

## Promotion to Professor Workshop

14 February 2019

Peggy Layne: We will be recording this session so when we get to Q and A we will ask you to wait for a microphone to come around so that we can be sure to capture the questions as well as the responses for the remote participants and for the recording. I'm Peggy Layne, assistant provost for faculty development, and we've been holding these workshops on promotion to professor for quite a few years now in response to feedback from associate professors that they felt like they didn't get as much guidance at the associate professor rank as you did at the assistant professor rank.

I'm going to start off this morning and I'm going to share some information with you that we've collected about how much time people typically spend at the rank of associate professor here at Virginia Tech, and then we'll have a review of the process for promotion. Unfortunately, Dr. Finney will not be able to join us this morning, he may be listening via Zoom so we'll have to be careful what we say about him, but he's a little bit under the weather today so Provost Clark and I will try to fill in. Then we have several speakers to share different perspectives on the process, Dean Sally Morton, Dr. Craig Woolsey from the university committee, and a couple of folks who have been through the process from the other side in the last couple of years. I'm still looking for Monty Abbas so if he comes in we will invite him to join us up here in the front.

I wanted to remind you that Donna Strickland, who received the Nobel Prize in Physics last year, was an associate professor at the University of Waterloo, and when asked why she'd never been promoted her response was "Well I just never applied". The message here is don't let that happen to you. If you are currently an associate professor you should be thinking about what you should be doing to prepare for that next promotion.

For the last several years we've collected data from our human resource system and looked at individuals who have been promoted to associate professor and then to professor here at Virginia Tech since the year 2000. We didn't go back any farther than that because standards have changed over the years. This slide just tells you currently as of last September, which is the date that we do our annual comparisons on, across each of the colleges how faculty are currently distributed across the ranks. Some colleges are heavier at the rank of professor and others are more leaning towards the associate professor rank, so that's a point of reference.

When we look at what's the normal time that people spend at the rank of associate, because there is no minimum or maximum time limit, we see quite a wide variation. You can see there's a difference between the mean and the median here because we have some folks who have successfully been promoted after many years at the rank of associate. So if you have colleagues, if you or your or any of your colleagues have been at the rank of associate for more than 10 years and feel that it may not be appropriate for you to consider promotion, you should rethink that and have a conversation with your department head, with your promotion and tenure committee members about how you might put together a successful case for promotion to Professor. But most people who are promoted to Professor are promoted within 6 or 7 years from when they were promoted from assistant to associate.

We do see some differences by gender, especially the mean and the median are slightly longer for women than for men. We also have significantly fewer women than men at the rank of professor, so that difference is there as well, but you can see that both men and women have successfully been promoted after many years at the associate professor rank.

We also believe that there are some disciplinary factors that influence that gender difference because most of our women faculty are in disciplines in colleges that tend to take longer to promotion than others, so you can see that faculty in the colleges of science and engineering tend to be promoted more quickly than faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences or the College of Business, so clearly there are some disciplinary differences there as well.

I think most of you are probably familiar with the COACHE survey of faculty job satisfaction. We share a couple of points from the coach survey that are appropriate for this group. One of the questions in the survey is - these are agree or disagree questions - that the promotion process from associate to professor is clear in my department. You can see here that people who've already been promoted think that the process is somewhat or very clear, but folks who are still at the rank of associate are not so sure, so that's why we have these workshops.

We want to encourage associate professors to work towards promotion, and here again people who've already been promoted feel that we do a pretty good job encouraging people to get promoted but people who are still at the rank of associate are again not quite as sure about that, and we do see some differences by college here. Some colleges, faculty in some colleges feel that they are encouraged to work towards promotion more so than faculty in other colleges. So those are just some points to keep in mind and these slides will be posted on the web site. We'll send out a link after the workshop. So with that I will turn it over to Provost Cyril Clarke for the next section.

Cyril Clarke: Good morning. Thanks for the opportunity just to share a few perspectives on promotion to professor. There are a couple or 3 slides that I'm going to go through that I think originally were intended to serve as some reminders to Jack, since Jack is not here regrettably you have me. So before I do that though, let me just say a few words about why this is important, and of course there are lots of reasons, but I think it's important because the prospect, the potential, the expectation to be promoted is an important element in your ability in departments and in our ability collectively to retain excellent faculty.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to share a few words with the student affairs team as part of their spring renewal and most of people in the room were not academic faculty, they mostly are staff, classified and university staff, and administrative and professional faculty. I shared with them something that I learned, that we all learned I think many years ago, and that is that really for someone to be secure in their workplace, to want to continue working in that environment, there of course are lots of criteria but there are 3 in particular we need to think about:

What is it you need to be able to be comfortable, it needs to be a place that you come to that you like working with, you get on with your peers. I think we know that and we continue to work towards that end. The second thing is that there ought to be an opportunity to constantly learn new skills, new tricks, new trades, new perspectives. In other words professional development is a key element in securing and retaining top class employees. The third thing is that generally people look for the next step. What is their career projection, you know what is it that I'm going to do as the next step in developing my particular career in service to a profession or an entity, and so promotion through the academic ranks is an important element of that.

We know in general that promotion, not in general, specifically at Virginia Tech promotion is not a question of time in service, it really is a consequence of developing beyond that point where the institution essentially makes a 40 year decision over tenure, beyond that to creating more substance, more depth, more breadth to the particular assignment or commitment to mission so that that

recognition at the professor level can then be accorded. I would go so far as to say that you should look forward to the real possibility, you should look forward to the expectation that that promotion to professor is going to happen within a reasonable period of time, and we see what the average is here, 5 to 7 years is reasonable.

If you've gone beyond that I'm going to ask you to take a closer look at why you're not either submitting an application for a promotion or why after having submitted one it's not been successful, and I would encourage you if you've gone beyond that period of time to make an appointment to sit down with your department head, perhaps depending on the context or the policy framework of the unit to have a conversation with the departmental promotion and tenure committee so that you can put together a plan that has clear expectations in terms of what that particular disciplinary context within the department expects in terms of accomplishments, and that plan or to have a timeline or to have embedded in the plan some expectation of what resources, what support the institution needs to provide you so that you can be appropriately enabled.

So what is this about? So essentially some factors that we need to think about in terms of the criteria, the expectation for promotion here, firstly that there be a national or international distinction and leadership. I'm not in a position to stand here and tell you exactly what those criteria and outcomes are, they are really going to depend so much on the context of your college, your department, your discipline, and being a land grant, comprehensive institution, that varies widely at Virginia Tech. I can give you a pretty good idea of what that's going to look like in some of the science and engineering and biomedical sciences because I've lived in that world, and it has to do essentially with the distinction of your scholarship, what is the impact of your scholarship in terms of the ideas, do you have an identifiable line of inquiry, a body of scholarship that fits together in some coherent way that creates a reputation for excellence for you, your department, your college, and your institution.

