ATTENTION: Dean, Chairs and Directors

FROM: Jennifer Perry, Executive Director

RE: Contract Renewal, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) Procedures 2020/2021 Faculty RTP List

cc: Directors of Administration, Dean’s Secretaries, Chair’s/Director’s Secretaries, Faculty TPC Secretaries

DATE: March 12, 2020

I attach lists of research and teaching faculty up for contract renewal, tenure and promotion (RTP) consideration in 2020. The decisions that the TPC and Dean need to make are clearly marked on the lists for your convenience. Please contact your Faculty Relations Advisor if your records do not agree with ours, if faculty are added or removed from the list, or if there are early consideration requests for tenure or tenure and promotion.

Part A of this memo deals with Contract Renewal, Tenure and Promotion Procedures for Tenure Track Research Faculty (Instructors, Assistants, Associates and Full Professors); Part B deals with Promotion Procedures and Policies for Teaching Faculty (Lecturers, Senior Lecturers and University Professors).

A. Contract Renewal, Tenure and Promotion for Research Faculty

1. General Criteria:

   RTP policies and procedures for research faculty are set out in Article 30. The RTP assessments and recommendations for research faculty should take into consideration both the University Criteria for RTP set out in Article 28 and the applicable Criteria and Standards developed by each Department/School. The University Criteria supersedes the Department/School Criteria if there is a conflict.

   Please provide a copy of the appropriate Criteria and Standards to the external referees and include it in the consideration packages sent to the research faculty member, TPC, Dean, VPA and President. Faculty members being considered for Renewal, Tenure or Promotion to Associate Professor should be reviewed using the departmental and university criteria existing at time of hire unless the faculty member opts for the more recent criteria. The most recent University and Departmental criteria should be used for cases involving promotion to Full Professor.

   Departments are encouraged to develop departmental criteria for evaluating contributions pursuant to Criteria for Assessing Non-Traditional Scholarship and Criteria for Assessing Scholarship in the Fine and Performing Arts that may be particularly relevant to their disciplines. Faculty members who
expect to engage in such scholarship are encouraged to consult with their TPC Chair well in advance of a contract renewal, tenure and/or promotion application to discuss how this work might be best presented for evaluation by the TPC. A faculty member may request that one external referee have expertise consistent with the non-traditional work to be reviewed; where appropriate, and with agreement of the TPC, this referee may be a person with expertise and stature who may not have academic credentials.

The TPC must use a template letter and guidelines for external referees that have been approved by the Department and the Dean. A sample is available on our Faculty Relations website. Some faculties/departments are also requesting faculty members to provide a statement of their research interests and contributions. This is helpful to the TPC and external referees.

2. Key Policy Highlights:

   a) Early Tenure
   Faculty members who meet the requirements for early tenure can apply by April 1, 2020 to their Dean to request early tenure and promotion consideration and the Dean must make this decision by April 15, 2020. A negative decision is not relevant in any future tenure consideration.

   b) RTP Notice
   Chairs/Directors should provide written notification to all research faculty members being considered for RTP by April 15, 2020 asking the faculty member submit an application and a full curriculum vitae on or before May 1, 2020. Also included should be a copy of the appropriate University and Departmental Criteria and Standards against which they will be assessed.

   A faculty member may request a delay in their RTP consideration of a year at a time (Articles 30.13-30.16).

   c) TPC Composition
   The composition of the TPC must be based on current faculty ranks (April 2020) and not on a future rank attained through a promotion effective on September 1, 2020. One Alternate from the research faculty should be elected or ratified for the TPC.

   d) RTP Application and External Referees
   By May 1, 2020 faculty members must submit their letter of application and an updated CV to the TPC. The TPC must provide the faculty member with a list of 5 referees by May 15, 2020. The faculty member must submit a list of at least 5 referees to the TPC by May 15, 2020. The faculty member and TPC will have opportunity to comment on each other’s list by May 30, 2020.

