

To: All UC San Diego Faculty  
From: Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP), Lynn Russell (Chair, 2024-25)  
Date: October 1, 2025  
Subject: Where CAP Stood (2025)

## Table of Contents

Overview .....	2
CAP 2024-2025 .....	2
Updated CAP Review Practices.....	4
Rate of Agreement and Reasons for Downward Modifications .....	6
<i>Table 1: CAP Rate of Agreements for 2024-25 Review Actions</i> .....	7
KEY TOPICS in 2024-25 .....	12
1) Expectations for Peer-Reviewed Publications or the Equivalent .....	13
2) Expectations for Teaching and Service .....	16
a) Teaching .....	16
b) Service .....	18
3) Expectations Increased with Rank and Step .....	21
OTHER TOPICS in 2024-25 .....	22
Candidate Statements and Departmental Recommendation Letters.....	22
External Referee Letters .....	23
Dean's Recommendation Letter.....	24
Candidate Certifications .....	24
Department Standards .....	25
Research Scientist Series .....	25
Teaching Professor Series.....	26
Departmental Service Expectations .....	29
Teaching Portfolios .....	31
Accelerations.....	33
Recalibrations .....	34
Career Equity Reviews.....	34
APPENDIX: CAP Operations & General Guidance on File Review (Updated 10/1/25) .....	36

## Overview

CAP serves as an advisory body to the Executive Vice Chancellor (EVC) and Chancellor, with final authority on all personnel actions resting with the EVC and Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (Sr. AVC-AA) or the Chancellor.

**This document is divided into two parts**, with the main document serving to provide transparency for CAP's activities during this academic year and the [Appendix](#) providing general guidance on topics where there have been continued misunderstandings, suggesting the need to repeat information from prior years.

## CAP 2024-2025

CAP continued its practice of review of all files by all members in attendance, providing university-wide and cross-disciplinary input on all actions. CAP decisions are based on the majority vote, rarely (~1%) resulting in no decision. CAP recommendations are reported to the EVC and Sr. AVC-AA or the Chancellor and later returned to the Dean and department to be provided to the candidate, with the outcome of the vote described in the CAP letter. CAP functioned as a cohesive committee this year, ensuring alignment with past practice and University policy while adapting to new situations, issuing supportive decisions when appropriate and constructive guidance when necessary.

CAP continued to implement and normalize the principles of *achievement relative to opportunity (ARO)*, foreseeing new limitations to opportunities in the coming years associated with the new political landscape and associated changes in government funding.

Historically, the EVC and Chancellor have frequently concurred with CAP's recommendations. An **override** is defined as when an outcome decision made by the final authority differs from CAP's final recommendation. This year, there were 36 overrides by the EVC out of 764<sup>1</sup> files reviewed, approximately 95% agreement. Of those CAP decisions overridden by the EVC, most were a consequence of contextual information that was perceived differently by a CAP majority. The CAP annual report provides additional information on these cases, which were discussed in meetings between CAP leadership and the EVC and Sr AVC-AA. The high rate of agreement supports the concept that shared governance is operating well. High alignment underscores the process's consistency with policy; occasional disagreement reflects CAP's university-wide peer representation in judging academic reviews. CAP leadership was

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<sup>1</sup> CAP and Academic Personnel Services (APS) calculate the rate of agreement differently. CAP counts each step in the process separately, meaning an initial review and the review of a departmental response to a preliminary assessment are considered two separate files. In contrast, APS organizes data by candidate, so both an initial review and a response to a preliminary assessment would be reported as one file in their reports.

impressed by the open and frank conversation with the EVC and Sr. AVC-AA on the challenge of judging diverse academic files with equity.

This year, CAP was chaired by a faculty member with a primary appointment at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO), which has not happened in approximately 30 years. CAP continued to include a Teaching Professor (from Physical Sciences) in the membership, who provided important insight on several aspects of academic files. This year, CAP comprised faculty from all parts of campus with 14 members: 4 from the Health Sciences, 2 from the Social Sciences, 2 from the Arts and Humanities, 1 from the Biological Sciences, 2 from the Physical Sciences, 2 from Engineering, and 1 from SIO.

CAP held most of its 36 meetings in hybrid mode, but most committee members participated in person. Three of the meetings were held fully remote on Zoom. CAP meetings generally last 4-6 hours. CAP conducted 848 reviews (764 initial/additional information/reconsiderations, and 84 “Above the Line” items (endowed chairs, administrator reviews, revisions to policy, etc.). CAP supported Academic Personnel Services’ (APS) efforts to ensure file submission before the relevant deadline this year, resulting in only 26 late files being carried over to next year, although there are also up to 40 responses to preliminary decisions or requests for additional information that could still be submitted.

There are multiple opportunities throughout the year for the campus community to communicate with CAP. At the beginning of the academic year, the CAP Chair delivered several presentations to the Schools in collaboration with the Sr. AVC-AA. In these forums, the basics of CAP review are provided with ample time for questions and discussion. These campus-wide presentations are important for equity and informational purposes. The CAP Chair also delivered a similar presentation to all new faculty at the University to ensure transparency in the academic review process. In addition to these forums, CAP accepted requests for visits from 16 groups of visitors from across the campus, including Department Chairs, Deans, Administrators, and leadership from Academic Personnel Services. In these meetings, the visitors had an opportunity to discuss specific questions related to their departmental concerns, as well as to further clarify CAP’s operating procedures.

CAP continued to prioritize equity and fairness in the review process. CAP considers all departmental standards that are submitted very carefully, while noting that not all departments provide those standards with the same degree of clarity and rigor. In cases where departmental standards lacked clarity relative to a candidate’s performance, particularly for acceleration actions, CAP utilized an equity lens to evaluate files relative to other similar departments and schools. CAP appreciates the field-specific insight that is given to provide ways to identify potential bias. CAP notes that *ad hoc* committees, departments,

and schools should also include in their evaluations of teaching some discussion of structural issues such as class difficulty and student preparedness, as well as potential contributors to bias in student comments or scores. Because departmental standards are a crucial benchmark to assess files through an equity lens, CAP strongly encourages departments to clearly articulate standards for advancement and acceleration. CAP notes, however, that department standards do not supersede University policy and may require regular updates to reflect changes in the discipline and the department. CAP has the benefit and purview of reviewing University-wide academic files, which enables CAP to have a broader perspective on the review process and makes it possible to recognize campus-wide inequities or imbalances of which departments may be unaware and thus unable to assess.

### **Updated CAP Review Practices**

To address the record-high number of 99 files that were estimated to be carried over from the 2023-24 review cycle, in 2024-25, CAP limited the time allocated to activities other than file review in the fall quarter. Specifically, in response to delays in file submissions, CAP modified its practices this year in invitations for department and school administrators to visit CAP meetings. All department and school administrators were still invited, but were given combined times when issues consistent throughout schools could be addressed more efficiently and effectively by sharing information with a combined audience of Department Chairs and their Deans.

CAP considered the recent trend of increased files for CAP review, noting that campus growth may at some point mean that CAP responsibilities may exceed the capacity of a single committee of research-active and teaching-active faculty. Major changes to either the types of files reviewed by CAP or the practices used by CAP for file review may be considered by a Senate-Administration workgroup focused on the Academic Peer Review Process that was appointed in March 2025 for a broad review of academic peer review. This year, CAP reviewed and revised some actions where the role of evaluating academic performance was not central to the recommendation being considered. Specifically,

- CAP waived reviews of Unit 18 lecturers, a practice continued from last year, since these actions are advisory to Deans rather than the EVC.
- CAP waived reviews of retentions and pre-emptive retentions, since these actions can be handled more quickly by an alternative Kuali-based process, which is sufficient to establish the legitimacy of the offer and the candidate's good standing.
- CAP waived reviews of endowed chair reappointments, since these actions are based on prior academic evaluation of the candidate's good standing.

- CAP continued to waive reviews of department post-audits of completed normal merit advancements, since these reviews served only as a mechanism to convey advice on file preparation and policy to departments and Deans.

Together, these actions, some of which were not fully approved for implementation until mid-year, meant the number of files reviewed in 2024-25 was similar to that of 2020-21 and 2018-19. While campus growth was the proximate cause of CAP's consideration of these changes, these actions were waived because the role of evaluating academic performance is ancillary to the action. CAP requested that, in place of reviewing these individual actions, annual reports be provided to CAP of the actions taken. Annual reports will allow for the equity of actions to be considered in the aggregate, and CAP expects to review those reports in future years.

This year, CAP reviewed 84 "Above the Line" items. These personnel issues included endowed chair appointments, the conferral of emeritus titles to non-faculty series, administrative reviews of Department Chairs, Deans, and Provosts, proposed revisions to campus or UC policy, and Academic Senate-related business proposals (such as consideration of the academic calendar workgroup report). CAP members frequently voiced concerns about the equity and transparency of the endowed chair appointment process, with members sometimes abstaining from supporting appointments because the information provided was insufficient to explain how the candidate was selected or how their scholarly expertise was appropriate for the specified endowment. CAP recognizes that some selection processes are restricted by the nature of the endowments or by selections related to appointments and retention actions. However, CAP requests that endowed chair files provide more information on how the selected candidates meet the requirements of the endowments to better support equitable allocation of the important resources provided by endowed chair appointments.

CAP discussed three versions of a proposal regarding the removal of the limit on the number of appointees in the Professor of Clinical X series at UC San Diego, which was first transmitted to CAP in 2023-24. CAP continued to voice concerns about the Health Sciences Senate faculty's expansion of the number of Professor Clinical X appointees, as this series does not seem to have stable institutional support for teaching, research, or service, based on the review of files for candidates who are already appointed in this series. CAP was concerned that a higher number of Professor of Clinical X Professors could change the balance and priorities of faculty representation within the Academic Senate, which has the primary duty and authority to set requirements for graduation and admissions, approve courses and curricula, and approve the publication of manuscripts by the UC Press. CAP raised concerns about the extent to which a larger group of Professor of Clinical X Professors might participate and contribute to university research and creative work, service, and teaching.

These issues were raised to the proposers, and the additional information provided in revised submissions did not support the arguments proffered. For example, there was a lack of data about the percentage of Professor of Clinical X Professors at other UC campuses. In addition, CAP voiced concern over the impact on the balance of representation in the Academic Senate, given the rapid expansion of the University's clinical mission without commensurate expansion of FTEs allocated to Health Sciences. While the limit on appointments in the Professor of Clinical X series is an anomaly relative to other UC series, the CAP majority judges the cap to assuage some of the fears about clinical efforts growing faster than research or teaching missions of the University. Some CAP members noted that a revision to the limit to 40%, rather than removal of the limit, could easily accommodate the <50 candidates who were considered to be eligible, while others noted that the limit has already been raised from 1/6th (as stipulated in the APM) to 1/3rd of the Health Sciences faculty. CAP provided a detailed roadmap for the information needed to clearly address the concerns raised if future CAP review is requested.

### **Rate of Agreement and Reasons for Downward Modifications**

CAP reviews files recommended by the department or school for promotion, career reviews, fourth-year appraisals, accelerated merit advancements (including bonus off-scale salary components or "BOS"), contested actions, and second-consecutive no-change actions, as well as those files where the candidate has requested one of these actions or a Career Equity Review (CER). CAP does not review normal merit advancements that do not have higher or lower actions proposed by the candidate, department, or Dean. CAP does not review candidate academic review deferral requests.

The UC academic review process includes several layers of review, and in most cases, CAP agrees with one or more of the prior reviewers' recommendations. Because actions proposed by the department (or equivalent) are considered the nominal proposed action, we consider here how CAP recommendations differed from the proposed (department) action. In some cases, prior *ad hoc* committee or subsequent school recommendations differed from the proposed action before reaching CAP, but those intermediate levels of recommendations are not currently tracked. Generally, disagreements among prior recommendations are more likely to lead to modifications of the proposed action by CAP, whereas consistent recommendations from all levels are more likely to be supported by CAP. In this sense, CAP often does not propose a new action but instead resolves a disagreement among previous reviewers' recommendations. CAP notes that some proposed actions appear to be higher than warranted by the contents of the file, perhaps in a collegial effort to support candidates. While there is no penalty for proposing a higher action than may be warranted based on the candidate's achievements in comparison to the departmental standards, such proposals are more likely to split the vote and prevent CAP from reaching a majority recommendation. **CAP**

encourages departments to propose clearly-justified, appropriate-level actions that are consonant with the departmental standards. To provide more detailed information, CAP calculated the rate of CAP agreements for different proposed actions, and these results are provided in Table 1 below.

*Table 1: CAP Rate of Agreements for 2024-25 Review Actions*

Action Type	Total	As Proposed	Down Mod	Up Mod	Lateral Mod	Additional Info	No rec	Reaffirm Prelim	Dis-approve	CAP Split
<b>All Ranks and Steps</b>										
<b>Accelerated Actions</b>	<b>269</b>	133	83	12	4	6	1	28		2
		49%	31%	4%	1%	2%	0%	10%	0%	1%
<b>Teaching Professor Accelerated Actions</b>	<b>24</b>	13	6	2	1	2				
		54%	25%	8%	4%	8%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>BOS Proposals</b>	<b>135</b>	57	55	12			2	9		
		42%	41%	9%	0%	0%	1%	7%	1%	0%
<b>No Change Proposals</b>	<b>27</b>	15	3	7			0	1		
		56%	11%	26%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%
<b>By Rank and Step</b>										
<b>Assistant Rank Actions</b>										
Accelerations	<b>51</b>	37	10	3	2	2	1	3		
Appraisals	<b>62</b>	29	8	3	17		1	2		
Promotions	<b>103</b>	53	26	7	N/A	4	4	7	1*	
Merits	<b>62</b>	27	11	7	14	1	1	1		
No Change	<b>3</b>	3								
w/ BOS	<b>29</b>	11	11	2	2		1	2		
Terminals	<b>3</b>	1		1			1			
Series change (to asst rank series)	<b>3</b>	2		1						
Series change (to assoc rank series)	<b>6</b>	3	1	1		1				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Associate Rank Actions</b>										
Accelerations	<b>62</b>	33	17	6	1*	3		2		
Promotions	<b>74</b>	46	17	9		2				

Merits	32	14	11	5			1	1		
No Change	7	3	1	2				1		
w/ BOS	43	16	18	6			1	2		
Series change (to full rank series)	1		1							
<b>Totals</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Full Rank Actions</b>										
Accelerations	147	58	56	3	2	1		23		
Advance to/thru Step VI	60	30	19	2				9		
Advance to/thru Above Scale	33	10	12		1	2		7		
No Change	15	8	2	5						
w/ BOS	50	20	20	3				4		
Series change (to full rank series)	24		1							
Series change (to asst or assoc rank series)	3	2				1				
Reappointments (non-salaried Adjuncts / 0% Professor appts)	37	17	5	1				1	2	
Retentions (reviewed before waiving CAP review)	4	3						1		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Career Reviews-To or Through Full, Step VI</b>										
Accelerations to Step VI	14	7	3	1				3		
Step VI + Acceleration	20	9	7	4						
Step VI (normal)	26	14	9	1				2		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Career Reviews-To Above Scale</b>										
Accelerations to AS	6		4					2		
AS + Accel	9	1	4					3		1
AS (normal)	18	9	5			2		2		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>3%</b>

Of the actions considered by CAP in 2024-25, there were 322 separate actions at Assistant Rank (for 209 faculty files), 219 separate actions at Associate Rank (for 172 faculty files), and



373 separate actions at Full Rank (for 354 faculty files). Of these 915 actions, CAP agreed with the department-proposed action generally slightly less than half of the time across all ranks, with the recommendations for the remaining actions being either an “UpMod” or a “DownMod.” An UpMod is an action where CAP’s recommendation is higher than that proposed by the department, and a DownMod is one where CAP’s recommendation is lower than that of the department. Of the Assistant Rank actions, 43% of actions were recommended as proposed, with 8% (25) UpMods and 20% DownMods. (Note that other recommendations, such as additional information requests, lateral modifications, and no recommendations, contribute to the remaining actions to add to 100%.) Of the Associate Rank actions, 51% were recommended as proposed, with 13% (28) UpMods and 30% DownMods. Of the Full Rank actions, 41% were recommended as proposed, with 4% (13) UpMod and 36% DownMods. **CAP notes that the lower proportion of UpMods and higher proportion of DownMods at the Full Rank relative to the Assistant and Associate Ranks likely results from the higher expectations of University policy for higher ranks and steps.**

Specifically for accelerations in 2024-25, CAP’s rate of agreement with the proposed department recommendation averaged 49% for the 269 accelerated actions proposed across all series. Of the remaining acceleration actions, 12 were UpMods (higher than the acceleration proposed by the department) and 83 DownMods (lower than the acceleration proposed by the department). The rate of agreement for accelerations was slightly higher than the average rate for all series when isolating only Teaching Professors, with 54% of 24 actions as proposed, 2 UpMods, and 6 DownMods. CAP encourages departments to continue to review department standards for all faculty series to ensure equity.

