

# American University Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment Guidelines Updates

## ABOUT THESE RESOURCES

Welcome to the Dean of Faculty’s resource library for faculty and administrators involved in updating faculty tenure, promotion, and reappointment (TPR) guidelines for all academic units in Academic Years 2021—23.

The purpose of these materials is to provide background information, discussion tools, practical suggestions about potential content, and links to other on- and off-campus resources that may prove useful to members of the AU community who are doing this important work—especially members of the TPR guidelines committees in the academic units and those who will review the new guidelines.

We expect the library of resources to evolve as the updating process ramps up and we incorporate ongoing lessons and insights. Please send additional tips, models, discussion-starters, examples, lessons, evidence, and other materials to [AssociateDOF@american.edu](mailto:AssociateDOF@american.edu).

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## Resource 1: BACKGROUND and OBJECTIVES

*AU cannot be excellent without being truly inclusive, and without taking concrete, specific steps to improve inclusion on campus.*

[AU's Plan for Inclusive Excellence](#), p. 2.

### Background

In 2005, the American Association of Colleges and Universities' (AAC&U's) "Toward a Model of Inclusive Excellence and Change in Postsecondary Institutions" established the case for why colleges and universities need to move beyond "islands of innovation" and "connect their educational quality and inclusion efforts more fundamentally and comprehensively than ever before" ([Williams et al 2005](#), p. iii). According to the report, changing the demographic composition of a university's student body, staff, and faculty is not enough to satisfy imperatives of justice and fairness in higher education. Nor is compositional change enough to realize the full institutional and individual benefits of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), which include more effective teaching and learning; recovery of what [Stewart and Valian \(2018\)](#) call "missing merit" in faculty scholarship (i.e., excellent outputs that are invisible or undervalued); and a reenergizing of faculty citizenship.

American University incorporated these insights into its own *Plan for Inclusive Excellence (IE)*, released in January 2018. The original IE Plan called for transforming "the way we recruit, hire, train, develop, evaluate, and recognize AU faculty, staff, and administrators to encourage the achievement of our diversity, equity, and inclusion goals" (Goal 5, p. 12). Meeting that objective requires multiple actions described in Phase Two of the IE Plan, released in January 2021.

Most relevant for this library of resources is Action Step 1 under Goal 3 (IE Plan, Phase Two, p. 6), which calls on the campus to "[c]omplete revisions to units' tenure and promotion guidelines, while working to analyze and correct any misalignment of these guidelines with both the norms of antiracist work and the recommendations of the Beyond SETs task force". This includes efforts to "[e]nsure the process of faculty evaluation reflects faculty engagement with meaningful diversity and inclusion efforts and activities in service, teaching, and research" (p. 6). Also relevant is the new Goal 5 (p. 12): "We will foster, support, and promote scholarship, research, and creative works that attend to diversity, equity, and inclusion ...," which includes action steps to "incentivize ... [and] ... recognize faculty engagement in DEI in research methods, process, dissemination, and/or content".

American University's Task Force on Equity in Faculty Reappointment, Promotion, Tenure, and Merit (December 2020, p. 6) similarly recommended that academic units "include in their revised guidelines for reappointment, promotion, and tenure guidance on how DEI

considerations are to be viewed by reviewers in promotion processes in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service, and regarding expectations of candidate performance.”

In addition, AU’s [Strategic Plan](#) aspires to advance “AU’s overall reputation as an institution that cultivates top-flight, cross-disciplinary research” to address “the most significant issues of the present and future” (pp. 13, 19). With that goal in mind, a subcommittee of the strategic plan implementation working group proposed revisions to multiple sections of the *Faculty Manual* to include cross-disciplinary/cross-field scholarship on a par with discipline or field-specific scholarship (see *Resource 5* for details). The purpose of the *Faculty Manual* revisions was to create space for cross-disciplinary work, but not to require it, so that faculty can advance in their careers at the same pace regardless of whether they focus on a single field or sub-field and/or choose to span fields/disciplines. The revisions were approved by the Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees in Spring 2020.

## Objectives

Faculty tenure, promotion, and reappointment (TPR) guidelines signal the AU community’s priorities not only to our own faculty, staff, and students, but also to potential future faculty who might consider joining AU and to external reviewers who assess our faculty’s applications for tenure and/or promotion. As such, they offer opportunities for making tangible progress toward the values of inclusive excellence and cross-disciplinary impact.

The resources in this library seek to help faculty and administrators translate the commitments described above into practice by focusing on three core goals for updating TPR guidelines:

1. Expand criteria for assessing teaching, service, and scholarship<sup>1</sup> to recognize and reward inclusive and cross-disciplinary accomplishments which standard metrics tend to marginalize.
2. Ensure academic freedom<sup>2</sup> for all faculty by removing needless and discriminatory obstacles to the free choice of topics, themes, genres, methods, protocols, collaborators, and venues (etc.) for scholarship, teaching, and service.
3. Highlight multiple pathways of excellence and impact for faculty.

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<sup>1</sup> In this and related documents, the terms scholarly and scholarship always include research, creative, and professional activities and outputs, as per the *Faculty Manual’s* glossary.

<sup>2</sup> Academic freedom refers to “the free search for truth and its free exposition” according to AAUP’s 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, accessed 4/2/2021  
<https://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-and-tenure>

## Resource 2: SUGGESTED PROCESS

This resource provides a rough outline of the suggested process for updating guidelines.

