

Overcoming the Mid-career/Mid-life Crisis: Charting the Path to Full or Master Faculty Specialist

A Four Part Program

Jan Gabel-Goes, Director, Office of Faculty Development

Gwen Athene Tarbox, Professor, English

Our Agenda

Where are you today in the promotion
process?

Where do you need to go?
Are you willing to commit to the goal?

Question One

Where are you currently regarding
research, teaching and service?

Question Two

What must be done to improve your portfolio?

More publishing needed?

Developing/revising courses to improve teaching?

Question Two continued

More/fewer service opportunities?

More/different attendance, or participation
or presentation at international, national
and/or local conferences/fields of specialty?

Question Three

Self Assessment

Where are your strengths?

Where are there gaps?

Identify resources to fill the gaps, get
help

Possible Resources

Identify mentor(s) if needed/helpful

Determine timeline needed to carve out
more time to work on gaps

Commit to the 4 Part Program

Determine location of help:
your department, other WMU resources,
OFD, OVPR, etc.



While in the 4 Part Program:

Report in with each other in the
4 Part Program.

Ask for help as needed.



Dr. Tarbox – a Case Example!



-
- I earned tenure and promotion in 2003; I earned promotion to full professor in 2017. What happened?
 - Health issues/caregiving
 - Over-commitment to service and to mentoring; under-commitment to research
 - Lack of focus on a specific research area
 - Fear

- What did I do?
 - I set a series of goals that would help me boost my scholarship

 - I narrowed my focus to children's and YA comics
 - I partnered with a colleague at another institution to co-edit a text
 - I submitted 4 articles/essays
 - I began tracking my working hours
 - I began to make sacred writing time a priority
 - I invested in dog daycare! (I know, but really, dogs need a lot of attention)
 - I hired a cleaning service.

- I set aside time to work on my binders well in advance, and I sought out help from OFD, senior scholars in my department and in the union.
- Most importantly, I included elements in my dossier that I felt my colleagues and college reviewers would be able to cite
 - Letters from former students, especially doctoral candidates who went on to earn tenure-track jobs
 - Letters from colleagues in the fields of children's literature and comics studies – I knew that my colleagues who were unfamiliar with these fields would appreciate that information
 - Letters from my editor and from the board of the Children's Literature Association

Thank you for listening!

- Questions?