CAP also tracked the rate of agreement on accelerated actions for different faculty ranks, where policy requires “above average” research or scholarship for all faculty series. For Assistant Rank faculty, 73% of 51 accelerations were supported as proposed, 3 were UpMods, and 10 were DownMods. For Associate Rank faculty, 53% of 62 accelerations were supported as proposed, 6 were UpMods, and 17 were DownMods. For Full Rank faculty, 39% of 147 accelerations were supported as proposed, 3 were UpMods, and 56 were DownMods. Of the Full Rank actions, 47% of 34 accelerated merit advancements to or through Step VI were supported, and 7% of 15 accelerations to or through Above Scale were supported, with no UpMods and 8 DownMods. The lower rate of agreement for the Full Rank compared to the Assistant and Associate Ranks is consistent with CAP’s expectations that both good and exceptional performance become more rigorous with rank and step (PPM 230-220-88.1). CAP notes that the lower rate of agreement at higher steps may reflect the absence of more rigorous expectations with rank and step in department standards and encourages departments to revise their standards to be more consistent with policy.

CAP's rate of agreement with the proposed department recommendation averaged 42% for the 135 BOS actions proposed for all series. Of the remaining actions, 12 were UpMods and 55 DownMods. A frequent reason for DownMods of BOS actions was the lack of identification of a specific contribution during the review period that sufficiently exceeded University expectations. Many proposals for BOS based on service failed to justify how the workload or impact of uncompensated service contributions were extraordinary relative to the workload and impact of the completion of multi-year service as Department Chair on the general campus, which CAP generally considers to be the benchmark (in terms of service load, commitment, and impact) for supporting a BOS awarded for service contributions.

CAP had a 56% rate of agreement for the 27 proposed no-change actions (some of which included a BOS), with 7 UpMods and 3 DownMods. CAP notes that it only reviews the second consecutive no-change actions and those that include a proposal for an additional BOS.

CAP encourages requests for reconsiderations for DownMods of proposed department actions only when new information is available that was not included in the previous CAP file. CAP letters provide only a brief summary of some aspects of the file, and the failure of the CAP letter to note a specific piece of information is not sufficient to justify a reconsideration. Approximately two-thirds of the 80 reconsiderations submitted in 2024-25 resulted in a reaffirmation of CAP's original recommendation, in most cases because they lacked new information relevant to CAP's stated reasons for the DownMod recommendations.

For 2024-25, there were 200 DownMods for the aggregated 764 review actions. For these actions, CAP tracked which one or more of the three primary areas of faculty performance (research, teaching, and service) was identified as a reason for the modification, noting that some actions had more than one reason. CAP advises that these statistics are intended to provide only a general sense of the distribution of reasons, since the reason for any decision may be an aggregate of the distribution of 14 different views of the reasons, even when CAP voted unanimously for a DownMod recommendation. CAP is providing this limited information in the hopes of providing some basic information to candidates and departments, for example, to highlight the fact that while the justifications for most promotions and accelerations in all series are largely based on research achievements, the reasons for DownMods vary among all three areas of the academic record – research, teaching, and service. The reasons were tracked by school, action, and rank.

Among the notable differences by school, for the 59 DownMods for Jacobs School of Engineering and the School of Physical Sciences, 40-41% were for teaching. Teaching also contributed between 5% and 40% of the DownMod actions of the School of Biological Sciences, SIO, and the School of Social Science. CAP notes that there could be a relationship

between the evaluation of teaching in which more quantitative courses receive less favorable comments than more qualitative courses, consistent with pedagogical research on student response surveys.<sup>2</sup> CAP encourages *ad hoc* committees, departments, and schools to implement the recommendations of the [Holistic Teaching Oversight Committee](#) (HTOC) by placing student comments in the context of departmental expectations and needs for their courses. Teaching was also a contributing reason for DownMods in more than 50% of the Health Sciences DownMod actions, although CAP notes that the absence of teaching evaluations may have been responsible for the lack of evidence of excellence in teaching frequently noted by CAP in the School of Medicine review files. CAP encourages greater documentation of teaching effectiveness in academic review files, particularly for Health Sciences faculty.

For Arts and Humanities, the Jacobs School of Engineering, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences, the School of Medicine, the School of Public Health, and SIO, 30% or more of DownMods had service as a contributing reason for CAP's recommendation. CAP notes that many of these actions are explained by the candidate's limited or absent University-wide service contributions for Full Rank steps higher than Step III ("Full>III"). CAP acknowledges that department standards do not always identify University-wide service as an expectation for Full Rank steps approaching VI, but this is a consistent campus expectation and has been specifically documented in CAP's previous versions of *Where CAP Stood* (see *Where CAP Stood* for [2022-23](#) and [2023-24](#)).

The reasons for DownMods aggregated for all actions differed by rank, with Research being the most common reason for Assistant (65%), Associate (43%), and Full<IV (52%), but Service being the main reason for all Full (54%) and Full>III (58%). Teaching was the second-most common reason in all categories after either Research or Service. The prevalence of Research as the reason for DownMods at Assistant, Associate, and Full<IV may have resulted from the continued contributions of mentors as coauthors on the publications of these faculty, limited evidence of independent, peer-reviewed contributions, and CAP's interpretation of field-specific standards and candidate contributions to collaborative work. Service was rarely (18%) the reason for DownMods at the Assistant Rank. In fact, CAP often suggested that Assistant candidates consider temporarily reducing their laudable service commitments, finding that the current level of service activities may potentially impede achieving increased independent research productivity or, for some series and schools, securing the independent funding that is necessary for future promotion. Service as the reason for DownMods for Full>III is again attributable to the failure of most departments to support expectations for University-wide service at steps approaching Full VI by naming their importance in their standards and by

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<sup>2</sup> Royal & Stockdale (2015) who write "Results indicate students in non-methods courses preferred the structure of quantitative courses, but tend to be more critical of quantitative instructors."

providing Department Chair support of their willingness to serve. In general, **CAP also notes that accelerated merit advancements beyond Professor VI face added scrutiny and require compelling evidence of continuing and exceptional achievement at the level required for advancement to Step VI.**

## **KEY TOPICS in 2024-25**

To summarize, many of the recommendations in which CAP differed from those of the department are those in which department and school recommendations failed to take into account the relevant policy in these ways:

- 1) **Expectations for Peer-Reviewed Publications or the Equivalent:** evidence of being “continuously and effectively engaged in creative activity of high quality and significance” or of “consistent and sustained professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity.” Although the Teaching Professor and Professor of Clinical X series have an additional requirement for excellence in teaching, peer-reviewed publications, or equivalent contributions to scholarly leadership in the field, beyond campus, are still required for promotion and accelerated advancement in all series. CAP reminds departments that peer-reviewed or other publicly archived work is the evidence on which letters requested from external independent referees are expected to specifically document the scholarly, educational, or clinical leadership required for career reviews in all series.
- 2) **Expectations for Teaching and Service:** For bonus off-scale salary components (BOS) and accelerated merit advancement based on one area of excellence with limited records in other areas, PPM 230-220-80/APM 220-80 stipulates that accelerations based on one area of accomplishment (often research and creative output) are only possible in cases where there are no problems in other areas of evaluation. This policy is interpreted by CAP to mean that accelerations, especially for more than two years, usually require both extraordinary achievements in research, such as more than doubling scholarly activities, and having “no weaknesses” in service and teaching. For the exceedingly rare accelerations that exceed a single step, which are not specifically described in policy, CAP looks for service and teaching contributions that have exceeded rather than merely met review-period expectations to make up for the time skipped in service and teaching by accelerated actions so that the overall record is commensurate with all areas of the candidate’s record (rather than just scholarly achievements). The consequence is that accelerations beyond a single step and successive repeated accelerations are viewed skeptically because they imply that the activities in service or teaching in the review period should also be expected to be

higher than for normal merit advancements. In contrast, CAP has sometimes supported recalibrations at career reviews, where sustained records of teaching and service have supported scholarly records that have repeatedly exceeded but not doubled expectations.

- 3) **Expectations Increased with Rank and Step:** PPM 230-220-88.1, notes that “the criteria for both good and exceptional performance become more rigorous with rank and step.” This criterion is manifested differently by field, department, and school, with some taking on an expanded range of interaction with students, administration, and scholarly endeavors, but in all cases, the expectation for advancement is higher than what was needed for lower steps. This year, CAP has noticed that many departments failed to define these increased expectations in their standards. CAP encourages departments to codify in their standards the need for all academic series to share their scholarly achievements beyond the campus community in preparation for each career review, specifying how the expectations for productivity and impact change at higher steps. None of these issues are new; however, CAP wishes to highlight their frequent contribution to CAP’s lack of support for many proposed actions in 2024-25 in hopes that it may better inform faculty expectations and departmental proposals.

Each of these key topics is discussed in more detail below.

### **1) Expectations for Peer-Reviewed Publications or the Equivalent**

There are generally two types of reasons that CAP judges a candidate’s research record as not supporting the department’s proposed action.

The first common reason is a failure to properly document evidence of being “continuously and effectively engaged in creative activity of high quality and significance” or of “consistent and sustained professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity.” CAP recognizes that faculty in more and more fields, from mathematics through the arts, are engaging in collaborative scholarly productions. For CAP to assess each contributor, the file needs to explain what part of the work was uniquely contributed by the candidate. If collaborations involve senior faculty, it may be useful for the senior faculty to outline how their role differs from that of the junior candidate. Specifically, it is helpful for candidates to identify roles as “contributing collaborator” or as “leading/corresponding/senior author.” In some fields, it is particularly important to note contributions where the lead author is a graduate student or postdoc advised and funded by the candidate, as well as which author was the PI of the funding supporting the work. Co-leading roles should also be explained, and department standards should identify the appropriate discounting of co-led contributions relative to sole-leader contributions. Some senior faculty appear to consider co-authorship on publications as

evidence of successful mentorship of junior faculty, but CAP reminds senior faculty and departments that better evidence of successful mentorship is the independent publications and funding of the junior faculty.

CAP relies on external referees to provide evidence of scholarly leadership. As noted previously, these external referees are more credible if they do not have a conflict of interest with the candidate. Moreover, some external referees fail to address the questions posed by the department in their solicitation letter. CAP advises departments to carefully assess whether the letters provided offer relevant evidence of scholarly leadership, explaining any deficiencies in the letters obtained. Ignoring such gaps can be misinterpreted by CAP.

The second common type of reason for research being identified as a reason for a DownMod arises from departmental standards that lack specificity, are clearly inappropriate for some fields in the department, or fail to satisfy University expectations of providing sufficient evidence of being “continuously and effectively engaged in creative activity of high quality and significance” or of “consistent and sustained professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity.” CAP has noted that departments define standards differently, with some identifying the productivity expected for an average review period as the minimum needed for merit advancement to the next step, which is typically met by most faculty in the department, and others report instead an accreditation-based minimum expected to be met by faculty at non-R1 universities, which is well below what most UC San Diego faculty achieve. These differing definitions imply different expectations for assessing what is needed for “doubling the standard” to support an acceleration in that doubling the performance of most faculty in the department is clearly exceptional, but doubling an accreditation-based minimum may actually be below the departmental average.

While the requirements for acceleration are not defined “on a curve” in department standards, CAP reminds departments that for series in which research and/or creative activity is among the series criteria (which includes all faculty series), **“above-average research and/or creative activity is a prerequisite to accelerated advancement.”** This policy requirement implies that more compelling cases for acceleration should show that the candidate’s scholarly productivity exceeds expectations. CAP interprets this policy (PPM 230-220-88.1.a) to mean that acceleration proposals could be made either by noting the candidate’s productivity relative to their department or to the professional field (which might be indicated by the department’s ranking or journal impact factor of publications) or to a combination of both. One approach could be to compare productivity to the median department performance. CAP suggests that departments should make departmental standards that are well calibrated with the average empirical record in the department and discipline. CAP recognizes that this type of documentation takes time to collect and needs to

be updated as faculty are hired in new fields or as expectations evolve within a field, but notes that extraordinary actions such as accelerations to/through Full VI require a compelling case, bolstered by specific accomplishments.

Achieving equity across departments in awarding accelerated actions implies that departmental standards should be defined comparably; providing supporting information on the candidate's performance demonstrates how departmental standards should be interpreted. Such evidence would also address concerns about some departments counting co-authored publications equally for all authors, whereas others discount collaborative publications. Such disparities are particularly problematic for candidates with appointments in multiple departments.

CAP finds quantitative and qualitative descriptions of expectations for scholarly productivity useful. Quantification of products can provide a convenient basis for showing a doubling of research productivity as long as they are accompanied by clear expectations for quality and impact. CAP has not found it useful for standards or department recommendation letters to specify a specific number of publications in "top journals" as being the benchmark needed to support acceleration in the department without providing an accompanying list of which journals that are considered "top journals"; these lists should be included in the departmental standards if this is the metric used to support accelerations for equity and transparency within the department. Frustratingly, CAP has observed that in some departments, different lists of "top journals" are mentioned in files for different candidates without explanation, thus creating equity concerns and the appearance of "cherry picking" to help the candidate. Differences in lists of "top journals" between fields within a department should be carefully justified and shared with candidates so that expectations are known in advance of review.

CAP also cautions that while double productivity is the canonical expectation for a single-step acceleration, the relationship between research productivity and accelerations is not intended to be linear – *i.e.*, tripling standard productivity is usually not considered sufficient for a two-step acceleration. In fact, **arguments that note productivity exceeding the doubling of standards tend to raise doubts about the applicability of the standards to all fields in the department.** Further, standards that do not distinguish between candidate-led and collaborative publications are difficult to apply.

**CAP reminds candidates of policy requiring evidence of being "continuously and effectively engaged in creative activity of high quality and significance" or of "consistent and sustained professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity," meaning that scholarly publications are expected to continue in each review period in order to achieve**

**merit advancement at any level.** Minor revisions or updates to past publications or textbooks are unlikely to meet this expectation for all Senate faculty series.