1. **Guideline Committee:** Academic units will establish TPR guidelines committees by the start of Fall semester 2021 to update both term and tenure-line faculty guidelines. Demographic diversity is important on committees, as is appropriate term faculty involvement (according to unit bylaws) and representation of heterogeneous fields, sub-fields, and cross-disciplinary teaching and scholarship.
2. **Diversity Facilitator:** Each School/College is encouraged to appoint one or more faculty members as facilitators to work with TPR guideline committees to stimulate discussion, provide resources, and ask key questions. Individuals who might be tapped for these roles include DEI fellows, inclusion officers, members of the Faculty Senate Committee on DEI, and/or members of the Equity Task Force. The Dean of Faculty's (DOF) Office will work with CTRL, the President's Council and Diversity and Inclusion, and others to convene the facilitators during AY 2021-22 to cross-pollinate ideas, share challenges, and nurture a campus-wide community of practice.
3. **Faculty Consultation:** Academic units may wish to consult widely with faculty about priorities and values as well as specific proposed changes.
4. **Submission Schedule:** See separate document on website.
5. **CFA Review:** The Faculty Senate Committee on Faculty Actions (CFA) is charged with reviewing each academic unit's updated TPR Guidelines and, where needed, asking for additional revisions.
  - Normally, guideline reviews are conducted on a five-year cycle, with each unit updated and reviewed every five years. Given that the current update initiative calls for reviewing all academic units across the university in two years, the CFA might receive assistance with DEI-related reviews from a sister Senate committee (standing or ad hoc): that idea is under consideration. Academic units will be informed of any updates to the process.
  - Once its review is completed, the CFA will forward the unit's updated guidelines to the DOF with a recommendation.
6. **DOF Approval:** The Dean of Faculty's Office will review/approve guidelines on a rolling basis following CFA review.

## Resource 3: GENERAL THEMES

Guidelines committees can use the three core goals (see *Resource 1*) to check progress:

1. Are we expanding criteria for assessing teaching, service, and scholarship<sup>3</sup> to recognize and reward inclusive and cross-disciplinary accomplishments which standard metrics tend to marginalize?
2. Are we ensuring [academic freedom](#) for all faculty by removing needless and discriminatory obstacles to the free choice of topics, themes, genres, methods, protocols, collaborators, and venues (etc.) for scholarship, teaching, and service?
3. Do the updated guidelines highlight multiple pathways of excellence and impact for faculty?

Proposed changes to the guidelines that do not meet those three tests may need further scrutiny. Other factors to consider include the following.

### Audiences

Guidelines serve several different audiences. First and foremost, guidelines tell [candidates for promotion and tenure](#) what is expected of them and how they will be evaluated. Second, long before [any faculty member](#) applies for reappointment, promotion, or tenure, knowledge of what is and is not in the guidelines can exert powerful influence on which intellectual and pedagogical paths they choose to follow.

Third, [prospective new hires](#) who have done their homework (by reviewing the DOF's website or hearing about our guidelines from others) may feel more, or less, inclined to apply and accept an offer of employment from AU based on what they know about AU's approach.

Finally, guidelines provide both internal and external reviewers with criteria for assessing faculty files. Because [internal \(AU\) reviewers](#) in the CFA and provost's office hail from a broad range of disciplinary backgrounds, the individual unit TPR guidelines provide important clarity about which criteria should be applied to each file. [External reviewers](#) receive the relevant TPR guidelines along with the AU faculty file materials and are asked to adhere to the criteria outlined in the unit's guidelines—and not those of their own institutions—when evaluating an AU candidate. Both internal and external reviewers need guidelines that are written plainly and forthrightly, without unnecessary field-specific jargon or department-specific shorthand.

### Checking Biases

Refreshing all academic units' TPR guidelines in 1.5 years offers a rare opportunity for faculty and administrators across campus to help each other develop greater intercultural competency

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<sup>3</sup> In this and related documents, the terms scholarly and scholarship always include research, creative, and professional activities and outputs, as per the *Faculty Manual's* glossary.

and cross-disciplinary appreciation. Doing so requires concerted efforts to identify not only obvious, but also more subtle ways in which long-standing academic norms may systematically disadvantage whole areas of excellence and whole subsets of the faculty population.

### **Consultation**

Because TPR guidelines are such important expressions of collective standards, committees are encouraged to consult as many faculty colleagues as possible throughout the revision process.

Consulting with colleagues outside AU may also be helpful, especially regarding scholarship guidelines. Some fields and disciplines have made more progress than others in expanding criteria for excellence. Committees can benefit from models and examples offered by disciplinary associations and/or other universities.

### **Customization**

Disciplinary imperatives, organizational styles, and philosophical emphases vary from unit to unit. Committees should tailor guidelines to the distinctive needs and priorities of the academic unit while honoring core values and principles. There is no template for TPR guidelines.

### **Diversified Measures**

Unidimensional, summary-type measures often fail to capture the breadth of possible accomplishments. For example, SETs scores in the teaching sphere and journal impact factors or h-index scores in the scholarship sphere have significant blind spots. Multi-dimensional and mixed-methods criteria may do a better job of identifying excellence in all its forms. (See *Resource 9* on metrics for assessing the impact of scholarly outputs.)

### **Examples**

Balancing specificity and expansiveness is a challenge in TPR guidelines. Committees may be tempted to set benchmarks (such as preferred journals or specific pedagogies, etc.) to make standards clearer, but doing so risks creating a narrow, one-size-fits-all definition of high-quality work. Narrow definitions tend to institutionalize historic biases.

One way to clarify standards without ingraining biases is to accompany statements of priorities with illustrative, non-prescriptive examples of multiple ways faculty might meet the criteria. Examples can be used to emphasize a broad array of different pathways to career advancement.

## Resource 4: TEACHING

This resource offers suggestions for updating teaching guidelines with a focus on three dimensions: teaching portfolios, inclusive teaching practices, and open educational resources.

