University Tenure and Promotion Committee (UTPC)
Annual Committee Report
2007-08

TO: James Kohn, Chair
Academic Senate

FROM: 2007-08 University Tenure and Promotion Committee (UTPC)

DATE: May 16, 2008

RE: UTPC Annual Report

This University Tenure and Promotion Committee Annual Report is respectfully submitted on 16 May 2008 by 2007-08 UTPC members:

Lorraine Dong, PhD, UTPC Chair & Professor, Asian American Studies

Victoria Chen, PhD, Professor, Communication Studies

Kim Foreman, PhD, Professor, Instructional Technologies

Caroline Harding, MSL, Librarian, Library

Nancy Reist, PhD, Professor, Broadcast & Electronic Communication Arts
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Academic Year 2007-08 University Tenure and Promotion Committee (UTPC) Membership

1. Lorraine Dong, PhD, UTPC Chair & Professor, Asian American Studies (2007-09 term)
2. Victoria Chen, PhD, Professor, Communication Studies (2007-09 term)
3. Kim Foreman, PhD, Professor, Instructional Technologies (2006-08 term)
4. Caroline Harnly, MSL, Librarian, Library (2007-09 term)
5. Nancy Reist, PhD, Professor, Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts Department (2006-08 term)

B. Summary of Committee Activities

Fall 2007

*September:* Together with the Dean of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development, UPTC Chair held a total of 9 RTP information meetings with individual colleges and the Library [September 11, 12, 13 (2 meetings), 18, 19, 20, 25, 26], and co-conducted 3 campus-wide RTP Workshops [September 4, 6, 10].

*December 12:* UTPC met to prepare for Spring 2008 workload

Spring 2008

*February 14-May 1:* UTPC met for a total of 11 weekly sessions from February to May to deliberate on 70 tenure and promotion cases (31 tenure and associate professor promotion cases; 3 tenure only cases; 15 associate professor promotion cases; and 20 full professor promotion cases); 3 sessions in May were devoted to reviewing follow-up cases.

*April 14:* UTPC exchanged its tenure and promotion recommendation list with the Provost.

*April 23 and 28:* UPTC met with the Provost and the Dean of Faculty Affairs to discuss tenure and promotion cases.

*May 2:* UTPC recommendation letters were hand delivered to tenure and promotion candidates or their offices on campus. These same letters were carbon copied and sent to the President as well as the Office of Faculty Affairs to be placed in the candidates’ Faculty Records files.

*May 5:* Together with the Provost and the Dean of Faculty Affairs, UTPC met with the President to discuss tenure and promotion recommendations.
May 8: Outgoing UTPC Chair conducted the election of the new UTPC Chair from among the AY2008-09 UTPC members. UTPC members and the chair for the year 2008-09 are:

CHAIR: Nancy Reist (Broadcast & Electronic Communication Arts) – 2008-2010 term
Victoria Chen (Communication Studies) – 2007-09 term
Caroline Harnly (Library) – 2007-09 term
David Ellis (Mathematics) – 2008-2010 term
Julia Lewis (Psychology) – 2008-2010 term

May 8 & 15: UPTC met to write the annual committee report.

C. Recommendations to the Academic Senate

This was the first year of operation for the newly formed University Tenure and Promotion Committee (formerly the University Promotions Committee) created under the “new” policy (Academic Senate Policy #07-241). UTPC has the following recommendations that are imperative to ensure UTPC’s ability to function more effectively next year (listed in order of importance):

1. All prior levels of retention review letters must be included in the WPAFs of candidates applying for tenure: The additional charge for UTPC to make recommendations on tenure cases has created a major concern regarding the candidate’s privacy. In order to evaluate and review tenure cases adequately, it is necessary for UTPC to read all prior levels of retention reviews, which are not currently required for inclusion in a candidate’s WPAF. This has resulted in having to go to Human Resources to make special arrangements to check out the candidate’s PAF. Not only was this inefficient and inconvenient for both UTPC and Human Resources, but having access to a faculty’s PAF may be a violation of a faculty’s privacy. When searching through the PAF to read retention review letters, UTPC has access to information beyond these letters.