How is that particular reputation reflected, how do you know that? Are you being invited to speak at conferences, are you being invited to put together programs for meetings where you have the opportunity to invite colleagues, are you being invited to serve as the editor of or publish reviews, where there is an element often of the opportunity for critique and evaluation. All those are examples within the particular context maybe of biomedical sciences or engineering or technology that you can look to in terms of a national and international distinction. That's going to vary, within the performing arts it may be the particular venue where you have the opportunity to perform your art. If you're in the area of the visual arts and maybe architecture and design, it may be selection at a particular exhibition of your work. Within the humanities it may be the opportunity to have a monograph or a book accepted by a publisher which has a national or international distinction in a particular field.

Those particular criteria, those particular expectations are very much connected with the disciplinary context and the department and that's why there needs to be a commitment, a very close and interactive relationship between the individual faculty member and the department in terms of really mapping out an understanding of what those expectations are, and I think I have an opportunity to come back and talk about this but that's exactly the direction that we're taking at our institution is to make sure that departments do indeed, that faculty in departments come together and collectively create an expression and explicit expectation and vision as to what those outcomes and those measures of excellence are.

So high level of competence in instruction, outreach, and service - we are a land grant institution, we're committed to educating the population, we're committed to research, and we're committed to taking the education, the products of education research and transferring that to the betterment of the

state, of the communities who we serve. That's what land grant institutions do, and so at the professor level we do look for competence across all of those missions tailored to the particular expectation, the culture, the character of that departmental context. Think of it almost like checking the box, but beyond that we're particularly interested in identifying excellence in research and scholarship or creative achievement and so scholarship, scholarly works again are understood and defined within the context of that particular discipline and that particular unit but institutionally we have already established an excellent reputation and we aspire to be even better and the way we are achieving that is to continue to move forward in terms of the productivity and the quality of our scholarship, again within the context of how scholarly works are understood and valued within the discipline, within that departmental context.

Ultimately you can say well how do I know whether my scholarship has sufficient quality? How do I know whether it has national or international distinction? As I said it depends on the context of the discipline and the department, but in a sense the faculty member, you the individual aspiring to professorship at the full rank, you need to make the case. And the way you make that case is that you work closely with your mentors, with your department, you come to an understanding to develop a plan but ultimately you will make the case that will be evaluated at the departmental, the college, and then the university level, so promotion to professor should be reserved for those whose achievements are broad and noteworthy.

This doesn't suggest at all that we protect this particular kind of appointment, that we preserve it just for a subset of our faculty whom we tenure. When we tenure a faculty member at Virginia Tech we have full confidence and expectation that that person will continue to develop the depth and the breadth of their scholarship to the point where they would be worthy of promotion to professor. This is not a filter where we only expect 40 percent of those who are tenured are going to make it. It's quite the opposite, when we tenure someone we make a well grounded bet on the future in regards to that individual faculty member and we do that with the expectation that academic progress, the scholarship is going to continue to develop and we look forward having made that tenure decision, we look forward to coming back in 6 years or so to confirm that in fact that person is ready for professorship or before that depending on what the development is.

A lot of what I said is that the national or international reputation, the evaluation of the impact of the scholarship, this needs to be really understood in the context of the particular discipline, and how does that happen? Well generally that happens within the context of departments. I know there's a diversity sometimes within departments, but nevertheless departments have a duty and department leaders both in the context of department heads as well as promotion and tenure committees and senior members in the department, they have a duty really to do their best to identify and describe how you evaluate, how you identify quality of scholarship within that particular department, and almost never will you find judgments or assessments here that are overly quantitative. I would certainly discourage a department from saying that you have to have 2 publications or 3 or one or whatever it is. It's a qualitative assessment but a qualitative assessment made within the context of understanding in a fairly explicit way how you evaluate quality and what quality looks like.

I mentioned earlier that we are moving forward in terms of being more explicit about this and so departments are in the process of documenting these kinds of expectations, documenting them as a consequence of conversations that faculty need to have at that departmental level, and so there is a deadline for submission of those and it's the 1st of May this year. Many departments have done this already and some need to really do a lot of work in a hurry to get this done because we need to do it because it serves you.

So what are the qualitative and quantitative indicators that demonstrate stature and impact of the faculty members research, scholarly or creative work? That's essentially the question that needs to be answered within these documents that departments are preparing, and then what do we do with this? These serve as guides, think of it this way. The opportunities that we have to evaluate dossiers for tenure and then after that dossiers submitted that apply for promotion to professor are just two decision points that happen within a whole array, a timeline of other decision points and processes. Those decision points are actually built on a process that has to do with the constant and interactive mentorship that happens with department heads, promotion and tenure committees and senior mentors. It's built on what happens in the process of annual evaluations and need to be equally balanced in terms of a retrospective performance evaluation but just as important or more important in some instances a forward looking conversation about assignments and goals.

And beyond that it's built on reviews or re-appointments that happen twice as you know during the probationary period. Prior to tenure and at least once prior to promotion to full professor. Those processes, the annual evaluations, those interactive conversations can be thought of as stepping stones that move a faculty member forward. There should be no surprises is what I'm saying, as you progress through an academic career passing through those important decision points. And by departments actually documenting, as a consequence of those collective judgments that faculty bring to the conversation, departments actually documenting that helps a faculty member understand where the steppingstones are and how well they are progressing in this pathway towards first tenure and then for the promotion. And the better we do that then this whole process is going to work better at Virginia Tech. I spent more time than I anticipated, but I really feel that we're making great progress here in terms of these departmental documents, and so as faculty members you should look to departments in terms of departments writing this kind of useful information.

What I've got next is basically policy and procedural issues, and perhaps I can go through them quickly and then respond to any questions that you may have. In evaluating scholarship, we of course are very interested in the internal perspectives as we go through the decision process at the departmental, college and institutional levels. But we also look to peers outside the institution to make those assessments so these are immensely valuable and of course the important thing here is pay attention to the policy details. External reviewers, how they're chosen, it's a shared responsibility of the department head, the committee and so on, and as well as the candidate. You want external reviewers who are going to bring emphasis and weight to the evaluation, so the quality and the value of the review, of the external letter is going to depend in part on the degree to which you trust the decision or the opinion of that external letter writer. Pretty obvious but pay attention to that.

The department head's letter should address the expectations for the candidate's promotion in the context of departmental standards, exactly what I've been emphasizing, that scholarship, visibility, reputational excellence, those are essentially understood and evaluated in the context of the discipline as understood and articulated mostly through the department, and you know as the dossier has gone through the process from departmental evaluation, to the college, to the institutional level, all of the conversations, all of the recommendations are tied back to that understanding of how a department understands scholarship and how it evaluates quality and so it should be.

Committee letters should address the major points of discussion, positive and negative. So as a dossier progresses through the evaluation phases there'll be particular issues, perhaps its strengths and weaknesses that arise in a dossier, and those are the issues that will be the conversation points of course as each successive committee conducts its evaluation. It's a good idea always in a recommendation, in the substantive justification for a recommendation, that those particular points get

raised up and addressed so that the wisdom within the room at each committee level can then be incorporated into the conversation that occurs subsequently, and likewise so that it should address the major points emphasized by the external reviewers.