   Starting June 1, 2020 (or as soon as referee confirmation has taken place), the TPC will request confidential letters of reference from six referees, at least three of which must be from the faculty member’s list. If additional referees are required, the faculty member must provide additional names. We would strongly encourage you to get more than 5 names given recent experience that referees drop off.

   Referees should be at arm’s length from the candidate. They should not have been a recent thesis supervisor, co-author, co-researcher or personal friend of the faculty member or an SFU faculty member. The faculty member should not contact the proposed referees to see if they are available or for any other reason. That will compromise the referee and may cause them to be eliminated.

   Please ask external referees to confirm that they are not in a conflict of interest relationship with the faculty member. In your letter, please include the following statement:
"This candidate has named you as a person whom we may contact for a reference. It is understood between SFU and yourself that the letter of reference you prepare is supplied in confidence. Pursuant to provincial law and University policy, your identity as an external referee in this proceeding will remain confidential. Candidates are provided with an anonymized version of referees’ letters for tenure and promotion purposes. In order to maintain your confidentiality, it would be helpful if you could provide your evaluation on a separate sheet from your covering letter, rather than on letterhead."

Please note that referees should not be asked to recommend whether the candidate would be tenured and/or promoted at their institution.

The references must be received in writing. If received by email, the TPC Chair must verify that they are satisfied that the reference is legitimate. There must be a minimum of four referees’ reports received before the case can be considered. At least two of the reports must be from referees who appear on the faculty member’s list. The TPC should not consider unsolicited letters of reference from faculty members at the University, including retired faculty members, or from other members of the University community.

*External referee letters are not required in Contract Renewal cases.*

e) **TPC’s Legal Duty of Fairness and Confidentiality**

The TPC must operate with a legal duty of fairness, be impartial in its consideration of each case and have knowledge of the relevant policies and process. If any member of the TPC is in a conflict of interest with a candidate or feels they cannot be impartial, they should recuse themselves from considering the case and step off the TPC. If a candidate brings forward evidence to a TPC Chair or Dean demonstrating that a member of the TPC may not be impartial, i.e., that there is a reasonable apprehension of bias, then the Chair of the TPC must instruct that member that they cannot participate in any further consideration of the case. A faculty member who is up for review cannot be a member of the TPC.

The TPC (and office staff providing assistance) should be reminded that Freedom of Information/Protection of Privacy legislation applies to RTP considerations and that they are under a legal duty to protect the confidentiality of each candidate and his/her information. A failure to do so is a serious policy breach. The TPC and its staff should review the university confidentiality policies annually at the start of each new term in May. They may also wish to sign a confidentiality agreement at the start of the RTP considerations each year.

f) **TPC Draft Assessment**

The TPC must keep minutes of its deliberations and provide a draft assessment of the RTP application to the faculty member by **November 15, 2020**. In exceptional circumstances, if this timeline cannot be followed, the faculty member must be advised in writing before **November 15, 2020** of the anticipated delay, the reasons for it, and the expected date upon which they will receive the assessment.

i. The TPC should treat the assessment as a performance review of the teaching, research and service record, and provide sufficient detail in regard to each area in the draft assessment to allow the faculty member to make a full response. The TPC may choose to meet with the faculty member prior to writing its draft assessment if it has any questions for the faculty member. The faculty member can also request a meeting with the TPC before the draft assessment is prepared or after receipt of it. Illness and parental leaves should be taken into account in any assessment so as not to negatively impact the faculty member. If there are questions regarding how to handle issues relating to delay in consideration, please contact Faculty Relations for assistance.

ii. The faculty member can request anonymized copies of each referee letter before meeting with the TPC or providing their response to the TPC. TPCs need to be vigilant about anonymity. We have seen a number of examples where it was possible to identify referees.
To anonymize, do not simply black out portions of the external referees letters. If a referee has provided a separate letter with no identifier information, you can send that after reviewing the letter to ensure referee identify is not compromised. If not, please retype or copy the relevant information onto a separate document for each referee identified by A, B, C, D, etc.

