



ADVANCE BU

Advancing and Maintaining Equity

April 2025

Monthly Newsletter

Chairs Embrace Efforts to Revise Tenure and Promotion Guidelines

More than twenty academic chairs and directors attended a March Lunch & Learn session to hear ADVANCE BU's **recommendations** for revising Bradley's tenure, promotion and retention (TPR) guidelines. According to **surveys** administered to Bradley faculty in 2018 and 2024, only a minority of faculty believe that our current TPR guidelines are very clear and equitably applied. So, over the past year, a team of faculty from across the University has been systematically analyzing Bradley's TPR guidelines to identify both best practices and areas for improvement. We are now reaching out to colleges and departments to share our findings, explain our recommendations, and offer our assistance with making long-overdue updates. Chairs Scott Cavanah (Interactive Media), Tricia Dahlquist (English), and Kerrie Schattler (Civil Engineering and Construction) are among the first chairs to invite us to meet with their departments to begin the revision process.

As one of the newest departments on campus, Interactive Media created its TPR guidelines just six years ago, but after viewing ADVANCE BU's recommendations, Cavanah says they recognize that their document is missing several key elements. Their plan is to meet with the ADVANCE BU team to get specific suggestions for improvement, and then hold a one-day workshop in May where the goal is to update the document. Similarly, the English department has long talked about updating their guidelines. "Over the years, revising our TPR policy has been brought up and put on the back burner as something to get to later when we were not so busy," notes Dahlquist. "Thanks to ADVANCE BU's willingness to work with each department, the English Department will finally—after 16 years—review and update its TPR policy, guided by the research and data gathered by the ADVANCE BU team." Schattler likewise explains why Civil Engineering is embracing this opportunity. "Establishing consistent departmental TPR guidelines will serve as a foundation for fostering equity, stability, and growth. These guidelines will help ensure that faculty members are evaluated fairly and uniformly, thereby contributing to an academic environment that nurtures and sustains excellence." To arrange for the ADVANCE BU team to visit your department to share your unit's data and assist with starting your updates, please contact **Jackie Hogan** or **Matt O'Brien**.



Scott Cavanah,
Chair, Interactive
Media



Tricia Dahlquist, Chair,
English



Kerrie Schattler, Chair,
Civil Engineering and
Construction

A team of faculty, led by Matt O'Brien and Jackie Hogan, recently completed an analysis of all of the TPR guidelines currently in use at Bradley (418 pages), coding them for **15 elements** that research indicates contribute to clarity and equity. The elements were coded as 0 (absent), 1 (present but lacking detail or clarity), or 2 (present, detailed and clear). See the **full report** for the elements, and detailed methodology and results. In brief, we found that:

- 44% of Bradley's TPR guidelines are more than 10 years old, with 24% being more than 15 years old.
- TPR documents at Bradley are not centrally archived and there is no mechanism for regular reviews to keep pace with changes in the field or in the institution.
- Bradley's TPR guidelines vary greatly in level of detail (3-48 pages), and 4 units do not have TPR guidelines.
- Some TPR guidelines contain outdated information, or are out of alignment with the *Handbook* (eg. counting advising under service instead of teaching).
- Some unit guidelines give chairs a double vote in TPR decisions, or record a tie as a negative vote. (This is particularly problematic because national research shows that faculty from underrepresented groups are more likely to receive tie votes.)
- Ten out of the 15 elements received a median score of less than 1.0, indicating an insufficient articulation of those elements.
- Five elements received a median score greater than 1.0, but no items received a median score approaching 2.0, indicating that improvements are still needed.

Based on our **analysis** of Bradley's data, a review of scholarship and best practices, and consultations with all college Executive Committees, ADVANCE BU recommends the following revisions:

1. That all units develop TPR guidelines that incorporate clear articulations of the **15 key elements**.
2. That all units ensure that no one gets a "double vote" and that tie votes are treated as such.
3. That all college and unit TPR guidelines be reviewed and revised (and ratified by vote) no less frequently than every five years, and centrally archived.
4. That all units develop a **Tenure and Promotion Roadmap** for both pre-tenure and post-tenure candidates to help guide their professional activities toward continued advancement.
5. That university, college, and unit TPR guidelines be updated to reflect the growing range of professional activities that faculty engage in, using **Boyer's (1990) expanded model of scholarship**: the scholarship of discovery; the scholarship of teaching and learning; the scholarship of application; and the scholarship of integration. Each unit may decide the appropriate "weighting" of these different types of scholarship.
6. That the Senate clarify *Handbook* language regarding the relative "weight" of teaching and research/creative production. It currently gives "highest priority" to teaching, but in practice, research/creative production is often the most important factor, particularly for promotion to Full Professor. See **example language** whereby faculty applying for promotion to Associate or Full Professor must document satisfactory performance in both areas (teaching and research/creative production) AND a record of excellence in at least one area.