## 2) Expectations for Teaching and Service

### a) Teaching

CAP engaged actively with HTOC during this academic year to align CAP's teaching review with HTOC recommendations, including Teaching Portfolios for academic review files for which CAP has specific recommendations in the "Teaching Portfolios" section. CAP members attended HTOC workshops and met with HTOC, both providing input to help align HTOC recommendations with CAP processes and identifying CAP processes that required revision to align with HTOC recommendations. Specifically, CAP removed discussion of numerical scores from its recommendation letters and advises departments to do the same. In its place, CAP has focused on the four-part rubric presented by HTOC of (1) course load, (2) course design and pedagogy, (3) reflection and growth, and (4) mentoring and advising. CAP reviewed several files that included teaching portfolios, all of which improved CAP's view of the candidate's teaching effectiveness. On this basis, **CAP encourages all candidates to include a teaching portfolio in their files, even though it is not yet a campus requirement.** CAP provided feedback to HTOC on the importance of brevity and appropriateness for material included in the teaching portfolios and suggested that portfolios should not be more than 100 pages in length (including all statements and course materials, with links to posted materials only as optional examples). CAP did not receive teaching portfolios from Health Sciences, and, while these are not required, they may have provided both context for teaching load expectations and evidence of teaching effectiveness that were otherwise absent from some files. CAP also suggests that the components of the four-part HTOC rubric could provide useful guidance to Health Sciences faculty on how to expand the evidence in their files of teaching effectiveness, since that was noted as a frequent shortcoming during the past several review cycles. Exhaustive submissions of >100 pages that included detailed course materials and complete lecture presentations did not contribute to the evaluation of the candidate's teaching effectiveness, and such submissions are discouraged.

Subject-specific assessment of a candidate's teaching content is the responsibility of the department. Department standards should provide guidance on the appropriate amount and type of material needed for that review. CAP notes that *ad hoc* committees, departments, and schools should explicitly review and comment on the four parts of the HTOC rubric, whether or not a portfolio is provided. The field-specific expertise is necessary to judge the role of a course in a curriculum and provides appropriate support for colleagues who agree to teach unpopular courses, take over assignments at the last minute, or teach above the expected load. CAP looks forward to seeing greater documentation of teaching effectiveness by



departments and candidates in future reviews, prioritizing the candidate's reflection on student learning and evidence of their pedagogical improvement.

A frequent reason that teaching was considered insufficient to support the proposed action was critical student comments that persisted in multiple course offerings and from the previous review period that were not addressed constructively by faculty in teaching statements or the department in the departmental recommendation letter. Further, if CAP provided advice to consult with the Teaching and Learning Commons (TLC) in a previous review period, the candidate statement should address what advice was sought from TLC (or other pedagogical experts) and how that advice was implemented in their teaching. CAP also notes that TLC provides support for many aspects of pedagogical improvement beyond correcting problems noted by CAP. CAP considers TLC engagement as evidence of work toward pedagogical growth rather than as an indication of teaching problems.

**The most useful part of teaching statements is often summaries of student comments that identify the major recurring themes and describe strategies used or planned to address those themes.** Sometimes this analysis of comments benefits from an external set of eyes, which is another service that TLC provides. It is important to explain the range of comments received, making sure not to ignore the constructive or negative comments. While CAP discounts isolated comments from a single student, repeated concerns about the classroom environment and course organization, as well as comments noting the instructor's lack of responsiveness to queries, an excessive or insufficient amount of material, or the ease or difficulty of a course, all need to be explained. CAP recognizes that structural reasons that vary from student preparedness to course scheduling sometimes color course evaluations, but the rationale or restrictions causing those reasons should be explained by both the candidate and the department. There is no circumstance in which CAP considers either unsolicited or candidate-solicited student or mentee testimonials in the candidate's favor or to take the place of anonymously solicited organizational evaluations. The conflict of interest that is evident even in unsolicited communications such as "thank you" notes is obvious.

CAP reminds candidates that an important motivation behind holistic evaluation of teaching is to provide evidence outside the discipline-specific and gender/affiliation-biased student surveys that show engagement with and responsiveness to student feedback. Mentoring and advising are important parts of teaching effectiveness. The types of evidence needed to show effective mentoring still need to be developed, as **mentee surveys often suffer from sample-size issues that make them effectively non-confidential and hence biased positively.**

CAP noted this year that some candidates included a printout from a Graduate Office database that listed all student committee service appointments, which should be included in

the student instructional activities portion of the BioBib. CAP found this information to be useful in its review and may relieve candidates of the burden of tracking these appointments.

#### **b) Service**

APM 210-1.d (4) notes that "Services by members of the faculty to the community, state, and nation, both in their special capacities as scholars and in areas beyond those special capacities when the work done is at a sufficiently high level and of sufficiently high quality, should likewise be recognized as evidence for promotion." Nonetheless, significant professional and public service contributions are not judged by CAP as a substitute for the requirement of University service, as both University and Public service are expected criteria for advancement in all faculty series. CAP has noted that most files reviewed by CAP include sufficient professional service, with some very high-profile contributions showing external recognition. Some files include an impressive amount of public service, which the University appreciates, but is not a sufficient replacement for University service, nor a justification for additional advancement. University service has been an essential requirement for merit and accelerated advancement, with the load and impact, degree of non-disciplinary character, and leadership roles expected to increase with the candidate's rank and step. For example, center director positions are judged by CAP to have a disciplinary focus and, more often than not, to benefit the candidate's own research record, which fails to satisfy the non-disciplinary contributions expected above Full VI.

CAP generally considers service activities that benefit the broader UC San Diego community as counting towards the requirement for service. However, compensated service activities or partially compensated services are not typically judged as satisfying the expectations for University service as one advances up the ladder. Files should make clear what part of the service is not compensated. No Senior Management Group (SMG) or faculty administrator service has been considered as part of the service for faculty review, since the performance for these roles is assessed via a separate review process, so files should clarify which service roles, if any, are part of faculty academic responsibilities rather than administrative roles.

While Senate committee service and leadership are not required, such contributions may be helpful to support a case for exemplary service for advancement to and further Above Scale. CAP reminds candidates and departments of the rank-and-step-specific guidelines provided in *Where CAP Stood* for the last three years: "While Assistant Professors are expected to perform some service, expectations are limited and usually satisfied by some departmental service. Associate Professors are expected to perform more extensive service, including some service outside of their department and often in their School. Full Professors and especially faculty members approaching Step VI are expected to perform University service outside of their Department and School and outside of their area of research, with increased leadership

in their service activities as they approach Above Scale. Performing more Departmental service does not necessarily make up for a lack of wider University service at the higher ranks and steps. University-wide service outside of the candidate's area of research becomes essential and should be part of every review period at Step VI and above. **Service is valued less if the faculty member's research or creative activities benefit from it or if it is well compensated.** Insufficient University-wide service constitutes one of the main reasons for CAP to decline merit advancement or accelerated merit advancement in the higher professorial ranks."

Exceeding service expectations at junior levels is rarely rewarded with accelerated advancement since CAP is concerned that excessive service roles may be taken on at the expense of research or teaching. CAP encourages departments to limit service assignments to junior faculty rather than burdening them with time-consuming duties. CAP encourages departments to assign the most onerous tasks to Full Rank faculty, which should provide the opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their willingness and ability to contribute effectively to service responsibilities. Successful engagement with department and school service often leads naturally to broader service appointments as candidates approach Step VI. This progression allows junior faculty appropriate time to learn the policies and procedures that prepare them for Senate, College, and other University-wide standing committees. CAP finds it awkward to expect Assistant Rank or other faculty new to campus to effectively represent department views on University-wide committees, such as the Representative Assembly. Successful completion of department or school service responsibilities is typically the experience expected for nominations submitted to the Committee on Committees for Senate committee consideration, and it is the responsibility of Department Chairs to provide such nominations for candidates, assuming they have appropriate experience. CAP members opined that the assignment of campus-wide positions may require the support of the candidate's Department Chair for guidance and advocacy, but CAP reminds candidates that it is their responsibility to establish a record of service that merits such advocacy. **In no way is the lack of an invitation to serve on a University-wide committee for the Senate, the Colleges, or other non-disciplinary standing committees considered to be a replacement for such service.**

Administrative and center director positions, including but not limited to those that fall under the realm of the Senior Management Group (SMG), may be compensated at salaries that exceed their faculty appointments, and are accordingly evaluated separately and not considered as part of academic service under a faculty appointment. Consequently, some administrators forego faculty advancement during their administrative appointments. If their file is reviewed for advancement, it should clearly demonstrate how their service exceeds the expectations of their administrative role, in addition to meeting department research and

teaching criteria for merit advancement. For example, when candidates have course relief during the review period, departments must explain how, with a reduced course load, the candidate meets or exceeds the departmental expectations for teaching in the review period.

Other department, school, and University service responsibilities are provided with nominal compensation of some faculty time (but not a higher salary) for service workloads that exceed what is expected for merit advancement. Such compensation is often considered to be in lieu of accelerated advancement, except in cases where the load and impact of the contributions are beyond those accounted for by the compensation provided. However, load and compensation vary significantly around campus, and so accelerated actions based on service need to clearly explain how the load and impact justify further recognition with accelerated advancement. Completion of multi-year service as Department Chair on the general campus is frequently considered an example of load and impact that substantially exceeds compensation in a way that justifies a BOS. More heavily compensated and/or administrative roles, such as Health Sciences Chair and research-related roles as Center Director, are unlikely to be considered as reasons for accelerated actions.

Service alone is rarely a justification for a BOS and cannot justify acceleration without above-average scholarly contributions, but a weakness in service may preclude acceleration. Typically, CAP considers a BOS or its equivalent half-step contribution to an accelerated action as sufficient recognition of completion of a multi-year, partially compensated but non-administrative role, such as Department Chair on the general campus and SIO. (Health Science chairs are excluded because they receive higher rates of compensation and separate reviews.) **Service roles with shorter terms, more research relevance, lower workloads, and lighter responsibilities than Department Chair are rarely judged as meeting the high expectations for a BOS based on service.** CAP has typically not supported proposals that argue that service roles leading multiple types of programs within a department should also be recognized with a BOS.

Multi-step accelerations and successive accelerations sometimes fail because the teaching and service records are sufficient to show “no weakness” for a single-step acceleration, but are too limited to support a larger action. CAP notes that candidates should allow sufficient time to improve teaching effectiveness and strengthen University service to meet the increased expectations at higher ranks and steps. CAP notes that acceleration by more than three years is granted rarely above the barrier step, due to the elevated expectations for all aspects of the academic record at this rank.

Service expectations at the UC system are higher than at many other universities because of the commitment to shared governance. This somewhat unique service expectation is one

reason that it is important to appoint junior faculty a seasoned mentor who can help them get acquainted with UC San Diego and expectations for promotion and advancement. Departments should consider appointing even senior hires with a mentor who can help acquaint the new faculty member with the review process and department expectations. Some departments choose to appoint one mentor focused on research development and another for career development and guidance, as the latter role has a clear responsibility to acquaint new appointees with expectations for service roles.

### **3) Expectations Increased with Rank and Step**

The policy requiring that **“the criteria for both good and exceptional performance become more rigorous with rank and step”** is a frequent reason for CAP’s declining to support both merit and accelerated advancement to and at Above Scale. Campus expectations do not allow scholarly productivity alone to justify more than merit advancement, *i.e.*, doubling (or more) of scholarly productivity is not sufficient justification for acceleration at Above Scale, although it is a frequent reason for accelerations at lower ranks and steps. The reason for this distinction is that such productivity is considered to be part of the exemplary research performance expected for merit advancement at the Above Scale rank. Further accelerated advancements must be supported by extraordinary external recognition, along with exemplary teaching and service. CAP notes that service expectations at Above Scale include current University-wide service activities, including the colleges, as well as non-disciplinary contributions and leadership roles. Service roles in prior review periods are not sufficient.

High expectations for accelerated advancement are consistent with guidance from campus leadership on capping of FASM actions at 200%, where reaching this cap requires extraordinary, once-in-a-lifetime recognition such as election to the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, or Medicine. This year, there were no proposals submitted by departments or recommended by CAP for more than a four-year accelerated merit advancement (200%), further Above Scale.

Accelerations at the Above Scale rank require external recognition as well as exemplary scholarly productivity, exemplary teaching, and exemplary service, which differs from the lower ranks and steps, where doubling productivity and having no weaknesses is sufficient to justify a single-step acceleration. The expectation of external recognition for acceleration at Above Scale is based on administrative guidance, and it effectively implements a progressive system of faculty salaries that provides for proportionally larger steps at lower ranks and smaller steps at the highest ranks. While CAP applauds rewarding the lower ranks at a larger percentage than at the highest ranks, it notes that salary compression is also a pervasive and increasing problem across campus, which contributes to perceived inequities in many

departments. While CAP has waived individual reviews of retentions that contribute to this problem, CAP has requested to review cumulative actions regularly to assess salary equity.

CAP notes that the application of the policy of rising research expectations with rank needs to be applied differently across fields, benefiting from field-specific guidance in department standards. For example, in many experimental STEM fields, research group personnel, grant funding, and co-authorships increase with seniority and should be incorporated in rising expectations for productivity with rank and step. However, in humanities and social sciences and more theoretical STEM fields, this may not be the case. Regardless, senior faculty may be expected to show greater research leadership and external recognition.

## OTHER TOPICS in 2024-25

### **Candidate Statements and Departmental Recommendation Letters**

There are usually two narratives that are expected to provide the core for all review files: that of the candidate and that of the department (or equivalent). Each should address all aspects of the candidate's record, namely research, teaching, and service, in a complete but concise manner. Both candidates and departments are encouraged to identify how the candidate meets or exceeds the department standards or explain why shortcomings are not a weakness as follows:

- Evaluate the candidate's scholarship in the context of the field, describing the significance of any external recognition, explaining the candidate's role as a scholarly leader, and noting the role and significance of collaborations, if applicable.
- Evaluate the candidate's teaching in the context of curricular and departmental needs, addressing the four elements of the HTOC teaching rubric explicitly.
- Evaluate the candidate's service record, characterizing the load and impact of the candidate's service relative to University expectations for rank and step.

The candidate's statement should prioritize the candidate's view of the most important aspects of their file. While there is no page limit on the candidate's statement, longer statements can distract from or dilute the most important aspects of candidate performance.

**Candidates should prioritize explaining the aspects of their file that are most important with respect to University policy and department standards, as well as any discipline-specific context that would help CAP to interpret how they fulfilled or exceeded department standards.** See the [Appendix](#) for more information regarding CAP's recommendations for candidate statements.

The department recommendation letter is usually written by the Department Chair, except in cases in which the Department Chair is conflicted with the Candidate. If the Department Chair has a conflict, then they should not write the department recommendation letter; moreover, they should not sign the solicitation letter correspondence, and staff should be mindful not to attach a template letter with the conflicted Department Chair's signature, as both could be perceived by CAP and the external referees as the Department Chair participating in the review process.

In general, the department's recommendation letter should report the outcome of departmental voting, noting discussion points raised or comments submitted, particularly those relevant to "no" votes. However, Department Chairs should not editorialize what they think faculty opinions are; ballot comments, if submitted by faculty, should be forwarded verbatim. CAP expects departments that require completion of books for career reviews to note if progress towards books was credited toward previous merit or accelerated advancements. See the [Appendix](#) for more information regarding CAP's recommendations for departmental recommendation letters.