I think that's the end of my section. If you have any questions for me I'm going to be staying through to the end. Jot them down and I'll come up later, thank you.

Sally Morton: Thank you. So good morning, I'm Sally Morton, dean of the College of Science, and I'm delighted to be here with you this morning. As a dean, the only currency in my college is people, and my most important job is to recruit, retain, and develop the best people, and you are they, and as the provost said, this is really a partnership between the candidates, most notably with their departments, but also with the college and the university, to determine how you wish for your career to move forward and how we can work with you on that.

The provost alluded to an important step in that and that is the progress towards promotion to full professor which usually takes 5 years, takes place 5 years after promotion to associate. I would counsel you to use that as an important time to look at where you are and where you're going in your career and also do that and in an ongoing way in dialogue with your chair or head as well as your personal committee within the department.

I've been asked to speak about two particular issues I think given my marching orders by Peggy, so I'll address those now. The first question I was asked to address was how should a faculty member identify and cultivate potential external reviewers. So the important part of this question is, it doesn't say "should a person do this" but "how should a person do this", so I would first say you should do this, this works not only in your favor to get yourself known in terms of visibility for both letter writers that you might add to the list, remember the candidate is asked to put forward letter writer suggestions as well as the department does as well, so anything you can do to increase your visibility in your field will help you in terms of letter writers that you might propose as well as others that might be elicited by the department. I wouldn't do this six months prior to wanting to go up, I think this is a multi-year activity.

Think about who are the leaders in your field, are they at particular places? Are folks at the University of Michigan, that's where a particular center of excellence in your field is, get yourself invited to give talks at those places, use your professional societies to increase your visibility. The provost spoke about being asked to organize a session, for example, at a professional meeting, these are all ways to work on your visibility, so I think you should be very intentional in this space. Think to yourself, you're the department chair or head and you're having to put together a list of potential reviewers for you, the candidate, who would be on that list? You know who the leaders are and I would just quote from the faculty hand book, and the provost also alluded to this, reviewers are expected to be at peer institutions or other major research universities, experienced with promotion process at their home university, national and international leaders. So think of those criteria.

The second question I was asked to address was how do college committees evaluate faculty members whose accomplishments vary widely based on disciplinary differences, and I would actually go further to say those could be sub-disciplinary differences. I think the first overall comment I would like to make as a dean in my third year here at the university is that within my college and at the university level there is wide recognition and respect for the variability across disciplines and across sub-disciplines, and the provost spoke to that as well. What are the type of scholarly dissemination activities that different discipline have? In my field, in the area of science, it's the scholarly paper, but in other fields, arts, architecture, and so on, there are very different ways in which scholarly accomplishments are

disseminated. That is discussed in the college committees, it is discussed in the university committees, it is accepted and it is respected, so I wanted to assure you on that point.

I'd also like to make another couple points: college committees have representatives from across the departments and disciplines, it varies in different colleges, in ours we have one representative from each department or school, other colleges might have more numbers, but you should be assured there is someone from your department on the college committee and who participates in the discussion. The departmental promotion and tenure expectation documents, which as you heard are due on May 1<sup>st</sup>, play an essential role in assessment by the dean and by the college committee. I look at those to really understand across the eight departments and one school that I have in the College of Science. How do those expectations differ? Those documents are used, you should acquaint yourself with those and as senior people in your departments you've probably already been very much part of that discussion, that's an important role you play as a departmental citizen as well. The dean is present in all colleges at the college committee, we do not vote, at least in my college we don't, and I'm fairly sure we do not vote in any of the college committees. Our job is to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and equitably according to the faculty handbook, and as deans we take that responsibility very seriously.

I've talked about our responsibilities but what is yours? I believe that your responsibility as a candidate in your dossier is to tell a narrative of who you are, what are the accomplishments that you have made in your field. Think to yourself, let's suppose you're a statistician, I'm in statistics, not everybody reading the dossier is a statistician, so make sure it's almost as if you're sitting across the table from someone who's not in your discipline and you have five minutes, how would you explain the impact that you've had, the scholarly achievements that you've made. Think to yourself, it's not just someone in your discipline. Now your departmental personnel committee has that same responsibility in their letter, the chair or head of your department has that same responsibility to set context for you. The college committee does as well, as well as the Dean's letter, and we try very hard to do that but you have a responsibility in that context as well when you write your dossier. You might want to ask someone from outside your field to read the dossier to see do they understand that. I know we're totally within our discipline and we think this makes perfect sense but sometimes it doesn't, and really thinking about impact, context, comparison those are important words to think about when you present your case. So I think I'll stop there and of course I would welcome questions as well when we get to the end, thank you.

Peggy Layne: Thank you and next we have Craig Woolsey to talk about how the university committee approaches its work.

Craig Woolsey: OK so I can be very brief, Peggy asked me to talk specifically about how the university P and T committee operates, and so I am a professor in aerospace and ocean engineering, I am the College of Engineering representative to the university P and T committee - each college has a representative. The committee comprises representatives from each college, the deans, and then an additional member I guess from the Faculty Senate. And the way the process works is that we have two sets of meetings. In one week we meet, we had our charge meeting earlier this week when it was explained to the committee how all the different college processes work, and then the college representatives meet by themselves without the deans present, with the provost present, to present the cases from our respective colleges to one another. We spend 5 or 10 minutes presenting each individual case and part of this process is just about calibrating to each other's expectations for excellence and scholarship, and so we present and then we discuss these cases and then we sort of take a straw man vote to understand where the temperature of the committee is, and then we meet later in a 2nd week with the deans present where we all vote, with the exception of the deans do not vote on cases that were advanced from their own college, because they have already cast their vote in the form of their letter for the

candidate.

So the important thing to share, and I think this is sort of the 1st thing that Provost Clarke says when he meets us for our charge meeting, is by the time the dossier has gotten to the university committee it has gone through four levels of rigorous review: it's been reviewed by the department P and T committee, it's been reviewed by the department chair, it's been reviewed by the college P and T committee, and in many or most cases the representatives to the university committee are there at that college committee meeting listening to the discussions so that we better understand all of the context, and then it has gone through the review of the Dean, and actually there's a 5th level of review which is all of those external reviewers that we talked about earlier, and that's a really important part of the whole process, so I think Provost Clarke's point is we know how to do this. It's a very rigorous process, by the time it gets to the university committee a lot of very important work has been done by people who understand these cases and many of those cases much better than we do, so our role again is to ensure the integrity of the process at the university level across the colleges and in a few cases that may be marginal or have some controversy associated with them we do have to do a bit more work investigating and discussing, but by the time it gets to the university committee the cases have been well studied and so I'll leave it at that and I'm happy to answer questions later.

Peggy Layne: Thank you. We have found it useful in the past to invite a couple of faculty members who have recently been through this process to share their perspectives with you and so I'd like to invite Monty Abbas to come up to the mike and tell us a little bit about how he prepared for promotion.

