

Notes from the FMP Promotion Productivity Panel on February 20, 2025

12:30 pm on zoom (18 participants)

How did you know you were ready to go up for promotion?

- One panelist felt they were ready to go up because they had earned a couple of really significant scholarly opportunities which they felt put them over the top
- Several panelists took 5 years for tenure and promotion (to associate) and then another 5 years for promotion to full professor – one took four years between associate and full
- Most panelists discussed their readiness to go up for promotion with their chairperson
- One panelist did not want to go up early to avoid unneeded stress
- Panelists discussed wanting to both have a strong CV and wanting to be comfortable/understanding of the process (some waited to become familiar with the new fully-online process, for example)
- Panelists suggested looking at your department's teacher-scholar model (DTSM) as a measurement of how ready you are—look at every single point of it and be sure to address every single point in your narratives
- One panelist suggested that you set a goal for when you would like to go up and aim for/prepare for reaching that goal
- Someone suggested talking with colleagues in your department about how they knew when they were ready

How much and what kind of service/scholarship do you need?

- There are no numbers (e.g., X is enough) but look at your overall record
- One panelist reported hearing that after you get tenure, you can “just do nothing for a while,” but noted that we are all high achievers, and recommended to always have something cooking in scholarship realm, e.g., planning a project, applying for a grant, working on a project, etc. She noted that some of her projects took several months to come to completion while others took years, so it's good to have something active at all times.
- Connect your research to the courses you teach and the service that you do, to double-dip and maximize your efforts/time.
- Think about service outside WCU, too—e.g., serving on panels, review boards, etc.
- One panelist noted that some kind of leadership is generally expected for going up for full

Tips for narratives

- Know your department's DTSM inside and out and be sure to reference the DTSM throughout your narrative
- One panelist liked using bullet points/charts in the narratives to enhance the clarity and make the narratives easier to read. Explain in more detail after the bullet list/chart.
- Assume that the reader does not know your field and be sure to fully explain your accomplishments
- Consider weaving a theme throughout your three narratives
- Ask colleagues in your department if you can review their narratives
- It can be helpful to have someone outside your discipline read your narratives
- One person suggested having a separate CV that is set up to mirror the TeP categories of teaching, scholarship, service—anything to make it easy for your committee to easily digest and process your accomplishments
- When going up for the 2nd/3rd time, highlight your accomplishments from the previous promotion, but also provide needed context to make those accomplishments make sense (since your committee will not know your previous work)

Tips for the interview

- Be yourself and speak from your heart
- Be sure to read your narratives and have your narratives in front of you during interview
- Have ideas regarding how you plan to continue improving your teaching, continuing your scholarly activities/university service going forward
- Be ready to answer the question, “what have you done since you submitted your materials?”

General tips

- If you focus too much on service it could potentially hurt your overall application, especially for tenure – service is generally 15% of your expected duties, and scholarship and teaching/professional responsibilities are weighted more heavily
- A panelist recommended having several scholarly projects in progress at the same time – these can be projects of different sizes, but it is good to have several things going in case one project takes longer than expected
- Other kinds of diversifying: have an individual project, a project with colleagues, a project with students; attend regional, national, international conferences; for service, have department-, college-, university-levels.
- One panelist said they put more emphasis on publication and they were then more selective about conference presentations (making sure they had a variety of conference experiences – regional, national, and international)
- Several panelists recommended developing organization strategies for their TeP materials – email folders, gathering supplemental materials in folders as you go, etc.—one each for teaching, scholarship, service

- Off-campus service can be a nice addition to your overall service activities
- In narratives and interview, be ready to shift from being humble to being more confident in the way you write/speak about your work. Having colleagues read your narratives can help with this.