iii. The TPC must not vote on or make a recommendation prior to sending the draft assessment to the faculty member. As a consequence, there should be no indication in the draft assessment of the TPC’s recommendation or vote. Try to avoid using the word “unanimous” as it is an indication of the vote. But the draft assessment must be more than just a description of the faculty member’s activities. It should provide a full assessment of the faculty member’s research, teaching and service performance for the period reviewed and should refer specifically to the University Criteria and the applicable Criteria and Standards developed by the Department/School.

iv. All Members of the TPC must be present for all meetings of TPC deliberations and if not, they should not vote in the final decision. E-mail should be avoided for all substantive discussions. The Alternate TPC member can replace those TPC members who have a conflict with respect to one case only, or long term, if a member has to be replaced on a long-term basis. All members of the TPC should review the draft assessment before it is sent out. While no vote is taken at the draft assessment stage, the faculty member must be made aware of any concerns that members of the TPC may have in order to prepare an informed and appropriate response to the draft assessment.

v. The draft assessment must advise the faculty member that they have two weeks to provide any written response, further explanation or additional material to the TPC.

g) Joint Appointments (Article 24)
With any joint appointment the faculty member will have a “primary” department and a “secondary” department.

For renewal, tenure and promotion procedures, the TPC of the Secondary Department will provide the Primary Department with an assessment and the Primary Department will consider that in making the department level recommendation to the Dean. If the faculty member’s appointment is across two faculties, the Secondary Dean will also provide the Primary Dean with an assessment.

Administrative Appointments
Where faculty members have administrative appointments in the same or another faculty, those “secondary” supervisors should be asked for an assessment by the “primary” department to be considered as part of any RTP review process.

h) TPC Recommendation to the Dean
The TPC Chair should propose the recommendation to be voted on in the affirmative. All members of the TPC are expected to form an opinion and vote. Abstentions are not permitted. The results of the vote are disclosed only to the Dean and are not to be disclosed to the faculty member. In developing the recommendation, the TPC must specify the basis on which the recommendation was made and identify the information it relied on to inform the recommendation in sufficient detail to allow the faculty member to respond.

Split vote - If there is a split vote by the TPC resulting in a majority and minority recommendation, the minority recommendation (and the basis for it) must be clearly set out, either at the end of the majority recommendation, in a separate document, or incorporated throughout in the majority recommendation. The faculty member must be made aware of the details of the minority position in order to prepare an informed and appropriate response.

A faculty member who is being considered for contract renewal, tenure and/or promotion and for salary review must be evaluated on the basis of their performance in three key areas of activity:
teaching effectiveness; scholarly activity and service to the University, their academic discipline or the broader community. At a minimum, satisfactory performance in both teaching effectiveness and scholarly activity must be demonstrated. Less than satisfactory performance in either will not meet the expectations of the University. In addition, there must be evidence of meaningful service contributions.

Requirements for Associate Professor - An important criterion is the demonstration of continued professional growth of the individual in their field(s), including recognition as an established scholar. External referees of high academic stature must assess the individual's research contributions.

Requirements for Professor - The total overall career contributions of the faculty member in areas of teaching, research and service to the University and the community will be taken into consideration. The rank of Professor is designed for those who have excelled in teaching and research. Appointment or promotion to this rank requires evidence of national or international reputation in their area of expertise, supported by letters from external referees of high academic stature.

Salary recommendation – the final recommendation should include a recommendation for steps on promotion for the year of the promotion and the following year. Departments add to their own and the Dean's workload by leaving the step recommendations to the salary review. Departments and Deans are in a better position to make the salary recommendation now, rather than later, as the assessment is fresh. With steps on promotion, the TPC is not limited to the 1.25 or 1.3 steps average imposed during regular salary reviews.

At the time of promotion, a Member's entire career performance is reviewed and salary placement in the new rank is made on the basis of that review. In particular, consideration should be given to steps awarded but not received. Promotion adjustments usually take effect on September 1st. The recommendation for placement on promotion will include a recommendation for step awards in the year following promotion (see arts. 32.23 and 32.24).