Monty Abbas: All right thank you very much. I just prepared some slides, I know that I'm not supposed to talk from the slides but I find it easier for me to get some points. It is very difficult to follow Provost Cyril Clarke when he presents, but I think he has pointed a lot of good points, so I'm just going to tell you my perspective. One thing that I think about is promotion to professor, you have to distinguish between the state of being at that point and the artifacts that are the evidence that shows you are at that point, and sometimes we lose track of that as we are working so it's important to point it out. About excellence in scholarship, education, outreach, and leadership, I'll take one step back and give you my own advice. Thinking about the cycle of scholarship, and in my mind you start by funding, sometimes it's not for all the colleges but in a lot of colleges that's important, then the research itself, then producing outcomes and those outcomes are going to include the students that you have trained, the papers that you have produced, and the collaboration and if you do everything right then you reach the national recognition or international recognition and then there is one step that we usually forget about which is the outreach and how you can promote your own work so that you can have significant number of citations and feeds into recognition which is going to feed back into the whole cycle because now you're going to become more successful in getting funding, getting graduate students, and so on.

So my advice would be, passion is number one in what you're doing, your goals you have to determine your goals, and you have to revisit those goals as you are working. The faculty activity report is a really good point where you can sit back and think about not what just what you are doing next year but what you're doing for the next promotion. And the trick is really alignment of those two, so I have had projects before where I was not passionate about, just you know not very helpful to work on those, and I have others that I was really passionate about them, that produce a lot, and then efficiency, you know in what you're doing. How can you have more hours in your working day that's the question, that's the holy grail right, the answer is actually simple - it's synergy. So one thing that I found during the last years was everything I do, it has to have multiple outcomes and they feed into each other, so even when I took some steps back from research just a little bit to work on the faculty senate, that took a lot of time but at the end of the day some of this work itself I presented at national conferences and that led to

some funding believe it or not, so it's a cycle that if you put everything together in a synergistic way, that is going to help.

Timeline 5 to 7 years seems reasonable. But again it's not about the time, it's about the excellence in what you're doing and the impact that you have in the field, so for me, how did I know that I was ready, again, the state of being there versus the counting beans. Just different signs here and there. One of my major sponsors contacted me saying that we think some of the work you have done has led to a lot of changes and we just want to track the steps that were taken in that, so OK I did have an impact. Walking into conferences and seeing that some of the work you have done now people are following up on, well so you have an impact in the field. Success of grad students, I take pride in that, when I say that 5 of my PhD students that I graduated, 4 of them are faculty elsewhere, so these kind of things here and there are just, gives you a sign that you're ready to make your case and then you make your case. That's my point of view and I'll be here if we have questions, thank you.

Sally Johnson: Thank you for the chance to share some of my experiences with you, I was asked - Peggy gave us our marching orders and I have 2 of those questions answered. One has to do with mentorship. This was very important to me because, like some of you in this room, Virginia Tech is not your first stop. I came here from two other universities, and had experiences with promotion and tenure at two larger universities, University of Florida and Penn State. So one of the things that I recognized as being very important to me when I came to Tech was try to identify the right person. I was assigned an individual from my department to serve as a mentor and he was wonderful with putting all of the papers and grants and all of the checked box material together but he didn't meet my needs for how do I look as a whole, how does my packet, how would it be viewed in the broader sense, and so I selected an individual who was an acquaintance but also a fellow woman, a department head within my college, and I formed a very strong informal mentorship with her and she was able to look at my packet and help me recognize that number one, the very most important thing that you can do is be your advocate and write a very strong candidate statement that's going to leave a lasting impression with everyone as your package moves forward.

The second thing she helped me identify was that my weakness was in how I define international reputation. I will share with you I have a fear of flying, my passport is not going to be full of stamps, which is not the only way you can be regarded as having an international reputation, so I became very involved with my professional society. I was elected to the board of board of directors for my professional group, I spent one year there, during my second year of my elected term I volunteered to organize our next annual meeting. It just so happened to be in Baltimore but it was attended by scientists from 47 different countries, so clearly establishing that I do have an international reputation, that I have an outreach component, that I was able to provide leadership to a large group. Other ways that you could consider with that particular metric is to look at how many citations are downloaded from some of your papers. Where those citations are being downloaded from, who is citing your work, again further strengthening your case for being a strong scientist in all aspects.

The final thing that I will mention that helped me looking at my packet was again doing it early and putting it away, and coming back to it and asking am I meeting all of the missions, am I able to show that I have a good reputation, that I am a leader and strong in not only research but also with my activities in outreach, diversity and inclusivity, and teaching. Thank you.

Heidi Ann Mesmer: Hello my name is Heidi Ann Mesmer and I'm in the School of Education and I study reading, specifically how people, usually young children, learn to read, and within that field I study text difficulty, readability, and struggling readers. I've been in higher education since 1999 and Virginia Tech

since 2007, and was at two prior institutions. I'm part of an academic couple and so we did a little bit of moving around. We were asked to address three questions: How does a faculty member determine when they're ready to go up, did you have a timeline, and mentoring, and I jotted a few things down around each of those.

So in terms of how does a faculty member determine when you're ready to go up, I kind of have 5 quick responses. The first and the most obvious is when your record has the required credentials that match your department and the university - don't ignore the university document - and the university's requirements, or more, or more right, it's better to have a little more. If you don't have those requirements, then you are putting your P and T committee in a position of having to make a case that you are exceptional, that the rules are one way for everybody else but you're so special that you don't really have to match the rules, and that's usually as things go up the chain it doesn't go well, because people can look at what's written down and they can look at your record and they can see that there's this mismatch. Get outside yourself and try to assess your record objectively - my recommendation is do that little executive summary, the two pager at the very beginning of the dossier, where you're just going to catalogue the number of grants, who funded you, the number of articles, the big stuff that you're really proud of when it says major accomplishments, put all that down. That's usually the first thing that a P & T committee is going to look at, and use that as a way to talk to people in your field and outside of your field about how you look, it's really easy for people to do that.

My second point about when you're ready is when you believe people in your field who don't really work with you directly, because remember your summary, your letters are not going to be coming from co-authors or people that you have really close relationships with because that's disallowed. So check those people out, you know who the SCHEV approved peers are, go to all of those different university sites, look at who those people are, do they know you. Think about are you being called for panels, are you doing P & T reviews from assistant to associate. That's a great experience to see how an external person would go about evaluating. When people at your conferences say, I thought you were full, that's an indication that they're starting to see you at that rank, when people in your department and especially influential people recommend that you go up. I would recommend that you pay attention to shifts in your departmental P & T documents. There was a shift in my document between the time I went up for associate and got that and the time I went up for full, there were just, books kind of shifted in value there, and it was important for me to pay attention to that as I went up.