### Teaching Portfolios

Goal 3 of AU's Plan for Inclusive Excellence recommends that existing policies be reviewed "for potential disparate impact and treatment on faculty of different identities" so that plans can be developed to remediate such impacts. A literature review undertaken for the 2019 [Faculty Senate "Beyond SETs" Task Force](#) found growing evidence from other colleges and universities that one such practice—survey-based student evaluations of teaching—may be prone to biases based on faculty race, gender, age, accent, and other characteristics.

Faced with this challenge, AU has adopted the Beyond SETs Task Force's recommendation to deemphasize the unidimensional survey tool known as the Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) and embrace a multi-dimensional portfolio approach to teaching evaluation in which SETs are only one of several essential components.

Units are asked to include in their TPR guidelines a requirement for teaching portfolios (as defined by the Beyond SETs report) in all files for major faculty actions, which means tenure, promotion, third-year review, and initial multi-year term appointment. Guidelines can include a link to the many [teaching portfolio resources](#) offered by CTRL.

Guidelines committees also may want to include language that encourages faculty to take active steps toward increasing their SETs response rates since SETs are one component of the teaching portfolio.

The spirit of the portfolio approach aims to recognize multiple pathways to excellent teaching and move away from past practices that disadvantage colleagues of color, women colleagues, LGBTQ+ colleagues, and others. Teaching portfolios also offer opportunities to acknowledge various forms of invisible labor, including, for example:

- Formal or informal advising of students from diverse backgrounds
- Special efforts to examine one's teaching praxis with respect to international students and students from historically underrepresented groups
- Mentoring of faculty peers in inclusive teaching practices such as Universal Design for Learning and antiracist pedagogy (see below).

Multi-dimensional portfolios are intended to stimulate a fairer, truer, and more collegial process of assessing teaching while also supporting continuous teaching innovations and improvements.

## Inclusive Teaching Practices and Student Belonging

The AU Plan for Inclusive Excellence calls upon AU faculty<sup>4</sup> to “demonstrate cultural competence and racial literacy by building critical knowledge and skills to use inclusive and antiracist practices” (Goal 1 Vision), including “inclusive and antiracist teaching strategies to enhance classroom climate” (Goal 1, Action Step 2). Such strategies aim to stimulate, inspire, and challenge all students in developmentally appropriate ways while actively helping all students feel included and supported as full members of the learning community.

Inclusive classrooms can be described as those that accommodate students’ backgrounds by employing evidence-based praxes that work for all learners, as outlined, for example, by [Universal Design for Learning](#) (UDL). A core element is the use of multiple instructional and assessment approaches, including:

- Content/resources from diverse perspectives, especially those of marginalized or underrepresented groups, and, where relevant, resources that address issues of power, privilege, inclusion, and exclusion; and
- Multiple representations of content through videos, articles, podcasts, etc. to ensure all students can access and use the information.

The AU College of Arts and Sciences’ [Initiative on Antiracist Curriculum Development](#) offers a helpful definition and examples:

“Antiracist pedagogy challenges systems that perpetuate racism and categorical exclusion. This can involve:

- discussing political, historical, and economic contexts of one’s discipline and its conventions
- critical examination of the persistence and impact of racism and racist policies
- diversifying course readings and materials to include historically marginalized authors and authors with an antiracist perspective
- creating an inclusive classroom environment addressing diverse learning styles
- critiquing the “hidden curriculum” of lessons that are absorbed through the experience of school: that meritocracy is impartial, that failure is merely the student’s fault, etc.
- openness to other epistemologies, traditions, cultures, and languages to reduce Eurocentrism’s narrowing of the human experience and knowledge development
- self-reflection and professional development by faculty
- campus and societal engagement as part of the learning experience.”

Visit the Library website for [USC’s Anti-Racist Pedagogy Guide](#) for many useful teaching and community discussion materials.

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<sup>4</sup> Staff, students, alumni leadership, administrators, and the Board of Trustees are also called upon to meet this goal.

Note: inclusive excellence in teaching may be applied not only in the classroom, but also in office hours, independent studies, student research supervision, recommendations of students for merit awards, career advising, and other teaching-related settings.

### **Adopting Open Education Resources (OERs) into Teaching**

(From *Resource 10*, with thanks to the AU Library and CTRL's Open Access Team)

OERs are educational materials that can be accessed by anyone. Adopting classroom materials that are available free of charge promotes an equitable learning environment by eliminating financial barriers for students.

There are several approaches to making teaching materials more accessible or universally accessible, including:

- Adopting OER materials (e.g. textbooks) in your courses: explore [OER Commons Hub](#);
- Using materials provided by the library, including print and electronic reserve copies, streaming videos, articles available through library databases, or other materials students can access independently; and
- Adopting older editions of textbooks, making copies easier to obtain (though this often reduces rather than eliminates the cost).
- Creating your own OER materials for classroom use is ideal. We urge departments to include OER material creation as a form of scholarship in tenure and promotion guidelines.

The library is ready to help! Email [open-l@listserv.american.edu](mailto:open-l@listserv.american.edu) to contact OER specialists on campus. We will assist individual faculty as well as present on these issues to departments/schools, as well as collaborate on incorporating these principles into tenure, promotion, and reappointment guidelines.

## Resource 5: SCHOLARSHIP<sup>5</sup>

*In the interest of safeguarding academic freedom, which is valued by the university, DEI work in scholarship shall be rewarded but not mandated.*

### **AU Equity Task Force Report 2020, p. 6**

The clarifying statement quoted above reminds us that updating TPR scholarship guidelines is not a zero-sum exercise. Committees can add new examples of scholarly excellence and adapt metrics to make room for previously undervalued DEI-attentive and cross-disciplinary work without diminishing the value of past and current scholarship in the discipline. In other words, “missing merit” in the scholarship domain can be discovered and recovered without having to bury other treasures in its place ([Stewart and Valian 2018](#)).

