Writing the Narrative for the Promotion Application

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When to Begin the Application and How to Approach the Writing

• Begin now
• Treat this as if you are doing research on yourself:
  – Assemble your evidence for achievements in each portfolio area
  – See how much you have and whether you can make a case
  – Decide how you plead: outstanding, meritorious, satisfactory
  – Check the policy as to what the required achievement levels are for the level of promotion being sought
  – Make sure your evidence meets or exceeds the benchmarks for each criterion (guidelines, expanded descriptors and My Voice Checklist help here)
    • Outstanding = exceeding the criteria (being exceptional)
    • Meritorious = exceeding the criteria (being very good)
    • Satisfactory = meeting the criteria
Writing the Narrative

• Decide what you wish to emphasise in each portfolio area, basing your choice of emphasis on the extent to which you can demonstrate your achievements with evidence.

• Keep a file of achievements in each portfolio area. Compare what you have with what’s expected (see expanded descriptors/checklist).

• Do you meet the criteria? If so, press on. If not, delay for a year.

• If you are going for outstanding in one category and meritorious in the other two, think about how you will apportion the writing to each portfolio area within the 4,000 word limit e.g. 45% (research): 40% (teaching): 15% (governance) or 35% (research): 45% (teaching): 20% (governance).
Writing the Narrative

- Write an abstract for each section, as you would for a journal article. Use this as the template, showing what will be covered in your writing of that section. This helps the reader to follow the narrative.
- Use headings in the body of the narrative as indicated in the abstract.
  - If using sub-headings, make sure they make sense in terms of what was set up in the abstract.
  - The goal is to make it easy for the reader to follow.
- Use an active voice.
  - e.g. I have increasingly demonstrated an upward trajectory in my teaching achievements. I have progressively moved into more senior leadership: Head of Program (HoP) (2001-08), Associate Head of School (AHoS), Learning and Teaching (Acting) (Spr. 2011), and Director of Academic Program (DAP) (since 2013), the latter conceived by UWS as a role for Level D, Associate Professor.
Writing the Narrative

• Make each sentence count. Avoid padding.
• Remember the rule: the application is not all that you would like to say but what you can effectively convey
  – Demonstrate that every claim can be substantiated
    • e.g. In comparison to the national benchmarks in musicology, my research output is outstanding. The field of research benchmarks for Australia in FOR code 1904 is 3.8. My achievement is well above this: in the triennium 2010-12, I achieved 10 publication points (1 book, 1 chapter, 4 articles); and in the triennium 2011-13, I achieved 9 points (1 book, 1 chapter, 3 articles).
  – Don’t duplicate what you include in the tables but pull out what you need to make your point. Remember, this is a piece of writing and you need to help the reader navigate it with ease.
Writing the Narrative

• Use numeral annotations, prefacing the application with something like:
  • Please note that in the following section numeral annotations indicate items of evidence provided to the Dean of the School for each of the claims made

• I used numeral annotations for these kinds of statements:
  • My recent work, which radically re-conceptualises this earlier work, is recognised as ‘ground-breaking’ (Kouvaras)$^1$ and ‘innovative’ (Davies)$^2$. 
Allow Plenty of time

• Leave enough time for editing the final version and fixing formatting/typographical errors. Show that care has been taken with the manuscript
• Leave plenty of white space.
• Ensure that paragraphs address a new topic and that you use linking statements from one paragraph to the next
• Treat the exercise as if you’re writing a journal article. Expect to go through several drafts
• Ask senior colleagues to read your drafts and give you feedback. I had several readers at the level and above the level for which I was seeking promotion. This was invaluable. Each reader highlighted different issues for me to address.
• If your application is unsuccessful the first time, don’t let this deter you from reapplying. This was the situation for me.
Opening to My Previous (Unsuccessful Application)

Reputation and International Standing: I am a research-active scholar with a high publication output. The majority of my scholarly works, consisting of 5 books and 76 other papers, was produced over a period of 16 years (see Attachment 1). My publications include 2 peer-reviewed, sole-authored books (international publishers), 1 sole-edited, and 2 co-edited books, 14 book chapters (3 in international publications), 12 peer-reviewed articles (8 in international journals), 2 peer-reviewed conference proceedings, 3 edited special issue journals, 24 professional articles, 6 reviews, 3 analytical articles, 8 reports, and 4 papers in progress. My most recent book, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, is published by Ashgate (2010) which is indicative of the international reputation of my work.
Opening to My Successful Application

On the basis of my publications and their social impact, and the international networks I have established, I am regarded as a significant world-class researcher in the field of musicology. Together with having administrative responsibility as Head of Program (2001-08), Associate Head of School (Spring 2011), Honours Course Adviser (2012) and Director of Academic Program (since 2013), I have built an international reputation as a leading world authority on the philosophy of Deleuze and its application to music. In arguing for my outstanding contribution to research I have chosen to focus on: (a) my publications, including their originality and significance, quantity, quality and impact; and (b) my international networks and research standing.
Narrative for Teaching Philosophy (Unsuccessful Application)

- **Teaching Philosophy:** I believe that excellent teaching must have its foundation in excellent research. For more than a decade I have been committed to a philosophy of research-infused teaching. From the outset of the undergraduate degree, I encourage students to feel part of the music research culture. I aim to make students aware of the latest research in the field, and encourage them to probe contemporary issues by building small-scale research activities into undergraduate assignments. I aim continually to build on and improve all aspects of my teaching and research by engaging in ongoing self-reflection, being responsive to student and peer feedback, developing innovative approaches to teaching, opening students’ minds to the worlds of complex, critical thinking, making complex ideas accessible through tangible, example-based learning, and constantly revising and updating my teaching units, lectures, musical examples and other supporting materials. I aim to teach students the tools of research within an inclusive research culture. In resonance with the university’s ethos, I aim to ‘emphasise critical and questioning enquiry and innovation.’
Narrative for Teaching Philosophy (Successful Application)

- My approach to leadership in undergraduate teaching is informed by a teaching philosophy underpinned by four sound principles:
  - The success of the student is central, and relationships are the key elements of effective ‘pedagogical encounters’ (Davies and Gannon, 2009)
  - Deep insights, innovative practice and success are not always quantifiable, yet assessment standards need to be scaffolded, competitive and rigorous, and criteria need to be relevant and mapped to high quality graduate outcomes
  - High quality graduate outcomes are achieved through excellent curriculum design and its continuous evaluation, and through embedding critical thinking in the course/unit outcomes, enabling students to optimise their employment opportunities
  - A positive workplace culture is achieved through the promotion of a personal, people-focused leadership-style that supports equity and values diversity