

# DEMYSTIFYING TENURE AND PROMOTION: STRATEGIES FOR A MERITORIOUS FILE

Victor Ferreira, Professor, Department of Psychology

Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Equity Diversity and Inclusion

*The UC San Diego community holds great respect for the land and the original people of the area where our campus is located. The university was built on the un-ceded territory of the Kumeyaay Nation. Today, the Kumeyaay people continue to maintain their political sovereignty and cultural traditions as vital members of the San Diego Community. We acknowledge their tremendous contributions to our region and thank them for their stewardship.*

# UC San Diego

## CENTER FOR FACULTY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Center for Faculty Diversity and Inclusion works collaboratively to cultivate an academic culture of inclusive excellence.

- Transformational change
- Cultivating faculty success and leadership
- Fostering civility in academia
- Recruiting and retaining diverse faculty

[facultydiversity.ucsd.edu](https://facultydiversity.ucsd.edu) | [vcedi-faculty@ucsd.edu](mailto:vcedi-faculty@ucsd.edu)

# ADVANCEMENT AND PROMOTION AT UC SAN DIEGO

- What's bad about advancement and promotion at UC:
  - It's a complex, bureaucratic, policy-bound process that is multi-layered and laden with options.
    - Effortful to learn about and understand.
- What's good about advancement and promotion at UC:
  - It's a complex, bureaucratic, policy-bound process that is multi-layered and laden with options.
    - Your fate is determined by a system of checks and balances, and (not really) by any one person.

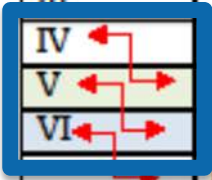
# POLICIES AND MANUALS

- Two articulating policy documents:
  - The APM (Academic Personnel Manual; UC)
  - The PPM (Policy and Procedure Manual; UC San Diego)
- The PPM supplements the APM with additional UCSD-specific policies
- Especially relevant policies to advancement and promotion:
  - [APM 230-210](#); [PPM 230-210](#); “Review and Appraisal Committees”
  - [APM 230-220](#); [PPM 230-220](#); “Professor Series”
  - [APM 230-285](#); [PPM 230-285](#); “Lecturer with Security of Employment (Teaching Professor) Series”



Normal Time in Step

Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Full Professor		Distinguished Professor Above Scale	Normal Period of Service at Step
Step	Step	Step	Step	No Steps	
I					2 years
II					2 years
III					2 years
IV					2 years
V	I				2 years individually or combined
VI	II				2 years individually or combined
	III				2 years
	IV	I			3 years individually or combined
	V	II			3 years individually or combined
		III			3 years
		IV			3 years
		V			open steps – 3 or more years
			VI		open steps – 3 or more years
			VII		open steps – 3 or more years
			VIII		open steps – 3 or more years
			IX		4 or more years
				No steps/just merits within Above-Scale	4 or more years between merit advancements



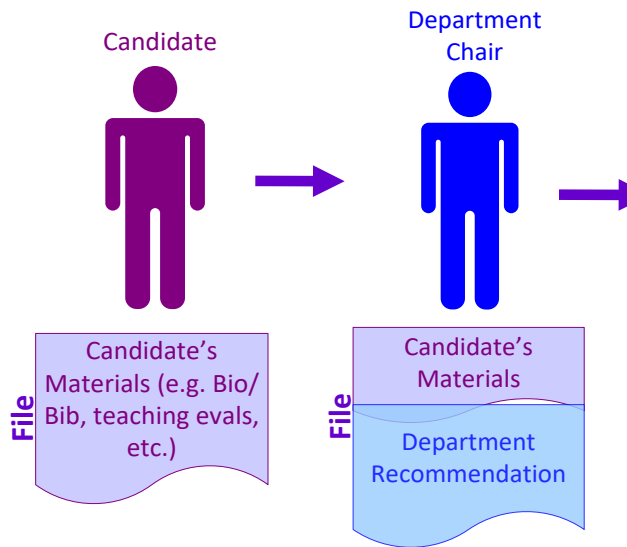
Normal is:  
 Asst I - IV to Assoc I      Assoc I – III to Prof I  
 Asst V to Assoc II        Assoc IV to Prof II  
 Asst VI to Assoc III      Assoc V to Prof III