All members of the TPC should review the recommendation before it is sent out to the Dean and the faculty member by January 15, 2021. In exceptional circumstances, if this timeline cannot be followed, the faculty member must be advised in writing by January 15, 2021 of the delay, the reasons for it, and the expected date upon which they will receive the recommendation. If a TPC fails, without sufficient cause, to make a recommendation on time, the TPC Chair will make the recommendation and transmit it to the Dean by January 30, 2021 accompanied by an explanation of the failure of the TPC to meet the deadline. The faculty member should be advised they have 14 days from the date of receipt to provide a further response, information or comments to the Dean.

Relevant information received from the candidate at any stage of the assessment process should be reviewed and sent for consideration to the next level.

i) Dean's Recommendation
The Dean must send their recommendation to the VPA and faculty member by February 15, 2021. In exceptional circumstances, if this timeline cannot be followed, the faculty member must be advised in writing before February 15, 2021 of the delay, the reasons for it, and the expected date upon which they will receive the assessment.

The Dean's recommendation should set out the basis on which the recommendation was made. The Dean should also include a salary step recommendation for the promotion year and the following year. Deans will review all salary adjustments at the time of promotion to prevent and/or address inequities that may be attributable in whole or in part to any prohibited ground of discrimination.
If the Dean and TPC recommendations are positive, the Dean should forward their recommendation to the VPA with a copy to the faculty member advising them they have 14 days to provide any response to the VPA.

Pertinent material received after a recommendation has been made formally at any of the stages of review will be forwarded for consideration to the next higher stage. If the new material is judged to be sufficiently important, the Dean, the Vice-President, Academic, the FRC or the President may direct that the case be reconsidered at any of the previous levels of review. A summary of the pertinent material will be sent to the faculty member under review. If there is to be a reconsideration, a revised timetable for the case will be adopted and the candidate will be notified. The reconsideration will be governed by the same procedures as the initial consideration.

j) **FRC Appeal**

If both the recommendations of the Dean and the TPC are negative or if the Dean disagrees with the TPC, a Faculty Review Committee (FRC) will be convened by the University. The Dean should send their recommendation to the VPA and Faculty Relations who set up the FRC. The Dean should send a copy to the faculty member and advise the faculty member of their right to a review before an FRC and their right to provide a further response on the appeal within 14 days to the VPA’s office through the Faculty Relations office.

2. **Negative Decisions by TPC and Dean**

I would like to review all negative recommendations made by the TPC or the Dean prior to these assessments/recommendations being sent to the faculty member to ensure that no procedural irregularities have occurred. This is not a substantive review and will be undertaken as expeditiously as possible.

Please provide the following documents for this review:

- **a)** the recommendation package received by the TPC and the draft assessment the TPC intends to make before it is sent to the faculty member
- **b)** the Committee’s Procedures and Rules and Departmental Criteria
- **c)** the recommendation package received by the Dean and the draft recommendation that the Dean intends to make

3. **RTP Documents should be sent to the VPA through Faculty Relations**

The Dean should forward all contract renewal, tenure and promotion cases to Faculty Relations. We will review them and send them on. Cases will be routed to the VPA, President or to a Faculty Review Committee as appropriate.

Please send us the following materials for the VPA, President’s and or FRC’s Review.

- **a) Summary Forms – For Contract Renewal, Promotion and/or Tenure (attached)**
  
  Please summarize all of the recommendations made on the attached Overall Summary Forms for all faculty members who are considered for promotion and/or tenure and send them along with the individual packages.

- **b) RTP Checklist for Individual Cases (attached)**
  
  Please attach one of these checklists to the front of each faculty member’s package. The checklist should be completed progressively as recommendations are completed and forwarded on.

Please note that a one-page biography of each of the external referees should be included and not the full curriculum vitae.
Please request/photocopy all materials to be double-sided (if possible).

Supporting documents (such as books, monographs, videotapes, etc.) should not be sent to this office but retained in the Chairs/Directors office instead. These materials will be requested on an as-needed basis.

B. Promotion for Teaching Faculty (Article 35)

1. General Criteria:

Promotion procedures for teaching faculty are set out in Articles 35.50-35.56.3. These procedures should be followed systematically at all stages of each consideration.

