



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to identify how biases could potentially impact the review of retention, promotion, tenure, and leave cases and to make suggestions for avoiding negative impacts of these. The issues identified in this document pertain to both lecturer and tenure track faculty reviews. Structural inequities can lead to inaccurate perceptions of the quality of teaching, professional development, and service of RPT and leave candidates. Further, biases can place differential demands on service and professional development activities, which in turn could disadvantage those who are asked to do more service work at the expense of professional development output. Paying attention to these impacts can create more equitable and accurate evaluation processes, which have meaningful consequences for how we review each colleague's contributions, retain faculty, and determine compensation rates. Please see here for a more complete description of issues and references.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Examine how RPT committees are structured:** Follow best practices and have more than one person per committee regardless of CSU policies, which sometime allow for only one reviewer. Research shows that more accurate judgements are made when evaluations are based on multiple observers.ⁱ
- **Monitor language in discussing candidates:** Be aware of language used to describe one candidate in comparison to another if it seems to be based on social identity, as opposed to professional work.ⁱⁱ
- **Build in accountability.** Identify at least one member of the committee to act as an Employment Equity Facilitator (EEF).ⁱⁱⁱ If remarks or assessments seem biased, or decisions involve characteristics of social identity, the EEF should speak up, document, and redirect the conversation to focus on merit.
- **Be aware that research has found that historically and currently marginalized scholars experience systematic discrimination:**
 - Pay attention to positive and negative evaluations of professors of different identities. Are there any consistent differences based on race, ethnicity, gender, or other social identities?
 - Do faculty rankings seem related to social identity (e.g., people with underrepresented backgrounds toward the bottom of the list)?
 - Be aware that historically and currently marginalized scholars need to work harder than their peers to be considered as competent as their non-marginalized peers. Female faculty, especially female faculty of color, experience subtle discrimination compared to White men that impacts perceptions of success^{iv}.

TEACHING

- **Be aware that research describes biases in student evaluations:**
 - Female-identified professors receive systematically lower scores than their male counterparts^{vvi}
 - Male-identified professors are more often described as having qualities that are positive for academia (e.g., "intelligent") in comparison to qualities used for non-male professors (e.g., "kind," "conscientious," or "warm").^{viiiviii}
 - Faculty of color tend to receive lower evaluations compared to White peers.
 - It is likely that these types of bias extend to professors who are sexual or gender minorities.^{ix}
- **Pay careful attention to evaluations that may be based in stereotypic expectations or discomfort with difference.** This may involve paying careful attention to language in your own assessments and comments.
- **Recognize that teaching about DEI topics may bring out student reactions to the material that are transferred to the professor.** Those who teach topics related to LGBTQ+ topics, racism and discrimination, feminism, etc. may find themselves being rated on students' comfort with the material as opposed to their teaching ability.

SCHOLARSHIP AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

As faculty develop and publish their scholarship, bias unevenly affects the amount of time and resources available to devote to scholarship, experiences while conducting research, and evaluations of scholarship.

- **Understand differential evaluations of scholarship:** research on topics related to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and other social identities are often thought of as ancillary or “niche publishing” though this work makes important additions to the field. Rerunning a particular experiment to correct bias in the original, for example, may take creativity and much time. Additionally, publications focused on DEI may not be as well-known to the average academic. The same may be said for creative works. Taking time to understand the value of publications and exhibition venues related to this work can help it to be treated with equity.
- **Be aware that history and practice dictate certain research agendas, epistemologies, and methods as legitimate while discarding or marginalizing those that do not fit neatly within established frameworks.** This is evidenced in gendered, racialized, and disciplinary biases in funding^x, as well as in the perceived respectability of publishing venues.^{xi}” This can impact number and type of scholarly and creative products.
- **Ensure equitable time for scholarship by ensuring equitable distribution of departmental service:** Consider/adjust/compensate for some faculty’s additional time in service activities, such as mentoring (e.g., BIPOC students seeking out BIPOC faculty). Ratios of student to teacher in the CSU based on racial identity are much higher for many BIPOC faculty particularly those who are Latinx.^{xii}
- **Adopt a more expansive definition of scholarship.** Do not assume that your discipline’s norms are universal at CLA level of review. Consider public scholarship, works published in new forms of media. Look to members of the committee in the fields close to the one being assessed for the guidance in the area (e.g. look to those in the Arts and other creative fields to assess the value of a productions/exhibitions).