### External Referee Letters

External referee letters should be solicited at promotions and career reviews. Refer to CAP's [guidance on the selection of referees](#). CAP has found a disturbing number of referee letters to include conflicts with the candidates and an additional number to lack the appropriate standing or expertise, with both of these factors limiting the authority granted to their adjudication of the file, either preventing or negatively impacting CAP's recommendation. CAP warns that sending files forward with an insufficient number of independent external referee letters can significantly delay the review process. **CAP suggests that best practices for external referee letter solicitations involve a pre-solicitation request to the potential external referee, inviting them to share both their current position and expertise, as well as any possible conflicts with the candidate, so that time and effort are not wasted in formally soliciting letters that hold no value for the review process.** Because CAP recognizes that some conflicts are not "black and white," CAP has agreed to accept some "grey" letters in decisions where the outcome is unlikely to be changed by additional letters. Nonetheless, CAP is concerned that the inclusion of "grey" letters in files seems to be a slippery slope towards losing external referee independence, which makes the process of requesting letters burdensome without providing an independent assessment. CAP cautions that departments should be more vigilant in reviewing the expertise and conflicts of referees before sending files forward, noting these issues in the department letter. The department recommendation letter should also explain how letters from external referees are interpreted, explaining concerns and noting if letters failed to address the criteria requested in the solicitation letter.

CAP notes that the solicitation letters for external referees for some series, including the Teaching Professor and Professor of Clinical X series, need to be very explicit about the criteria that should be addressed, with the materials relevant to those criteria being provided. For example, it is difficult for external referees to comment on teaching excellence if teaching materials, including student evaluations, are not provided. Departments should be aware that some external referees may not be familiar with the expectations of the UC Teaching Professor and Professor of Clinical X series, although targeting referees in departments with similar series may be a good practice. Solicitation letters should explain UC expectations for scholarly leadership, and external referee letters that do not address this criterion are non-responsive. **Non-conflicted letters from other UC campuses are often particularly helpful, especially for Step VI.** See the [Appendix](#) for more guidance from CAP concerning external referee letters.

### Dean's Recommendation Letter

The Dean's recommendation has no required format, and policy says only this about review following the department: "The departmental recommendation and the accompanying file will be referred to one or more administrative officers (of a college, division, or school) and to the appropriate Academic Senate Committee (Committee on Academic Personnel or equivalent committee)." Typically, the Dean's letter is most impactful if it summarizes briefly agreements with the Department and only provides more detail for areas of disagreement. Currently, these letters vary widely by School. Some are very brief, working well for files with concurrence, but lacking information on disagreements. Others are quite lengthy and often repeat much of the same information already given in the department letter, adding little to the review process. CAP does not need a regurgitation of the candidate's complete record, and **the most impactful letters summarize the extent to which the candidate meets or exceeds department standards.**

### Candidate Certifications

Faculty should be provided the full contents of their file (including the posted version of their own materials) at the time they sign their certifications (Certs 1A, Cert1B, Cert 2, Cert 3). CAP reminds departments to share the final outcome letters bundles with candidates, which typically include the Dean's recommendation, CAP's recommendation, and the Final Outcome letter. These materials are available following the completion of the review process and should be used by the candidate in preparing their next file for review. Wherever practical, these materials should be shared on Interfolio so that candidates may always have access to their past review file records in a single system. Candidates at Assistant V and VI and Associate IV and V (formerly called "crossover steps") should also be informed that they



are not subject to policy for off-cycle reviews, allowing their file to come forward again as soon as noted shortcomings are remedied.

### **Department Standards**

This year, APS has enforced the inclusion of department standards in files more than in the past. CAP applauds this development and notes the need for continued attention to these standards.

CAP notes changes in many fields that expand the role of collaborative research, for which there is little information in many department standards. Specifically, there is little guidance on how co-authorship contributions are valued relative to lead authorship. CAP appreciates candidates who specify their contributing role in large-authorship papers, but in the absence of department guidance on how these contributions are valued, the information provided is difficult to interpret. CAP recognizes that there is no mathematical solution to this problem, such as dividing by the number of authors to estimate the fraction of the paper written. However, **given the different perceptions of collaborative contributions in different fields, CAP notes the need for department-specific guidance on their value.** For example, departments that specify standards of 2-3 “lead” publications per year but have faculty who produce 10 or more collaborative publications per year should identify how both of those products contribute to expectations. In addition, CAP appreciates that the important role of senior or corresponding authors in mentoring first authors who are students or postdocs means that those publications should be credited as “lead” publications. However, CAP expects student-led publications to be counted more than works led by more senior authors, such as staff scientists and junior faculty, since there is more oversight needed in these cases. Such information on the candidate’s leading and mentoring roles in publications is critical for evaluating scholarly contributions and is simply not conveyed by the standardized publication codes that are popular in some journals.

Departments that specify that publications in “top venues” are needed for ladder rank faculty should identify what top venues are, including a list in the standards. If more top venues are expected for acceleration, that information should be stated in the standards. If there is an appropriate metric, such as impact factor or acceptance rate, for it to be considered a top venue, then those thresholds should be shared with candidates, and allowance should be made for the variability and biases in those metrics.

### **Research Scientist Series**

Scholarly standards for achievement, independence, and leadership are the same for research scientists as for Ladder rank faculty (PPM 230-310-4). Evidence of independence is needed for promotion to the Associate rank and further advancement. The Research Scientist series is

distinct from the Project Scientist series in the requirement for independent peer-reviewed publications. The Project Scientist series provides an analogous track for advancement that does not require independence and may be more appropriate for individuals who produce research products that are not archived publicly or contribute to a larger project led by another research scientist or faculty member. Project Scientists contribute special skills to projects, typically under the supervision of a Professor or Research Scientist. The Research Scientist series differs from the Professor series in that teaching is not required but can be counted as University service at UC San Diego, and University service may be substituted by public service, as policy distinguishes that for this series, University and/or Public Service is required.

### Teaching Professor Series

University policy APM-210-3 for promotion to the full Teaching Professor rank requires **“consistent and sustained professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity, as well as a profile of excellent teaching, that have made the candidate a leader in the professional field and/or in education.”** Since the Teaching Professor series has recently expanded and there are not as many faculty appointed in this series in most departments as in other series, many departments lack detailed standards for promotion to the Full Teaching Professor rank. Because teaching expectations are higher than for Professors, expectations of professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity, including creative activity, for Teaching Professors are reasonably expected to be less independent, less numerous, and less archival than for other series. CAP supports the inclusion and consideration of publicly available materials related to teaching rather than research as evidence of scholarly contributions in this series, but CAP emphasizes that the APM 210-3 requirement of “professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity...that have made the candidate a leader in the professional field and/or in education” means that candidate achievements and activities should be accessible beyond campus. Given this context, CAP encourages departments to develop standards for Teaching Professors that allow non-independent as well as open source and other broadly-released materials to be counted for advancement as long as they can provide evidence that the candidate is a leader in the professional field and/or in education. Department standards that count internal, non-peer-reviewed, and not publicly-archived material as sufficient evidence of professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity can be problematic for advancement at career reviews because these contributions may not provide external referees with the evidence needed to attest to the candidate’s standing as a “leader in the professional field and/or in education” as is required for promotion.

CAP encourages departments to revisit and revise their [departmental standards](#) for promotion and advancement for all series. CAP recognizes that the Teaching Professor series often

represents a relatively small fraction of department faculty but notes the need for many departments to expand their standards to identify appropriate standards for teaching, scholarship, and service in this series. While CAP recognizes that scholarly contributions in this series may be either in the candidate's field or in pedagogy, CAP notes that impact beyond campus is required for promotion and that peer-reviewed publications are valuable for establishing leadership that can be recognized by external referees. Some departments have asserted that while Teaching Professors may initially be hired based on their publications in a field-specific research area, that they are expected to transition to and focus on pedagogical research. This expectation violates academic freedom as well as University policy and should not be provided as a formal or informal recommendation to candidates in the Teaching Professor series.

Similar to the Professor of Clinical X series, independent research publications are not a requirement of the Teaching Professor series, but candidates need to demonstrate scholarly leadership to be recognized in the field, nationally and internationally, as they climb through the ranks and steps. Some scholarly contributions by Teaching Professors are in field-specific research but in collaborative rather than independent roles. CAP recognizes that collaborative contributions may be the only option for faculty in some fields, since Teaching Professors are generally not provided laboratory space and related resources necessary to establish full independence. CAP encourages departments to note how such contributions are valued in department standards and in solicitation letters to external referees. Candidates should make sure that their roles in collaborative papers are identified and associated with a specific expertise to provide evidence for their being a leader in their field or sub-field, for example, in carrying out a specific technique, running a model, or completing a statistical analysis. **If departments do not consider such collaborative roles as sufficient for scholarly contributions, department standards should explain why and how their expectations are consistent with University policy.** Specifically, since Teaching Professors is a series in which research and/or creative activity is among the performance criteria, "above-average research and/or creative activity is a prerequisite to accelerated advancement." Departments should consider that, while not required, peer-reviewed publications could provide strong support for considering a candidate's scholarly contributions to be "above average," as they are more likely to contribute to making the candidate a leader in the field or in education.

Alternative modes of disseminating scholarly contributions are possible in many fields – such as online textbooks, publicly available course materials, public performances, and online-archived products – but need to provide evidence of professional engagement with the field or pedagogy. Simply developing course materials for one's own courses is considered part of teaching rather than scholarship. Sharing materials only within the department does not provide evidence that external referees can attest to as showing leadership. While CAP

recognizes that teaching excellence is the primary responsibility of Teaching Professors, CAP notes that the distinction of this series from Unit 18 Lecturers is the responsibility of professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity, as well as service. **Excessive service is not a substitute for scholarship and is not sufficient to support advancement.** CAP finds it inappropriate for departments to fail to value the scholarly aspect of the expectations for the Teaching Professor series by failing to define scholarly standards with sufficient rigor. CAP recognizes that the problem of judging scholarship for the Teaching Professor series is new and expanding as the series increases. CAP recommends that a University-wide work group be created to set standards of scholarly productivity and recognition for the Teaching Professor series, which could help to align the current disparate department standards across the University. CAP recognizes that not all departments and programs have developed standards for Teaching Professors, and CAP encourages them to consult with departments with more experience in developing their standards. CAP recognizes that some programs are new to the CAP review process and encourages them to consult departments with more experience in developing their standards so as to properly inform their faculty.

CAP recognizes that professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity for Teaching Professors are expected to be different from the ladder-rank faculty, given the substantially higher expectations for teaching load and quality. Nonetheless, departments should define appropriate standards for scholarly achievements for tenure, promotion, and other career reviews so that there is equity with ladder rank faculty for both merit and accelerated advancement. CAP notes that there is currently a lack of information in most departmental standards that defines the scholarly record of Teaching Professors that is expected for promotion, Full I, VI, and Above Scale, which makes arguments for recalibration problematic. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of familiarity of many external referees with the series and with appropriate benchmarks to assess career review milestones. The expectations should scale up as one climbs the ladder, given that policy says that the criteria for both good and exceptional performance increase with rank and step. Departments should consider including specific examples of how scholarly leadership is demonstrated through external recognition by societies, agencies, and other entities. Society-based awards for scholarship certainly show national or international recognition, as do roles leading major projects or assessments, research grant funding as PI, editing an established journal or a scholarly collection, and likely many field-specific types of recognition that departments could specify as appropriate for promotion to Associate and Full ranks, advancement to Step VI, and Above Scale. For all series, including field-specific expectations, are particularly helpful, especially when the fields within a department differ significantly.

CAP notes that teaching loads and expectations of teaching excellence are sufficiently high for the Teaching Professor series that accelerated advancements can usually only be justified

by awards or scholarly contributions. This consequence of current policy raises a number of questions related to equity among faculty series and could have been the motivation for changes in series from ladder-rank faculty to Teaching Professors (and vice versa). CAP notes that the large teaching loads and excellent teaching effectiveness are so high that these expectations cannot be “doubled”. The result is that most recommendations for accelerations for Teaching Professors are based on exceptional performance in scholarship, which is not the primary responsibility of the series. However, as noted by policy, “For series in which research and/or creative activity is among the performance criteria, above-average research and/or creative activity is a prerequisite to accelerated advancement.” This requirement raises various problems about equity in accelerations between series, especially given that research is expected to play a more minor role in the Teaching Professor series than for ladder-rank faculty and the equivalent salary scale of Teaching Professors and ladder-rank faculty. For example, should ladder rank faculty who double their expected teaching load also be rewarded by acceleration even though it is not the primary responsibility of the series? Or alternatively, should the expectations for Teaching Professors be reconstituted so that doubling expectations for excellent teaching, their primary responsibility, is possible? Or are awards the only justification for accelerated merit advancement, given that most teaching loads for Teaching Professors are too high to be doubled?

CAP considers these questions to be problems in the current stated expectations for the Teaching Professor series. Further, CAP notes that scholarly expectations are designed to be a smaller part of workloads for Teaching Professors, but that exceeding this secondary responsibility appears to be necessary (per policy noted above) but not sufficient to award an acceleration. Further, awarding accelerated actions for teaching awards seems inconsistent with policy for career advancements, in which candidates at career reviews should be judged on scholarly leadership (whether or not that leadership is recognized by awards), and with policy for accelerations, which require above-average scholarly contributions for all Senate series. Similarly, advancements based on unpublished scholarly products may set candidates up for failure at career reviews, where external referees are required to attest to a candidate’s leadership. CAP encourages departments and the University to carefully establish standards with equity between the series and reiterates that advice from a University-wide workgroup, incorporating guidance from departments and other UCs with more established records of scholarly expectations for Associate and Full Teaching Professor Ranks, may be useful.

### **Departmental Service Expectations**

For service, CAP notes that many department standards are vague and do not scale service expectations appropriately as faculty proceed up the ranks, as is required by policy. CAP does not see a justification for differing standards for service by department and continues to provide specific guidance on the increasing expectations for service across the university in

the rank-and-step-specific guidelines provided in *Where CAP Stood* for the last three years: “While Assistant Professors are expected to perform some service, expectations are limited and usually satisfied by some departmental service. Associate Professors are expected to perform more extensive service, including some service outside of their department and often in their School. Full Professors and especially faculty members approaching Step VI are expected to perform University service outside of their Department and School and outside of their area of research, with increased leadership in their service activities as they approach Above Scale. Performing more Departmental service does not necessarily make up for a lack of wider University service at the higher ranks. University-wide service outside of the candidate’s area of research becomes essential and should be part of every review period at Step VI and above. Service is valued less if the faculty member’s research or creative activities benefit from it or if it is well compensated. Insufficient University-wide service constitutes one of the main reasons for CAP to decline merit advancement or accelerated merit advancement in the higher professorial ranks.”

CAP considers it misleading to provide faculty with lower/higher expectations at the department level for service, noting specifically problems with department standards that have the same expectations of service for all steps at the Full Rank. While CAP generally defers to departments on appropriate publication quantities and venues, CAP expects departments to abide by University-wide norms in implementing consistent service expectations across campus. CAP encourages departments to revisit standards to address this issue so that candidate expectations can be better informed and managed.

CAP finds it useful when departmental standards include descriptions of what counts as departmental, school, and university-wide service, as well as approximate time commitments for different roles. The Senate’s Committee on Committees provides a list of time commitments for standing Senate committees, and CAP encourages departments and schools to develop similar lists for their committees. Health Sciences has provided such a list to CAP, which should also be made available to candidates. This information can be included and disseminated as part of department standards. The level of the committee (*i.e.*, whether it is departmental to University), the workload and impact of its work, and the non-disciplinary nature of the committee should be described by candidates and departments in their letters, especially for *ad hoc* and other non-standing committees. For example, service as a center director alone is not considered sufficient for advancement above Full VI because it is often compensated and discipline-related, benefiting the candidate’s research program.