The third thing about how to know when you're ready is when you have the time to put together materials and make a case, what you have right now is data, you have data about the number of grants you've done, the amount of funding you have, the number of journal articles, the number of patents et cetera et cetera et cetera, but having data does not make a case. If you want to think about it in terms of a journal article, you don't just lay out a bunch of data and send it in, you have to organize it, you have to create a cohesive picture, you have to create alignment, so the abstract says this and then you rationalize what you've done and your results match your measures, same thing in your dossier. You say 10 articles here, it's got to be there, et cetera. It takes time to craft your narrative and present a story of what you've done, it takes time to make it interesting and compelling to someone outside your field - your audience is an overworked faculty member frankly, that is reading these and trying their best, so do have people outside your field read them.

I want to share a little story around that, make sure you do get feedback from people, especially people who may or may not be really high on you. I got feedback from somebody in my department and at the time they made an observation about my record that was kind of like what they perceived to be a weakness and of course you know I responded as most people would, you know, kind of agitated,

irritated, but once I let that dissipate what I realized is that I could more substantively address that perceived weakness and almost combat that perception, and so in my narrative I crafted a paragraph that almost directly controverted that point, and then importantly I had evidence, I could point to objective impact indicators to support that, so it wasn't just a really passionate argument, it was a passionate argument with five pieces of external evidence, and after I got promoted, the whole thing was said and done, I was talking to somebody about my record who had sat on the committee and they actually echoed something that I said in that narrative.

So don't underestimate the power of your narrative to impact, it's your only place to say something and I'm so thankful here that it's only four pages, because at other institutions in some places you have to do a research one and a service one and a teaching one, I'm really glad we don't do that, because you can really focus. You're ready to go up for promotion when your mind space is around selling yourself, so try to avoid doing this after a big rejection or bruising situation, you know, we're all human. Act like you are writing a letter of recommendation for somebody else when you can acquire the temperament and style, and then you're ready to go up.

Number five is when the politics are right. This is a human endeavor, and we're all trying to make it fair and I know all the administrators are, but my experience has been that people either underestimate or overestimate politics in their own favor. In other words, they say they underestimate it and they say I've got the record, I'm great, I don't care if nobody likes me. Or they say everybody likes me, they get along with me, I've got great teaching eval's, I'm a shoo in, doesn't matter that I'm supposed to have 1,500,000 in funding and I've only got a quarter of that, everybody is just going to overlook that. They can't overlook it, the process doesn't allow that.

Timeline, no I didn't really have a timeline, I just kept doing my work. I feel like we are extremely lucky to be in a field where we can pursue intellectual interest, it's an amazing thing. I knew that I had not reached all my career goals and so I just kept plugging away at the things I wanted to do, and the studies and projects that interested me. I tend to be motivated so I was very motivated after getting associate, that motivated me, made me want to go farther, it kind of empowered me and freed me. I knew that I didn't want to wait 10 years, so I kind of got the message that was probably a hard time line but I didn't know if I was going to do 6, 7 or 8, it can all depend on the right grant being funded, or the right publication being accepted, so I had a flexible timeline that was responsive to my career trajectory and I was paying attention to other people. And finally in terms of mentoring, I find Sally's comments really very interesting because I have lots of mentors for lots of different things, and I seek them out and I don't just have one mentor and I'm not a super fan of that assigned mentors kind of thing either. I understand that it's necessary from an administrative standpoint, you don't want to leave anybody just hanging out there, but there's a little bit of an artifice to that especially if someone does not know me well or my work.

But so that said, I just over my career always sought out various mentors, so I have mentors who looked at my dossier and narrative and they were really good at giving me honest feedback, I have mentors who advised me about the political climate, when I went for associate somebody told me you need to wait a year, I didn't want to wait a year, thank God I listened to them going up for associate. Mentors who have put publication issues, you know I got rejected, I have competing requests for revisions, and people who help with teaching situations and people who advance my methodology and analytical skills. I'll just end by saying that for me the promotion to full was really honestly kind of financially inspired, I have kids in college and I just I needed that jump, but here's what I'll say, I found that now that I have earned promotion I'm more energized and excited about my work. I have all these new projects this past year, I got my best teaching rates ratings to date which was kind of surprising, so I guess I kind of

underestimated the intangibles and I would just you know so it's worth it.

Peggy Layne: Thank you, thanks to all of our speakers for taking time out of your busy schedules to join us today and now we have time for questions. Leslie in the back has another microphone, and I'll ask that if you have a question raise your hand and let one of us get you a microphone and then I'll share this microphone with some of our speakers. When you have a question you can direct it to whoever you want to respond or I can pick somebody at random to respond, and I'll remind the folks that are participating by Zoom to type questions into the chat box and we have somebody who's monitoring that and can pass those along.

Participant: Question for Heidi, you were talking about the narrative and we have four pages to create or sort of stitch together a case. My school and myself, I always get locked in to making these sections like research, teaching, outreach, do you have other suggestions on how that might work or is it always divided that way.

Heidi Ann Mesmer: So I'll pass the mike to Sally and then Monty or whoever, my narrative did follow that structure, I did put headings in, I didn't depart from it because I think that's easier for committees. I try to hook my reader in the beginning in layman's terms, situate my work for them in an easy to understand way, and then to kind of funnel down. It's very hard writing because you've got to be clear, you've got to be interesting and compelling, and then you've got to have all these pieces of data that say, you can't just say I'm really great and everybody knows me, you have to say this article was cited this many times, so I did not depart from that structure and I don't know what, you might want to ask people like Dr. Woolsey who sit on committees whether or not they think that's a good idea, Sally?

Sally Johnson: I did mine pretty much the same way, I had subsections for research, scholarship, and teaching, outreach, et cetera but I also included a summary paragraph where I tried to blend all of the previous components back into my view of the world. Of my program, my introductory paragraph which is pretty much equivalent to the first paragraph of any grant you write, and I echo this is where you hook your reader, it's important to keep them engaged although you are given four pages, I cut mine to three, to help people like myself who have shorter attention spans.

Craig Woolsey: Some structure is helpful, from the committee perspective, you know we have about at the university level about 80 dossiers, each of which is about 80 pages, so we're 6400 pages we have to read in about a month. So conciseness is helpful and we have to talk about each of these things, and so it is helpful to have some structure there to sort of point that out, but you know that said, it's not 80 pages of narratives, there's only four pages of your statement and that is a really important aspect of the dossier so it does pay to spend some time on it.

Peggy Layne: I'll just say from listening to these workshops over the years, don't just list the things that are in your dossier in your summary statement, your personal statement is your opportunity to tie all of your work together and give it context, so don't just repeat the information that's already in other parts of the dossier, and I think some of the speakers said get somebody outside your discipline to read it and see if it makes sense to somebody who doesn't have the disciplinary context that you bring to it.

Participant: The tenure dossier includes a comparison table of performance prior to tenure and after, what is the purpose of this comparison and why split up performance if it's about international reputation and impact.