It is important to underscore that guidelines should never dictate what faculty study or create, who they work with, or how they undertake and disseminate their work. Instead, guidelines updates are meant to focus on the three core goals from *Resource 1*:

1. Expanding criteria for assessing teaching, service, and scholarship to recognize and reward inclusive and cross-disciplinary accomplishments which standard metrics tend to marginalize;
2. Ensuring [academic freedom](#) for all faculty by removing needless and discriminatory obstacles to the free choice of topics, themes, genres, methods, protocols, collaborators, and venues (etc.) for scholarship, teaching, and service;
3. Highlighting multiple pathways of excellence and impact for faculty.

Because scholarship standards are highly specific to each discipline, academic units will vary in their approaches to updating the scholarship sections of their guidelines. This resource offers:

- A basic framework (what-who-how) for thinking about dimensions of scholarship,
- Suggestions about cross-disciplinary scholarship, and
- Some questions to spur discussion with colleagues.

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<sup>5</sup> In this and related documents, the terms scholarly and scholarship always include research, creative, and professional activities and outputs, as per the *Faculty Manual's* glossary.

## Framework

*We will foster, support, and promote scholarship, research, and creative works that attend to diversity, equity, and inclusion, whether in intellectual content, theoretical frameworks, processes and methodology, analyses of data, participation of research teams and subjects, or engagement with the wider public.*

### Goal 2 of [AU's Plan for Inclusive Excellence](#) Phase Two, p. 3

When specifying what inclusive excellence and impact mean in the context of specific disciplines and fields, different academic units may choose to emphasize different dimensions of scholarship.

#### WHAT?

The “What” dimension captures choice of topics, research questions, themes, motifs, etc. It is often the first thing that comes to mind when people talk about “DEI scholarship,” but it is only one possibility. On average, a political scientist or performance artist will probably have more opportunities to pursue DEI-related *topics*<sup>6</sup> than a theoretical physicist or mathematician, to take just one example. Making room within TPR guidelines for such topics may therefore be more important in some disciplines than others: that is a decision for academic units to make.

The related, but distinct goal of making room within TPR guidelines to recognize and reward cross-disciplinary themes and topics is probably relevant to many, if not all, academic units. (See further discussion below.)

Committees might consider recognizing faculty creation of Open Educational Resources (OER)—teaching materials made available to all via the internet—as a form of scholarly output in tenure and promotion guidelines. Please see *Resource 10* for a discussion.

#### WHO?

The “Who” dimension focuses broadly on the people—including research personnel, subjects, audience, etc.—involved in or affected by the scholarly or creative endeavor. This dimension has clear relevance for all fields, disciplines, and academic units. Signposts of inclusive excellence in this dimension include attention to:

- Who is initiating/organizing/envisioning the work, which refers to the diversity of the research or creative team and inclusion of students, international collaborators, and/or AU term faculty.

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<sup>6</sup> Examples of such topics include race, class, gender, sexual orientation, intersectional identity, religion, power, privilege, barriers facing minoritized groups, disparities in outcomes, civil and human rights, means of correcting inequities and injustices, among many others.

- Whose lives will potentially be affected by the work, which includes plans for human-subjects research: do they incorporate diverse sampling and participation of affected and interested community members at every stage of project planning and execution?
- Who has access to the results of the research and creative work, which may include multi-dimensional approaches to dissemination, including presentations and performances in atypical venues and publication on open-source platforms.

Guidelines can be updated to recognize and reward diversification of teams and methods, breadth of participation, and inclusive dissemination of results.

Please see *Resource 10* for helpful ideas from the University Library about open-access publishing.

## HOW?

This broad dimension also has relevance to every field, discipline, and academic unit. Following are some examples of inclusive approaches to “the how” of scholarship:

- Theory
  - Theory building that incorporates intellectual and creative contributions of scholars who have been historically and unfairly marginalized
  - Participatory approaches that include community members in theory building and/or choice of theories to be applied
- Project Design, Methodology, and Settings
  - Artistic expression and cultural production that reflects culturally diverse communities or underrepresented voices
  - Contributions to emerging genres in fiction, drama, and other arts
  - Participatory approaches that include community members in research design or in plans for creative production
  - Agreements that ensure equal distribution of any benefits from an experimental intervention after the data has been gathered
  - Research that credits all contributors, including those who provide labor, ideas, or are the objects of study
  - Project designs that support economic diversity by overcoming barriers to participation faced by individuals from underserved and under-resourced communities
  - Research that applies non-standard design, sampling, or choice of experimental participants: e.g., Black Feminism, Race Theories, Critical Gender Theories, Intersectionality Theory, Socio-Cultural Theory, etc.
- Approaches to Data Analysis
  - In human-subjects research, attention to understanding what outliers might tell us about the phenomenon being studied, beyond measures of central tendency
  - Application of complexity principles to emergent social trends

- Participatory forms of analysis that invite subjects of research to engage directly with the data.

## Cross-Disciplinary Work

AU's [Strategic Plan](#) aspires to advance "AU's overall reputation as an institution that cultivates top-flight, cross-disciplinary research" to address "the most significant issues of the present and future" (pp. 13, 19). With that goal in mind, a subcommittee of the strategic plan implementation working group proposed revisions to multiple sections of the *Faculty Manual* to include cross-disciplinary/cross-field scholarship on a par with discipline or field-specific scholarship (see bullet points below for details). The purpose of the *Faculty Manual* revisions was to create space for cross-disciplinary work, but not to require it, so that faculty can advance in their careers at the same pace regardless of whether they focus on a single field or sub-field and/or choose to span fields/disciplines. The revisions were approved by the Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees in Spring 2020.