While we clearly need to improve, there is good news to share. First, many units already do a great job of articulating some of these elements. (Contact us for your unit's numbers!) Second, five of the elements are straightforward technical items, which are easy fixes. Third, ADVANCE BU has compiled example language that units can follow when revising their guidelines, and one of our team members is happy to meet with your department to go over your unit's data and assist you with your revision process. Email **Jackie Hogan** or **Matt O'Brien** to schedule a visit with your unit.

As ADVANCE BU team leader Matt O'Brien notes, "Having proudly served in numerous capacities in my 20-plus years at Bradley University, I see our collective opportunity to positively influence the tenure and promotion guidelines and processes as one of the most, if not THE most, important, long-term impacts we can make on this campus in service to our academic colleagues and programs."

Equity Quick Takes: The Dangers of "Service Shaming"

According to a new **study**, service shaming--discouraging and devaluing faculty participation in service--is widespread in the academy and harmful in multiple ways (Merritt 2025). Service shaming:

- **Hampers faculty careers**: Devaluing crucial community-engaged work fails to give faculty due credit for applying their scholarly expertise to solve real-world problems.
- **Maintains inequalities in the academy**: Myriad studies demonstrate that women faculty and faculty from underrepresented groups take on more service, particularly community-engaged service. When such work is devalued, these groups may be less likely to achieve tenure and promotion, reproducing long-standing inequalities in the academy.
- **Damages the institution**: When faculty are socialized into avoiding service, they don't develop the perspectives and leadership skills needed to sustain a vibrant, responsive institution.
- **Damages higher education**: Failure to value community-engaged work contributes to public perceptions of an "ivory tower" that is out-of-touch with the rest of the world. Such service work helps "cultivate legitimacy and trust in the eyes of the public."

Merritt notes that, "More than ever, we need scholars who are deeply engaged with their students, local communities and the general public through service. It's time to create an academic culture that better recognizes the importance of service and the people who perform it. Without it, higher education risks irrelevance and an even greater disconnect from the public when society needs its contributions the most."

Higher Ed Equity in the News

College Application Surge: Underrepresented Students Lead Growth in 2024-25 Admissions Cycle

New Higher Ed Study: The Toxic (but Respectful) Workplace

Demographic Disparities in STEMM Persistence

Upcoming ADVANCE BU Events

A Chair's View on Changing the Way We Evaluate Teaching: A Lunch & Learn Discussion for Academic Chairs and Directors
Thursday, April 3 | 12–12:50 p.m. in BECC 1122 / [Zoom](#)
[Register Here](#)

Constituting a Bradley Chairs Council?: A Lunch & Learn Discussion for Academic Chairs and Directors:
Thursday, April 24 | 12–12:50 p.m. in BR 250 / [Zoom](#)
[RSVP Here](#)

ADVANCE BU Spring 2025 Book Group, discussing **The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy**.
Monday, April 14 | 10 a.m. in BR 116 or by Zoom.
Contact jlhogan@bradley.edu to participate.

Arrange a meeting with your department or group:

ADVANCE BU has recommended a number of **changes** to the ways we evaluate teaching at Bradley, and for revising Bradley's **TPR guidelines**. We recognize that different individuals and groups on campus may have different questions, concerns, and ideas. We're happy to meet with individuals and groups to explain the proposed changes and hear your feedback. Please contact jlhogan@bradley.edu.

Interested in participating in a pilot program for revised teaching evaluations?

Contact [Jackie Hogan](#) or [Tim Koeltzow](#) for details.

Bradley Bookshelf

Dolan-Reilly, G. & **Saleeby, P.W. (Sociology, Criminology & Social Work)** 2023. EcoSocial Work Policy and Advocacy Practice. In R. Forbes & K. Smith (Eds.), *Ecosocial Work: Environmental Practice and Advocacy*. NASW Press.

Jagannathan, A., Hakkim, A., & **Saleeby, P.W. (Sociology, Criminology & Social Work)** 2023. The Juxtaposition of Disability and Ecosocial Work: Implications and Challenges. In Forbes, R., &

Smith, K. (Eds.), *EcoSocial Work: Environmental Practice and Advocacy*. NASW Press.

Flinn, L. (Nursing) 2024. Implementation of an Updated Screening Tool to Identify Human Trafficking Victims in the Emergency Department. *Journal of Doctoral Nursing Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1891/JDNP-2024-0004>



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