Cyril Clarke: The way I understood the question is about the way the dossier is prepared to highlight the work accomplished since the last decision, so in other words you've got that body of scholarship and

work and commitment that serves as the basis for a tenure decision and then the question is what has essentially happened since that decision, and so the answer is simply that from an institutional view point we're interested in understanding whether or not continual progress is being accomplished as you go forward. It's quite possible that in fact a lot of the outcomes that we'll be looking for may actually have been evident already at a tenure decision, but that's actually generally the exception. The elements that are necessary for us to identify as being supportive of promotion to professor really have to do with the depth, the breadth, the broader recognition and visibility of the work, and so it's easier to evaluate that if we say OK so this is what happened, this was the status at a tenure stage, and building on that what has happened over the last 5 or 6 or whatever number of years, so it's not the be all and the end all, ultimately that dossier is evaluated in its entirety, we're looking at the entire record of an individual. But it's instructive to know that there is this continuing and building progression and development that not only has happened in the last 5 years but based on the last 5 years is likely to happen in the next 5 years or 10 years or 15 years.

Heidi Ann Mesmer: I just wanted to say, I didn't address this, but in my work the quantity of my peer reviewed articles did not increase from assistant to associate versus associate to full, but the quality did by a number of indicators, publication in more difficult journals, top ten articles list, my citations really shot up so you can use the executive summary to highlight those.

Participant: I want a really honest answer to this question, so promotion to full is based on international and national recognition and professional leadership, does leadership within the department, for instance holding heavy administrative positions since tenure, ever mitigate less of that professional service, and if the answer is no then I'd love to know that the answer is no.

Cyril Clarke: You want an honest answer as opposed to most of the ones [laughter] the honest answer is not entirely, no. There are circumstances within our university where we call on associate professors to take on administrative burdens and you can see evidence of that right now, and that usually happens because of the extraordinary confidence that we have in those individuals to provide leadership. Whenever that happens I really worry. I worry about that extending for too long, because I know it has often a negative impact on the ability of that faculty member really to develop in terms of the breadth of scholarship, and so I think that within the process certainly there is an understanding, a consideration in regards to that burden, but that administrative additional burden is not enough to explain an absence of scholarly development.

Participant: It's not absence of scholarship but and maybe this is getting too far in the weeds and I think I understand the answer to the question, but if you think about the bullet points at the beginning, it was professional leadership, service, so not a lack of scholarship, the goods are there, but a balance of say leadership and service within a department or a unit more than leadership outside in the profession at large, so that's more of the sort of tenor of my question but I think I understand.

Cyril Clarke: It really depends on the details, and I would I would focus less on leadership in the context of national and international visibility and more on the visibility of the quality of the work and the scholarship, so you could demonstrate extraordinary leadership within the institution and that will be valued, and if you can do that and still have sufficient time that doesn't preclude your ability to raise the visibility of your scholarship and the quality of that on an international basis then that's good, I mean that's the best of both worlds.

Participant: Please clarify for me the nature of the P&T document required from the departments at the beginning of May.

Peggy Layne: He's asking about the documents that we are asking the departments to provide by May 1st, documenting their promotion and tenure process. It's the responsibility of the department to provide in writing the processes and the expectations that they have in place for the department, many of your departments already have these and have had for many years, but there are departments at the university that have not and so we are asking them to be provided.

Sally Morton: Just echoing that, it's not just about the process but also about the expectations within departments, and those are also provided at the college level and those are being required by May 1st by the provost office. I happen to know in my college we've received them from all of our departments and I know that other departments are working on them. You play an essential role in that discussion at the disciplinary level within your departments, so I would encourage you to have input into that, and be assured as I mentioned our college committee looks over those at the department level, and so we have a good understanding of what the expectations are across the departments. I found them incredibly helpful in setting context and clear expectations, and they vary quite a bit across all departments in the College of Science in terms of formats as well as content. Some of them are tables, some of them are narrative, we do ask that they be consistent with the college level expectations document which is available on our website at the college of science.

I'll give you an example and that is the importance of funding, at the college, in the college document it says "external funding appropriate at a level to maintain a nationally visible research program is expected," that is very very clear in our college document, however in some sub-disciplines within our college, no funding is actually necessary, or a very small level, for example, the very theoretical sub-disciplines within our college. On the other side, in the lab heavy disciplines in our college, quite a high level of funding is available so then departments are more explicit about what that means, but they need to be consistent with the college level perspective and expectation.

Craig Woolsey: So I really appreciate Dean Morton's comment where she said you play a really important role in the process, and there's a discussion that has to happen between your P&T committee and you, and between your department head and you. The department head writes a letter that explains the department's expectations with regard to P&T but in a lot of cases those expectations are really specific to the individual. We have faculty being hired with appointments that are sort of shared among destination areas and things like that, for a committee reviewing the applications that can all get muddled if the department head isn't very specific about what your specific expectations were and so that's really helpful and how do you make sure that the right language gets in, well have that discussion with your department and your P&T committee.

Participant: I had to ask, the people who had a chance to serve on the college and university level P&T committees before they themselves went up for full, what were the major kind of revelations or takeaways from that experience that then impacted how you yourself put your case together.

Craig Woolsey: I don't know many people that have had that experience, I mean in my department you're not allowed to serve on any of these committees until you're full professor, it's kind of unfortunate, I learned at the charge meeting the other day that in some colleges it is possible and it seems it could be a really valuable thing so what about the rest of us, again for somebody like me the only answer is to have a conversation with the people that are on the committees.

Peggy Layne: I am aware that there are some departments that even have assistant professors sit in on promotion and tenure committees before they're promoted to associate and that does provide a great deal of insight.

Heidi Ann Mesmer: So I'm on my department level committee now and I guess it just helps me understand how hard it is to evaluate a bunch of people, even within my department I don't completely understand the context of their work and how important the narrative is to help me understand that and how much I want to make a case for somebody, the narrative really helps the committee member to know what to emphasize and where to look, all of those things. The other thing that just comes to mind is that the committee is in a situation where they have to show that they're complying with their own documents, so if that person going up isn't complying with the expectations document, it's a written record that there's a disparity between those two things, it's just incredibly hard to overcome.

Participant: Being a program chair, I need to do a lot to keep things under control in my program, with 15 plus contact hours of teaching per week, should I step down from the position to have a realistic shot at doing the things that will help me make the promotion.

Cyril Clarke: The question has to do with an assessment of an assignment and the available time to commit to those activities that are likely to build a case for promotion. And so I come back to an earlier comment that I made and that is that I think that faculty member should take the opportunity to put together a plan and you put together this plan in conversation with the department head and depending on the culture of the department in consultation with the promotion tenure committee or mentors. It may under some circumstances be necessary within that plan to recognize that a faculty member's commitment to a particular activity needs to either end or needs to draw down to give that person the opportunity to build a case, to build a record for promotion.

I don't think we ever want to get into a circumstance where institutionally we say that yeah, we think it's important for you to develop your scholarship in favor of promotion, but we're not going to give you the time actually to commit to that. There are circumstances I recognize within departments that we desperately need people to fulfill jobs. But we should never have that happen for so long that it really diminishes that person's opportunity to develop and continue to move through the ranks, so the specific circumstances I can't speak to other than to suggest that there may need to be a conversation with the department head to think about what that plan is, what the expectations are, how we're going to do that, what are their valuable resources in terms of time and other dimensions to accomplish that.