2. Additional UTPC release time is required: This year’s caseload was 70, of which 35 or 50% were tenure cases. Of these tenure cases, 33 also went up for associate professor promotion, which means even under the old UPC structure, the committee would have had 68 cases. Both numbers, 68 and 70, are large. To be able to thoroughly review so many WPAFs in less than ten weeks requires more than the .2 release time of 5 individuals. While the faculty development compensation received from the Provost’s office is much appreciated, but it cannot substitute for, or replace, the number of hours required in a day for UTPC to do its work. The recommendation of previous UPCs requesting additional release time for caseloads that exceed 40 has been ignored. This year’s UTPC must emphatically request that additional release time be given to UTPC in order for it to do its job well.

3. Department criteria for tenure and promotion should be posted online: As an augmentation to the University-wide criteria for promotion and tenure, departments have developed their individual criteria for tenure and promotion. UTPC uses these criteria in
its deliberations of all cases. Unfortunately, the inclusion of these criteria in the WPAFs has been inconsistent. Confusion arose in one case when UTPC was told after its recommendation was made that the criteria in the candidate’s WPAF were not approved by the Provost’s Office. In order to avoid future misunderstanding of this sort, all approved department criteria should be posted online and made accessible not only for the UTPC but for the entire campus community. This will eliminate one document in the WPAF. More importantly, this will ensure accuracy and consistent transparency of what is expected and required for tenure and promotion in each department.

4. **Clearer guidelines are needed for “early” tenure and promotion cases**: Approximately 43% or 30 out of 70 cases were “early” this year. Other than using vague terms like “stellar” and “superstar” to judge whether or not an “early” case should get tenure or promotion, the RTP policy must provide clearer guidelines to eliminate the subjectivity of what being “stellar” and “superstar” encompasses. In other words, is simply meeting the department’s criteria sufficient for “early” tenure and promotion? Since no such guidelines exist, each level of review is using their own variation of what is “stellar” and “superstar” enough to warrant “early” tenure and promotion.

5. **Concurrent tenure and associate professor promotion cases require more guidelines**: The new tenure and promotion policy needs to delineate the difference between the criteria for tenure versus the criteria for promotion to associate professor. Should it be automatic that a “yes” or “no” for one means the same for the other?

6. **UTPC recusal and abstentions**: The issue of recusal has been brought to the attention of the Academic Senate by UPC in the previous year. To date there has been no response. UTPC requests the Senate to seriously consider the following concerns and provide some definitive directives for UTPC to follow:

   a. Under what circumstances does a member of the UTPC recuse and abstain from deliberations or discussions of specific tenure and promotion cases? Are there circumstances under which the Senate would recommend recusal and abstention, for example if the candidate were a family member, spouse, or life-partner, and/or a colleague within the same department or unit? Is this issue a legal or ethical one?

   b. According to the new Tenure and Promotion policy, Section 1.5 (“The University Level! Review Procedures”) states: “Promotion [and tenure] evaluation reports and recommendations shall be approved by a simple majority of the committee. Abstentions shall be counted as a no vote.” UTPC strongly recommends that abstentions be counted as a neutral vote, neither “yes” nor “no.” If a committee member must abstain him/herself because of the circumstances listed above, such an abstention is not necessarily the result of non-support for the candidate’s tenure or promotion, and if counted as a “no” vote the abstention would be unfairly detrimental to the case on hand.
7. **UTPC review must be acknowledged as equivalent to and on the same level as the Provost’s review**: It is a great honor to be chosen by peers and colleagues to serve on this important committee. However, the significance of having a UTPC structure is tempered by the fact that, except for Dean Don Taylor of the College of Health and Human Services, none of the deans addressed and submitted their letters of recommendations to UTPC. They were only addressed to the Provost.