2. Key Policy Highlights:

a) TPC
Continuing lecture faculty members are not eligible for tenure, but may serve on a TPC (as per Article 29: Establishment of Tenure and Promotion and Faculty Review Committees) and may vote in any election of Members to that committee and participate fully in departmental, faculty and university activities.

Term lecture faculty members holding appointments of more than one year or who have two or more consecutive one-year appointments may participate in departmental, faculty and university activities, except that they may not serve on a TPC, vote in any election of members to the TPC or vote in demonstrated support votes.

Continuing Laboratory Instructors may not serve on a TPC but may vote in any election of Members to that committee and participate fully in departmental, faculty and university activities.

b) Early Promotion to Senior Lecturer
A lecturer can apply for early promotion to Senior Lecturer to the Dean (copied to the Chair of the TPC) by Sept 15, 2020 if they have at least three years as a continuing lecturer at SFU and three years as a lecturer (or equivalent position) at a previous post-secondary institution, both of which must be at least half time.

The Dean shall consult with the Chair of the TPC and inform the lecturer of the early promotion decision by October 1, 2020 with a copy to the Chair of the TPC. If approved, the faculty member will submit their application by October 15, 2020. A negative decision will not be relevant in any future promotion consideration.

c) Promotion to Senior Lecturer
Chairs/Directors can ask eligible teaching faculty members if they wish to be considered for promotion, and if so, to submit their application for promotion in writing to the Chair/Director by October 15, 2020 along with a teaching dossier and other relevant materials. Referee letters are not required for promotion to Senior Lecturer.

i. The TPC will submit its recommendation (including a salary recommendation) to the Dean by February 15, 2021 copied to the faculty member and advise him/her that they have 14 days to provide a response to the Dean.

ii. The Dean will make their recommendation (including a salary recommendation) to the VPA by April 15, 2021 after considering the recommendations of the TPC and the response of the faculty member. Following the Dean’s recommendation, the faculty member has 14 days in which to provide a response, or further information, to the VPA is they so wish to.

iii. The VPA will review the recommendations from the TPC, the Dean and the response/comments of the faculty member. The VPA’s decision is final and will be provided to the faculty member, Chair and Dean by June 30, 2021.
iv. If the VPA’s decision is negative the teaching faculty member must wait at least 2 years from the date of the most recent application before reapplying.

d) Promotion to University Lecturer

Senior Lecturers in continuing positions may apply to be promoted to the new rank of University Lecturer. Please advise Faculty Relations as soon as you are aware that you have someone applying for promotion to University Lecturer. If your Department has not yet approved Criteria for Promotion, you will need to complete those as expeditiously as possible if you are notified that you will have an application. (Initial criteria need to be approved by the Dean and the Vice-President Academic.)

**Please submit all draft TPC and Dean decisions on promotion to University Lecturer for review by Faculty Relations prior to providing the recommendation to the faculty member. This will help ensure consistency in how these initial applications are dealt with.

i. For promotion to University Lecturer, at least four letters of reference from internal or external referees of high academic stature must support promotion to this rank. Referees will be chosen in the same manner as those for research faculty promotions except that some referees may be internal to SFU.

ii. Procedures will mirror those of research faculty as outlined in Article 30: Contract Renewal, Tenure and Promotion.

Please contact Karim Dossa at any time (2-5681) or by email (fr_appa@sfu.ca) if you have any questions about procedure or regarding interpretation of any of the contract renewal, tenure and promotion policies. He will help ensure that you have all the information you need so that all cases are conducted in accordance with the University’s policies and procedures.

I am more than willing to meet with your TPC at the beginning of the process to overview common issues and respond to any questions they may have.

A copy of this memo along with the following additional resources have been posted on our Faculty Relations Website:

- Timelines for Renewal Tenure and Promotion (including timelines for teaching faculty).
- Individual Checklist for RTP or Lecturer Promotion – to be placed on the front of each case.
- Overall Summary Forms for tenure & promotion.
- External Referee Template Letters and Guidelines for External Referees
- Form for recording final list of external referees.