



2022 PTIE Conference Abstract

Title: Examining I&E Language in External Review Letters

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Abstract:

PTIE has promoted stronger consideration for faculty innovation and entrepreneurship (I&E) in promotion and tenure (P&T) decision-making, including policy changes. Through our team's NSF-funded projects, we examine empirically what role I&E plays in external review letters and in P&T decision-making. In our analyses, we focus on race/ethnicity and gender to determine if, when, and how the inclusion of I&E considerations in P&T processes will affect promotion decisions, and ultimately the representation of individuals from minoritized groups. Analyzing P&T data from more than 2000 faculty members seeking P&T at nine research universities (two AAUs, three Hispanic serving, one HBCU), we examine the prevalence of patents, membership in I&E associations, and discussion of I&E in external review letters as precursors of P&T decisions to show how I&E indicators are currently used in P&T decision making. Our findings suggest that there are differences in I&E language depending on a candidate's race and gender. Additionally, we find that a letter writer's race and gender influence the use of I&E language in external review letters.