CAP recognizes that revisions to UC policy by which some types of mentoring activities are considered as part of contributions to service rather than teaching: (1) mentoring non-UC trainees, (2) mentoring UC trainees on non-scholarly topics, and (3) mentoring other faculty.

CAP encourages candidates to document both the workload and the impacts of such efforts. CAP reminds faculty that these efforts alone are not considered to satisfy University service expectations.

## Teaching Portfolios

For teaching, UC San Diego and CAP are moving towards holistic evaluation of teaching based on the guidance provided by HTOC. CAP expectations for continued demonstration of teaching effectiveness remain high for all ranks and steps, with CAP allowing more time for improvement of instructional strategies at the Assistant and Associate ranks. Specifically, this means that student evaluations provide important but incomplete evidence of teaching excellence. Departments should revise standards to align with the four-part rubric recommended by HTOC of (1) course load, (2) course design and pedagogy, (3) reflection and growth, and (4) mentoring and advising.

This year, CAP noted that many files were submitted with insufficient evidence of teaching effectiveness. **Simply continuing to teach the same course(s) each year without implementing improvements may not be sufficient to support advancement under holistic teaching guidelines**, even with positive student evaluations, in the absence of a teaching statement describing reflections on student learning and feedback that lead to instructional growth. CAP has observed that the new SET format of student evaluations often includes more constructive comments on teaching, and candidates are encouraged to reflect on the feedback they have received in deciding how to improve their courses to better reach the current student audiences. CAP has generally judged this type of reflection on student comments for the purpose of course planning and revision as a positive indicator of pedagogical improvement. Failure to provide such reflection often causes CAP to recommend seeking advice from the Teaching and Learning Commons (TLC), which can advise faculty on specific steps to take to address student concerns. Of course, students may choose not to complete student evaluations, and in Health Sciences, student feedback is often not collected. CAP considers it the Department's responsibility to collect feedback anonymously from all enrolled students, and the candidate's responsibility to incentivize response rates of at least 50% of enrollment. TLC encourages faculty to offer a nominal amount of extra credit for student participation in evaluations, although many faculty employ other equally effective methods.

Department letters (and *ad hoc* committees, when applicable) should explicitly address the HTOC rubric in reviewing candidates' teaching. Department reviewers are best positioned to provide field-specific knowledge of teaching quality and challenges, and these reviewers are encouraged to provide constructive advice to their colleagues for appropriate levels of difficulty, amounts of material, and topics to be covered. Departments are also encouraged to

coordinate with faculty on developing ways to assess student learning, as this information would be a valuable independent counterpoint to the information available from student evaluations.

CAP reviewed several teaching portfolios this year and found them overall to be helpful by showing both specific instructional strategies and responsiveness to student concerns. Detailed notes, online videos, and slides from every lecture were occasionally provided with little explanation, and these materials were not helpful. Similarly detailed syllabi can be provided for up to three courses, rather than for every instance of every course. Candidates should remember that **CAP is not asked to judge the content of the lectures delivered, as this is subject-specific and a matter of academic freedom, but rather the effectiveness of the instructional strategies for the student population that is enrolled.** The material and delivery should be understandable and at a pace appropriate for the students, not CAP members, so providing links to videos for CAP members to view does not provide a replacement for student feedback. Departments and TLC can provide peer review of lectures and classroom environment, and instructors are encouraged to arrange such reviews. Typically, these reviews are most useful as formative feedback for the candidate rather than evaluative information for CAP – although CAP has considered their inclusion in the file as evidence of efforts made for pedagogical improvement. Like all evaluation systems, student feedback is imperfect, which is why CAP requests that candidates and departments place the feedback in context with appropriate plans for improvement of both the courses and the curriculum. Note that this consideration implies that even instructors with largely positive student evaluations should address how their teaching meets the HTOC rubric and adapts to the ever-changing needs of students.

Documentation of mentoring and advising is often difficult to obtain. For Health Sciences, the MedHub system provides aggregated review comments that can be very helpful, although concerns were raised about the degree to which these evaluations were consistently gathered and whether such comments were of sufficiently large sample sizes to be perceived by respondents to be anonymous. This problem of anonymity is inherent to mentoring surveys, as many groups are too small to allow anonymity, precluding constructive and timely feedback. CAP encourages departments and HTOC to address this issue going forward. As an alternative, **CAP encourages faculty to document mentee success in their subsequent endeavors, which CAP encourages departments to support by tracking alumni.** CAP notes that former mentees with independent careers, including non-academic pursuits and publications, are considered to be better evidence of successful mentoring than continuing employees or co-authorships beyond degree completion. CAP also appreciates evidence of mentoring loads that exceed department expectations.



Given the teaching portfolios that CAP has reviewed to date, a single combined PDF of all candidate-provided materials is most useful if it begins with a < 5-page summary of how the other materials included provide evidence supporting the summary that is relevant to the HTOC rubric, and if it does not exceed 100 pages. CAP notes that student evaluation forms are not included in this page limit as they are currently provided in a lengthy and inefficient format that HTOC is working to improve. Links to publicly available material online may be included, but temporarily posted items are not appropriate for consideration in personnel actions and may distract from review of the primary materials. Candidates should expect that the summary of how the candidate's teaching addresses the HTOC rubric for effectiveness is the primary material reviewed by CAP, with other materials provided as supporting evidence rather than as additional information.

### **Accelerations**

CAP notes that "For series in which research and/or creative activity is among the performance criteria, above-average research and/or creative activity is a prerequisite to accelerated advancement." All Senate faculty series include research and/or creative activity as performance criteria, and thus require departments to show "above-average" performance. Compared to prior years, CAP has continued to observe an increase in proposed accelerations, with a few departments sending many (if not most) files forward as proposed accelerated actions based on doubling department productivity standards. Such high numbers of accelerations make CAP wonder if the departmental standards may not be appropriately calibrated. CAP expects that accelerations represent productivity and impact that is well above the norm of the field, making it necessary to justify a high frequency within a department and a high number of successive accelerated actions for a candidate. Many accelerated actions are justified in part by prestigious types of external recognition, which might, on their own, support a BOS but could also be needed to support a single-step acceleration.

CAP has also seen a concerning increase in the number of proposals for multi-step accelerations or single-step accelerations with an additional BOS. The rate of success of such actions is low and may continue to decrease since arguments that candidate accomplishments in research, teaching, and service in 3 years' time are equivalent to expectations for more than 6 years are difficult to support. CAP reiterates that actions beyond a single-step acceleration are rare and cannot rest on quantitative research productivity alone, especially for actions to or above Full VI. One type of rare exception in which CAP has supported a single-step acceleration plus a BOS included scholarly productivity in excess of double department expectations, with external recognition, and coincident completion of service as Department Chair on the general campus.

CAP reminds candidates and departments that per PM 230-220-88.1: “In parallel with normal merit advancement progress, the criteria for both good and exceptional performance become more rigorous with rank and step.” Consequently, accelerated merit advancements beyond Professor VI face added scrutiny and require compelling evidence of continuing and exceptional achievement at that level. CAP notes that 50% and 100% FASM require exemplary performance in all areas and that 150% and 200% FASM require world-class research, high-quality teaching, and University-wide service.

External recognition, such as winning awards or prestigious fellowships, being named to significant service appointments, and receiving competitive national grants, is important to provide evidence of leadership in scholarly contributions at all levels. Such recognition can support a BOS or acceleration for Assistant and Associate ranks. External recognition may also be sufficient to show the candidate’s national or international recognition for Step VI, which can be a substitute for soliciting external referees at this level. At Above Scale, external recognition is required to justify an accelerated action.

### **Recalibrations**

Scheduled career reviews provide an opportunity for recalibration of accomplishments over multiple review periods that were not recognized by previous actions. However, such actions are considered to be large advancements, with Full VI, Above Scale, and further Above Scale Merit requiring evidence of exemplary scholarship in both productivity and external recognition for a merit advancement. Prior successive accelerations based on research sometimes mean that the career record of teaching and service is limited compared to expectations for career advancement, which may unintentionally disadvantage candidates at the time of their next career review. CAP encourages candidates to consider whether they have had time to perform the type and extent of service that is expected for promotion to Full or advancement to Step VI or Above Scale before being proposed for those actions.

### **Career Equity Reviews**

Career Equity Reviews (CER) can only be requested once while the faculty member is at the Associate Professor rank, once while at the Full Professor rank before advancement to Step VI, and once after advancement to Step VI but before advancement to Above Scale, and must be initiated by the candidate. When a CER is requested, policy states that departments are obligated to prepare a file that addresses both the CER and the normal review action. Proposals for a specific rank and step can be justified by adding to the file anonymized data comparing faculty records at similar rank and step, including years since PhD, publications, funding, teaching, and service. Departments can use comparisons from both within and outside of UCSD. In small departments where there are few people at the same rank and step, comparisons can still be made by looking at those a step above or below. This

information should be provided prior to review by the *ad hoc* committee so that *ad hoc* members can evaluate the request based on the same evidence that will be included in the file. This role is the responsibility of departments because candidates do not have access to their colleagues' files. CAP encourages departments to consider making faculty aware of this option when it may be the most appropriate option for advancement. Successful CERs usually include a clear reason for the request and comparisons to colleagues to demonstrate existing inequity. Clear departmental standards make it easier to show that someone may have been appointed too low.

CER arguments can fall short when they only compare research achievements. CAP looks at all areas (research, teaching, service), and proposed actions need to account for the full record. PPM 230-220-80/APM 220-80 stipulates that accelerations based on one area of accomplishment (such as research) "are only possible in cases where there are no problems in other areas of evaluation." Consequently, if issues in teaching and service were the reason for prior failed accelerations, the record may not support the CER. CAP notes that appealing a specific past decision is not a valid reason for a CER, but appealing the aggregate impact of successive past decisions is valid.

## APPENDIX: CAP Operations & General Guidance on File Review (Updated 10/1/25)

Note: Text in **blue font** indicates updated information from previous iterations of *Where CAP Stood*

### Table of Contents

APPENDIX: CAP Operations & General Guidance on File Review (Updated 10/1/25).....	36
CAP Operations .....	37
Efforts with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion .....	37
Confidentiality of CAP Discussions .....	37
File Preparation .....	38
Candidate Statement .....	38
Departmental Recommendation Letter .....	39
BioBib.....	41
External Referee Letters .....	42
Solicited Student Letters of Evaluation .....	43
Reading the Previous CAP Letter.....	43
Research.....	44
Teaching.....	47
Service.....	49
Accelerations/Recalibrations/Career Equity Reviews.....	52
Accelerations.....	52
Recalibration .....	55
Career-Equity Review (CERs).....	55
Reconsiderations .....	56
Bonus Off-Scales .....	56
Collegiality .....	57
COVID Impact Continues.....	57
Retentions and Pre-Emptive Retentions .....	58

Series Specific Guidance.....	58
0% and Non-Salaried Appointments.....	58
Professor/Professor in Residence/Professor of Clinical X/Adjunct Professor in the Health Sciences .....	59
Teaching Professors.....	59

### CAP Operations

For each weekly meeting, all CAP files are read and commented on by every CAP member. Files are then presented by a lead reviewer or, in the case of appointment, promotion, and career review files, by an internal CAP *ad hoc* committee of three members, followed by a comprehensive discussion of each file at the subsequent meetings. All views and perspectives are revealed, and files are discussed at considerable length. After the discussion, the Vice Chair leads the committee vote that is recorded by the CAP analyst. The committee discusses not more than 30 files at each meeting, including "Above the Line" Items, to provide sufficient time for consideration and equitable review of each file.

### Efforts with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

CAP underwent implicit bias and diversity training, as in past review cycles, [this year in a session with UC San Diego’s Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion \(EDI\), Becky Petitt, and Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty EDI, Victor Ferreira](#). Implicit bias training refreshed CAP’s sensitivity to the challenges that female scholars and scholars from underrepresented minorities face at UC San Diego and within academia at large. Whenever possible and warranted, CAP considered EDI in its deliberations and, at times, its recommendations. Specifically, CAP discussed the potential impact of bias when student comments seemed targeted at a minority candidate or when scores were inconsistent with the critical comments provided. CAP also submitted a formal request for data on CAP decisions with respect to gender and minority status relative to other levels of review, but the limited information provided to date has been difficult to validate and could not be shared in time for this report. CAP hopes that more information on the equity of its decisions can be shared in future years to assess the equity of the University review process, as well as CAP’s role in that process.

### Confidentiality of CAP Discussions

CAP’s deliberations are confidential. It is highly inappropriate for a faculty member to contact a CAP member to discuss a file. This is very awkward for CAP members when it happens, as they are not allowed to respond, and moreover, discussion would risk losing the integrity of the academic review process. CAP members cannot confirm whether a particular file has or

has not been reviewed by CAP. Faculty are able to consult the Academic Personnel Services' [Academic Transparency Dashboard](#). Former CAP members may be consulted on general questions of CAP policy or judgment, but they may not be asked to comment on the content of CAP discussions.

### **File Preparation**

A well-prepared file is the best way to facilitate equity in the review process and support our colleagues. During this review cycle, delays, and disruptions occurred repeatedly due to poor file preparation. In several instances, issues could have been resolved before reaching CAP if the advice provided by AP staff had been followed. Department Chairs and Deans are encouraged to heed the file preparation advice from their trusted academic personnel staff. Some examples of these file preparation errors that could have been resolved before reaching CAP include issues with the candidate's BioBib (typically unpublished work listed in Section A rather than Section C, service sections not updated from previous review periods, or forgoing the inclusion of dates for service activities and not including teaching evaluations), file documents out of the expected document order, and missing file components.

[Preparation of the BioBib is the responsibility of the candidate, and it should prioritize a listing of information relevant to the review period \(including career for career reviews\). While a suitable template is provided, candidates may use formatting to support efficient review and reduce the cognitive burden. This information should be identified by date and review period as a listing rather than a narrative.](#)

### **Candidate Statement**

The candidate statement is the expected narrative part of the file in which the candidate should make the case for the action they believe appropriate given department standards and University policy as well as equity. This statement should include the candidate's description of the highlights of their contributions to research, service, and teaching in the context of their department's standards and University policy. The teaching, research, and service descriptions may vary in length based on expectations for different series, but CAP encourages candidates to summarize the highlights of all three aspects of the review period in 10 pages or less. Candidates are encouraged to prioritize their statements based on their efforts, responsibilities, and standards, summarizing how their accomplishments compare to department expectations. Additional statements of usually less than a page that describe the impacts of external factors such as COVID or other state, nation, or world-changing events are encouraged to show how the events affected the candidate's ability to meet merit advancement criteria. Sabbatical leaves also require a short statement, and candidates may choose to include brief limited information about personal or family crises that impacted their ability to work during the review period. CAP interprets these statements by applying principles of Achievement Relative to Opportunity, noting that while they can be used to

excuse below-merit performance they cannot be used as justification for accelerated actions or promotion. In general, CAP discourages candidates from including information that is not relevant to the review period and action under consideration.

### **Departmental Recommendation Letter**

The departmental recommendation letter sets the tone for the academic review and should present a brief and independent evaluation of the candidate's record. It should not simply reproduce the candidate's self-statements, or the analysis provided in an *ad hoc* report, let alone repeat verbatim sections from these documents. The proposed action should align with the department's stated expectations, particularly when accelerations are proposed. CAP encountered several files in which the published departmental expectations diverged from the expectations applied in the departmental recommendation letters. Such divergences can be a reason for CAP to return the file to the department for clarification. Moreover, there still remain several departments that have unpublished or overly vague or brief departmental expectations, requiring CAP to divine the expectations from the department recommendation letter or other materials provided in the file, which is a potential source of broader inequity and is unfair to the candidate. CAP urges departments to publish substantive standards and justify how their proposed action is in line with those standards in the recommendation letter.