# TYPICAL CAREER PATH AT ASSISTANT RANK

- Appointed to Assistant Professor Step II
  - Serve at Asst II for 2 years, advance to Asst III (Dean)



# Academic Review at UC San Diego



# TYPICAL CAREER PATH AT ASSISTANT RANK

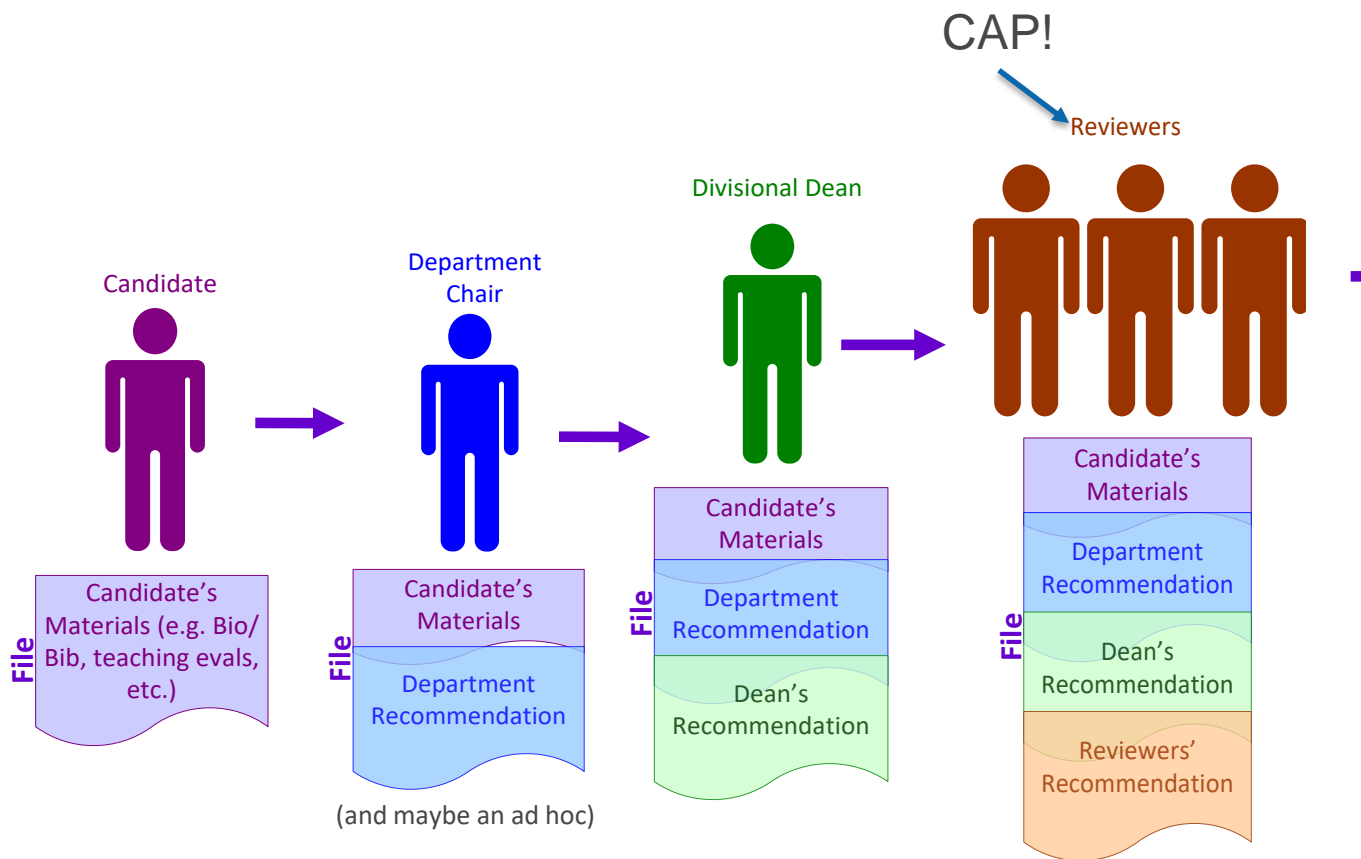
- Appointed to Assistant Professor Step II
  - Serve at Asst II for 2 years, advance to Asst III (Dean)
  - Serve at Asst III for 2 years, advance to Asst IV; appraised (EVC)



