

INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WORKING GROUP

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS:

- Melissa W. Aleman - Communication Studies
- Marcus Davis - Interim AUH, Mathematics and Statistics
- Gilpatrick Hornsby - Interim Executive Director, CFI
- Jennifer Kester, Assistant Director, HR, HR, Training & Performance
- Calvin Henry Lawrence - Alumnus
- Meshayla Lumpkin - Graduate Student, CSPA
- Steven Whitmeyer - Interim Associate Dean, College of Science & Math

Working Group Champion: David Owusu-Ansah, owusuadx@jmu.edu

Recommendation Title: Academic Unit, Personnel Adv Cmte Chair Leadership Development

Problem Statement/Issue

At JMU, the departmental review comprises an essential step in instructional faculty evaluation; in the absence of a college- or university-level faculty evaluation committee, the Academic Unit Personnel Advisory Committee (AUPAC) represents the most critical body for impacting this process. We propose this specific intervention focused on AUPAC chairs because of the critical role these faculty members play in facilitating the evaluation process as well as in revising criteria and standards for evaluation in academic units. To lead equitable reform efforts within academic units—arguably *the* locus of change for faculty evaluation, promotion, and overall satisfaction—we recommend the cultivation of professional development spaces for PAC chairs. At present, limited formal mechanisms exist for bringing together AUPAC chairs (across the University); this limits opportunities for peer mentoring, strategy sharing, and leadership development. Further, there are no systematic methods for AUPAC chairs to learn about evidence-informed methodologies like those endorsed in the ACE Report on Equity-Minded Reform (O’Meara et al., 2020). Furthermore, to achieve this recommendation, PAC chairpersonships should be unilaterally viewed as high-level service and leadership opportunities that entail substantial time investment with associated levels of recognition within the unit. Ultimately, this recommendation aims to ensure that the academic unit is one in which BIPOC faculty report fair treatment, feel successful, and belong.

O’Meara, K., Culpepper, D., Misra, J. & Jaeger, A. (2020, January 8th). Equity-Minded Faculty Workloads: What we Can and Should do Now. Washington-DC. ACE Report. <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Equity-Minded-Faculty-Workloads.pdf>

Recommendation, Rationale and Success Measures continue on following pages.

WORKING GROUP
LEADERSHIP



David Owusu-Ansah,
Leadership Council



Cynthia Bauerle, WG CC



Cara Meixner, WG CC

Recommendation:

In the context of JMU's decentralized institutional structure, the criteria and practices for faculty evaluation are developed and carried out in the departmental context. While there have been efforts by the office of the Vice Provost for Faculty, Curriculum, and Policy to review departmental evaluation documents, it has yet to reach a standard expectation for regular review of tenure and promotion procedures. Due to lack of training and frequent turnover in the membership of academic unit AUPACs, it may be challenging for departments to maintain consistency in the way that criteria are applied and evidence is evaluated. The system does not easily allow for departmental review of their current practices or examination of standards through an equity lens. Specifically, it is difficult in the current practice to identify and respond to individual bias or insufficiently informed attitudes about professional scholarship in the field, both of which may selectively privilege or disadvantage faculty whose work is under review. Uneven application of evaluation standards, even when inadvertent, can negatively impact faculty whose scholarship, teaching, and/or professional engagements do not fit easily within accepted norms for faculty work. We seek to create a resource to support equitable faculty evaluation practice at JMU, specifically focusing on supporting the work of AUPACs.

We propose the establishment of regular programming for AUPAC chairs focused on increasing their awareness of issues of bias and discrimination in faculty evaluation and developing their skills in guiding the annual faculty evaluation process in an equitable manner that reflects the value of diverse faculty identities, scholarships, and professional practices. We suggest that this programming be infused in all facets of the PAC Chair experience, from biennial meetings to regular email communication. We also recommend that the implementation champions explore a peer mentoring model that will allow for PAC chairs at various levels of tenure in the role to share experiences and pitfalls about bias and discrimination. Programming should focus on specific learning objectives and should be designed to engage AUPAC chairs at JMU. We propose this programming be developed in collaboration with faculty who are experienced AUPAC chairs, BIPOC faculty campus organizations, CFI, or other curriculum development experts, and be administered through the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Curriculum, which oversees biennial meetings of the AUPAC chairs. Finally, we propose a communication link between the AUH and the AUPAC Chair that allows for portions of this training to be shared with AUH. We anticipate that hybrid programming that takes advantage of in-person, online synchronous, and asynchronous elements will provide full access for busy faculty serving as AUPAC chairs. Compensation in the form of a course release or stipend similar to that which assistant and associate AUHs receive will be required for members of the program development team.