The departmental recommendation letter should explain a candidate's research in a way that is accessible to non-specialists. CAP does not appreciate the view that a colleague's research is so specialized or unique that it cannot be adequately evaluated by reviewers outside of the candidate's field.

The departmental recommendation letter should not be written by the Department Chair where there is an identified, documented conflict of interest (COI). CAP noted several files this year where the Department Chair wrote the departmental recommendation letter and solicited external letters for the file while having a COI with the candidate. These types of COIs penalize the candidate by significantly delaying the review process, reflect poorly on the department, and add unnecessary work for others in the review process.

The departmental recommendation letter should also explain the impact of a candidate's research, and discuss the quantity, quality, and number of senior-authored works (in multi-author disciplines). This year, CAP saw several files where the faculty member had a very low rate of senior-authored papers throughout their careers, and the Department Chair proposed an early promotion or accelerated merit advancement through a barrier step. While CAP supports collaborative science that results in co-authorships and understands the nuances of highly interdisciplinary faculty (i.e. biostatisticians, clinical consortium work, etc.), independent research portfolios at promotion and at career barrier steps are expected. Thus, these types

of cases gave CAP pause. For promotion to the Associate rank cases, it is important for the Department Chair to identify previous mentors so that CAP can evaluate independence appropriately.

The departmental recommendation letter should outline the significance of any awards [reported](#). For example, it could provide CAP with the number of people who receive or were considered for this award annually, or the significance of the award to a particular society. The same applies to teaching and service activities. The department recommendation letter and candidate statement should offer an analysis of the candidate's specific contributions and address potential problems in the file. For example, a candidate's low and/or problematic teaching evaluations might be the result of structural issues in the department or of the candidate having been assigned a particularly challenging course; these sorts of insights that cannot be gleaned from teaching evaluations are extremely helpful to CAP members, and they impact recommendations.

It is also important that the department recommendation letter explains the nature and extent of a candidate's service contributions, which is often one of the least detailed sections of the file. It is often difficult to untangle administrative service roles that are compensated (example: AVC, Deans, [Associate Deans](#), Chairs, Vice Chairs, Provosts, [Training Directors](#)) with general service. This is particularly important in Health Sciences where compensated service is more common than on the general campus. It is helpful when the departmental recommendation letter and the candidate statement clearly outline these service roles and responsibilities. Details regarding the frequency of meetings, hours spent, intensity, and importance of work should be included in the candidate statement, particularly when files are being proposed for career reviews and/or acceleration actions.

Finally, the department recommendation letter should also explain the reasons for any possible dissenting votes, or provide a statement noting that no comments or discussion arose from dissenting votes, if appropriate. CAP finds it difficult to evaluate a file with a substantial minority dissent without explanation. Such explanations are important to convey to CAP the full range of the departmental discussion of a particular file, to help understand differences in opinions or candidates' contributions and accomplishments.

For appointment files, the department recommendation letter must describe, in accordance with policy, the search process. This includes information such as a brief description of the recruitment process and how the candidate was selected. CAP prefers that the description of the recruitment efforts include details on the departmental selection process, including how many applicants applied and were interviewed for the position.



## BioBib

CAP members found that BioBibs prepared by Faculty 180 exacerbate the cognitive load on reviewers for numerous reasons, primarily due to the small font size, issues with publication citation tags, and the reverse chronological ordering of activities. CAP provided feedback on their experiences with Faculty 180 BioBibs to Academic Personnel Services [last year and encourages these suggested changes be made before broader use of Faculty 180 is implemented.](#)

It is important that the BioBib is updated for each review period. New activities should be clearly marked as “new,” and all items should be dated. The Biography may contain short (1-line) explanations of the items included, where appropriate, but should not repeat or expand on narratives presented in the candidate statement. Including a list of recent and current mentees in the Biography helps to support the assessment of the candidate’s role in publications led by mentees. Wherever possible, the Bibliography should be organized and formatted to reduce the cognitive burden for reviewers, clearly designating the roles of mentees, the quality of the publication, and the candidate’s contributions. All items listed in the Bibliography should list all authors so as to facilitate the identification of conflicts of interest whenever possible. It is recommended that the candidate’s name be bolded or highlighted in such a manner that the author’s order can easily be identified. It is not appropriate to end the author list with the candidate’s name followed by et al., in large multi-authored papers as this may imply to reviewers an inaccurate designation as last/senior author. All items in sections A & B of the BioBib should be published or accepted and available for reviewers as part of submitted publications in the candidate’s publication hyperlink. Any publications currently or previously listed in sections A & B that have been retracted should be identified in accordance with APS guidelines. Submitted publications not accepted should be listed in C. It is important to describe the candidate’s role when the candidate is not a first or senior author and in disciplines where the order of authorship does not clearly denote their role in the publication. Importantly, documenting intellectual independence and the significance of the work is key, this can be augmented in the candidate statement.

Active grants with multiple PI designations should be listed with the percentage of dollars dedicated to a faculty member’s lab/role in the grant (not their percent effort on the grant). The dollar value of the award (direct and indirect costs) should be listed for the entire grant. Only funded grants should be listed, not protocols or IRB submitted/approved projects. It is useful to have grants listed from the previous review period. Pending grants should not be listed on the BioBib since their precise status can be confusing. Candidates can describe their unfunded projects and pending grant applications in their self-statements, although they rarely have an effect on the advancement for the current review period. It is also important to

clarify the distinction between being a PI versus a Co-PI/MPI. This is particularly important for candidates being considered for promotion to the Associate rank. CAP takes the view that grants reflect a candidate's stature [and independence](#) in the field and a means to support research productivity for merit promotion or advancement. As such, they are a means to an end. CAP looks forward to rewarding tangible outcomes like peer-reviewed publications that typically follow the receipt of extramural funding but does not find arguments for accelerations or BOS based on grantsmanship to be persuasive—except in rare cases where the level of commitment is combined with a high level of service and/or teaching.

### **External Referee Letters**

Appointments and promotions require a minimum number of independent external referee letters. It is greatly appreciated when Departments identify non-independent letters as part of the "Ref ID List". [Again, this](#) year, CAP saw a concerning number of files with insufficient independent external referee letters. Per policy, CAP is forced to return these files without review until additional letters are collected, which can add significant delay to the review process. CAP is acutely aware of the delicate nature of faculty recruitment and the frequent exigency with which such files must be processed, yet ill-prepared files only serve to delay approval. CAP encourages departments to reconfirm the independence of all letters in the file before submission, [or perhaps to pre-solicit confirmation of independence from referees before waiting for them to return a letter](#), to avoid jeopardizing time-sensitive recruitments.

External referee letters from former academic advisors, mentors, or faculty from departments where the candidate was a postgraduate student postdoc, or had a prior faculty appointment are never judged to be independent by CAP. This also applies if the mentoring/advising occurs in clinical settings in the Health Sciences. Letters from active collaborators within the last five years are also not independent. Letters from external referees who proposed to collaborate or who are planning to collaborate with the candidate in the future are borderline independent and can be accepted on a case-by-case basis but [should be avoided if possible](#). If there are more than one such "borderline" letters in a file, CAP is likely to send the file back for more letters. CAP is also aware that some colleagues are part of very large consortiums. Letters from other members of such consortiums can be considered independent if they do not come from close collaborators within a subgroup of that consortium. Letters must also come from external referees who are at an equal or higher academic rank than the one for which the candidate is proposed. CAP encourages Departments to practice due diligence in the selection of external referees and the identification of any conflicts on the referee form rather than wait for CAP to identify problems and return the file.

CAP noted that most external referees do not see teaching evaluations or other evaluations of teaching effectiveness in many departments. CAP notes this makes it problematic for most

external referees to comment on teaching effectiveness, particularly for candidates in the Teaching Professor and Professor of Clinical X series, for which teaching excellence is a primary criterion for advancement. CAP hopes departments better align the expectations in their requests for external referee letters with the information provided to the external referees in the future, namely by either providing teaching statements and evaluations or by not asking for the referee to comment on teaching.

Although letters are no longer required for merit advancement to/through Step VI, they constitute a prime method of establishing a candidate's national recognition, especially in the absence of other awards showing such recognition. A sustained record of competitive grant funding may contribute to making a case for national recognition, but awards indicating career achievements such as elections to professional societies or academies provide more substantial support. Letters for advancement to or through Step VI are particularly useful if the department also proposes an acceleration. Whether or not a department has sufficient expertise to judge a file is not a sufficient criterion for foregoing external referees, as the latter are needed to provide evidence of national recognition. They are required if advancement to Step VI is part of a Career Equity Review (CER).

### **Solicited Student Letters of Evaluation**

CAP also reminds the department that files that include solicited student letters should include a description of the criteria used to select letter writers and a notation identifying those solicited at the department's request and/or those requested by the candidate. CAP would like to see this information explicitly in future files, although candidate-provided letters are rarely persuasive. As noted previously in *Where CAP Stood*, CAP gives no weight to letters provided by the candidate, whether they are solicited or not. If letters are solicited from students by the department, then this practice needs to be applied to all file reviews for similar actions.

### **Reading the Previous CAP Letter**

CAP pays close attention to recommendations for the candidate in the CAP letter from the candidate's previous review, if available. It is important for candidates to be aware of these recommendations and address them prior to the next review cycle. At the time of the previous review, Department Chairs should also alert candidates to these recommendations and, if necessary, explain their meaning to candidates. For example, if a previous CAP letter "encourages" a candidate to expand their university service activities, CAP expects to see a discernible increase in service activities in the following review period. Not following CAP's suggestions for improvement regarding an aspect of the candidate's portfolio raises questions in CAP's evaluation as to whether the candidate understands expectations for the faculty of their contributions to the university, and often leads to disagreement with the

proposed actions in the current review cycle. Conversely, CAP welcomes a candidate's demonstrated and documented efforts to address the previous recommendations from campus reviewers, [which at times requires efforts throughout the review cycle, not simply upon preparation for the current review](#). CAP notes that the candidate's prior review documents are available to the candidate for reference if the department has routed the file and shared the relevant documents with the candidate within the Interfolio system.

## Research

UC San Diego has some of the most innovative research worldwide. CAP members are frequently humbled by the creativity and productivity of our colleagues. CAP realizes that Departments are best suited to define expectations for professional advancement in their discipline. This is why CAP does not set expectations for research productivity but follows [University policy and](#) departmental standards. CAP appreciates the fact that almost all academic units now have formulated such departmental standards, which are publicly available via the Academic Personnel Services website. [However, CAP notes that candidates in many fields produce both leading and collaborative works, yet few department standards specify how these different types of contributions should be valued.](#)

The main basis for evaluating research/creative activities are the items listed in Section A of the BioBib. This section should be reserved for peer-reviewed publications and creative activities. If unpublished material is included in the file, it should also include evidence that a particular item has been accepted for publication before the campus-established deadline, [which historically has been October 15. We understand that the deadline will shift to June 30, with AY 2025-25 serving as a transitional year, and mandatory adoption in AY 26-27.](#) This is particularly important for book manuscripts or contributions to edited collections. CAP also expects that any publications listed in the BioBib that have been retracted will be noted and explained.

In [2024-2025](#), CAP [continued to](#) note that some departments do not define their standards in terms of the expected number of publications or research products. While the committee is very much willing to consider the qualitative impact of research and/or creative activities, it is imperative that the file documents such impact. Sometimes, the significance of the work can be easily discerned based on the high-impact venues in which the work appears, but this is not always the case. In the cases where this is not clear, CAP relies on an in-depth explanation of the research impact/productivity related to the department standards by the Department Chair and the departmental *ad hoc* committee, if applicable. Impact is not considered consistently across all departmental standards. Some departments have different types of publication profiles among their faculty, and in these cases, it is important that standards differentiate expectations, for example between single-author and multi-author sub-fields [as](#)

well as between publications that are led by the candidate or their group and those that are collaborative efforts. It is important that each department has a clear roadmap for promotion for their faculty to ensure equitable treatment among faculty members. In general, CAP considers numerical indexes such as the H-index of only limited usefulness in ascertaining research impact.

White papers, committee opinions, articles in predatory journals that do not require peer review, or manuscripts that appear in self-publication venues should not be included in Section A. Publications in Open Access journals that require fees for open access can be included in Section A as long as they are peer-reviewed. Conference Proceedings constitute another ambiguous category. In some fields, such as Computer Science, they are the main publication venue and are clearly peer-reviewed. In other fields, their status is not as clear. If conference proceedings are included in Section A, they must be peer-reviewed. CAP also appreciates additional information on publication venues, such as acceptance rates. The Department recommendation letter should explain if and how conference proceedings were taken into consideration in arriving at the departmental recommendation. Non-peer-reviewed publications should be listed in Section B. Items in this section are generally less important for the review process and not considered as important, particularly in a proposed acceleration action. But they can nevertheless contribute to bolstering a case if their significance is explained in the Department recommendation letter and if the publications can be provided for CAP review. CAP expects for items listed in Sections A and B to be provided for review by CAP, and classified or otherwise restricted materials that are exempted from being provided should explained with appropriate approvals.

Pre-prints (for example, BioRxiv) that are available online before being published should be placed in Section C, not A or B. Work in progress or publications that have not been finally accepted for publication can also be listed in Section C. In general, CAP does not assign much weight to items in Section C. Yet under certain circumstances, items in Section C can be important for the review process. In some Departments, Section C items can become the basis for a merit advancement, particularly in book fields. In book fields, the inclusion of draft chapters can document research progress even in the absence of publications, but CAP cautions departments to ensure that progress to a book is not counted twice. Research articles that have not been accepted for publication can also signal the future trajectory of a candidate. They can be important in fourth-year appraisal and promotion files.

Multi-authored work is common in many research areas. In order to evaluate correctly the contributions of individual faculty members, it is critically important that the specific contributions to each co-authored piece are clearly described. In particular, candidates should highlight whether they served as corresponding or senior author, as appropriate for their field,

to identify contributions to which they had a leading academic role. CAP does not appreciate numerical systems that are used by some journals that require reference to a list of generic terms rather than a specific description of what was done. The committee prefers short descriptions after each entry in the BioBib (or in a separate list) outlining the specific author contributions, and in particular what part of a large project was led by the faculty member. CAP prefers that the candidate's name be highlighted or bolded for easy recognition in author order, including all authors except with very large author lists. The author who was the primary senior, corresponding, or otherwise leading author should be clearly identified. The candidate's name should not be the last author followed by et al. when subsequent authors are listed beyond the candidate's name. If the publication was led by a student or postdoc advised or funded by the candidate, CAP prefers that this role be noted.

Research independence constitutes the most important criterion for promotion to the Associate rank for most series. In many fields, the best way to demonstrate research independence is the peer-reviewed publication of first or senior-authored papers without previous mentors as co-authors. Candidates should explain their role in each publication, especially for fields in which author order is not indicative of their role. Insufficient independence is the most frequent cause for CAP's lack of support for promotion to the Associate rank. It is also the main reason for a less than "favorable" fourth-year appraisal. It should be noted, however, that "favorable with recommendations" is the most frequent fourth-year appraisal and is considered a positive appraisal by CAP.