TPR guideline committees are asked to check their own guidelines to ensure cross-disciplinary work is included and recognized. Some academic units may want to insert "and/or cross-disciplinary" where applicable in their guidelines, as illustrated below from the *Faculty Manual*:

- Associate Professors (and Term Associate Professors) are expected to achieve "significant scholarly accomplishments appropriate to the field **and/or significant cross-disciplinary achievements**" (8.a.iii., ~p. 25; 13.b.ii., ~p. 47).
- Professors (and Term Professors) are expected to demonstrate "excellent scholarship, including prominent accomplishments in the field **and/or in cross-disciplinary endeavors**" (8.a.iv., ~p. 25; 13.b.iii., ~p. 47).
- Term faculty who hold the highest rank in the professorial lecturer sequence, Hurst Senior Professorial Lecturer/Librarian, "will have demonstrated meritorious performance through sustained excellence in teaching and in service internally to the university and/or externally in their profession or field of scholarship, **or through cross-disciplinary achievements**" (13.a.iv., ~p. 46).
- When faculty members review files for action submitted by colleagues, they are expected to determine "if a candidate's performance contributes significantly to the field **and/or generates cross-disciplinary knowledge and insights** in the case of faculty whose appointments require research and raise the academic quality of the university" (11, ~p. 38).
- "[C]urrency in the field **and/or across fields**" is a core expectation for all term faculty in all ranks (15, ~p. 50).

## Discussion Questions to Expand Perspectives

Committees may want to arrange meetings with small groups of colleagues to crowd-source ideas. Here are some potential discussion topics, in no particular order.

### **Do your current guidelines tend to exclude any forms of excellence?**

Ask faculty to share ideas about how your unit's current guidelines might inadvertently marginalize or undervalue some populations of scholars, areas and types of scholarship, or methods of scholarship within your discipline, including both DEI-attentive and cross-disciplinary work. This question invites faculty to reflect deeply on the reasons for updating the scholarship guidelines and may stimulate ideas for constructive revisions. In these conversations, try to drill down to specifics about what and who is being excluded, and how. Look for areas of "missing merit" ([Stewart and Valian 2018](#)).

Identifying hidden sources of bias is very difficult without fresh perspectives and different vantage points. Including a diversity of voices in these conversations will help.

### **Are metrics an issue in your guidelines?**

The Equity Task Force noted that using exclusively quantitative metrics to assess scholarly quality—e.g., journal-level metrics such as citation counts, impact factors, or acceptance rates, and author-level metrics such as h-index scores—may exclude some forms of scholarly excellence. To address this gap, units can adopt, for example:

- DEI-specific metrics
- Non-citation metrics, such as downloads or views – these may be appropriate in low-citing or non-citing fields
- Qualitative assessment of a monograph or a journal's standing by external reviewers of faculty files.

Such practices may expand the academic unit's familiarity with smaller and more specialized journals doing excellent work in areas traditionally overlooked by well-known, highly ranked journals. Multi-dimensional assessment also may accord greater recognition to open-source publishing; publishing of monographs with small, emerging presses; and public forms of communication via media outlets, blogs, etc. External reviewers can be asked to assess the significance of these forums directly.

Please see *Resource 9* for helpful ideas from the University Library about impact metrics.

### **What are the trends in your discipline or related clusters of disciplines?**

Are the editorial boards of your discipline's journals becoming more diverse? Are national and international disciplinary associations talking about how to reduce bias and improve equity? If so, what new ideas are coming forth from your discipline, and how might your academic unit

incorporate those ideas into your updated guidelines? How can your academic unit help lead change beyond AU?

### **What changes do your colleagues already have in mind?**

Some colleagues may have been thinking for years about how their field or discipline could and should expand beyond “mainstream, conventional, established” topics, genres, theoretical frameworks, research designs, etc. to support intellectual pluralism and encourage traditional and non-traditional, intra- and cross-disciplinary breakthroughs (Equity Task Force Report, p. 4). Consulting widely with colleagues in your unit may surface many promising ideas.

### **Are the following bits of career advice common in your academic unit? If so, do they point to areas where change is needed?**

- *“Wait until you reach Full Professor before doing inter-disciplinary research because only low-impact journals will publish it.”*
- *“Don’t focus too much on race, ethnicity, or gender in your scholarship if you want to be hired in a mainstream department.”*
- *“Community-based research and creative work is nice, but it’s not rigorous enough or original enough to fully count as scholarship.”*
- *“Translating your work for non-academic audiences is nice, but don’t let it slow down your academic productivity.”*
- *“Beware of open-access publishing because the peer review process is inferior.”*
- *“To increase your chances of being published, follow the trends in the top journals, presses, and other academic outlets. Don’t stray too far from the center of intellectual gravity.”*
- *“Make sure to collaborate only with colleagues who already have strong publishing records.”*
- Etc.

Discussion might focus on a few sub-questions: Which of the statements above are most common and most problematic in the disciplines and fields represented by your academic unit? How can your updated TPR guidelines contribute to changing these types of self-reinforcing biases while at the same time encouraging innovation and fresh thinking in your academic unit’s scholarly sphere?

## Resource 6: SERVICE

This resource suggests ways of incorporating inclusive excellence into unit guidelines for service roles and activities performed inside and outside AU.

