

From: **Buell, Denise** <dbuell@williams.edu>

Date: Fri, May 22, 2020 at 8:28 AM

Subject: some updates from the CAP

To: <WILLIAMS-FACULTY@listserv.williams.edu>

Dear faculty colleagues,

With the recent announcement of the overall shape for next year, regardless of whether we are able to offer some in-person instruction or must teach remotely, we know that many questions still remain. Some of these questions are ones that the CAP is actively discussing, even as we do not yet have answers to them all. I write today, on behalf of CAP, to let you know some of the issues we are considering and to invite you to contact me or any CAP member with your thoughts on these or other CAP-related matters.

The Pandemic and Leaves

The conditions of the pandemic continue to pose impediments to the ability of many faculty to undertake research and creative work. If you are scheduled for a leave during the 20-21 academic year and your ability to pursue your work is going to be significantly impeded (e.g., you cannot travel to a necessary location to access research materials or archives, work with collaborators, or participate in a residential fellowship program), the CAP will offer flexibility, especially for assistant professors, to adjust the timing of that leave. Some of you have contacted me already, to inform me of changed plans or that you are considering a change to your leave. Please let me and your chair know, as soon as possible, if you are contemplating a change. All decisions concerning changes to leave plans need to be finalized and communicated to the Dean of the Faculty *no later than July 7, 2020*.

The CAP reminds faculty that we prioritize allowing Assistant Professors to take their AP leaves as close to on schedule as possible and that mini- and full sabbaticals of tenured faculty always require both unit-level and CAP approval and cannot always be taken when a faculty member is eligible for a leave. If you are a tenured faculty member needing to reschedule a leave currently

planned for 20-21, you may not be able to take that leave in 21-22; the timing for the rescheduled leave will have to be established in relation to the unit's curricular and staffing needs to smooth leave patterns and minimize the need for visitors.

Teaching Flexibility and Workload

We understand that faculty members have a wide range of life situations. If we are able to offer some in-person instruction next year, there will still be some enrolled students who need to learn remotely and some faculty who need to teach remotely. You'll hear more in the coming weeks about how we'll manage these varying needs.

We also recognize that curricular needs and pedagogy vary considerably across the college. We ask that each academic unit work to consider what kinds of teaching arrangements for next year will minimize the stress on faculty. We recognize that faculty members this year were asked to make a huge mid-stream adjustment in your teaching and that next year's teaching will also require further adjustments including more remote instruction and, in some cases, changes to the content of courses. With salary freezes and ongoing financial pressures at the college, we cannot offer faculty monetary acknowledgment of this extra work, so we ask units to think creatively about how to make adjustments that could ease faculty workload (e.g., in some units that might mean altering class sizes or formats).

Evaluation and Tenure-Clock

As you know, in consultation with all continuing faculty, the CAP decided that Spring 2020 teaching would not be assessed as part of the evaluation of Assistant Professors, instructors, lecturers, senior lecturers, or artists-in-residence. We also have offered all of these groups of faculty the option to defer either their tenure-clock or renewal decision by one year. We recognize that the 2020-21 academic year will still be an unusual year, not easily comparable with our pre-pandemic context. Challenges remain for our teaching as well as for our ability to pursue our research programs and/or creative work. The CAP has not made a decision about how to address these ongoing challenges. But we do think it is necessary for assessments of performance during the time of pandemic to take its disruption into account even as we will need to find ways to evaluate teaching, research/creative work, and service in the coming year. And whether or not we are able to resume in-person activities with safe social distancing protocols, units will need to meet in the fall to discuss and produce staffing reports for assistant professors in non-decision, reappointment, and tenure decision years.

Looking ahead to 21-22

The CAP typically renders decisions about all tenure-line and visiting staffing requests for the 21-22 academic year by now. In consultation with the CPC, we have made decisions concerning tenure-track requests and communicated out to units that made requests. Concerning tenure-track hiring, we want you all to know that we are essentially in a hiring freeze. There will be no more than three tenure-track searches conducted next year, two of which were authorized already in Spring 2019. Concerning requests for visitors, the CAP has decided to defer almost all decisions concerning new requests until September. Doing so will enable changes to leave plans and changes to the curriculum to be clearer so chairs will better be able to assess their impact on the 21-22 staffing and curricular needs. The CAP will allow chairs to submit any updates to the April staffing request by August 15, 2020. Please note that, in the constrained financial landscape, the CAP will reduce the overall number of visiting FTE, so we ask that units plan curricula and leave patterns to minimize the need for visitors.

Please feel free to reach out to me or other CAP members on these or other topics.

Best,

Denise, on behalf of CAP