise Science - received 9/27/19, reviewed, sent back for revisions
 - f. Economics - approved pending minor changes (9/23/19)
 - g. Chemistry - approved pending minor changes
 - h. Science, Technology, & Society - received 2/7/2020
 - i. Theatre Arts - received 4/17/2020
2. Address request from colleagues in the School of Education regarding the streamlined review process for clinical instructors.
- a. PSC was did not address this charge, and thus will need to be addressed by the 2020-2021 PSC committee
3. Upon receipt of a recommendation from the Senate, draft Code language and develop processes related to potential revisions to Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs).
- a. Although addressing the appropriate use of SETs was one of the PSC's main goals for this academic year, we regretfully report we were not able to put very much time towards this important issue given the considerable additional work in the Fall (see Part II) and the impact of Covid-19 in the Spring (see Part III).
 - b. We determined that all departmental evaluations should refer to the statement in the User Guide regarding SETs:
 - i. "Because of concern that evaluation forms invite bias, head officers of faculty reviews, department colleagues, and the Faculty Advancement Committee should use them with awareness of potential limitations and in the context of multiple forms of evidence of teaching effectiveness."
 - c. In our discussions thus far, we have concluded the following:
 - i. The PSC noted the lack of evidence for the use of SETs as valid measures of "teaching excellence," as well as the peer-reviewed research documenting the systemically biased nature of SETs. However, student feedback could still be collected in order to understand student experiences in courses.
 - ii. SETs likely cannot be "fixed" in the sense that all measures, including SETs, reflect systematic social and institutional bias. This bias necessarily impacts the most vulnerable members of our faculty, and their use in *promotion and tenure decisions* runs counter to our Core Values and Mission Statement.
 - 1. Evidence shows SET reflect student experiences, not an unbiased, empirical, or even valid measure of teaching effectiveness.
 - iii. Training of faculty and students in use/purpose of SETs is critical.
 - iv. Change in terminology/name to better reflect purpose, use, and meaning of SET is important.

- v. We could reframe the use of SETs to be seen as a *developmental tool* (formative use of SETs) rather than as *evidence* of teaching excellence during promotion and tenure (minimize the summative use of SETs).
 - 1. Tailor measures to courses, information that is useful.
- vi. Tie evaluation questions to departmental evaluation documents/goals.
- vii. We could remove the word “evaluation” and replace it with something that better reflects what they are. One term that was suggested was SPOT forms (student perception of teaching).
- viii. We could educate students and faculty about their appropriate use.
- ix. Although many institutions have gotten rid of traditional SETs, at Puget Sound this would require a change to Faculty Code.
- x. Inclusion of student voice is important.
- xi. Although the Code states that student evaluations must be included in one’s file, the precise format and use of these evaluations is not specified, allowing for relatively dramatic changes.

PART II: ADDITIONAL WORK

1. We addressed two questions about adding materials to an evaluatee’s file after the submission date.
 - a. We addressed a question about whether additional material could be added to an evaluatee’s file *after* submission if the department (or FAC) determine that additional material is needed to make a promotion or tenure decision.
 - i. The PSC determined that adding material after the file deadline is not allowed in the standard procedure. However, the Code does allow for a request to be made for a formal variation from standard procedures (Chapter 3, Section 4.a.3.a) upon agreement by the evaluatee, Head Officer, Provost, and FAC.
 - b. We addressed a question if it was possible to correct materials that had been incorrectly uploaded to the electronic file submitted for review (e.g., uploading two of the same SETs). The PSC concluded it is appropriate to correct this type of clear error, but to keep both the original submission as well as the amended submission available to reviewers for context.
2. We reviewed an “Addendum to the School of Education Evaluation Criteria for Position of Professor of Music Education” regarding evaluation of a faculty member with a joint position in both Education and Music.
3. The PSC held two full meetings to address two individual informal challenges to evaluation procedures during promotion.
4. We reviewed and concurred with the Senate Task Force on Non-Tenure Line Faculty that:
 - a. The Code (Ch1.B Section II.b) allows for the creation of a new type of faculty position, but that the input of faculty is to provide input to the Provost in the creation of policies, contracts, and categories of non-tenure-line positions, as bound by the Code, Faculty By-Laws, and other governing documents.

