AY 2021-22 Annual Report of the A&S Research Scholarship and Creative Works Committee

May 17, 2022

Committee Members:

Bridget Buxton
Jason Dwyer
Erik Loomis
Julie Keller (Chair)
Joon Kyoung Kim
Brian Krueger
Annu Matthew
Kimberly Nelson
Smita Ramnarain

Julie Keller (SOC/APG) volunteered to be Chair of this committee for the 2021-22 year. The committee members agreed.

The Committee accomplished a number of noteworthy tasks this past year.

1. The committee set among its initial tasks revisiting the COVID memo sent to the Dean last year. In light of the continuing effects of the pandemic and on faculty productivity and well-being as well as emerging concerns such as accounting for public scholarship, the Committee sought to emphasize the need to keep the A&S Promotion and Tenure Standards current. The memo sent to the Dean to this effect included a request that the Dean make a request to departments to update their promotion and tenure standards to both address the demands of emerging opportunities such as increased public engagement, while also recognizing the ongoing impacts on faculty RSCW productivity. In addition, the Committee also advocated for an optional tenure-clock extension for Assistant Professors (this item is, however, under the purview of collective bargaining). The Dean acknowledged this memo in her communication to the committee and noted that Departments were asked - in a February Chairs’ meeting - to undertake updates or creation of P&T standards in light of recent developments.

2. The Committee Chair Julie Keller and Associate Dean Brian Krueger evaluated proposals for the Dean's Summer Research program. This program provides summer salary for tenure-track untenured faculty to pursue research in the summer. There were only three applications and it was therefore decided that Chair Keller and Associate Dean Krueger would evaluate these proposals. All applicants were awarded summer stipends to complete their research.
3. The Committee members also evaluated applications for the **Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowships**. This year, there were two pathways to applying for the undergraduate fellowship for summer research: a Student Project Pathway (A) and a Faculty Project Pathway (B). The Student Project Pathway was for students who had their own ideas for an original research, scholarship or creative works project, and the Faculty Project Pathway was for students to join a faculty member’s project. The RSCW Committee was tasked with reviewing applicants for Path A, and all 8 applicants were awarded funds.

4. One of the significant achievements of the Committee this past year was to propose the **Dean’s Opportunity Fund**. Given that faculty might sometimes need small “lightning” grants to see through a project or activity already under way, the Dean’s Opportunity Fund proposed the provision of support between between $200-$2000, to be awarded ad hoc to any tenured and tenure-track faculty within the College. The Dean accepted this proposal and the Dean’s Opportunity Fund was announced in January of this year. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with due dates 1/31/22, 2/18/22, 3/18/22, 4/18/22 & 5/18/22. So far, four faculty have been awarded this funding in Spring 2022.

5. The Committee also **drafted a memo** advocating for greater support for tenured, mid-career faculty (i.e. Associate Professors) seeking promotion to Full and full professors seeking promotion to Full III. In light of the high service demands on mid-career faculty, especially on faculty of color and folks in smaller departments and programs which may prevent progress on research, scholarship, and creative work, the memo advocates for support for such faculty in the form of release time, summer salary, and the creation of a pathways to promotion document to highlight multiple pathways to promotion to Full or Full III.

In addition to these larger tasks, the Committee spent time discussing the following:

- Academic freedom and questions/concerns about how the University handles and responds publicly when faculty’s academic inquiry/academic expression brings controversy. Our committee reached out to Ryan Trimm to discuss the work his committee has been doing on academic freedom in the Faculty Senate, and we discussed the possibility of co-hosting a panel on this issue for faculty to attend.
- How faculty can best utilize the considerable set of skills brought to A&S by Kimberly Nelson, in terms of grant application and other support for funding research and creative work.
- How to achieve greater clarity in the process of buying out courses.
- How the University can develop more creative ways of funding research, scholarship, and creative work (e.g., GoFundMe, linking particular projects to certain donors).