Kick-Off Meeting Executive Summary

A project kick-off meeting was held on Feb. 6, 2020, with all project participants invited, to familiarize attendees with the project purpose, timeline, deliverables, and what is expected of them. Other goals were for project participants to learn from each other about promotion & tenure within their disciplines and institutions, and to contribute ideas about what changes might be possible for improving diversity, inclusion, equity and openness in P & T.

Open Access

Open access is beneficial because anyone with an internet connection can read it, giving those not affiliated with a university and unable to pay access charges access to information that otherwise would not have access. With the wider audience, open access also tends to increase the citation rate. Open access material can also often be re-used more readily.

There are a couple of educational issues related to open access. The difference between open access verses paywall content is not always clear on university campuses where authentication into subscription databases is automatics. Recognizing that ease of access on campus does not mean a work is free for all to access is key to understanding that open access is necessary if they want their work to reach a wider audience. It is also important to help faculty understand difference between open access and predatory. They need to understand when a fee is for processing for OA verses a predatory fee. Both mentors and libraries could have role in helping make it clear.

Open access can be perceived as risky for tenure and discourage. In the humanities, open access journals may be perceived as lacking in prestige. The quality of open access journals may be questionable, and they need to clearly be high quality to be given equal value in P & T. P & T may also treat all journals the same regardless of whether open access as paywalled. Instead they look at factors like quality, impact factor, downloads, and citations.

Open access is generally encouraged outside of the P & T process, such as through an open access policy like at Hopkings which requires that all publications are open access. It may also be supported via funds administered by the library to pay OA fees for faculty like at College Park.

Should open access have more weight in evaluation?

Adherence to OA policies is a management issue, not a P&T issue. It's akin to trying to evaluate on characteristics such as print vs electronic. It misses the mark in terms of quality and reputation. But perhaps we need to re-evaluate what high quality means to go beyond the impact factor. Impact is dependent on discipline. Some disciplines will gravitate to OA because their research influences policy and they want to reach that audience. OA, however, can't necessarily be separated out as a standalone quality to evaluate.

Preprint verses In Press Presentation

A preprint is the version that precedes peer review and a postprint iss the version that is peer reviewed but precedes publication. Preprints are sometimes made available before publication in repositories like arXIv.org,bioRxiv.org, MedrXiv, etc .Posting preprints is common practice in some disciplines and funders often support them. However, sometimes publishers require that they be taken down before publications. Postprints are found in PubMed and other repositories and may include copy-editing and formatting so that they appear different than the published version. She then talked about using Sherpa/RoMEO to understand journal policies.

Do these types of works received the same consideration as published works in your P&T processes? Do you think they should be valued more or less than they currently are?

In some fields, posting preprints is unheard of. This is sometimes because there concerns about the potential for theft of ideas if preprints are posted. There is a strong preference for finalized, peer reviewed content for the purposes of P&T processes. If it's submitted but not accepted, it's not counted as part of review processes. Preprints wouldn't receive same consideration as formally peer-reviewed works.

There were questions about how preprints fit into a CV, and how stable they are, and if they can be listed twice in the CV, once for the posting of the preprint, and second time for publication. There were also questions about how preprint varies from a working paper. Sometimes preprints are considered final works, and these could be peer-reviewed by colleagues at the institution and could also be a part of the university archive.

What other types of materials might receive more recognition than they currently do?

Digital as a concept, as a form or vehicle for content is not always recognized despite widespread adoption as a means of scholarship and should be. Creating or contributing to a community of engaged scholarship may be treated solely as service when there is also a research component. Applied research reports may be perceived as below peer reviewed but should be valued. There should be more reward for making dataset openly available, and how often datasets are cited should be considered. Contributions to public press or social media, particularly with a wide reach and active engagement, should be considered but often are not. Congressional testimony may not be adequately recognized as intellectual work. In art, juried or commissioned works, and advertisements may not be considered and should be. In the performance arts, the venue for the performance is also often not adequately considered. Negative results may not be published and not considered, but no findings are as valuable as findings in that they can prevent replication by others.

Mentoring infrastructure and Sustained mentorship

Four participants indicated there's a strong culture of mentorship at their home institution. Six participants would like to see some improvement.

Mentoring can be spotty with a lot by dept chairs. It can be, encouraged by deans in colleges but not otherwise supported. A unified effort would be better—it should be an institutional responsibility. Some department say that they assign mentors but don't have any mentors to assign. There are no incentives for people to participate—it's not even recognized as service and should be.

Mentoring is incredibly difficult, especially to do well. It can runs the gamut, being reactive or proactive, and done poorly it may come off as bullying. There should be institutional guidelines and training on how to mentor.

Fair and Transparent process

Gender, race, and ethnicity matter in P & T. There are plenty of anecdotes about this but also statistics, so both facts and experiences illustrate. There is disparity in outcomes based on personal charactieristics.

While there is little clarity on the process and expectations, it's high stakes. Expectations for each level of review need to be explicit and made available at time of hire and be consistent for all. The process can't be both confidential and transparent.

Most often P & T is confidential but not transparent. Each university should collect central info on P & T on who went up and the outcomes.

Mid-cycle or annual reviews might or might not be included. Mid-cycle and annual reviews should be more careful than tenure perhaps. Reviews themselves can explicitly or implicitly inform process. They can be done to inform conversations with mentors, areas to address, where doing well

Many changes would start with a small group of faculty willing to test it out, learn from it, make into a bigger project - those who experience the benefits can become champions. Might not be difficult but time intensive

The following topics received votes on the flip charts, but not discussed at Kickoff

- Criteria reviewed discussed and possibly changed periodically
- Peer assessment
- Consider variety of ways to engage with scholarly and public communities