5. With regard to how departments must proceed when questions of professional ethics arise during an evaluation (p. 17; Ch. III, Sec. 4f), the PSC concluded that an addition to Ch III, Sec. 4a (1c) (p. 12) is most likely necessary to make III 4a (1c) consistent with III 4f regarding proper procedures when questions of professional ethics arise during an evaluation.
6. The current language in the User Guide on p. 21 reads: “The head officer should remind colleagues that, effective 2017-18 with implementation of a regular review cycle for departmental evaluation statements, faculty members undergoing evaluation *may* choose to use either the newly approved departmental evaluation standards or the most recent prior version of their department’s evaluation standards, so long as the most recent prior version was in effect on the date that the faculty member’s tenure-line or ongoing clinical-line appointment began.” The PSC voted unanimously that the word “may” on line 3 of the paragraph should be replaced with “will”. The same change is to be made on page 23 in the checklist table.
7. The PSC recommends adding the following language on p. 9 of the User Guide before the paragraph headed “Letters from outside the department.” First, a new heading of “Choice of evaluation standards version to be used in the evaluation,” followed by the text “Faculty members undergoing evaluation will choose to use either the newly approved departmental evaluation standards or the most recent prior version of their department’s evaluation standards, so long as the most recent prior version was in effect on the date that the faculty member’s tenure-line or ongoing clinical-line appointment began.”
8. Changes to User Guide to correct inconsistencies in Streamlined Reviews:
 - a. The PSC decided: “All streamlined review files are considered ‘open’ files.” This information will be added to page 27 of the User Guide, at the end of the first paragraph under the section heading “Alternative Evaluation Process.”
 - b. The PSC decided: “After their file has been forwarded to the Provost’s office by the head officer and the Provost’s office has notified the evaluatee that their file is complete, the evaluatee will have five days to review their file.” This information will be added as an Item 5 under “Alternative Evaluation Process” on page 27 of the User Guide.
 - c. Item 1 on page 27 of the User Guide should be changed to read: “1. For evaluations starting in 2021-2022 academic year and thereafter, the faculty member consults with the head officer about the review one year prior to the start of the semester in which the evaluation is scheduled and informs the head officer whether they prefer a streamlined or full review.”
 - d. On page 3 of the User Guide, the line: “Professors at any year of service in that rank may elect, with the concurrence of their head officer and the dean, to have a “streamlined” review will be changed to read: “All five-year reviews will be streamlined unless a) the evaluatee requests a full review or b) the head officer or Provost determines that a full review is necessary. Whoever calls for the full review must inform the other involved parties one year prior to the semester in which the evaluation is scheduled.”
9. With regard to the stipulation on p. 47 of the PSC’s Interpretation Appendix to the Faculty Code: “In the case of an open file, the faculty member being evaluated has access to letters in the evaluation file and may take notes while reviewing the file. If the faculty member desires copies of the letters, the faculty member must seek copies from the writers.” The PSC determined that

the existing practice of not allowing photographs to be taken of evaluation file material is the correct interpretation.

10. With regard to how to interpret the word “results” in Ch. 3, Sec. 5, point b of the Faculty Code: “In making this decision the head officer shall consider information gathered from student evaluations of teaching, evidence gathered from any class visitations and the *results* of previous evaluations.” The University Counsel agreed that the PSC can add an interpretation to the Faculty Code specifying that “results” includes the previous head officer evaluation letter and FAC evaluation letter from no more than the two most recent evaluations.

PART III: PSC WORK REGARDING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EVALUATIONS

Beginning March 7, 2020, all teaching was moved online to slow the spread of Covid-19. Although clearly the right decision, the impact of this change with regard to evaluations was significant and the PSC dedicated our time to developing a plan to mitigate the impact of these changes. The document regarding our plan was sent out to all faculty 4/17 and is attached to this document in Appendix A. In summary, student evaluations and peer observations for Spring 2020 are optional, and those with early fall evaluations who need additional time or student evaluations can postpone until Spring 2021, or for a full year to Fall 2021. To manage FAC workload, streamlined Full Professor five-year reviews were moved to Fall 2020, and due dates for all fall evaluations were consolidated to September 3, 2020.