SERVICE TO DEPARTMENT, COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY, AND COMMUNITY/DISCIPLINE

Faculty from underrepresented groups often experience *cultural taxation*^{xiii} which can be defined as extra service burdens related to ethnicity, race, or other social identity facets (e.g., providing representation on committees, serving on diversity taskforces, mentoring underrepresented junior colleagues or students at a higher ratio than non-underrepresented colleagues). Women faculty (particularly women of color) receive more frequent requests to perform service, and are frequently tasked with performing more time consuming and less prestigious types of service. This tendency to heap greater responsibilities upon these faculty must be recognized as unfair prejudice that harms their retention and promotion. Such practices ultimately work against the institution’s goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion^{xiv}.

- **Acknowledge added time in service during the review process.** Faculty tasked with greater teaching and service demands systematically produce fewer scholarly and creative products.
- **Understand that multiple marginalized identities may increase taxation (e.g., women of color):** Research shows consistently that women of color carry a much larger load of service than other genders and racial groups.^{xv}
- **Value DEI service work and understand the nature of the work:** Universities that stress DEI initiatives, yet have low representation of faculty members from marginalized groups should recognize that diversity labor performed at such an institution is “extraordinary” service and document it as such in the RPT process.
- **Pay attention to special assignments** – e.g., DEI-Focused Cluster Hires – and be aware of the expectations of these faculty. DEI-focused cluster hires have been recruited for their expertise in DEI areas of teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and/or service work. As such, these are expertise areas that they are expected to fill as a part of RPT. This DEI work should be considered as a part of their job requirement, not as extra work after non-DEI service is completed.

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- ⁱ Stewart, A. J., & Valian, V. (2018). *An inclusive academy: Achieving diversity and excellence*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press;
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- ⁱⁱⁱ <https://crco.calpoly.edu/content/eef>
- ^{iv} Kamenetz, A. (2016, Jan 25). Why female professors get lower ratings. Retrieved from: <https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/01/25/463846130/why-women-professors-get-lower-ratings>
- ^v Kreitzer, R. J., Sweet-Cushman, J. (2021). Evaluating student evaluations of teaching: A review of measurement and equity bias in SETs and recommendations for ethical reform. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 1-12. Retrieved from: <https://philpapers.org/rec/KREESE>
- ^{vi} Kamenetz (2016)
- ^{vii} Boring, A. (2017). Gender biases in student evaluations of teaching. *Journal of Public Economics*, 145, 27-41; Mitchell, K. M. W., & Martin, J. (2018). Gender bias in student evaluations. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 51, 648-652.
- ^{viii} MacNell, L., Driscoll, A., & Hunt, A. N. (2015). What's in a name: Exposing gender bias in student ratings of teaching. *Innovative Higher Education*, 40, 291-303.)
- ^{ix} Russ, T. L., Simonds, C. J., & Hunt, S. K. (2008). Coming out in the classroom...an occupational hazard?: The influence of sexual orientation on teacher credibility and perceived student learning. *Communication Education*, 51, 311-324.
- ^x Taff, M. A., & Gilpin (2021, Jan 18). Equity, diversity, and inclusion: Racial inequity in grant funding from the US National Institutes of Health. Retrieved from: <https://elifesciences.org/articles/65697>
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- ^{xii} California Faculty Association (2018). A snapshot of bargaining unit 3. Retrieved from: <https://www.calfac.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Assembly-Spring-2019-Poster-Charts-and-Figures.pdf>
- ^{xiii} Padilla, A. M. (1994). Ethnic minority scholars, research, and mentoring: Current and future issues. *Educational Researcher*, 23, 24-27.
- ^{xiv} Commission of the Status of Women (n.d.). The great gendered divide in faculty service. Retrieved from: <https://csw.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/data/Faculty%20Service%20infographic.pdf>
- ^{xv} Domingo, C R., Gerber, N. C., Harris, D., Mamo, L., Pasion, S. G., Rebanal, R. D., & Rosser, S. V. (2020). More service or more advancement: Institutional barriers to academic success for women and women of color faculty at a large public comprehensive minority-serving state university. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000292>