Several suggestions can help to promote awareness of UTPC’s important role in the tenure and promotion process:

a. The carbon copy list for UTPC’s recommendation letters to faculty is not the same as the carbon copy list for the Provost’s recommendation letters. Only the President and Faculty Affairs are carbon-copied in UTPC letters. Entities involved in the candidates’ earlier levels of review (RTP committees, department chairs, and deans) are not informed of UTPC’s recommendation, thus ignoring and diminishing the equal role UTPC has with the Provost in the tenure and promotion process. **UTPC recommends that the carbon copy list be identical for both recommendation letters from UTPC and the Provost.**

b. For many years, UPC has requested that it be informed of the President’s final decision in the promotion process. Unless UPC members knew the candidates personally, UPC would not know the results of their hard work until the following Fall semester when there is a celebration for the newly tenured and promoted faculty. **UTPC recommends again that a structure be in place where UTPC would be notified of the President’s final decisions on tenure and promotion cases.**

8. **All levels of review must continue to retain familiarity with the “old” policy (Academic Senate Policies #S88-120 and #F04-28)**: The ability for faculty whose appointment began prior to Fall 2007 to choose between the “old” and “new” policy for their tenure and promotion reviews poses a challenge for UTPC (and others) who must now review cases on two tracks. This year, there were 56 cases under the “old” policy and 44 cases under the “new.” The confusion predicted to happen did not for UTPC; instead, some departments and colleges were the ones who were forgetful in using the “superior,” “significant,” and “not significant” language and who did not separate the tenure review letters from the promotion ones for their “old” policy cases.

9. **UTPC’s need to have a regular room to meet and read files should be given higher priority**: The WPAF room on the fourth floor of the Administration Building is an improvement over what was available in the past. However, the situation is far from perfect because the room is basically a storage room. It was difficult to organize and locate the many WPAFs in the small space, and there is barely enough room for two people to work in, which makes it difficult when two or more committee members have the same time available to read the files. Another problem is assigning a meeting room for UTPC to meet regularly every Thursday. The staff in Academic Senate should not have to hunt down a meeting room for us. It is a given fact that every Spring semester,
UTPC meets on Thursday afternoons. Yet there are no rooms available on a regular basis for UTPC to do its work.

10. UTPC strongly recommends that the UTPC committee structure be changed to comprise of a member from each college and the library, thereby increasing the current committee membership from five to nine. The benefits to having such a structure is twofold: (1) Members from each college would be able to help each other in UTPC to understand the nuances of his/her particular college or field and (2) there would be more people to review the ever-growing number of tenure and promotion cases, hence eliminating the request for increasing release time for the current five UTPC members. Some feel that a nine-member UTPC might be too unwieldy and that this would create a structure where each college would be advocates for themselves. Based on past experience, UTPC does not see this happening and believes such a larger, but representative structure, would in fact be more beneficial than disadvantageous in the long run.

II. CHARGE TO THE COMMITTEE

A. “OLD” POLICY (Academic Senate Policy #94-028):

For faculty members choosing the “old policy,” the mandate and operations of the University Promotions Committee are according to the policy and procedures specified in the Academic Senate Policy #S94-028 as follows:

UPC provides one of two independent University-level reviews of faculty applications for advancement in rank. UPC and the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall independently review the WPAF and prepare their recommendations for the President. Copies of their separate recommendations and reasons therefore shall be sent to the candidate seven days prior to forwarding the WPAF to the President, according to the deadlines published in the Executive Calendar. Recommendations shall be made as early in the year as possible and shall be forwarded to the President no later than May 15. The Committee consists of five members elected for two-year terms through a University-wide election, from a slate of nominees from the academic units (Colleges and Library). UPC elects one of its own as chairperson for the coming academic year.

B. “NEW” POLICY (Academic Senate Policy #07-241):

The UTPC has the following responsibilities:

1. The UTPC will consider recommendations from the departmental RTP committee, from the department Chair, and from the Dean concurrent with the Provost’s review of those recommendations.

2. The Committee will pay special attention to case where there is disagreement between the Dean, the Chair and/or the departmental committee. Such cases will be carefully and completely reviewed.
3. The recommendations from prior levels will be examined to be certain that procedures and criteria have been correctly followed.

4. The Committee will have the authority to consider all material in the WPAF and compare it with departmental criteria.

5. The Committee will be aware that departmental criteria for tenure and for promotion may differ and will pay attention to both.