CAP understands that junior scholars can be the main drivers of research even if they collaborate with more senior scholars. CAP implores senior scholars to not appear as co-authors on papers led by junior scholars in order to avoid compromising junior scholars' quest to demonstrate independence. If there is a legitimate reason for senior scholars to remain on the paper as co-authors, the Departmental recommendation letter and candidate statement should explain the ways in which the candidate drove the research agenda. A supplemental letter by the senior scholar testifying to the candidate's independence can help to document the candidate's independence but may not be sufficient. Consequently, CAP views co-authorships of papers led by colleagues in series requiring research independence (even if junior) as adding little evidence of productivity to the scholarly record of the senior scholar.

In contrast, publications that are first authored by graduate students or post-doctoral trainees should be highlighted as evidence of both research leadership and mentoring. Such evidence may support why a file has a smaller number of publications (time training a student) and provides evidence of successful mentoring.

Prestigious awards, invitations to conferences to present as a keynote speaker, or elections to professional societies or academies are some of the major ways to demonstrate a faculty member's research excellence and/or national and international recognition. CAP appreciates a thorough explanation of the selectivity and significance of these awards [and external recognition](#) in the department recommendation letter.

## Teaching

CAP discussed extensively how to evaluate teaching, especially since the campus is undergoing a transition in how to document teaching effectiveness. [CAP discussions continued to benefit](#) from having a Teaching Professor serving on CAP. CAP has reviewed several teaching portfolios modeled based on the guidance for holistic teaching evaluation that included several types of evidence, such as a [concise](#) teaching statement, syllabi, and new student evaluations of teaching forms (SETs) that will replace CAPEs. CAP appreciated the holistic approach of addressing quantity (teaching load) and quality and noted the value of statements that specifically evaluated the candidate's course design and pedagogy, mentoring and advising, and reflection and growth. However, CAP noted that the length of teaching portfolios prepared for a holistic teaching evaluation sometimes included excessive amounts of course materials, which tended to distract from evaluating teaching effectiveness. CAP does not appreciate the inclusion of [multi-page or repeated syllabi with boiler-plate information](#) or other teaching materials that are included without direct interpretation to the candidate's teaching effectiveness. This year, CAP [continued to use](#) a hybrid approach to teaching evaluations that included CAPE [and SET](#) scores, student evaluations, and teaching statements. Based on the [past two](#) years' experience, CAP has made recommendations to the holistic teaching evaluation committee for improved guidance to faculty members, [which have been incorporated in their current guidelines](#). [One particularly helpful aspect of teaching statements are direct responses to constructive criticism from students, noting what changes have been or will be implemented to improve the instructional experience.](#)

CAP also noted that the holistic teaching evaluation may not adequately address teaching effectiveness in Health Sciences, particularly as many faculty's teaching activities are clinical and not classroom-based. Additionally, the issue of anonymity of residents in small or 1:1 interactions likely limits the value of evaluations as many residents may be hesitant to provide candid and constructive feedback for fear of retaliation. CAP encourages the holistic teaching evaluation process to account for this variation in the teaching and evaluation process for clinically oriented HS faculty. [CAP continues to note with dismay that student evaluations are not routinely collected for all Health Sciences courses. The lack of such evaluations cannot be supplanted by student testimonials. The failure to provide these evaluations has been found to constitute a weakness that prevents actions that are otherwise supported by the file. CAP understands that in some fields, such as the Health Sciences, it can be more difficult to obtain](#)



student evaluations and comments. CAP nevertheless encourages Health Sciences Schools and departments to solicit such comments, without having the faculty candidate be involved.

CAP realizes that the former CAPE questions “Recommend Course” and “Recommend Instructor” percentages were prone to implicit bias and thus are no longer commented upon in the CAP letter or included in SET evaluations. Further, CAP asks that departments refrain from using numerical scores or cutoffs as evidence of teaching effectiveness, asking instead that department level reviews comment specifically on how the quantity of teaching meets expectations as well as the candidate’s contributions to course design and pedagogy, mentoring and advising, and reflection and growth. CAP still finds unfiltered student comments to be of essential importance in the review process, although summaries provided by the candidate have been useful. The inclusion of student comments in review files is not optional but mandated by policy, which requires “evaluations and comments solicited from students for most, if not all, courses taught since the candidate’s last review.” (APM 210). Having read hundreds (or thousands!) of teaching evaluations, committee members have developed a good sense of how to interpret student comments. A well-written teaching statement is especially important in communicating a faculty member’s teaching strategies and growth. It is important that the teaching statement address any weaknesses in the file, such as problematic student comments, especially if teaching issues were flagged in the previous CAP letter.

CAP encourages candidates to respond to student comments, especially for how candidates plan to address critical comments that may be viewed as concerning, toxic, and/or hostile. Reflective candidate statements help provide the necessary context for CAP to make equitable recommendations. CAP also encourages departments to provide context for student evaluation scores, noting courses that are perceived as challenging or otherwise problematic for students and explaining the need for such courses in the departmental curriculum. CAP has viewed positively teaching statements that openly address critical comments and how candidates have improved their instructional strategies to address them.

CAP is most concerned about student comments that describe poor pedagogy, organizational issues, or simply being non-responsive (even in large-enrollment courses). CAP is also disturbed by student comments that characterize the instructor as creating a hostile learning environment, including belittling or humiliating students. A particular concern is the potential effects of such environments on underrepresented students. CAP looks for repeated or long-term patterns in teaching comments prior to making any judgment on the teaching aspect of the file. Often, CAP requests that the colleague seek the assistance of the Teaching and Learning Commons when critical student comments are in the file or when student response rates to evaluations are low. It is important that the candidate follow up and discuss



this process prior to the next review, as CAP members have access to the previous CAP recommendation letter, when available, and look for explanations and progress forward. A failure to address student comments over repeated offerings of a course can be one reason for CAP to conclude that teaching constitutes a weakness in the candidate's record and hence precludes promotion or accelerated merit advancement. Notably, CAP tends to dismiss rude and offensive student comments [where otherwise unsupported by teaching concerns](#), and it remains sensitive to the possibility of implicit or explicit bias toward female instructors, instructors from underrepresented minorities, and instructors for whom English is not a first language.

CAP does not penalize colleagues for experimenting with new teaching strategies and methods. In fact, the committee encourages such initiatives, especially if they occur in documented consultation with the Teaching and Learning Commons. CAP sees such activities as an indication of a faculty member's deep commitment to the instructional mission of the university. Moreover, the committee understands that not everything works well the first time in the classroom and that new teaching strategies might produce more negative student comments and evaluations at first. Documenting the process of attempting these new strategies will help CAP form a fair evaluation of the candidate's efforts. However, sticking to an instructional approach that does not seem to work is seen as problematic if there is not a pedagogical or structural reason to justify it.

Mentoring is another essential part of the teaching mission of the university, and the recently revised policy (APM 210) gives special recognition to faculty mentoring activities. CAP is aware of the fact that mentee evaluations can be problematic since their anonymity cannot always be guaranteed and that they are not uniformly collected across all departments and Schools. CAP encourages all departments to collect and include mentee evaluations as evidence of effective mentoring and advising but does not appreciate non-anonymous mentee evaluations. [In fact, sometimes the inclusion of testimonials causes one to question if the candidate has inappropriately involved students in the academic review process.](#) CAP encourages colleagues to describe the nature and extent of their mentoring activities in their self-statements, [and to list mentee accomplishments in the student instructional section of their BioBib.](#) Mentoring students and scholars, including faculty members, outside of the University of California is recognized as a form of professional and public service. [Mentoring UC San Diego faculty is a form of University service.](#)

## **Service**

Service is an essential part of the academic mission, and CAP takes service to the University very seriously. Whereas CAP relies heavily on departments to evaluate candidate's research leadership and teaching effectiveness, CAP measures candidates' service against university-

wide standards; this is one of the many ways in which the committee seeks to ensure equity and fairness across the University within the academic review process. Service is an essential facet of the University of California's shared governance model that extends beyond individual departments or schools for more senior faculty. The cultivation of a truly exceptional University hinges on the active engagement of its most outstanding and brilliant faculty members in the pursuit of upholding the University's mission.

In the BioBib, CAP has often seen service activities that are described as lasting up to the present but that are simply not updated. Older service activities can be deleted, though CAP advises that it can be helpful to have the service activities of the previous review period included in the BioBib, [in particular for accelerated actions](#). For career reviews, it is important to have the most important service activities for the entire period of service at a particular rank included. Instructional activities such as advising students on a thesis committee should not be listed under "Service." Nor should certain activities that are part of the normal duties of a faculty member be listed on the BioBib. These include attending department meetings or job interviews, writing letters of recommendation or meeting with students outside of class, attending commencement, or training courses. It is helpful for the candidate to describe in the self-statement which activities are departmental, school, and University-wide activities [or to list the service separately for each level](#). Time, effort, and intensity of service activities at each level should be addressed and [documented whenever possible](#).

The service expectations for CAP have remained consistent over the years. In particular, as previous CAPs have stated and consistent with policy, service expectations increase with rank and step. **While Assistant Professors are expected to perform some service, expectations are limited and usually satisfied by some departmental service. Associate Professors are expected to perform more extensive service, including some service outside of their department and often in their School. Full Professors and especially faculty members approaching Step VI are expected to perform University service outside of their Department and School and outside of their area of research, with increased leadership in their service activities as they approach Above Scale. Performing more Departmental service does not necessarily make up for a lack of wider University service at the higher ranks. University-wide service outside of the candidate's area of research becomes essential and should be part of every review period at Step VI and above. Service is valued less if the faculty member's research or creative activities benefit from it or if it is compensated. Insufficient University-wide service constitutes one of the main reasons for CAP to decline merit advancement or accelerated merit advancement in the higher professorial ranks.** As one of the classic CAP letter guidance sentences says: "A University can only be great if its best and brightest faculty members lend their talent to self-governance."

Academic Senate service is not the only way to perform University-wide service. Faculty members at the higher professorial rank should actively seek out service opportunities that involve leadership, such as chairing a committee. CAP has recognized certain kinds of service within one's own academic unit as the equivalent of university-wide service, specifically service as Department Chair or service as Associate Dean. More highly compensated administrative positions such as Dean [or other members of the Special Compensation Group have not been credited](#) as service in the academic review process; these service activities are evaluated separately. There are many University-wide service opportunities in the Colleges, in university-review committees, or interdisciplinary search and recruitment committees spanning several schools. Faculty members are encouraged to ask their department chairs and their representative on the Academic Senate Committee on Committees of their need for service opportunities, especially when approaching a barrier step such as Step VI or Above Scale. Broad service is expected for Advancement Above scale. [Department chairs are specifically solicited by Committee on Committees for this purpose and require that chairs support such recommendations with testimony of the likelihood of the candidate to fulfill the duties required. Candidates are encouraged to speak frankly with their department chairs about which roles would suit their interests and availability; past failures to complete service responsibilities may preclude consideration for future service roles.](#)

Service in Health Sciences has been a subject of much debate. Faculty members in HS are part of a very large and diverse academic unit and thus, often participate in service inside this unit. HS faculty and their chairs have at times found it challenging to identify service opportunities outside of HS. However, service on hospital committees, service at the VA, and service in HS Schools that are not associated with the faculty candidate's primary appointment are highly valued by CAP.

CAP acknowledges the importance of faculty members engaging in professional service. Extensive professional service, such as serving as president of a professional organization or as editor of an important journal, can also indicate a faculty member's professional recognition and reputation in the field. CAP recognizes high-level professional service with a broad impact on a local, national, and international scale. At the same time, the committee generally does not accept professional service as a substitute for university service. The only exception here is the Research Scientist series, in which professional service (as well as any instructional activities) are subsumed under the broader category of "service." Public service is important and, when significant, is considered by CAP [but has not been viewed by CAP as justification to support bonus or accelerated advancement](#). Faculty service activities related to the improvement of elementary and secondary education represent one example of this kind of [public](#) service. Similarly, contributions to student welfare through service on student-faculty

committees and as advisers to student organizations should be recognized as evidence, as should contributions furthering diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging within the University through participation in such activities as recruitment, retention, and mentoring of scholars, students, and faculty. Further detail is provided in APM 210.

CAP is strongly committed to recognizing faculty member's efforts on behalf of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). These activities do not represent a separate area of review, and they can be part of a faculty member's research and/or teaching and/or service record. However, in combination with the academic mission, EDI efforts might help support an accelerated merit advancement or a bonus off-scale salary component. CAP also understands that some efforts in this area are difficult to quantify, for example, the extensive mentoring of underrepresented minority students. In these cases, CAP asks the Department Chair or the candidate in their self-statement to describe and/or elaborate on these activities. In accordance with policy, CAP does not penalize faculty members for not engaging in EDI efforts.

### **Accelerations/Recalibrations/Career Equity Reviews**

Proposals for the advancement of more than one step occupy a large part of CAP's deliberations. There are various mechanisms in place to justify the advancement of more than one step. Departments should be clear about which path for accelerated advancement they propose since the particular mechanism defines the specific argument that needs to be made in support of the proposed action. [Many such proposals fail because candidates or Departments fail to identify the specific achievement\(s\) that justify the proposed action or how those actions go beyond what is expected for normal merit advancement.](#)

### **Accelerations**

Accelerated merit advancements, commonly referred to simply as accelerations, are solely concerned with achievements within the singular review period. The most straightforward and most common case for an acceleration is exceeding the expected research productivity for a review period by [a factor of two or more](#) with no weakness in teaching and service during the review period. Per policy, in a series where research is the main criterion, accelerations require that research productivity exceeds what would be expected for a normal merit advancement. If research productivity exceeds expectations for a merit advancement but does not quite amount to doubling expectations, a combined argument in support of acceleration is possible. EDI contributions may also be considered, although CAP notes that EDI efforts should be evaluated through the lens of research, teaching, and service and do not represent a fourth evaluation criteria on their own. In this case, research impact and excellence beyond normal expectations in teaching and/or service can augment the case for acceleration. For series where excellence in teaching is the main criterion for advancement (example: Professor

of Clinical X or Teaching Professor), simply doubling scholarly output is not considered sufficient for acceleration in the absence of clear excellence in teaching activities. A doubling numerically of low-impact scholarly works (e.g. case reports and non-peer-reviewed publications) is also generally not considered sufficient for acceleration. CAP would like to reiterate that accelerations *do not* require excellence beyond normal expectations in *all* areas of review, nor is numerical doubling required to establish that research productivity exceeds expectations in every case. *It is worth noting that most accelerations are based on scholarly achievements that exceed expectations, usually in both quantity and quality, for all series. Meeting expectations in teaching or service is required to support any acceleration, however, exceeding expectations in teaching or service has not been considered as the primary argument for an acceleration, except perhaps when combined with awards or above-average scholarly contributions.*

The Department Chair should avoid proposing accelerations in an abbreviated review period such as that immediately following appointment, those including substantial teaching relief, or those including substantial approved leave. While these limitations do not affect merit advancements and meet expectations for job performance, they may not be sufficient to support accelerated advancement (or promotion). CAP notes that this limitation is inherent since being excused from teaching does not provide evidence of teaching effectiveness, and similarly for service.

Similarly CAP discourages Departments from proposing accelerations if a candidate has a *below-expectations teaching load or otherwise* problematic teaching record or only limited service. In these cases, CAP may judge teaching and/or service as a weakness and decline to support the acceleration. It should also be noted that the numerical expectations for a merit advancement and/or acceleration remain the same independently of an abbreviated or extended review period. For example, if a department expects 3 publications for a three-year review period at the Full Professor rank, the expectation would remain at 3 publications if the candidate decides to defer their review by one year and hence completes a four-year review period. For a three-year acceleration at this rank, the expectation would be 6 publications even if the candidate opts for an abbreviated review period (for example, coming up for review ahead of their normally scheduled review). This means that for acceleration, candidates would need to meet the criteria expectation for the review period, despite only completing a portion of the expected review cycle.