# TYPICAL CAREER PATH AT ASSISTANT RANK

- Fourth-year appraisal:
  - Generally happens in parallel with second review
  - Opportunity for you to get feedback from all levels
  - In addition to narrative, formal outcomes will be one of:
    - Favorable (*rare*)
    - Favorable with ~~reservations~~ recommendations (*modal*)
    - Problematic
    - Unfavorable

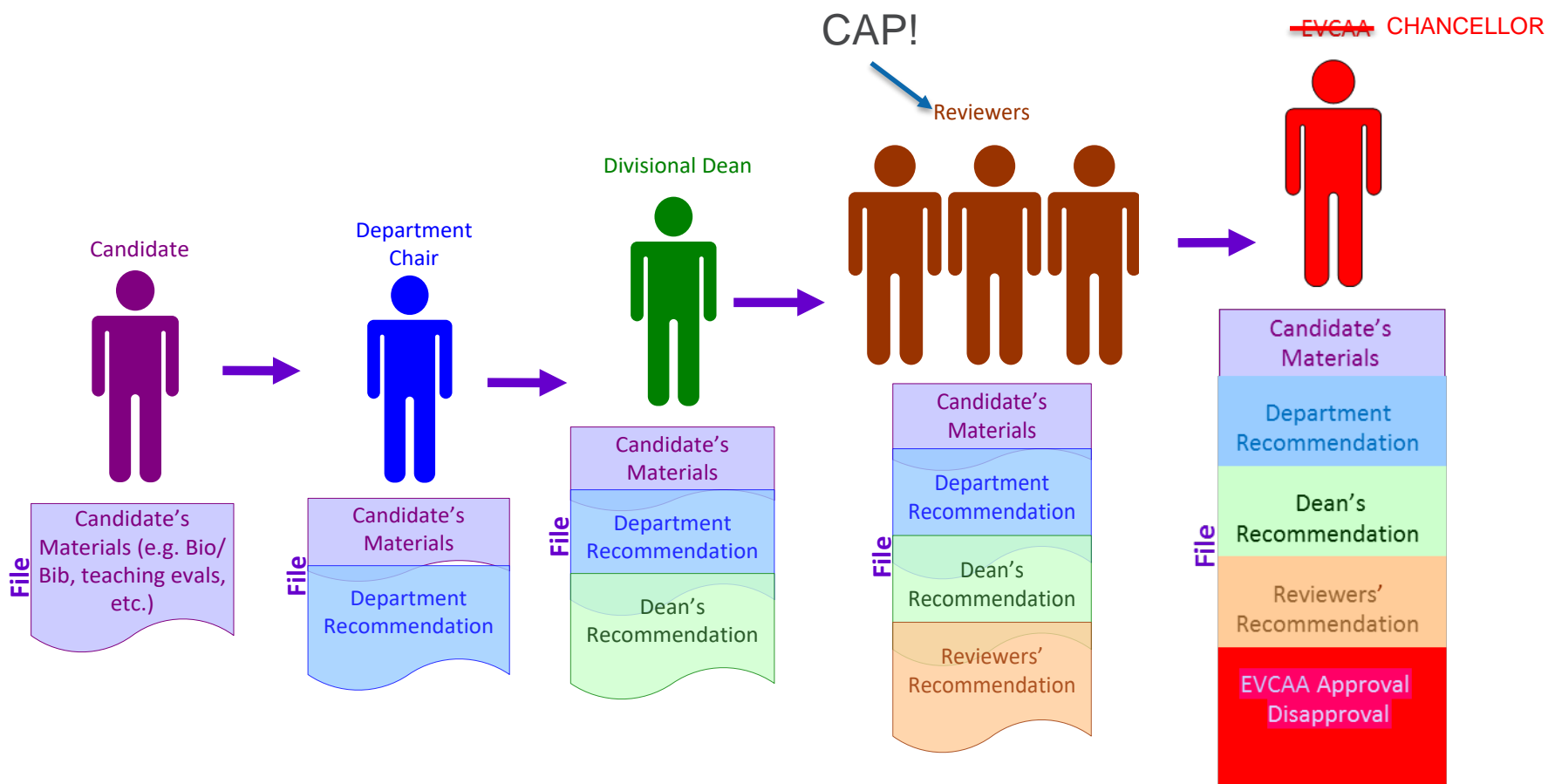
# Academic Review at UC San Diego



# TYPICAL CAREER PATH AT ASSISTANT RANK

- Appointed to Assistant Professor Step II
  - Serve at Asst II for 2 years, advance to Asst III (Dean)
  - Serve at Asst III for 2 years, advance to Asst IV; appraised (EVC)
  - Serve at Asst IV for 2 years, promoted to Associate Professor Step I (Chancellor)
- IMPORTANT: Along with the current file, CAP always sees the previous file.
  - So, CAP will see their appraisal of your file.

# Academic Review at UC San Diego





Normal Time in Step					
Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Full Professor		Distinguished Professor Above Scale	Normal Period of Service at Step
Step	Step	Step	Step	No Steps	
I					2 years
II					2 years
III					2 years
IV					2 years
V	I				2 years individually or combined
VI	II				2 years individually or combined
	III				2 years
	IV	I			3 years individually or combined
	V	II			3 years individually or combined
		III			3 years
		IV			3 years
		V			open steps – 3 or more years
			VI		open steps – 3 or more years
			VII		open steps – 3 or more years
			VIII		open steps – 3 or more years
			IX		4 or more years
				No steps/just merits within Above-Scale	4 or more years between merit advancements

Normal is:

Asst I - IV to Assoc I

Asst V to Assoc II

Asst VI to Assoc III


Assoc I – III to Prof I

Assoc IV to Prof II

Assoc V to Prof III

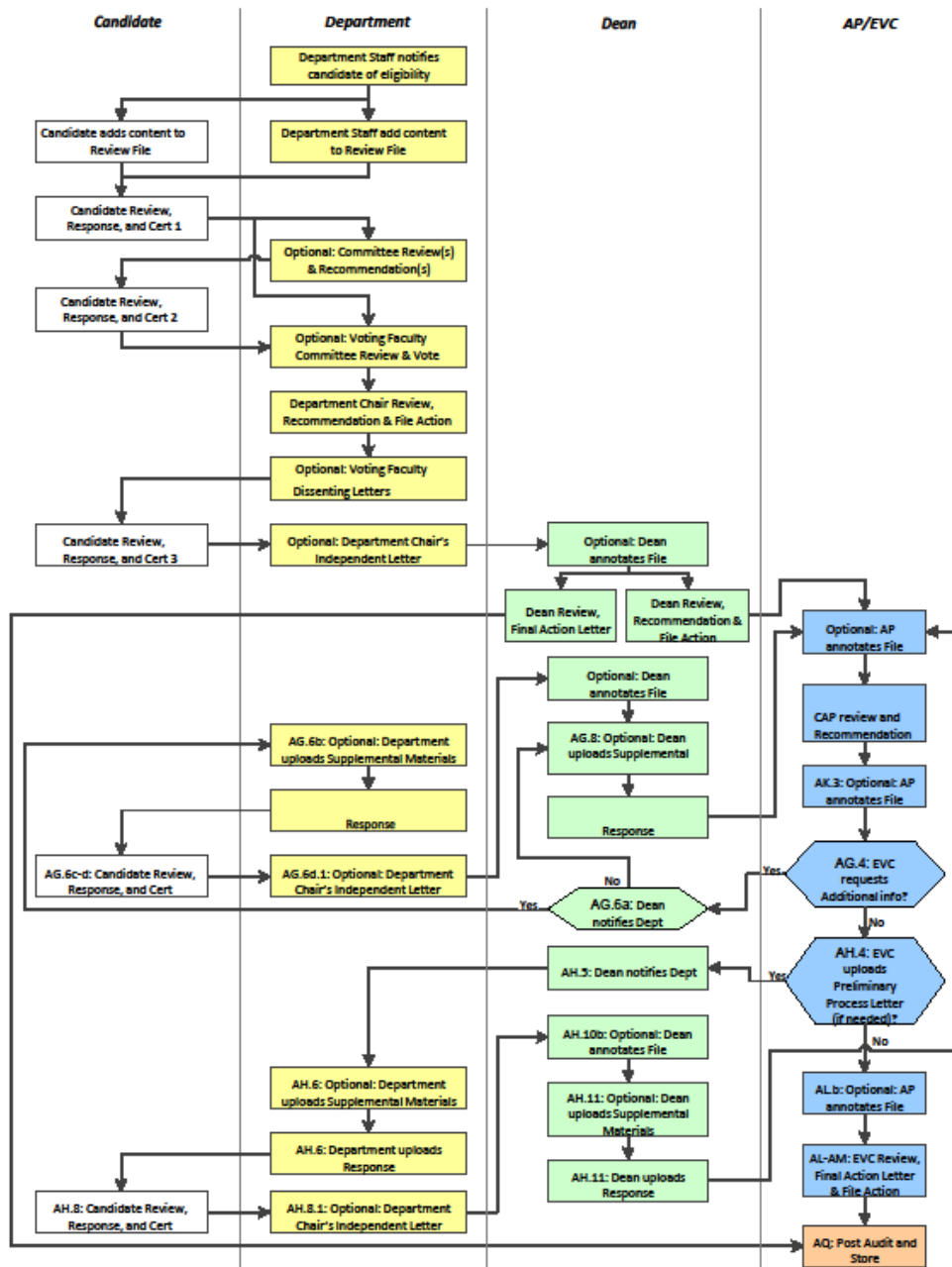
# CUSTOMARY ELEMENTS OF THE ACADEMIC TENURE FILE

- Cover sheet, employment history
- Department letter
- Ad hoc report
- Self evaluation
- External letters
- Teaching evaluations
- Biobib



You get to see all of these and certify them...

# Academic Review Process



# CUSTOMARY ELEMENTS OF THE ACADEMIC TENURE FILE

- Cover sheet, employment history
- Department letter
- Ad hoc report
- Self evaluation
- External letters
- Teaching evaluations
- Biobib

...but these are the  
only elements over  
which you have  
substantive control

You get to see all of  
these and certify  
them...



# CUSTOMARY ELEMENTS OF THE ACADEMIC TENURE FILE

- Cover sheet, employment history
- Department letter
- Ad hoc report
- Self evaluation
- External letters
- Teaching evaluations
- Biobib



...but these are the only elements over which you have substantive control

You get to see all of these and certify them...

# AN ASIDE: REGULAR VS CAREER REVIEWS

- Most of your reviews will be *regular* reviews:
  - Your first review at UCSD was likely a regular review
  - Generally, all that is considered is your most recent *review period*.
    - Starts after your last review period ended (or when you started at UCSD).
    - Generally ends one year before your advancement or promotion is effective.
    - (This is confusing, but not too pertinent for the tenure case.)