PART IV: FUTURE CHARGES

The work that the PSC hopes to address in the 2020-21 academic year includes:

1. Address request from colleagues in the School of Education regarding the streamlined review process for clinical instructors.
2. Continue to work with faculty to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on their upcoming evaluations.
 - a. Faculty up for Tenure review in Fall 2021 who may not have administered SETs in Spring 2020 and would only have three of four required SETs.
 - b. Many presentations, performances, publications, and research programs were significantly disrupted by Covid-19 in a variety of ways, and this context needs to be understood in the future.
3. Streamlined Reviews needs revision in User Guide and clarification in Code
 - a. What is written on page 3 of the User Guide does not match page 27 as to whom makes the decision regarding a streamlined review. Moreover, in Ch. 3, Sec. 5, point b of the Faculty Code says that “The head officer shall determine whether a full review under Chapter III, section 4 is warranted or if the review will proceed under the procedures described in this section.”

4. The PSC ruled in two specific cases about altering files in an electronic evaluation site. Future PSC may want to formalize how to handle these scenarios.
 - a. With regard to adding documents to an evaluatee's electronic file at the request of the department, the PSC concluded that adding materials after the deadline is not permitted as normal procedure. However, the department could pursue a formal variation in evaluation procedure, as outlined in Faculty Code Chapter 3, Section 4.a.3.a. Such a discussion would require agreement from multiple parties: the evaluatee, the head officer, the Provost, and the Faculty Advancement Committee.
 - b. With regard to correcting materials that were incorrectly uploaded to an evaluatee's electronic file, such as accidentally uploading the same set of documents twice, or the wrong set of student evaluations. The PSC decided to allow the *correction* of materials mistakenly uploaded. The head officer should instruct the candidate to send the correct materials to the Assistant to the Provost (CC'ing that correspondence to the head officer). The Assistant to the Provost will add the new materials to the evaluatee's evaluation site, with the old materials left in place.
5. Review of departmental evaluation criteria according to the published review cycle.
 - a. Past due
 - i. German Studies
 - ii. African American Studies
 - b. Submitted revisions that need to be reviewed by PSC
 - i. Sociology and Anthropology
 - ii. Economics (minor revisions)
 - c. Reviewed by PSC, awaiting major revisions from department
 - i. Exercise Science
 - d. Submitted but not yet reviewed by PSC
 - i. Science, Technology, & Society
 - ii. Theatre Arts
 - e. Due academic year 2020-2021
 - i. International Political Economy (Fall 2020)
 - ii. Education (Fall 2020)
 - iii. African American Studies (Fall 2020)
 - iv. Communication Studies (Spring 2021)
 - v. Asian Studies (Spring 2021)

Submitted,

David Andresen, Chair

Dear Colleagues,

COVID-19 has required adaptations to our usual practices and workloads, including an unexpected transition to teaching remotely, and disruptions in your programs of research, scholarship, or creative work. We recognize that this new reality may have caused anxiety about evaluations and your career progress, and we want to ensure that you will not be penalized for your flexibility, adaptability, and hard work. We hope these changes alleviate some of your anxiety and allow you to focus on the adjustments you are making in your teaching and other professional activities.

Timeline for Faculty Reviews

Faculty Scheduled for 3-Year Assistant Reviews in Spring 2021

Because three-year assistant reviews are critical for continued faculty development along the tenure track, faculty third-year reviews will be rescheduled for Spring 2021 (see due dates below). Faculty may satisfy the requirement for the most recent two semesters of student evaluations by including their choice of two semesters of evaluations from Fall 2019, Spring 2020 or Fall 2020 student evaluations.

Faculty and Clinical Faculty Scheduled for Tenure and/or Promotion to Associate or Full Professor, in 2020-21

Although we recognize that many faculty up for tenure and/or promotion may be prepared to move forward on their current evaluation schedule, we are providing faculty with the following three options:

1. Faculty may opt to be evaluated in Fall 2020, as currently scheduled.
2. Faculty may opt to delay their review to Spring 2021.
3. Faculty may opt to delay their review to Fall 2021, following the dates and deadlines as scheduled for that year.

Faculty should email the Provost by June 1 indicating which of the three options they have chosen. Due dates for 2020-21 evaluations are below.

Faculty Scheduled for 3-Year Associate and 5-Year Full Professor Reviews in 2020-21

Three year associates and full professors up for evaluation will have their reviews rescheduled to Fall 2020, unless they opt out of the Fall 2020 review by emailing the Provost by June 1. If they opt out, they will be evaluated in Spring 2021. Due dates for 2020-21 evaluations are below.

