

Additional Feedback from the VCU Libraries Faculty on the REPORT: UNIVERSITY PROMOTION AND TENURE TASK FORCE - TERM FACULTY

3/6/2025, based on open discussion held at the 11/13/2024 VCU Libraries Faculty Organization Meeting.

Standing Peer Review Committee Requirements

- VCU Libraries (VCUL) has a limited number of full professors, and requiring them to serve on a standing peer review committee would create an undue burden.
 - Similarly, requiring the presence of both tenure-track (TT) and term faculty on a standing peer review committee is problematic, as VCUL has no TT faculty.
- Does this requirement mean that when a faculty member is considered for promotion to the rank of full professor, a full professor must chair the review?
 - Currently, VCUL dossiers are not reviewed by a university-level peer review committee. VCUL's peer review committee operates at the unit level, unlike most departments, which have an additional school/unit-level review.

Dossier Assembly and Evaluation General concerns:

- The TT report states that annual evaluations should not be included in dossiers, while the term faculty report suggests they should.
 - Literature suggests that annual reviews should not be required.
 - Excluding annual evaluations in VCUL dossiers would complicate the process, as personal statements are limited to three pages, and annual evaluations provide additional context and support.
- There is desire for the inclusion of annual reports to be optional, but not required nor prohibited.
- There is uncertainty about the extent to which VCUL will be able to shape its own peer review and promotion process.
- The TT and Term guidelines appear similar in their overall requirements, despite term faculty lacking the same benefits and protections as TT faculty.

Some specific concerns:

- National and International Recognition for Promotion: The Term report does not explicitly mention national or international recognition, replacing that language with “reflects high standards of quality in creativity, scholarship, and professional competence.” However, one sample dossier still referenced it.
 - This type of recognition should remain a potential path to promotion for term faculty, but should not be the only route or a strict requirement.

- **Trans Inclusion and Safety:** The committee attempted to make recommendations for trans inclusivity, but there are better approaches. Suggest omitting the legal name requirement since the V-number is sufficient for identification. Requiring educational credentials (e.g., transcripts) could be problematic, as they may not reflect a person's name of use.
- **DEI Work in Promotion Guidelines:** Differences exist between the TT and Term reports regarding DEI activities. While DEI engagement should be encouraged for all faculty, it is difficult to assess and presents challenges, particularly in the current political climate and for term faculty without tenure protection.
- **Bias Training for Peer Review Committees:** The recommendations mention unconscious bias training for peer review committees but do not specify the source of this training.