# AN ASIDE: REGULAR VS CAREER REVIEWS

- You could have 4 *career reviews* across your time at UCSD (these are sometimes discouragingly called “barrier steps”):
  - Promotion to Associate Professor with tenure.
  - Promotion to Full Professor.
  - Advancement to Professor, Step VI.
  - Advancement to Above Scale (“Distinguished Professor”).



Normal Time in Step					
Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Full Professor		Distinguished Professor Above Scale	Normal Period of Service at Step
Step	Step	Step	Step	No Steps	
I					2 years
II					2 years
III					2 years
IV					2 years
V	I				2 years individually or combined
VI	II				2 years individually or combined
	III				2 years
	IV	I			3 years individually or combined
	V	II			3 years individually or combined
		III			3 years
		IV			3 years
		V			open steps – 3 or more years
			VI		open steps – 3 or more years
			VII		open steps – 3 or more years
			VIII		open steps – 3 or more years
			IX		4 or more years
				No steps/just merits within Above-Scale	4 or more years between merit advancements

Normal is:

Asst I - IV to Assoc I

Asst V to Assoc II

Asst VI to Assoc III

Assoc I – III to Prof I

Assoc IV to Prof II

Assoc V to Prof III

# AN ASIDE: REGULAR VS CAREER REVIEWS

- You'll have up to 4 career reviews across your time at UCSD (these are sometimes discouragingly called “barrier steps”):
  - Promotion to Associate Professor with tenure.
  - Promotion to Full Professor.
  - Advancement to Professor, Step VI.
  - Advancement to Above Scale (“Distinguished Professor”).
- *Your entire career* (as well as the review period) is evaluated.
- How you assemble your file is a bit different for regular vs career reviews.