6. All UTPC considerations must correspond with Department criteria.

7. The UTPC and the Provost will confer before making their recommendations to the President.

III. ACTIVITIES OF THE YEAR

UTPC’s activities for AY 2007-08 are fairly straightforward and have been described in 1.B (“Summary of Committee Activities”). Items of concern and recommendations have been addressed in I.C (“Recommendations to the Academic Senate”). UTPC would like to stress once again, as with previous years, that more time needs to be allotted for the increase in tenure and promotion caseloads.

IV. AGENDA FOR THE COMING YEAR

After reviewing 70 tenure and promotion cases this year, and in addition to I.C (Recommendations to the Academic Senate), UTPC wishes to raise the following concerns as well as make the following recommendations in the areas of WPAF, review letters, and dossiers that would facilitate and streamline the UTPC tenure and promotion review process for the coming year.

A. WPAF (Working Personnel Action File)

1. General Overall Concerns and Recommendations

   a. For tenure cases, all past levels of review from a candidate’s department RTP committee, chair, dean, and provost should be included in the WPAF. If they are not included, then UTPC members must access these documents in the candidate’s PAF, which raises an important issue of privacy (see “Recommendations to the Academic Senate,” I.C.1).

   b. Department Criteria: Until department criteria for tenure and promotion are available and accessible online, such criteria should be included in the candidate’s supplemental materials. It is the responsibility of the candidate and RTP Committee to include only the department criteria that have been approved by their respective
college deans and the Provost via the Dean of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development, indicating the date of approval. This year one WPAF included department criteria that had not been approved by the Provost.

c. Curriculum Vita

(1) CVs should be dated. This is important for differentiating the candidate’s current vita from his/her vitae of previous years, especially when reviewing the candidate’s PAF.

(2) Items listed in the CV must match items listed and/or included in the WPAF and Index. In other words, articles listed in the CV must be found in the WPAF.

d. Double Counting Materials for Promotion: For many years, UPC (and now UTPC) has been unable to monitor or determine whether or not materials supporting a prior promotion were ever used or used again (i.e., double counted) as evidence to support the current promotion. In the former case, if a candidate was under review during AY 2007-08 for promotion to associate professor, all his/her work done during AY 2007-08 would not be included in the WPAF or used for promotion review to associate professor because the closing date for the WPAF was in September/October 2007. If six years later, he/she goes up for promotion to full professor, can he/she be able to use all work accomplished in AY 2007-08 when he/she was in rank as assistant professor because they were never used for his/her associate professor promotion? Current policy says only work performed in rank (i.e., associate professor) should be considered for full professor promotion. More problematic is how would UTPC know whether or not an item used for promotion to associate professor during the transitional year of AY 2007-08 would be double counted for promotion to full professor? This year UTPC had to rely on review letters and an honor system to determine whether or not double counting has occurred.

e. Peer reviews and assessments in all areas are important: Candidates should provide peer assessments of their teaching, research, publications, presentations, community/university work and activities, and other professional activities.

2. Teaching Effectiveness

a. Student Evaluations

(i) A candidate’s self-narrative in the Teaching Effectiveness section and at least one level of review must address the following:

(a) Both old and new policies require a minimum of two courses to be evaluated per semester in accordance with CBA stipulation. The department’s RTP Committee is normally expected to ensure that
such evaluations are done. An explanation is needed to state the reason(s) why there are less than two evaluations per semester for a candidate.

(b) All missing teaching data (if any) needs to be explained. Examples of data that is frequently incomplete include:
   i. Student evaluations for classes taught.
   ii. Number of responses for each class evaluation.

(c) Both positive and negative scores and comments for the entire review period must be addressed.

(d) Positive and negative comments in student course evaluations and letters are also to be addressed.

(2) For cases where enrollment patterns are essential for the evaluation process, enrollment census for all classes taught must be included and analyzed by the various levels of review.

(3) The UTPC is in agreement with the following points raised by last year’s UPC and would like to re-state them for the coming year:

(a) Documentation of teaching effectiveness needs to increase in consistency across the university.

(b) Disparity in Interpretation of Teaching Evaluation Scores: There is no university standard as to the interpretation of quantitative scores reported from the student evaluations of teaching effectiveness. In addition, there is frequently no college-wide standard for interpretation. Thus, interpretation of the quantitative data from student evaluations of teaching is contextualized at the departmental level. This can make comparisons across departments difficult. For example, one department in the college reports any quantitative score of between 1.0 and 1.49 to be superior, another department in the same college reports a score of 1.0 to 1.99 to be superior, and another indicates scores of less than 1.25 to be superior. Frequently these quantitative scores differ by tenths or even hundredths of a point.