### A Special Note on Invisible Labor

The issue of invisible labor will probably be on the minds of unit committees as they review the service sections of their guidelines. Following are suggestions for making those activities more visible and ensuring fair recognition and rewards for DEI-related service in both internal and external settings.

#### Internal Service

*We will develop an inclusive campus climate and culture where all students, alumni, faculty, and staff feel welcome and have a sense of belonging and community while their overall wellbeing is supported through respectful, meaningful, and engaged relationships with each other.*

#### Goal 2 of [AU's Plan for Inclusive Excellence](#) Phase Two, p. 3

When all faculty are enabled to bring their energy, wisdom, compassion, and talent to service activities at the program, department, school, or University level, the AU community flourishes.

TPR guidelines can acknowledge contributions to campus climate, culture, and community by calling them out, including through illustrative, non-prescriptive examples of DEI-attentive internal service like the ones listed in the Equity Task Force Report (p. 7):

1. Contributions to activities that promote recruitment and mentoring of students and faculty from underrepresented groups
2. Membership, and especially leadership, on DEI-related committees
3. Serving as faculty advisor for underrepresented student groups
4. Work on processes, policies, and tools that promote equitable and inclusive practices within one's school or across AU, including revising search committee criteria, job descriptions and evaluations, evaluation of proposed curricula, etc.
5. Work on events to promote a diversity of perspectives and ideas
6. Less formal mentoring of vulnerable and underrepresented students
7. Participation in workshops aimed at facilitating community discussions about DEI issues.

In addition, those serving in elected roles in shared governance can be recognized for their efforts to gather a diverse set of perspectives from colleagues and AU community members when representing one's constituents.

## **External Service and Professional Activity**

The Equity Task Force Report (pp. 7-8) identifies the following examples of how DEI efforts can be manifested in faculty service to the disciplines, the professions, and the larger community outside AU. Guidelines could be written to encourage faculty to exercise DEI leadership in these contexts.

1. Efforts to advance opportunities for students from underrepresented backgrounds through membership, internships, fellowships, and awards in professional organizations
2. Presentation of papers at, and participation in, professional or scientific associations or meetings related to the needs of communities historically excluded from higher education
3. Engagement in seminars, conferences, or institutes that address the concerns of women and under-represented, minoritized groups
4. Presentations or performances for under-represented communities
5. Honors, awards, and other forms of special recognition such as commendations from local or national groups or societies representing under-served communities
6. Participation in service that applies up-to-date knowledge to problems, issues, and concerns of groups historically under-represented in higher ed generally
7. The application of theory to real-world economic, social, and community development problems
8. Election to office, or undertaking service to professional and learning societies, including editorial work, or peer reviewing for a national or international organization addressing disparities in access to higher education
9. Selection for special public service activities and invitations to give talks within the field that address the needs of under-represented or culturally diverse groups.

## Resource 7: CURRENCY in the FIELD

Section 15 of the *Faculty Manual* includes “currency in the field” among the general criteria for assessing term faculty performance. Academic unit guidelines define the phrase in various ways, and many include examples to illustrate the wide range of activities that belong to this category of faculty accomplishments.

Most “currency”-related activities are addressed in *Resource 5 (Scholarship)* and *Resource 6 (Service)*, especially 6’s subsection on “External Service and Professional Activities”.

When reviewing your unit’s guidelines concerning currency in the field, committees are invited to keep in mind the three goals/tests from *Resources 1 & 3*:

1. Are we expanding criteria for assessing teaching, service, and scholarship to recognize and reward inclusive and cross-disciplinary accomplishments which standard metrics tend to marginalize?
2. Are we ensuring [academic freedom](#) for all faculty by removing needless and discriminatory obstacles to the free choice of topics, themes, genres, methods, protocols, collaborators, and venues (etc.) for scholarship, teaching, and service?
3. Do the updated guidelines highlight multiple pathways of excellence and impact for faculty?

## Resource 8: FURTHER READING

### American University

[AU's Plan for Inclusive Excellence](#) – see Phases 1 and 2 (2018 and 2021)

[AU's Strategic Plan](#)

Report of the American University Task Force on Equity in Faculty Reappointment, Promotion, Tenure, and Merit (December 2020)

### American Association of Colleges and Universities

[Toward a Model of Inclusive Excellence and Change in Postsecondary Institutions](#) – a report by Damon A. Williams, Joseph B. Berger, and Shederick A. McClendon for the American Association of Colleges and Universities (2005)

Multiple publications available from the [AAC&U](#)

### Inside Higher Education

[“The DEI Pathway to Promotion”](#) – article in *Inside Higher Education* on developments at Indiana University-Purdue University (2021)

[“Undue Burden”](#) – article in *Inside Higher Education* on the extra diversity-inclusion workload shouldered by underrepresented faculty (2019)

### Misc.

[An Inclusive Academy](#) – MIT Press book by Abigail J. Stewart and Virginia Valian (2018)

[USC's Anti-Racist Pedagogy Guide](#) – a collection of resources assembled by the University of Southern California (USC) Libraries and USC's Anti-Racist Pedagogy Organizing Committee

Please send additional items to [AssociateDOF@american.edu](mailto:AssociateDOF@american.edu).

## Resource 9: IMPACT METRICS

This resource provides a highly condensed introduction to several vital issues associated with the measurement of scholarly<sup>7</sup> impact. The first section offers ideas for capturing impact on audiences beyond other experts in our academic fields and disciplines. The second section discusses existing measures of scholarly impact and offers several ways of addressing their weaknesses.

We are fortunate to have a national expert on these issues on campus. Thanks go to Science Librarian Rachel Borchardt, Associate Director of Research and Instructional Services at the University Library, for preparing this resource.