# CUSTOMARY ELEMENTS OF THE ACADEMIC TENURE FILE

- Cover sheet, employment history
- Department letter
- Ad hoc report
- Self evaluation
- External letters
- Teaching evaluations

→ Biobib



...but these are the only elements over which you have substantive control




You get to see all of these and certify them...

# THE BIOBIB

- The “biobib” – biography-bibliography – is (especially for research-focused professors) the most important part of your academic file.
  - It’s a categorized and organized inventory of all your professional contributions to UCSD.
  - Biography: You and your professional contributions to the university and to your field.
  - Bibliography: A list of your published work.
  - [A sample biobib – mine!](#)

# COMPONENTS OF THE BIOBIB

- Biography:
  - Section I: Employment History and Education
  - Section II: Professional Data
    - (a) Your service
    - (b) Memberships
    - (c) Honors and Awards
    - (d) Contracts and grants
    - (e) External Professional Activities
    - (f) Contributions to diversity
    - (g) Other activities
    - (h) Student instructional activities
    - (i) External reviews of primary creative work



Your department might/should have conventions on many of these. Check to be sure.



# BIOGRAPHY COMPONENTS

- It's important for the components to be well organized:
  - ALWAYS clearly distinguish contributions from the most recent review period from preceding contributions.
  - Relevant sections can have subsections:
    - Service: Department, University, Discipline.
    - Instructional activities: PhD advisees, PhD committees, post docs
    - etc

# COMPONENTS OF THE BIOBIB

- Bibliography:
  - Section A: “Primary published or creative work”
    - Subsections (for me; yours likely differ)
      - A.I: Research Articles/ Original Peer-Reviewed Work
      - A.II: Review and Invited Articles
      - A.III: Books and Book Chapters
      - A.IV: Refereed Encyclopedic Entries
      - A.V: Refereed Commentary
      - A.VI: Refereed Conference Proceedings
    - B: “Other work”
    - C: “Work in progress”



This is almost the entire focus of review; contributions in other sections are marginal or contextual.

# GENERAL TIPS ON THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Subsections of A are generally department-specific.
  - You'll need to work with what you've been dealt.
  - But you can provide context in your self statement, and you should provide context to your chairs and/or ad hoc.
- You need to document YOUR contributions to each item (e.g., CASRAI tags).
- Be careful about how to “count” items (and avoid double-counting).
  - Again, context in self statement and to chair and ad hoc.

# GENERAL TIPS ON THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Section B (“other work”) is given very little weight during review.
  - It’s nice to fill this out to have all your contributions in one place.
  - But don’t sweat the details.
- Section C (“work in progress”) is tricky.
  - All items listed in C must be provided with your file.
  - Can be useful especially for appraisal and tenure.
  - But, items in C are tracked from review to review – careful!

# CUSTOMARY ELEMENTS OF THE ACADEMIC TENURE FILE

- Cover sheet, employment history
- Department letter
- Ad hoc report
- Self evaluation
- External letters
- Teaching evaluations

→ Biobib



...but these are the only elements over which you have substantive control



You get to see all of these and certify them...

# TEACHING EVALUATIONS

- Campus is in the process of shifting away from CAPEs and to holistic teaching evaluation (stay tuned for future reviews).
- So for now, your teaching evaluations consist of two components:
  - CAPEs
  - Everything else
- Note: CAP is *very* reluctant to be enthusiastic about tenure files documenting teaching it views as problematic, so take this seriously.

# COURSE AND PROFESSOR EVALUATIONS

- There's lots to be said about student evaluations generally and CAPEs specifically.
- But what CAP (and everyone else) has historically done is:
  - Focus on the bottom line “recommend instructor” percentage.
  - If there are concerns, dig deeper:
    - Look at specific CAPE questions.
    - Skim through or read student comments.
- These aren't best practices, but it's what many will do anyway.

