This issue continues the series on how we are moving ahead on the priorities I set as dean, with a focus on four initiatives under **Advancing Teaching and Research Excellence**.

➢ **Ambitions for new T/TS faculty positions.** Through the fall, the Councils of the Humanities, Natural Science Chairs, and Social Science Chairs, and the Dietrich School PBC and Council discussed how new faculty positions could best advance the intellectual goals of departments while also bolstering the strength of the Dietrich School more broadly and being aligned with the Plan for Pitt. All proposed positions should reflect cutting-edge research, scholarship, and creative activity likely to generate significant, impactful, and enduring knowledge to address major social and/or intellectual challenges. The following characteristics reflect our discussions and will assist departments in formulating requests for new T/TS faculty positions:

- *Largely assistant professor positions, with disciplinary exceptions;*
- *Some cluster hires across departments in common zones of opportunity;*
- *Likely to bolster faculty diversity and faculty capacity to mentor an increasingly diverse student body;*
- *Ability to transform or significantly increase the reputation, intellectual strength, and/or rankings of departments or School;*
- *Synergistic with Pitt's broader strengths and emerging emphases as articulated in the Plan for Pitt;*
- *Attentive to both local and national trends in undergraduate student interests, enrollments, and outcomes;*
- *Ability to strengthen and/or benefit from other departments, centers, or interdisciplinary programs, through research collaborations or innovative teaching arrangements*

➢ **Tenure criteria.** The Dietrich School Council approved new language in the criteria for promotion or appointment to tenure rank that takes account of the changing forms of scholarship and research in the School. The new language is: *"Special care should be taken to establish achievement expectations for tenure for candidates whose work is interdisciplinary, collaborative, multidisciplinary or translational in character, or whose intellectual contributions and innovation are registered in part through significant societal impact, and evaluation processes should take account of unusual aspects of those expectations. For some cases, departmental tenure evaluation committees may need to bring in additional expertise and/or calibrate expectations for external references to ensure that a candidate's full breadth of achievements is evaluated."*

For the full criteria, see:
https://as.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Changes%20in%20Criteria%20for%20Promotion%20or%20Appointment%20to%20Tenure%20Rank%2017%20October%202017.pdf

➢ **NTS mentoring.** An informed and engaged NTS faculty will advance teaching excellence in the School. As a step in this direction, information relevant and important to the Dietrich School NTS faculty has been localized onto one web page with nearly 50 links categorized into five Orientation Hubs. These Orientation Hubs along with a few representative links include: **Policies and Procedures** (Pitt Faculty Handbook, contract renewals, benefits, FMFL, compensation, and reappointment); **Professional Development** (administrative and leadership openings for NTS faculty in the Dietrich School, criteria and checklist for promotion in the Non-Tenure Stream, and the Provost's Diversity Institute for Faculty Development); **Instructional Resources** (Teaching Resource Guide for Full-time and Part-Time faculty, dB-SERC, Pitt-CIRTL, Faculty and Staff Guide for Helping Distressed Students, Lynda online technology training videos, and several offerings from the University Center for Teaching and Learning; **Pedagogical Initiatives**, (Innovation in Education Awards, and Dietrich School Programs for First-Year Students); and **Mentoring and Sponsorship** (Center for Mentoring, the Chancellor's Distinguished Public Service and Teaching Awards, and the Tina and David Bellet Teaching Excellence Awards). For a full listing of resources available to NTS faculty, please see: https://as.pitt.edu/faculty/resources-nts-faculty .We are continually updating this page; please join the conversation by contacting us at**:** https://as.pitt.edu/contact-us

➢ **Data from OMET surveys.** The Dietrich School Council approved the following statement on how the School will handle raw data files of student opinions of teaching (OMET data): *The files will contain numeric and open-ended responses from students for all graduate student teaching assistants and fellows, all non-tenure stream faculty, and all tenure-stream faculty who teach a course, lab, or recitation for the Dietrich School or College of General Studies. Raw data files will be secured by the Data Team according to University data security standards. Permission to access raw data will be granted to a small number of Data Team staff, who will treat all data as confidential. The Dietrich School Dean's Office and departmental leaders may request aggregated scores and analyses, but no individual-level or identifiable data will be provided by the Data Team to anyone, including the Dean and senior leadership. The raw data and use of these data files are distinct from departmental operations and policies. Raw data provided to the Dietrich School Dean's office will not be used in conjunction with any personnel actions or decisions, including hiring, tenure, or promotion.*