Monty Abbas: The point that I want to add is again synergy, going back to synergy. I was the president of the Faculty Senate for a year, and I was involved with the faculty senate for 5 years before I got to that point. But there was synergy involved, because I learned a lot during that process and I have known some collaborators through that process, so that affected the proposal that I wrote, and the work that I have done and so on, so if you think about administrative work as something that you just do in isolation, that's not a good idea. If you think about it in terms of a synergy and how that can impact you positively in other fields and of your work then that's a great idea.

Participant: I have a question about the narrative statement, in particular the relationship of the one that you write for promotion to full to the one that you wrote for promotion and tenure to associate. What were your experiences, how useful did you feel that it was to either go back and read what you had written about yourself and how you envisioned your career and your work 5, 6, 7 years before, or did you find it more useful to start with a blank page and say all right, how would I talk about myself now without thinking about that earlier stage and how it characterized my work.

Heidi Ann Mesmer: I think promotion to professor is about growth, and honestly it did help me to go back and look because it helped me to chronicle my actual growth in a very specific way, so I could see what I did at associate and I could see over seven or eight years I have changed a lot, so I found that it's

a great idea, you don't want to completely reflect your previous statement, but I think it's a great idea because you can see your growth.

Monty Abbas: I did the same, I started from the previous statement and worked my way from there, and I would add, I deviated a little bit from the traditional way of writing the statement, I wasn't afraid of writing about failures as well, in a positive way. So again keeping in mind that we emphasize how much funding we get in the college of engineering and so on, I wrote a proposal that was not selected, but when I got good reviews it was saying that it was the best in that category, so I mentioned it there and I put it there. So again writing about how what I did with the funding I got that rather than how much funding I got. To me funding is a fuel that you put in your vehicle but where did you go with that vehicle is really what we want to emphasize. So those kind of things, philosophy, in addition to facts.

Participant: A question about letters from people at outside institutions: in my mind there's a difference between an external review and an independent review, an external review might be from someone who knows or has worked with the candidate prior, whereas an independent review would be written by someone with no prior knowledge of the candidate but rather reviews the CV or the dossier and writes a letter based on that. Will you clarify which one we use at Virginia Tech, does it depend on college, track, and/or other factors.

Peggy Layne: So the question has to do with the relationship between the reviewers and a person being reviewed.

Craig Woolsey: So my understanding of the question, we require external, independent reviews, the reviewers are not collaborators with the candidate, they're not co-authors with the candidate, but there's really no such thing as independent. In one's field, they have to be familiar with the candidate's work, occasionally we'll get a letter from someone that says, well I've never really heard of this person before you asked me to write this letter, but typically that's not the case, they are familiar with the work, especially for the case of promotion from associate to full, so they cannot be collaborators.

Cyril Clarke: Trying to differentiate different classifications sounds too complicated to me, what it really comes down to is that the various committees and administrative leaders would like to have a high level of confidence that the letter writer is credible, and so what they would like not to have is a suspicion that the opinion being expressed in that letter is based not just on evidence but on a particular and personal connection with the candidate in favor of advancing the candidate. It's a question of trying to avoid as much as possible the perception of bias, and that's what it comes down to, and you know in your discipline sometimes there may only be 5 or 6 other people at that particular discipline who are well placed to write a great external letter. And if one of those people happens to be a collaborator or a co-investigator or a graduate adviser you cannot use them, but otherwise you may choose to.

Heidi Ann Mesmer: It's interesting that this came up because when the discussion was going on I wrote down, in terms of external letters how do you comply with the regulations around not having close working relationships but still broker relationships so that a person could write a letter. Like almost behaviorally, are you allowed to, how do people know you but not work with you closely?

Peggy Layne: I just go back to what Provost Clarke said. It's about the perception of bias, and you need to, the person writing the letter and the people on the committees who are addressing what the content of the letters is need to be able to explain why this person is the most appropriate person to make a judgment on your work.

Sally Morton: I tried to address that a little bit. I think it is a difficult thing. I've always counseled people

if there is a particular location or department that is a leader in your discipline, get yourself invited to give a talk there. You want somebody - also at professional conferences - this is much easier said than done in a smaller area where you can really target this, in larger areas it's more difficult to get yourself out there, but it is about that professional visibility at conferences and so on, you want someone to be able ideally to say I haven't worked with her, I haven't written a paper with her, but I did see her present at the last conference or I've seen her paper, she's known as the leader and why, that's where you want to get to, but it is absolutely difficult to do that without stepping over bounds.

Participant: So close working relationship would be something like co-authoring, co-PI-ing, but it wouldn't necessarily bar having coffee or something to talk about it, or inviting somebody to your presentation or being invited to give a talk?

Cyril Clarke: So you're absolutely right there. They are the obvious extremes, there's the external letter writer who may have read your papers and you've never met, fine, OK, and the other extreme is it could be a graduate student, ex-graduate student, or a graduate advisor, I mean clearly there's an interest in having that person succeed because you benefit from that person's success, the same happens as a co-investigator on the grant, particularly an ongoing project. So again, that person advancing benefits me, and then there are sort of the in-between. Having a conversation, interacting at the conference, having a robust discussion about the field, that's how science works, that's what we want to happen. What about two people serving in the same study section in an NIH review, that's how science works, there's no vested interest that I have in that person advancing. There will always be the in-betweens, but you know, your judgment's going to work here, if you just think about it in the context of "is there any level of bias that will be brought to that particular evaluation that is going to undermine the integrity of that letter".

Participant: My question is about the process of the P&T committee reviewing an associate professor's dossier before the actual process of going up for promotion - from your experiences what have you seen that the P & T committees can do or say to the people who are thinking of going up for full, and still protect professional working relationships, while also being loyal to the expectations, in other words, how can the P&T committee give criticism to another associate professor and not have us end up hating each other, what are some practical things that we can do in that regard.

Craig Woolsey: Get thick skin, I mean you submit journal papers and they get reviewed and you get nasty comments right, I mean you're not going to get that from you P&T committee because they're your colleagues, but you know, my opinion is you have to trust your P&T committee to be giving you legitimate advice, and if you can't, you might be in the wrong place, this may not be great, I mean if you had a situation where you can't trust your P&T committee, things have gone badly wrong. I don't think that's the case in any department at Virginia Tech, but you have to also be willing to accept critical feedback, and you are because you're an academic and we get critical feedback all the time and you know in my case it was well, not yet, you need a few more journal publications, and you know, OK, that's not personal. Is that the nature of your question?

Participant: I'm in the situation where I'm thinking about going up but I'm also on the P&T committee, and a lot of things that the committee can do, too, if someone's not ready to go for example, how do you say that but also preserve the relationship.

Craig Woolsey: Trust that they have thick skin - you have to give them critical feedback, you know it has to be objective, to the extent you can provide evidence that you're not there yet, that's a helpful thing to give them, but you have to trust that they trust you, know that they're going to take your criticism as

helpful as opposed to personal.