### **Impact Measures Associated with Non-scholarly/Quasi-scholarly Audiences**

This guidance includes qualitative and quantitative impact indicators. Some are collected through alternative sources, namely [Altmetric](#), while others must be gathered or documented manually. These indicators are not comprehensive, and neither is the list of audiences. Both are meant to illustrate appropriate ways to document impact on a sample of different audiences. Schools, departments, and/or individual faculty may wish to create their own lists of impact audience(s) or impact type(s): for example, the [Becker Model](#) outlines 5 types of impact<sup>8</sup> within biomedical sciences, while the [framework for academic librarianship](#) details measures for scholarly and practitioner impact.

### **Sample of Potential Non-scholarly/Quasi-scholarly Audiences with Suggested Metrics**

1. Educators or other applied practitioners (journalists, healthcare workers, corporate and industry employees, etc.)
  - a. Impact factors may include evidence of application or use of scholarship including a wide variety of altmetrics (downloads, views, shares, etc.) and qualitative measures (emails, inclusion in syllabi, awards or recognition, etc.) that demonstrate engagement.
  - b. Research outputs may also be tailored for this audience, e.g., lesson plans, trade publications, presentations, or outreach.
2. Policymakers (government officials/groups/agencies/etc., think tanks, intergovernmental organizations such as WHO or UN, etc.)
  - a. Impact factors may include evidence of application or use of scholarship primarily in the form of citations within policy and policy-related documents (websites, policy papers, etc.) that demonstrate influence.

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<sup>7</sup> In this and related documents, the terms scholarly and scholarship always include research, creative, and professional activities and outputs, as per the *Faculty Manual's* glossary.

<sup>8</sup> The 5 types are Advancement of Knowledge, Clinical Implementation, Community Benefit, Legislation and Policy, and Economic Benefit.

- b. Research outputs may also be tailored for this audience, e.g., congressional testimony, policy papers, presentations, outreach, or communication.
- 3. Community, including community service
  - a. Impact factors may include evidence of application or use of research outputs, including a wide variety of altmetrics (downloads, views, shares, etc.) and qualitative measures (emails, continued community engagement, awards or recognition, etc.) that demonstrate engagement.
  - b. [SMART goals](#) may also demonstrate measurable impact, depending on the nature of the research/community engagement.
  - c. Research outputs may also be tailored for this audience – e.g., websites, visualized data, guides, or other forms of knowledge sharing.
- 4. General public
  - a. Impact factors may include evidence of interaction with research outputs, including a wide variety of altmetrics (social media mentions, shares, views, downloads, media mentions, etc.) that demonstrate attention and reach.
  - b. Research outputs or related media may also be tailored for this audience, e.g., films, videos, interactive media, exhibits, infographics, press releases, news articles, opinion pieces, blogs, or other social media posts.

### **Impact Metrics for Scholarly Disciplines**

Schools/departments should consider adopting a broad range of impact measures appropriate to the research outputs, impact audiences (above), and metrics relevant for their discipline(s), in addition to recognizing that research beyond the school/department’s primary research discipline may require different metrics, especially in the case of cross-disciplinary work.

Some schools and departments may also wish to exclude metrics from consideration. For example, the [American Mathematical Society](#) has stated its rejection of impact factor for research evaluation due to its unhelpfulness in providing meaningful evaluation for several reasons. These reasons, such as poor coverage, a lack of time dependence, and relatively low citation rates, also apply for many non-STEM fields. Some fields, such as [political science](#), publish updated journal lists based on peer consensus of journal quality, but these lists can also serve to reinforce existing narratives and power dynamics. In short, measurements of journal quality can reinforce existing biases within the research enterprise and should only be used in conjunction with other evaluative criteria, or abandoned entirely, rather than forming the sole basis of evaluation.

Some general principles to consider include:

#### **Journal-Level Metrics**

1. [Journal-level metrics](#), including Impact Factor, SJR, CiteScore, and H-5-index, have historically been used to indicate journal quality within a field or discipline, but also serve as gatekeepers and reinforcers of existing power inequalities within academic publishing. Using these indicators may disadvantage certain researchers and/or fields of

research inquiry, including faculty of color, those with less proficiency in written English scholarship, those publishing in newer venues, and cross-disciplinary and emergent fields of research. Disciplines value the role of academic journals in the broader scholarly discourse unequally and have varying citation norms and timelines that limit the usefulness of journal-level metrics for many fields.

2. Impact Factor is often an appropriate evaluative tool for STEM research and journals, due to the more accurate contextualization of impact factors within narrow STEM fields and more complete journal coverage. Social science disciplines should also consider SJR and/or CiteScore to measure journal-level impact. Humanities disciplines may lean more heavily on qualitative measures, as metrics often fail to provide the level of nuance needed to meaningfully evaluate publication in humanities scholarship. The H5-index provides journal-level metrics for more humanities journals, but at the price of a more simplistic, less meaningful metric.

### Article-level Metrics

3. [Article-level metrics](#), namely citations, can and should be used, but acceptable sources of citations should be meaningfully discussed when used.
4. Google Scholar, while more inclusive in its citation counts, also includes source types such as dissertations, preprints, and bibliographies not included in library databases such as Web of Science or Scopus. Citation culture within a field may help determine their usefulness.
5. In many fields, citation numbers rise slowly over many years and can be scarce and hard to track, particularly for books, book chapters, and other non-journal research outputs. Other metrics, such as downloads, views, and usage data can provide snapshots into the potential impact of research, but without meaningful contextualization because those numbers can only offer limited support for the previous or potential impact of articles (for example, a recently published, uncited article). These metrics also suffer from a lack of universal availability or standardization, but in some fields (namely STEM disciplines), correlate highly with citation counts.