Rationale:

The promotion and tenure process is often unfavorably biased towards marginalized faculty due to a system of excellence based on euro-centric values. Barber and colleagues (2020) identified that BIPOC faculty routinely find their work around diversity, equity, and inclusion devalued in the evaluation process. There have been several high-profile examples of BIPOC faculty members who were denied tenure in recent years. Freeman and Ford (2020) identified cases such as Lorgia García Peña at Harvard University, Tolu Odumosu at the University of Virginia, Ashley Woodson at the University of Missouri–Columbia, and Sibrina Collins at The College of Wooster. These disparities have grown even more prevalent as the impact of COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted BIPOC faculty (Lechuga-Pena, 2022). This phenomenon of inequitable evaluation processes is not only seen in pre-tenure faculty but also in the matriculation of associate professors to full professors. Kulp et al. (2022) found a lack of clarity in promotion expectations for BIPOC faculty to reach full professor. Taken together, the context in which this recommendation is written is one in which systemic racism and inequitable practices must lead to fewer BIPOC faculty attaining tenure and reaching the level of full professor.

As stated above, the AUPAC chair is in the unique position to facilitate the evaluation process as well as revise criteria and standards for evaluation in academic units. Therefore, these individuals should be provided the tools and professional development needed to act as change agents and promote equitable evaluation practices.

Measures of Success shown on page 3

Supporting Resources for Rationale shown on page 4

Success:

The ultimate measure of success will be the increase of BIPOC professionals that are successfully promoted and tenured through equitable evaluation practices. This will be achieved through a series of incremental goals such as:

- Provide professional development for new and existing AUPAC Chairs that educate about the evaluation process's inherent bias. This development opportunity should be provided annually due to the number of AUPAC Chairs that rotate on or off each year. Providing tools for the AUPAC chairs sets up a “train the trainer” approach, with the expectation that each chair will create professional development for all members of their AUPAC at the start of the fall semester.
- Create an AUPAC Toolkit for Equitable Faculty Evaluation Processes that can be shared with departmental AUPACs to provide the AUPAC chair with a mechanism to discuss these issues outside of the professional development space.
- Create additional opportunities for AUPAC chairs to meet outside of the regular meetings to discuss difficulties and promote peer mentorship.

The specific outcomes of this recommendation will be to empower AUPACs and AUPAC chairs to examine and correct parts of the evaluation process that may lead to inequitable practices. For instance, a AUPAC chair may discover journals that focus on DEI topics that are not regularly recognized through these development opportunities. Though based on the goals of this recommendation, they will be able to address these disparities that may disproportionately impact BIPOC Faculty.

Timeline and Benchmarks

- Summer 2022
 - ◇ Identify key stakeholders within the Vice Provost for Faculty, Curriculum, and Policy (CFI, Associate Vice Provost for Faculty and Curriculum, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Effectiveness and Evaluation) to discuss implementing these goals.
Identify funding source for a developer to lead these discussions among PAC chairs and serve as a resource to them.
- Fall 2022
 - ◇ Design a development plan and begin to pilot with seasoned AUPAC Chairs
 - ◇ Collect data from PAC chairs to understand baseline knowledge of bias in the evaluation process
- Spring 2023
 - ◇ Implement development plan and evaluate on a semi-annual basis for efficacy.
 - ◇ Explore the development of an AUPAC Chair Institute during the summer for deeper exploration and intensive development. As most AUPAC Chairs are 10-month employees, this would require funds to support them while they are not on contract.

Supporting Resources for the Rationale are shown on the following page

Supporting Resources for the Rationale:

Barber, P. H., Hayes, T. B., Johnson, T. L., Márquez-Magaña, L., & 10,234 signatories. (2020). Systemic racism in higher education. *Science*, 369(6510), 1440-1441.

Freeman, S., Jr., & Ford, D. Y. (2020, July 8). Minoritized senior faculty in higher education, please stand up. *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*

Lechuga-Peña, S. (2022). Navigating pre-Tenure and COVID-19: A Testimonio of a BIPOC Junior Faculty Mother. *Affilia*, 37(1), 13–19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08861099211048432>

Kulp, A.M., Pascale, A.B. & Wolf-Wendel, L. (2022) Clear as Mud: Promotion Clarity by Gender and BIPOC Status Across the Associate Professor Lifespan. *Innov High Educ* 47, 73–94 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-021-09565-7>