The PSC (Professional Standards Committee) seeks guidance on the two following issues:

**Issue 1: PSC Voting Procedures**

Historically, the PSC has followed a voting practice whereby all committee members vote on all cases, except for those of individuals in their home department; in such cases PSC members are expected to have voted at their departmental level. Presently, to the best of our knowledge PSC voting procedures are not codified anywhere. Because the PSC membership is comprised of both associate professors and full professors, this means that using the historic practices, PSC members vote on some cases (outside their departments) for which they would be ineligible to vote within their departments. The PSC has operated well using a fully inclusive membership approach to voting. The associate professors on the PSC (who often represent approximately half of the committee) consistently have been substantial and equal contributors to committee work with no distinctions made by rank within the committee. This has helped engender a sense of equity and collaboration among members. In smaller units, with fewer full professors, it can be a challenge to elect full professors to the PSC.

Given the advisory nature of the PSC, we think our current practice is appropriate to retain. We mention this because the PSC is not asking for a change; our desire is to have a clear, transparent, shared understanding between faculty and administration regarding PSC voting practices. For example, we would like to ensure that colleges electing representatives to the PSC are fully aware that their elected representative will have inclusive voting opportunities above rank. The main situation where this arises is when PSC associate professors vote on faculty bids of full professors outside their own departments. Based on a discussion of PSC member 8/28/17, the PSC members favor continue using our current practice of all members voting on all cases (except those within our home departments).

If voting rules were adjusted to align with expectations similar to those at the departmental level (i.e., members vote on bids at, or below, their current rank), PSC members are concerned about the potential that this may adversely impact committee work by interfering with collaboration and substantially reducing the numbers of members voting for full professors. We are seeking input regarding codifying voting practices. In absence of written guidance, each committee has been determined and implemented its own rules. We are posing the following questions in an effort to be transparent and fair in our committee work and to maintain consistent, principled practices as committee membership and leadership changes over time.
Questions
Should the current practice of having all PSC members vote on all cases, regardless of rank (except for those in their own departments) be continued? If so, is the rationale for different voting procedures at the PSC-level than at the departmental level acknowledged and agreed to by all relevant parties? Is this rationale effectively communicated to the Colleges/Schools so the faculty can make an informed decision about whom they send to the PSC as their elected representative? If the practice is retained, how should the Colleges/Schools be informed that their unit’s representative (as voted by them) will be eligible to vote on all cases, including those above their rank?

Issue 2: Off-cycle Reviews
Each year it is not uncommon for there to be some off-cycle reviews related to initial appointments. Typically, these initial appointment dossiers have come to the PSC when a faculty member, or administrator with a concurrent faculty appointment, is being reviewed for tenure. Not all initial appointments come to the PSC (e.g., a new hire of an assistant professor). Similarly, upon initial appointment an individual who has been previously promoted to Associate or Full Professor at a different College or University often is appointed at the same level without PSC review regarding their rank, but rather only a tenure review. Recent situations have raised the following questions that have a potential impact on equity within and across units.

Questions
Under what circumstances should initial appointments be reviewed by the PSC? In addition to tenure cases, should the PSC review promotions to a higher rank than the applicant has ever held previously at a previous comparable university? For example, can a College/School appoint a faculty member (without PSC review) as a senior lecturer, or an associate or full professor (regardless of tenure status) if the individual has never been successfully reviewed for/or appointed at that level elsewhere, prior to any work at UVM?

We look forward to discussing these issues and your input.