

TO: Gonzaga Faculty

FROM: Mia Bertagnolli, Interim Provost

SUBJ: Clarification on Section 304.03 (g) of the Faculty Handbook

CC: Katia Passerini, President
Tom McKenzie, Faculty President

DATE: October 8, 2025

The recently revised 2024 Faculty Handbook includes a number of new and expanded sections and elements as regards criteria for reappointment, tenure, and promotion. Some specific questions, and concerns, about the intended purpose of Section 304.03 (g) – a section that pertains only to candidates applying for the rank of full Professor – have arisen. This memorandum is intended to provide interpretive clarification on this matter going forward (i.e., for promotion applications in Fall 2025 and thereafter).

Section 304.03 (g) of the Faculty Handbook states:

For promotion to Professor, the candidate must demonstrate sustained scholarly and/or, depending on the field, creative work of recognized quality since the candidate's previous promotion, or demonstrated and sustained leadership in building the scholarly/creative academic profile of a unit overseen by the candidate.

The specific questions relate to (a) what constitutes "... *demonstrated and sustained leadership in building the scholarly/creative academic profile of a unit overseen by the candidate,*" and (b) whether the conjunction "or" that precedes this clause is intended to create an "alternative path" to promotion.

During the Spring of 2025, an ad hoc Faculty Handbook Implementation and Interpretation Committee (FHIIC) charged by then President Thayne McCulloh, which also included Interim Provost Mia Bertagnolli, Faculty Senate President Tom McKenzie, Dean Yoli Gallardo, Vice Provost Jolanta Weber, Senate representative Veta Schlimgen, and faculty representatives Bill Hayes and Claudio Talarico, discussed this matter and came to the following conclusions, which are supported by President Katia Passerini:

1) No single clause, much less major category, of the Faculty Handbook Criteria for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion can be viewed in isolation. Candidates for promotion must sufficiently fulfill the requirements outlined in Section 304, across all four categories (Teaching, Scholarly/Creative Work, Advising, and Academic Citizenship and Professional Service), and the University Committee on Rank and Tenure is obligated to evaluate the petitions of candidates for promotion across all four {ref. 305.02 (d) (iii)}. Further, candidates must provide concrete evidence, and impact, of category fulfillment.

2) For promotion to Full Professor, Section 304.09 (b) of the Faculty Handbook states:

The faculty member must have continued to maintain effectiveness in teaching or library performance, advising, and responsible academic citizenship and professional service as described under general criteria in 304.02 - 304.05, and must have achieved a sustained and recognized contribution as a mature and established

scholar or professional based on significant research and publication in the normal channels of the discipline, or by distinguished work in the practical or fine arts.

Sections 304.03 (b) and (c) provide examples of forms of scholarship and creative work that are acceptable and for which credit must be given, as well as evidence that could be provided for each form of scholarship/creative work.

The first independent clause in 304.09 (b) requires that the candidate *must have continued to maintain effectiveness in teaching or library performance, advising, and responsible academic citizenship and professional service as described under general criteria in 304.02 - 304.05*. 304.03 (g) is contained in those referenced sections (304.02 - 304.05), which describe the general RTP criteria for the four areas. However, the usage of “*and must*” in 304.09 (b) indicates that the second independent clause is an independent requirement, which must be satisfied for promotion to Full Professor.

Thus, as currently written, the Faculty Handbook does not allow substituting *sustained leadership in building the scholarly/creative academic profile of a unit* for the second set of requirements specified in 304.09 (b). Therefore, based on the text of the Faculty Handbook, the FHIIC affirms that for promotion to Full Professor candidates *must have achieved a sustained and recognized contribution as a mature and established scholar or professional based on significant research and publication in the normal channels of the discipline, or by distinguished work in the practical or fine arts*.

- 3) Based on the text of the Faculty Handbook, the Faculty Handbook Implementation & Interpretation Committee also affirms that a specific type of *leadership in building the scholarly/creative academic profile of a unit* can be used to strengthen a candidate’s record in the area of scholarly/creative work. The Handbook states this must be *sustained leadership*, not just contributing, supporting, or leadership that is not sustained. Furthermore, 304.03 (g) specifically requires *building*, not simply supporting or leading in general. Finally, 304.03 (g) requires that the *leadership in building* must be of the *scholarly/creative academic profile of the unit*, not other aspects of the unit or its functions, such as teaching, service, or advising.
- 4) In deference to the role faculty colleagues play in developing department- and School-specific RPT criteria and guidelines (ref. 304.01 (c)), we encourage said faculty to examine the language of 304.03 (g) and define, based on the specific context of the School or College, what constitutes evidence-based sufficiency of *leadership in building the scholarly/creative academic profile of a unit* for purposes of providing appropriate guidance to candidates for promotion.