# WHAT TO DO ABOUT CAPES

- If your “recommend instructor” ratings are high, not much to do.
- If your “recommend instructor” ratings are not high, then:
  - Provide context:
    - Does this course get lower ratings? (Provide data.)
    - Events that affected ratings (e.g., AI issues).
    - Steps to be taken going forward.
  - Try not to be defensive or dismissive; engage with the ratings and do the best that can be done with them.



# TEACHING EVALUATIONS: EVERYTHING ELSE

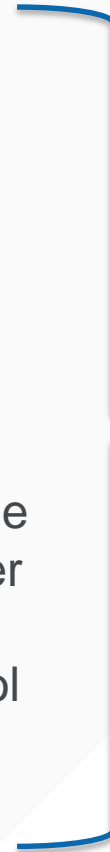
- Still a work in progress, but additional info to provide includes:
  - Narratives on classroom teaching.
  - Course syllabi.
  - Examples of assessments (tests, assignments).
  - Peer or TLC evaluations.
- Also: Include teaching duties outside the classroom:
  - Mentoring. Course development. Et cetera.

# CUSTOMARY ELEMENTS OF THE ACADEMIC TENURE FILE

- Cover sheet, employment history
- Department letter
- Ad hoc report
- Self evaluation
- External letters
- Teaching evaluations
- Biobib



...but these are the only elements over which you have substantive control



You get to see all of these and certify them...

# LETTERS FROM EXTERNAL REFEREES

- You need at least 5 letters from independent referees.
  - CAP prefers a few more than 5.
  - Should mostly be from full professors and peer institutions.
  - Some recommended by your department, some by you.
    - Talk to people about this (your chair, your mentor, others).
  - Must must must be independent.
    - If there's more than 5, then an independent-ish letter is okay.
    - But if only 5, your file will be sent back for more letters.

# EXTERNAL LETTERS: WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Work with your chair and colleagues ahead of time to navigate any trickiness.
  - You can exclude people.
  - You can provide context on (possible) referees.
- You will see the (redacted) letters that go into your file.
  - Only the header and footer are redacted (so if they self-identify, you'll see it).
  - You can respond to letters after they come in.

# EXTERNAL LETTERS: WHAT CAN YOU DO?


- You can provide external referees with additional materials.
  - Your vita instead of your biobib.
  - A research statement.
    - This is an especially good idea.
    - Especially in disciplines that produce piecemeal, referees can have a hard time seeing the forest for the trees.
      - Show them the forest – provide the thematic coherence or programmatic structure, which they can provide back in their letters.

# EXTERNAL LETTERS: AN ADDITIONAL NOTE

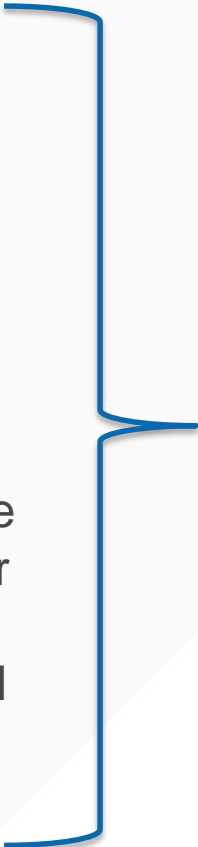
- For better or worse, “response rate” will be considered.
- General types of non-responses:
  - “I’m busy but they’re great.” ← These are okay.
  - “I’m busy but you shouldn’t hold that against them.”
  - “I’m busy and I’ve never heard of this person.”
  - “I’m busy.”
  - 🐦 🐦 🐦 ← These are held against you.
- You can provide context when you certify your file with letters.

# CUSTOMARY ELEMENTS OF THE ACADEMIC TENURE FILE

- Cover sheet, employment history
- Department letter
- Ad hoc report
- Self evaluation
- External letters
- Teaching evaluations
- Biobib



...but these are the only elements over which you have substantive control



You get to see all of these and certify them...