Sally Morton: I think constructive criticism with precise feedback, and also it is a partnership, if you're working with someone and you're saying you're not ready, you need a few more journal articles, I'd be ready to help you and review those, so it's a partnership that you're working with the candidate to help him or her proceed, that's one thing. I think the P&T expectations documents also set the rules of the road so that's why they're so important, and I think having a process, those yearly reviews, the 2 and 4 year reviews, the 5 year post promotion review, these are places, again that partnership we're working with you to achieve this, and that's really important, to have that culture in the department over feedback.

Participant: I have another one about external and internal reviewers: I'm very confused about the external reviewers, when I came up for tenure, the fact that I was extremely well connected was actually an issue that my department had to address, I guess to avoid the impression of conflict of interest. Otherwise I thought I was being given a hard time because I had accomplished to connect to international experts and that experience doesn't bode well for the progression to full process as I learn by the dean.

Peggy Layne: So the question is about again the level of connection between the candidate and the external reviewers, and if somebody could also comment about the selection of the external reviewers, some are recommended by the candidate and some are recommended by the department. So the candidate needs to be careful not to recommend every possible one because a department has to be able to pick some people that are not the candidate's recommendations right, somebody else want to jump in?

Craig Woolsey: Just one helpful comment, maybe don't make your recommendations to the department P&T committee until they have already inquired with some prospective external reviewers, that's what we did, and then you know if you happen to recommend the same people, but your department has already independently chosen, that's fine and they still count as independently selected.

Sally Morton: You know I can understand the questioner's concern, because in a very small field this is problematic, as I think the provost used as an example there's 5 people working in that area, you're collaborating with three of them, how do you find external reviewers where a bias won't be implicated? This goes back to the narrative as well, this might be a situation where your dossier is being sent to someone who has never met you, and perhaps has not read one of your papers, and they have to really understand who you are and what your work is about, so this does put you I think in a more difficult position, it's unfortunate that someone as well connected as the person, the questioner is that this seen as a negative.

Peggy Layne: But it also comes back to recognition of scholarship outside your sub-discipline, right, so you should be able to make a case for yourself that people who are not as embedded in your field as you are can still recognize as reaching the required level of accomplishment.

Monty Abbas: just a quick comment because your comment triggered it in my mind, we might get by surprise we attach some of our papers to the dossier when you send it out, so while you're working you know keep that in mind, and have some really great papers written before you get this up point.

Cyril Clarke: You know I'm not sure I have much more to add to the comments already shared. I think that the process at Virginia Tech works well, it's apparent that under some circumstances individual faculty or departments are having some difficulty in terms of evaluating whether the connection is too

close to result in an unbiased evaluation and so that could happen, and I'm confident that departments and colleges will be able to work through those details.

What I wanted to add though, is that in those circumstances when in fact the field is very small, and so I know a lot about this because in the context of veterinary medicine, in particular within the clinical specialty areas, if you talk about veterinary cardiology, there may be actually quite a small number of people who are actually tenured professors at an academic institution, because the majority of these individuals are in private practice, so at that point in time we recognize that it doesn't necessarily take a boarded veterinary cardiologist, actually to be the only kind of person who can evaluate the performance of a cardiologist going up for full professorship. You could look for an internist, who apparently know quite a lot about cardiology, and in fact some oncologists just may know something about cardiology too, and so there's an oncologist in the group here so I had to pick on him, but the point I'm making is that scholarship can be recognized and effectively evaluated, by some outside that immediate field, that immediate domain, so the fields are actually broader than we think they are, in terms of the number of potential letter writers.

Participant: My question is about, is it a bad time to start looking at new things before you go up? So this is my situation. I got my tenure and went through the whole process several years past now, all through the traditional computer engineering papers. I have always been a very passionate teacher, I have helped other people doing research in education in my classes, but I've never been a co-author with them but I like what they do, and I would like to get in there. I'm also working on a text book for my class which is a topic that doesn't have any good textbooks on it, and I think, sometimes maybe I should just make the last pushes and do what I have always been doing, continue that so that the narration becomes complete and I can go for full, and then maybe start looking at things that will take a long time to become fruitful, because I'm learning those things and it takes some time. I don't even have, can't have a Ph D student by myself, I have to co-advise them if I'm going to do those things. What is your take on that, it's a very specific question I know. My question is, What do you recommend, should I wait until I become full to spend more time on those or because I like it, let's just do it, do it all at the same time, although it may just lengthen the time that I go for full.

Monty Abbas: I think the advice I would give you is don't put your eggs in one basket, have a diversified portfolio if you will, and an example for what I'm doing, I spend some time in doing work that I know is going to count, and I spend also some time in doing work that I know it's very difficult to count, but I'm passionate about, but never put all your eggs in one basket, diversifying that you get to that point.

Participant: Wouldn't that lengthen the time?

Monty Abbas: I think it depends on what you achieve.

Participant: I'm actually worried, this is basically what I'm saying, that my worry is that I start to delve into those things and it will lengthen the process of going for full to a point that it may stall things or just becomes harder, harder and harder.

Heidi Ann Mesmer: if you're worried that you're teaching too much, and it's going to dampen your progress forward, there is scholarship in teaching and so documenting that is a positive and it makes your entire portfolio stronger because you are fulfilling aspects of multiple components of teaching, research, and outreach and scholarship, so again it's a diverse portfolio but you have to be able to blend it all together to show that it is an entire package.

Craig Woolsey: Clarification, are you asking about a change in your research focus that took a new

direction that you're not sure whether it may even be valued by your department as scholarship in the conventional sense? You need to have a conversation with your P & T committee and your department chair, I think about that.

Cyril Clarke: Right, so you should be worried. What I hear you saying is that you've got a particular area of scholarship and discipline, you've come to understand that you love the educational assignment and you want to redirect or shift your scholarship to the educational domain, so within academic careers we reinvent ourselves on a regular basis, I mean I have, too. And there should be a way for us to accommodate that, but around the specific question of promotion, let's go back to assess what we're looking for here, what we're looking for in most areas as part of your scholarship or creativity that is sufficiently substantive and coherent to garner visibility regionally, nationally, internationally. It takes time to do that and there are those amongst us who accomplish one product and it makes us famous, but that's a rarity, so yes, there is a risk in terms of expectation to achieve promotional rank in a certain period of time, and when you make shifts like that it is important as Craig said to have a conversation with your department and college, because the college and department hired you to fulfill a particular function within the overall mission of that entity, and it may be disruptive if you change direction and so there will have to be a conversation about how to accommodate that and how to deal with that over a period of time.

Participant: My question is connected with faculty whose work is largely international. An international reputation is a key part of this, so it's not clear to me whether the reviewers, external reviewers, can be full professors at an international institution, so that is a simple question really.

Peggy Layne: The question is can the external reviewers be from outside the United States.

Sally Morton: Absolutely, yes, yes it's a good question, but absolutely.

Peggy Layne: Thank you all for your attention, we will post a link to the recording and I'll send that out to everybody who registered, so thanks again and we hope to see you next year and see your portfolios coming through for review.