Regardless of the metrics or altmetrics used, an academic unit's ability to equitably evaluate the impact of the full range of faculty scholarship and creative works requires multiple indicators and increased appreciation for the role of qualitative assessment. Use of multiple indicators allows for variation to appropriately contextualize individual faculty accomplishments within a broad range of fields and manners of discourse. This should include room for qualitative information in addition to, or in place of, quantitative research metrics in order to recognize and minimize the systemic and self-reinforcing biases that often accompany quantitative scoring systems.

For discipline-specific advice, please feel free to contact Rachel Borchardt, [borchard@american.edu](mailto:borchard@american.edu), who can work with units to research evidence-based information and provide expert guidance.

## Resource 10: OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING and OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

This resource describes an important role for open access publishing and open educational materials in making progress toward goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We are fortunate to have experts on these issues on campus. Thanks go to the AU Library and CTRL Open Access Team, especially Stephanie Ko, Chris Lewis, and Stefan Kramer, for preparing this resource.

### Open Access and Open Educational Resources

As schools and departments revise reappointment, tenure, and promotion guidelines in AY21-22, the AU Library and CTRL urge you to incorporate equitable publishing practices in your revisions. Specifically, we recommend that schools and departments update the scholarship evaluation guidelines to explicitly consider [open access \(OA\)](#) publications, and update the teaching evaluation guidelines to address adopting [open educational resources \(OER\)](#).

OA publications make the results of research accessible from anywhere. Similarly, making such outputs as datasets, reports, and pre-prints OA contributes to equitable research practices. Sometimes opting to publish in an OA venue means choosing an outlet that has lower traditional evaluation measures (*e.g.* impact factor), but we believe the contribution to research equity warrants some priority and the citation advantage one gains from OA can counterbalance a lower impact journal. In revising your guidelines, we urge reviewers and administrators to credit those faculty authors whose publication choices show a commitment to equity, in alignment with the recommendations outlined in section II, A of the Equity Task Force report (December 2020).

Using OER in a classroom removes financial barriers for students. We endorse the recommendation in the Equity Task Force report that suggests *creation* of OER materials be regarded as scholarship.

Committees may want to discuss various ways of including the following advice for faculty in updated TPR guidelines.

## Advice for Faculty: Open Scholarship

### Equitable OA Publication

The AU Library Open Access team considers publication in fully OA venues as an equitable practice. In OA jargon, these are “gold” or “platinum” publications. In contrast, “hybrid” publications have an OA option but only if the author pays an article processing charge (APC) AND they still charge a subscription fee. This double payment is not sustainable for any but the best funded institutions. See table 1 for the full typology.

**Table 1.** Types of OA Publications

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Platinum | All articles available open access, no APC.   |
| Gold     | All articles available open access. APC is charged to authors.  |
| Hybrid   | Optional APC to make individual articles open access, but journal requires a subscription to access all content.            |
| Bronze   | Some articles are OA at the discretion of the publisher (e.g. COVID-related articles), but journal requires a subscription. |
| Green    | A version of a journal article/manuscript can be uploaded to a repository or personal website.                              |

### Green OA

Many publications permit the deposit of a version of the manuscript in a research repository or personal website. [Sherpa Romeo](#) provides an extensive database of publishers’ OA policies. Use of an OA repository is highly recommended. The AU Library maintains AUDRA, our institutional repository, and there are also subject repositories such as SSRN, arXiv, and Figshare available. Depositing in an OA repository will increase discoverability and citations to your work and provide a location for long-term archiving. Get started by contacting Chris Lewis, [clewis@american.edu](mailto:clewis@american.edu), and Research Data Librarian Stefan Kramer, [skramer@american.edu](mailto:skramer@american.edu), to learn more about data repository options.

### Selecting an OA Journal for Publication

Many factors can play a role in selecting an appropriate OA publication. Here are a few online tools to help you decide:

- [DOAJ](#) is one of the most comprehensive lists of OA journals. Search by subject and filter by peer review type, publisher, Creative Commons license, APC fee and more.

- [Manuscript Matcher](#). Built into EndNote Online (free registration), this program matches a manuscript's title abstract and references with suitable journals indexed in Web of Science.
- Other journal finders or searchable databases that denote OA publications include [CoFactor](#), [Enago OA Journal Finder](#), [Scopus](#), [Web of Science](#).

### **Support for Article Processing Charges (APCs)**

We strongly encourage authors to include APC costs in grant proposals. The library also maintains an [Open Access fund](#), which assists faculty with these charges for gold and platinum journals. Questions can be sent to [oafund@american.edu](mailto:oafund@american.edu).

## **Advice for Faculty: Teaching Resources**

### **Adopting Open Education Resources (OERs) into Teaching**

OERs are educational materials that can be accessed by anyone. Adopting classroom materials that are available free of charge promotes an equitable learning environment.

There are several approaches to making teaching materials accessible, including:

- Adopting OER materials (e.g. textbooks) in your courses: explore [OER Commons Hub](#);
- Using materials provided by the library, including print and electronic reserve copies, streaming videos, articles available through library databases, or other materials students can access independently; and
- Adopting older editions of textbooks, making copies easier to obtain (though this often reduces rather than eliminates the cost).
- Creating your own OER materials for classroom use is ideal. We urge departments to include OER material creation as a form of scholarship in tenure and promotion guidelines.

### **For More Assistance**

The library is ready to help! Email [open-l@listserv.american.edu](mailto:open-l@listserv.american.edu) to contact OA and OER specialists on campus. We will assist individual faculty as well as present on these issues to departments/schools, as well as collaborate on incorporating these principles into tenure, promotion, and reappointment guidelines.