Accelerations of more than one step ("double/triple accelerations") are not described by policy and are exceedingly rare. In the past year, *none were supported as accelerations but two were supported as recalibrations.* Those cases typically are justified by at least a tripling of research productivity combined with external recognition and excellence (not just the

absence of any weakness) in all areas of review. For this type of request, CAP would also expect significant service contributions and sustained teaching excellence commensurate with the level to which the candidate is advanced, as well as a career record of both teaching and service that meets expectations at the proposed new level. We note that a double acceleration effectively credits three years of advancement for each one year of the review period, which is why accomplishment in all three areas of review is expected.

In addition to the high expectations for service and teaching, CAP notes that productivity beyond doubling has raised concerns about the appropriateness of department standards. CAP recognizes that there are substantial differences in research productivity within departments, and that differences among fields may result in as much as a factor of 10 difference in the number of publications. CAP recommends that departments review their standards with these significant differences in mind and provide field-specific data on publication rates for faculty in their department in support of both their expectations for minimum and average performance levels. In addition, CAP encourages the Department Chair to provide these data as context for proposed accelerations.

Accelerations to and through the barrier step (Step VI) are possible. However, the two actions differ in that an acceleration proposal from Professor Step IV to Step VI needs to first justify a three-year acceleration based on the review period and then assess the candidate's career record in light of expectations for advancement to Step VI. Consecutive accelerations are possible; however, the candidate's review history is noted. Previous accelerations might mean that the candidate has not had adequate time to build a sufficient level of service to meet the expectations for the proposed rank/step, especially at Step VI and Above Scale.

Accelerations to the Above Scale rank are possible but exceedingly rare, as an exception to the policy requirement that candidates need to serve at least four years at Step IX before advancing to the Above Scale rank. Such proposals have to meet the high bar of being "rare and compelling" and are reserved for candidates with exceptionally strong academic records in all areas of review. This year, CAP reviewed six files that were proposed for accelerated merit advancement to Above Scale. CAP did not support any of these cases, and the EVC concurred with CAP in all cases. Simply exceeding the numerical publication standards by a factor of two or more, even with supportive external letters from UC schools, has not been sufficient. Departments should clearly articulate how a case is "rare and compelling" if they are proposing a candidate for advancement to Above Scale before they have served four years at Step IX.

At the Above-Scale rank, advancements of 50% and 100% are considered regular merit advancement. A 50% advancement does not represent a negative outcome and simply falls

short of the expectation of a 100% advancement, which requires exemplary performance in all areas of review. Expectations for service are high for Above Scale faculty, with evidence of recent University-wide contributions and leadership roles expected in each review period. Accelerations of 150% and 200% require not only an outstanding and often world-class record of research and creative activities, but also extensive external recognition combined with sustained excellence in teaching and service. At the Above Scale rank, extensive University-wide service outside of a faculty member's Department or School and unrelated to their specific research interests is expected. Insufficient University-wide service contributions constitute one of the main reasons for CAP's decision to decline to support acceleration requests at the Above Scale rank. CAP has only supported acceleration requests of more than 150% in the most unusual and distinguished cases, such as receiving a prestigious prize (e.g. National Academy, Nobel Prize, Fields Medal).

## Recalibration

Recalibration and CERs are two different mechanisms for advancing more than one step. Both proposals are career reviews that should be conducted in concert with a regularly scheduled review. In both cases, the Department recommendation letter needs to propose an action focused solely on the review period and, *in addition*, another action pertaining to a faculty member's career record. The combined effect then can translate into an advancement of more than one step.

Recalibrations can be used at the time of a career review (promotion to Associate Professor, to Professor, merit advancement to Professor Step VI, or to Above Scale), and it can be proposed by the Department, the Dean, and CAP. Recalibration requests need to be justified with reference to specific reasons. Recalibrations can be based on the argument that a faculty member was hired at too low a step or that certain [cumulative](#) accomplishments in the past have not been sufficiently rewarded [because they were split over multiple review periods or because their impact was not yet clear](#). Consecutive bonus off-scale salary components can also be used to justify a recalibration. The department is encouraged to support recalibration requests with data comparisons to other colleagues in the same field or Department at the same rank, [providing sufficient information for a complete comparison](#). For example, [Departments should compare faculty at the same rank according to not just research productivity and impact, but also in terms of career records of teaching and service](#).

## Career-Equity Review (CERs)

A CER can be requested by the candidate during a regularly scheduled review. CAP encourages Department Chairs to make colleagues aware of this mechanism [as they must be initiated by the candidate at the time of initial file submission](#). Unlike recalibration, a CER



does not have to occur at a barrier step. A CER can be justified in similar ways as a recalibration, such as the argument that a faculty member was hired at too low a step or that certain accomplishments in the past have not been sufficiently rewarded. Consecutive bonus off-scale salary components can also be used to partly justify a CER. In the [case of consecutive bonus off-scale components](#), a faculty member exceeded expectations for a merit advancement in several consecutive review periods while falling short of expectations for an acceleration. In those cases, the cumulative effect of consecutive bonus off-scale salary components could be presented as justification for an additional step by CER. A CER with comparisons to other colleagues in the same field or Department at the same rank is encouraged. Like recalibration requests, CER requests need to be justified with reference to specific reasons. CAP especially encourages colleagues to make use of the CER mechanism in seeking to mitigate the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, if research productivity during one or several review periods declined due to the pandemic, a CER can be used to argue that overall career record and research trajectory justify the advancement of more than one step.

### **Reconsiderations**

Despite its best efforts and extensive discussions, CAP realizes that the committee might not always arrive at the correct recommendation. Departments can request a reconsideration if the preliminary decision/recommendation diverges from the initial departmental proposal. CAP takes these requests very seriously and, in [27 of the 80 reconsideration cases this year](#), reversed its initial decision. Per policy, requests for reconsideration must either present new evidence or provide additional context for existing evidence that CAP might not have fully appreciated in its first review of a file. [CAP notes that CAP letters are not intended to provide a comprehensive listing of all the information presented in the file, so simply restating information that was already presented in the file but not specifically noted in the CAP letter does not constitute new information.](#) Further, while CAP attempts to ignore scolding or belittling language by disappointed colleagues or Department Chairs in reconsideration requests, CAP has been discouraged by such poor professional civility.

### **Bonus Off-Scales**

A bonus-off scale salary component (BOS) is a good way to reward specific accomplishments in research, teaching, and service [in a single review period](#). The specific reasons for a BOS request must be outlined in the department recommendation letter and must be based on activities and accomplishments that go beyond the regular duties of a faculty member or expectations for a normal merit increase. Non-specific BOS requests are likely to be denied. The most successful proposals for a BOS are based on exceeding research expectations for a merit advancement but falling short of expectations for an acceleration, distinguished awards or prizes, excellent teaching that is indicated by more than just excellent student evaluations



(such as teaching awards or pedagogical or curricular innovation) or distinguished service or EDI contributions. CAP has generally not supported a BOS for performing departmental service roles below the Chair's level (for example, Director of Graduate Studies or Vice Chair for Academic Personnel) or for compensated Director or Program Director positions or [those positions in the Senior Management Group](#). A BOS is also often recommended when a candidate's acceleration proposal fails to meet expectations, particularly when weaknesses in the [teaching or service aspects of a file](#) are identified [that preclude an acceleration for research achievements](#).

### **Collegiality**

APM 210.1.a. states that it is appropriate "to consider professional integrity as evidenced by performance of duties." While collegiality is not explicitly listed as a performance criterion for academic appointees, it is inherently reflected in the specified criteria and plays a vital role in teaching, research, and service. A 2019 senate-administration workforce concluded that the evaluation of collegiality could be included in academic review files. As a result, CAP has seen several files in which issues of collegiality were adjudicated over the last few review cycles.

In accordance with policy, CAP has considered issues of collegiality in determining its recommendation. In general, the academic review process might not be the best venue for adjudicating issues of collegiality and professional behavior. Any claims of professional misconduct (sexual harassment, bullying etc.) need to be confirmed by the appropriate process and should not be litigated within the candidate's file. CAP suggests that involved parties explore other venues to adjudicate such issues, for example, the Academic Senate Committee on Privilege and Tenure or forms of mediation within a department. That said, if such issues are introduced into a file (for example, through "no"-votes of dissenting faculty), it is important to consider the following issues. First, it is important to provide specific examples of uncivil behavior or lack of collegiality. Blanket and non-specific allegations are not helpful and cannot be considered. Second, CAP gives full consideration to candidate's responses in the statement they must be afforded the opportunity to include in the file. If a file includes non-specific allegations of uncivil behavior that have an impact on the departmental (or the Dean's) recommendation, CAP is likely to return the file for more information and request formal documentation.

### **COVID Impact Continues**

This year's files were still impacted by the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is why COVID-impact statements remain useful for CAP to understand a colleague's research trajectory. COVID statements can explain or contextualize a dip in productivity or a shift to other creative activities (for example, review rather than research articles). It can explain anomalies in teaching evaluation or the nature and extent of service obligations. The

committee would like to reiterate that it does not expect faculty members to reveal details of their private lives in such statements.

In general, CAP has applied the principle of “achievement-relative to opportunity” (ARO) in its holistic evaluation of files. CAP has rewarded individual faculty members’ extensive and unusual efforts to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with an additional half-step bonus off-scale salary component. At the same time, successfully making it through the pandemic, even if it involved additional time and effort, has not been judged as sufficient to merit a BOS. CAP does not use ARO as justification for accelerations or promotions. CAP recommends the use of a CER as a better justification for an advancement of more than one step. The CER makes it possible to consider the entire career trajectory and not just productivity during the most recent review period.

Since CAP has not yet considered files with information beyond April 2025, changes in federal funding policies have not yet impacted its reviews. CAP welcomes candidate and department statements that explain how current events have resulted in circumstances that impacted faculty performance. In consideration of such circumstances, CAP expects to continue to apply achievement relative to opportunity (ARO) principles to file evaluation as support for merit advancement but not accelerated or career advancement. This approach is similar to CAP’s approach for sabbatical and other approved leaves, in that the ARO principle is applied in place of the required aspects of faculty performance needed for merit advancement but is not used as justification for accelerated advancement.

### **Retentions and Pre-Emptive Retentions**

CAP understands that it is vital for the university to retain colleagues who are being recruited by other universities. CAP understands that sometimes recruitment happens in non-traditional ways, for example, through target-of-opportunity recruitment. This year CAP has waived review of retention requests because such requests generally are supported by the previous CAP review so that academic judgment of a new file is not needed. In addition, retention offers often involve information that has not been included in the file. For this reason, preemptive and other retentions were handled by the SVCAA/EVC without CAP review. CAP has requested to review data on retentions annually to assess questions of equity.

### **Series Specific Guidance**

#### **0% and Non-Salaried Appointments**

CAP notes the increasing number of non-salaried Adjunct Professor and secondary 0% appointments. CAP expects that departments provide clear expectations for teaching and service for all 0% and non-salaried appointments, preferably in an MOU, to be included in each review file. Since these expectations need to be articulated in the appointment file as

they are required by policy, [the expectations should be included in each review file](#). When the faculty member is due for review, the review file must explain how the candidate meets the expectations for each appointment in each department in each review period. More than one 0% appointment and/or non-salaried appointment carry high expectations for contributions to multiple departments, which are likely to be viewed with concern since appointments come with expectations of workloads that may be difficult to manage. The department letter should clearly identify the benefit to the University of having these faculty appointed.

### **Professor/Professor in Residence/Professor of Clinical X/Adjunct Professor in the Health Sciences**

CAP reviews files from a variety of different series within the Health Sciences. As in other files, the committee judges the portfolio against departmental expectations in research and teaching for these different series. CAP appreciates when requests for promotion and acceleration are calibrated to the series-specific requirements. For example, in the Professor and Professor In-Residence series, independently produced research articles as first or senior author are particularly prized in addition to teaching and service. In the Professor of Clinical X series, clinical expertise, teaching, and stature and recognition are the main series criteria. This series allows for a wider range of scholarly activities to be considered, including case reports and/or publications tied more closely to the candidate's clinical practice (see APM 210) but for accelerated advancement the candidate's scholarly contributions should exceed standard expectations in quality and quantity. Expectations for faculty members in the Adjunct Professor series (salaried or non-salaried) should be based on a departmental MOU stated in the Department Letter regarding the relative distribution of responsibilities among the four criteria but must be clearly defined for an individual at appointment [and included in review files](#). Candidates who are proposed for a series change should clearly justify the rationale for the change and how their record meets the requirements for the proposed level of the new series. [Some recent proposals for lateral series changes have not been successful because of the practical application of different expectations for different series even if their standards are nominally the same. For example, research standards for advancement in the Professor and Adjunct series are nominally the same in many departments, but application of those standards to appointments less than 100% is required to be calibrated proportionally. CAP encourages candidates to fully consider both the explicit and implicit differences in series before requesting a series change.](#)

### **Teaching Professors**

Teaching Professors comprise an increasing segment of faculty at UC San Diego. CAP is pleased that many Departments now have developed and made public departmental expectations for Teaching Professors. CAP encourages all Departments with Teaching

Professors to develop specific expectations, particularly regarding professional and creative activity, which vary across departments. Based on APM 285-9, Teaching Professors are evaluated based on three criteria: (1) teaching excellence, (2) professional and creative activity (3) university and public service. Unlike in the research faculty series, teaching excellence is the main criterion in this series. Moreover, professional and creative activity encompass a wider range of activities, including peer-reviewed articles (either in pedagogy or in the candidate's discipline) but also non-peer-reviewed conference proceedings, invited talks, and textbooks.

However, promotion and career reviews are stipulated by policy to require demonstrated scholarly leadership in the profession or education. CAP has found that demonstrating such scholarly leadership without peer-reviewed or otherwise publicly available scholarly products is difficult. Further CAP notes that sustained scholarly contributions are the benchmark for the Teaching Professor series that distinguishes their academic contributions from Unit 18 lecturers. Departments that do not define standards and allocate time for faculty to pursue scholarly leadership are undermining those candidate's ability to advance in the series and failing to value the down-the-road contributions to sustained teaching excellence that is supported by engaging in scholarly activities.

Teaching Professors have a higher teaching load, and many of them teach large classes. The transition of such classes to remote teaching was very labor and time-intensive for these colleagues.

Accelerations for Teaching Professors can be difficult to adjudicate because the Teaching Professor series lacks clear guidelines of what would constitute, in analogy to a ladder-rank professor, "double productivity" as the basis for an acceleration. Teaching Professor acceleration cases certainly require meeting normative sustained teaching excellence; however, excellence in another area is usually required for acceleration. CAP also notes the variety of different definitions of teaching excellence across the University leads to CAP being required to define teaching excellence for consistency. Accelerations in the Teaching Professor series are almost always based on a combined argument that a candidate is exceeding expectations based on external recognition or scholarly productivity. For example, whereas teaching excellence is a standard expectation in the Teaching Professor series, candidates might exceed expectations by winning a major teaching award or by publishing a new curriculum design or engaging in other aligned activities. Teaching professors can exceed expectations in creative and professional activity by publishing a higher number of papers or by publishing in high-impact journals. External recognition can be demonstrated through professional awards but also through invited talks and/or the broader adoption of a specific teaching strategy such as an online textbook. Finally, Teaching Professors perform

service at all levels and exceptional service duties are rewarded similarly to the ladder rank Professor series. It is worth noting that the number of colleagues in this series continues to grow and that campus reviewers are striving to calibrate files in this series with ever more precision.