# SELF EVALUATION

- There aren't really conventions regarding self evaluations.
  - You can contact people in your department (especially those knowledgeable about academic review) for ideas.
- In general, a good self-evaluation is:
  - Complete, but as brief as possible.
  - Organized appropriately for the applicable review.
  - Able to be read, skimmed, or sampled as needed



# EXAMPLE SELF EVALUATION (MINE!)

- Structure (for my Step VI career review):
  - Career Overview
    - (Evidence of independence)
  - Review Period Overview
  - Review Period: Research
    - Summary
    - Documentation of published work.
  - Review Period: Teaching
    - Summary
    - Classroom Teaching
    - Mentoring
  - Review Period: Service
    - Major Service: Department, University, Discipline
    - Minor Service: Department, University, Discipline

# INDEPENDENCE

- PPM 230-220-1.d (2): “For appointment at or advancement to the Associate level or higher, independent academic and intellectual leadership in the field must be demonstrated. Although candidates must demonstrate independence from early-career mentors or advisors in order to be appointed at the Associate level, evidence is not restricted to independent research papers, other independent creative accomplishments, or garnering sole-P.I. grants, particularly if the candidate’s research or creative activity takes place in a large-scale, collaborative team. However, if a traditional demonstration of independence is absent, more substantial documentation is needed to explain and support the case that appointment at the Associate level is warranted. In such a case, letters from non-independent referees (e.g., research team members) may be provided in addition to the usual complement of independent letters.”

# INDEPENDENCE

- Independence is sufficiently important for tenure review that it's a *great* idea to point to the evidence of independence in your file:
  - Publications / creative activity without mentors or senior colleagues
  - Grants or funding as PI and without mentors or senior colleagues
  - Recognition in your discipline – invited talks, editorial activities.
- Remember: Point to evidence. Think of academic review as like manuscript review.
  - Manuscript reviewers shouldn't assume anything about the research reported in a manuscript, and academic reviewers shouldn't assume anything about accomplishments documented in an academic file.

# SELF EVALUATION: ADDITIONAL COMPONENTS

- Any needed context, added as appropriate.
  - Context for publications given biobib structure: Research section
  - Context for CAPEs: Teaching Section
  - Context for minimal or important service: Service section
    - Especially for DEI contributions: Provide full context!
      - CAP looks to give bonuses for significant EDI contributions.
    - Also a good idea to give your chair a heads-up on these things.
- COVID statement. Strongly, strongly recommended.

## Think about the impact of COVID and your research, teaching, advising.

- Describe and document (for yourself) how your research has been impacted by COVID.
- Take notes now on this, as you may forget which projects have been postponed, duration, etc. No Lab access, etc.
- Also consider how you have adjusted. Did you go back to data you collected previously? Did you engage in writing op ed or for news outlets? Did you use this time to get grants out? Apply for COVID funding for your research?
- Also reflect on the shifts and changes to your teaching and pedagogy. How much time did it take you to get up to speed on Canvas? Zoom? Did you attend any Teaching & Learning Commons webinars or other online professional development forums to improve your teaching?
- How has your advising shifted?
- Undergrads and Graduate Students: Did you increase the number of and timing of office hours to enable students to feel more connected to you and your lab?
- Did you provide weekly or regular updates to your research team?

# ADDITIONAL COVID CONSIDERATIONS

- Everyone has had their probationary extended.
  - UC has an “8-year up-or-out” policy -- that’s the probationary period.
  - Generally, this means all faculty appointed on or before 6/30/20 who were within the probationary period when the pandemic started have 9 years before “up-or-out” is invoked.
  - And you can apply for an additional year extension if applicable.
  - Note: Automatic extension of probationary period is NOT automatic deferral of review; you need to actively defer a review if you wish (and that’s available too).

# OVERALL

- The academic review process – and especially the tenure process – is complicated, but it's not capricious.
- You could spend a lot of time figuring out every option or every detail...
  - ...or you could ask around: your chair, your department or school (nee division) AP contact, your mentor, etc.
- With a little digging, and enough asking, you can make sure you get the fairest shake possible.
- And don't be worried about asking: The university has many people who are here to help you get the best shot at success.

**THANK YOU!!**

Victor Ferreira  
vferreira@ucsd.edu

Center for Faculty Diversity and Inclusion  
facultydiversity.ucsd.edu  
vcedi-faculty@ucsd.edu