(c) UTPC is also concerned with the relationship between the amount of teaching done by a faculty member and the ratings of teaching effectiveness. Specifically, is it possible for a faculty member with an extremely light teaching load (1-2 courses per year) to achieve a rating of, using old policy terminology, superior in teaching? As
the university moves to a variable classroom teaching load, it is 
essential to define the relationships among the quality of teaching, 
the quantity of teaching, and the evaluation of performance in 
one’s primary assignment.

(d) Distinction should be made between classroom teaching and 
research teaching, both of which would fall under the category of 
Teaching Effectiveness. Faculty and departments also need to 
clarify papers and projects co-authored by the faculty and his/her 
students. If the faculty is the mentor/facilitator of a project that is 
student-driven, then the paper/project should be considered under 
Teaching Effectiveness. If the students are working for a faculty’s 
project, then that project/paper publication should be listed as the 
faculty’s Professional Achievement and Growth.

(e) With the emergence and growth of Community Service Learning 
courses, departments should develop criteria and guidelines to 
determine whether such courses in their department fall mainly in 
the Teaching Effectiveness category or the Contributions to 
Campus and Community category. This year’s UTPC did not see 
many department criteria specifically addressing CSL courses.

b. Peer Classroom Observations and Evaluations

(1) Not all RTP committees conduct annual peer classroom observations and 
evaluations for their department’s assistant and associate professors. It is the 
department and/or RTP Committee’s responsibility to conduct peer classroom 
observations:

(a) *Old Policy - Preparing for Tenure and Promotion Brochure (Fall 2007)*, 
p. 3: “RT committees should solicit peer evaluations of teaching each 
year, to be included along with data of student evaluations and other 
evidence in the WPFAF.”

(b) *New Policy - Preparing for Tenure and Promotion Brochure (Fall 2007)*, 
p. 4: “A department must also conduct ongoing peer observations of 
teaching.”

(2) Attention to peer evaluation must continue to be given to faculty seeking 
promotion from Associate to Full Professor. In many cases, peer evaluations 
ceased after a faculty is promoted to Associate Professor.

(3) Candidate’s self-narrative and the various levels of review should address both 
positive and negative comments in the peer classroom evaluations, as well as 
missing annual peer evaluations.
(4) There is great variation across the university in the quantity and quality of peer classroom reviews of teaching. The least helpful were cases where there were none or extremely few peer reviews of teaching, and cases where they were all done in the same semester. Some departments are highly irregular in either the occurrences of the reviews and/or the format of the reviews. The most helpful peer reviews of teaching were ones that were completed regularly (one course per semester) and evaluative in nature.

3. Professional Achievement and Growth

a. Candidates should explain the significance of their work and publication in the self-narrative so reviewers outside the discipline will be in a better position to analyze their work. For example, if one publishes in a journal that is a central one for the profession, this should be stated, along with an indication of the journal’s acceptance rate, if known.

b. Candidates and/or review letters should specifically state and document what a candidate’s role(s), contribution(s), and involvement(s) are in group projects. For example, it should be clear whether the candidate is the primary researcher or writer. Collaborative evidence from peers or colleagues is helpful, such as a letter written by one of the co-authors that fully describes the specific contribution of the candidate to a particular article. An explanation of the order of co-authors is also helpful to determine the candidate’s contribution(s) and role(s) in the paper or project.

c. As stated earlier under “Teaching Effectiveness,” faculty and departments need to clarify papers and projects co-authored by the faculty and his/her students. If the faculty is the mentor/facilitator of a project that is student-driven, then the paper/project should be considered under Teaching Effectiveness. If the students are working for a faculty’s project, then that project/paper publication should be listed as the faculty’s Professional Achievement and Growth.

d. Candidates and/or review letters should identify and evaluate outcomes resulting from grant(s) funded or a progress report of what has been done with the grant(s).