3-Year Instructor Reviews Scheduled for Spring 2021

The following two options are available to 3-year instructors scheduled for review in the academic year 2020-2021.

1. Faculty may opt to be evaluated in Spring 2021, as currently scheduled.
2. Faculty may opt to delay their review for one full year, following the dates and deadlines as scheduled for that year.

Faculty should email the Provost by June 1 indicating when they have elected to submit their file for review. Due dates for 2020-21 evaluation are below.

Reviews of Current First- and Second-Year Faculty Members

Review of first- and second-year faculty will be completed by department chairs/head officers according to the timeline in the "Faculty Evaluation Procedures & Evaluation": "First- and second-year faculty members will be evaluated only within the department by means of a written progress report by the head officer that should be forwarded to the individual and the [Provost] by June 30, 2020" (*Faculty Evaluation Procedures & Criteria*, 2).

Faculty scheduled for tenure beyond the 2020-2021 academic year

The PSC recognizes that faculty colleagues scheduled for tenure evaluation beyond 2020-21 have been impacted by the current situation. The PSC will address this concern in the near future.

Student Evaluations of Teaching

Faculty have two options regarding student evaluations of teaching for Spring 2020:

1. Faculty may elect to administer student course evaluations of teaching for Spring 2020. Electronic evaluations forms, completed anonymously online, will be made available to students using Google Forms, and administered by departmental administrative assistants.
 - i. Faculty should notify their departmental assistant if they would like student evaluations of teaching administered this semester.
 - ii. If Spring 2020 student evaluations are collected, faculty may elect to include, or exclude, Spring 2020 student evaluations with regard to subsequent evaluation files, and this decision may be made *after* the faculty member has reviewed the evaluations.

2. Faculty may elect not to administer student course evaluations of teaching for Spring 2020.

3. If student evaluations are not collected for Spring 2020, or if they are collected and the faculty member opts to not use them in their file, faculty should use the directions below in order to include the required number of semesters of student evaluations for their review:

- iii. Faculty who opt to stand for evaluation in Fall 2020 may replace spring 2020 evaluations with student evaluations from a prior semester from within the evaluation period not already included in their file.
- iv. Faculty who opt to delay until Spring 2021 will include Fall 2020 student evaluations in lieu of Spring 2020 evaluations.

Peer Observations

The following peer observation options are available to faculty up for review in the academic year 2020-21. Faculty may opt to:

1. *Continue peer observations during spring 2020.*
 - Peer observations may occur during online teaching sessions
2. *Not have peer observations during spring 2020.*
 - If additional peer observations are needed please discuss this requirement with your department chair and/or head officer to determine if additional peer observations are necessary, and how to schedule those observations. Peer observations may occur in Fall 2020 as long as those observations occur prior to submission of colleagues' evaluation letters to the head officer.

In order to be responsive to questions faculty may have about their individual scenarios, please use this form to submit any questions you may have: <https://forms.gle/QypSY7LywVGLGKJk6>

Sincerely,

Laura Behling, Provost
Sara Freeman, Chair, Faculty Senate
David Andresen, Chair, Professional Standards Committee
Suzanne Holland, Professional Standards Committee
Jim Jasinski, Professional Standards Committee
Andreas Madlung, Professional Standards Committee
Jennifer Neighbors, Professional Standards Committee
Jennifer Utrata, Professional Standards Committee

DEADLINES FOR OUTSIDE LETTERS AND FOR FORWARDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PROVOST'S OFFICE

The following deadlines apply for individuals submitting outside letters to the head officer and for departments forwarding recommendations and supporting files to the Provost's Office.

<i>Evaluation</i>	<i>File due to Department (evaluee access to Google evaluation site ends)</i>	<i>Outside letters due to Department (deliberative meeting must not occur prior to this date)</i>	<i>File due to Dean's Office (department access to Google evaluation site ends)</i>
Tenure	September 3 OR January 11	September 17 January 25	October 1 February 8
Promotion to Associate	September 3 OR January 11	September 17 January 25	October 1 February 8
Promotion to Full	September 3 OR January 11	September 17 January 25	October 1 February 8
3-year Assistant	January 18	February 1	February 15
5-year Professor	September 3 OR January 11	September 17 January 25	October 1 February 8
3-year Associate	September 3 OR January 11	September 17 January 25	October 1 February 8
3-year Instructor	January 18	February 1	February 15
Spring approved evaluation files	January 18	February 1	February 15

