Proposal to have only Full Professors deliberate on promotion cases to Full Professor at both departmental and T&P Committee levels

Judgment by Peers
In the present process both Associate and Full Professors are eligible for election to the T&P committee. Furthermore, all tenured faculty participate in the departmental vote on T&P cases. This wider rank representation is most appropriate for tenure and promotion cases from Assistant to Associate Professor. However, one may question the appropriateness of having associate professors judge and vote on promotion cases to Full Professor, either in the departmental level or in the School or University levels. There are valid arguments in favor of having both the departmental as well as the School/University deliberations about a promotion to Full Professor be decided only by the Full Professors of the Department or the School(s). None of the Universities we surveyed has a similar system like ours, where Associate Professors participate in decisions on promotions to Full Professors.

Proposed changes
Changes in T&P committee membership for promotion cases
In the case that a promotion to full professor is considered, the T&P Committee will appoint a Full Professor, who has previously served on T&P, as an alternate member of the T&P committee to stand in the place of any Associate Professor member. It is recommended that the selected alternate member is from the same or a proximate department as the T&P member that is being replaced.

Changes in departmental votes on promotion to Full Professor
Only Full Professors participate in the departmental vote on cases of promotion to Full Professor.

Advantages:
- A freshly tenured Associate Professor may not be in a position to provide an informed and unbiased opinion about whether a fellow Associate Professor, with several years in rank, deserves or does not deserve to be promoted to Full Professor;
- A tenured Associate Professor who is close to being considered for promotion, may not be in a position to provide an unbiased opinion on a departmental colleague who will soon be an evaluator for his/her own case for promotion.

Disadvantages:
- The replacement of Assoc. Prof. members on T&P for promotion cases introduces a logistical complication. However, this is relatively minor, considering that only 4 Associate Professors have served on T&P over the past 7 years (no Assoc. Prof. is currently serving on T&P);
- Considering the small size of several Departments at Tufts, excluding Assoc. Prof. from departmental vote on promotion cases may result in votes by very few faculty members at the departmental level;
- The opinions of experienced Associate Professors can be very valuable and they would be lost in promotion cases.