c. External Letters of Support: Consideration for external letters of support needs to extend beyond the quantity of the letters to the stature of the persons writing the letters. It is important for the department RTP and department chairs to provide information on the ethos of the individuals writing external evaluations of the candidate’s work. In cases of co-written papers, external letters would prove to be most helpful as evidence of the candidate’s contribution to such works.

f. The text of conference presentations needs to be included in addition to an evaluative letter from someone who attended the presentation.
g. Publications in press, accepted, submitted, and in progress should not be listed in the publications category, but in their separate categories. Of note are in-press publications that require detailed documentation such as a final contract indicating the expected date of distribution, galley proofs, press releases, etc.

h. Journal titles need to be spelled out in full and all page numbers (not just the first page) should be provided for each entry.

4. Contributions to Campus and Community

a. A reminder needs to be sent to those choosing the new policy for tenure and promotion that “professional leadership,” such as being editor of a journal or participation on editorial boards or in refereeing,” now falls under the category of “Contributions to Campus and Community” and not “Professional Achievement and Growth.”

b. As mentioned in the “Teaching Effectiveness” section, departments should develop criteria and guidelines to determine whether Community Service Learning courses in their department fall mainly in the Teaching Effectiveness category or the Contributions to Campus and Community category.

B. Review Letters from Department RTP Committees, Chairs, and Dean

1. Necessity for straightforward and honest review letters: UTPC’s task is not to read between the lines or second guess review letters written by the RTP committee, department chair, and/or the dean. Recommendations from all levels of review must be substantiated by and not contrary to evidence in the WPAF. If the recommendation is contrary to the evidence, the review letter(s) must provide an explanation for the recommendation.

2. Do not insert in the review letters, new items or information acquired after the WPAF closing date: Because review letters are written after the WPAF closing date, the department and college might have new and updated information about a candidate. Every level are to be reminded that the review process must use only the evidence in the WPAF as of its closing date.

3. The timely submission of dean’s review letters is strongly encouraged: There has been much improvement over the past years, however, due to the increased caseload faced by UTPC, it is now even more imperative that the deans adhere to the due date of their recommendations to UTPC and the Provost.

4. Avoid or explain disciplinary jargon: UTPC cautions against the use of discipline-specific jargon and acronyms in recommendation letters (the most common examples
are abbreviated journal titles). If they are used, please define and spell them out for the committee.

5. **Pagination in recommendation letters**: The lack of pagination is an ongoing problem. Pagination is necessary to facilitate UTPC discussion when referring to certain sections of the recommendation letters.

C. **Dossiers for UTPC**

Due to the increased caseload and resulting large number of WPAFs to review, UTPC would like to facilitate the review process by **strongly recommending that each candidate’s dossiers include the following items and arranged in the following order**:

1. CV
2. WPAF Index
3. Candidate’s 3 self-narratives
4. RTP review letter
5. Candidate’s rebuttal if any
6. Chair’s review letter
7. Candidate’s rebuttal if any
8. Dean’s review letter
9. Candidate’s rebuttal if any

V. **APPRECIATION**

UTPC wishes to thank the Academic Senate staff, Angela R. Sposito and Chau Nguyen, for their assistance and support throughout a frustrating year that required them to find UTPC a room to meet every week. Special thanks go to Angie Lin Mendoza in the Office of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development who was extremely efficient and instrumental in getting a room that served both to store the WPAFs and to provide private space for UTPC members to read the WPAFs. Kathleen Kanewske in the Provost’s office is also to be thanked for her help in scheduling and coordinating UTPC meetings with the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development, and the President. Special recognition and appreciation are extended this year to Patricia Ricketts in Human Resources for her efficiency, patience, and smiling face. Because of the new policy, UTPC members had to go to her constantly for access to the PAFs of candidates applying for tenure. Last but not least, Dean of Faculty Affairs Marilyn Verhey and Vice President for Academic Affairs John Gemelino have been collegial throughout the process, for which UTPC is also appreciative.

Finally, the University Tenure and Promotion Committee is thankful for the opportunity and confidence that the University community has bestowed upon the committee members. We have learned much from and about our colleagues. It has been an honor to serve on UTPC during its first year of operation under the new policy.