

Provost's Supplemental Instructions Promotion & Tenure

DISTRIBUTION:

A copy of this set of instructions is to be provided to everyone involved in file preparation, including the candidate, members of the Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure, and staff who compile the documentation.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Promotion or tenure review is a confidential process. A sentence included in letters to external reviewers and individual teaching evaluators promises that their responses will be held confidential to the extent permitted by law. Potential evaluators who are asked to write letters or teaching evaluations are selected by the dean from those suggested by the candidate and the department chair, but the composition of the final list and the identity of those who wrote are not revealed to the candidate. This policy is intended to encourage a balanced list of potential referees and to discourage a candidate or colleagues from approaching or otherwise attempting to influence potential evaluators.

Correspondence or other contact with evaluators is to be conducted only by the dean or other person charged with responsibility for managing the review process. Discussion of the case at all levels is confidential, and details of discussion are not shared with the candidate or others outside the review process.

DEAN'S RECOMMENDATION:

The dean's letter expresses the dean's recommendation and the reasons for that recommendation. If the dean's recommendation is contrary to that of the faculty, it is especially important that letter explain fully the reasons for that recommendation.

FACULTY APPOINTMENTS, PROMOTIONS, AND TENURE COMMITTEE:

Committee report:

The committee report must report the numerical vote, summarize the meeting discussion, and explain the basis for the recommendation. An affirmative vote is one on which the majority of voting participants vote in favor of the proposed action.

Abstentions

Abstentions should be rare. **An abstention is recorded only for an *eligible* voter who participates in the deliberations but in the end declines to vote affirmatively or negatively.** An abstention is not recorded for 1) a member of a voting body who disqualifies herself or himself from participating in discussion and vote on a case because of a conflict of interest, 2) a member of a voting body who may be present at the discussion but is ineligible to vote on a particular decision by reason of rank or tenure status, or 3) a member of the department or equivalent body who reserves his or her vote to vote at a higher level. Because the vote total includes all participating voters, an abstention has the effect of a negative vote.

DEPARTMENT CHAIR'S RECOMMENDATION:

The department chair¹ makes his/her recommendation on the candidacy after a vote by department faculty or the department-equivalent committee. In addition to stating the chair's recommendation, this letter might explain standards unique to a discipline, the significance of achievements in a specific field, or other elements of importance that might be less apparent to reviewers outside the candidate's field than to those familiar with the discipline. If the department chair's opinion differs from that of the department faculty, it is especially important that the reasons for that opinion are expressed in detail.

DEPARTMENT REPORT:

Consideration of promotion or tenure award is initiated by the recommendation of a department, or, where faculty organization is not departmental, by a vote by members of the constituent faculty who are eligible to vote on the candidacy.

VOTING:

Level at which vote is cast

Usually, a member of the candidate's department who is eligible to vote at a higher level (e.g., the faculty promotions committee) should abstain from voting at the lower level to reserve his or her vote for the higher level of authority. **However, if there are fewer than three eligible voters at the department level, a department voter who would otherwise be eligible to vote at the higher level should vote at the department level and abstain from voting at the higher level.** A voter votes only once on a candidacy.

In a school that is not organized into departments, a member of the faculty promotions committee votes as a member of that committee and does not vote at the faculty level. The dean does not vote as member of the faculty voting body. Rather, the dean's vote is expressed in the dean's letter of recommendation in favor of or opposed to the proposed promotion or tenure award.

Voter eligibility by rank

On recommendations involving promotion, only faculty of rank equal to or superior to that being considered shall vote. (Faculty Handbook, I.I.2). If additional eligibility restrictions are defined in the school's bylaws, they must also be observed.

Minority opinion

A faculty member who participated in the discussion leading to the department or faculty vote who believes the report from the department or faculty **does not adequately express the deliberations** may send independently to the dean a statement of that opinion (Faculty Handbook, I. I. 3). Such a letter is permitted in the specific circumstance described in the Faculty Handbook and is not an opportunity for a dissenting voter to register disagreement with the conclusion of the majority. Disagreement with the majority conclusion is to be expressed during discussion and reported in the department or faculty recommendation.

¹ The chair of a department of secondary appointment may submit a letter of recommendation. The candidate's division chief should also submit a letter if the department is organized into divisions.

Report on deliberations

Deliberations on promotion/tenure recommendations should be guided by principles of objectivity as expressed in the Faculty Handbook Review and Decision passage (Chapter 3 I J.1), “The faculty in a particular field has a responsibility to render favorable or unfavorable judgments on the work of its colleagues in an objective manner.”

The department’s report must convey the sense of the participants’ deliberations. If the vote is not unanimous, the report should explain the basis for divided opinion.

PRETENURE REVIEWS – THIRD YEAR (AND SIXTH YEAR, IF APPLICABLE):

A copy of the third-year pretenure review (and the sixth-year pretenure review in schools with a nine-year pretenure period) is to be included in the promotion file of untenured faculty. Pretenure reviews are not included in the files of tenured faculty.

CURRICULUM VITAE:

The candidate’s curriculum vitae is an essential reference document for reviewers at all levels. The CV must be well organized and complete, and the first page or two must convey the candidate’s educational and career history and list correct academic titles and the years of current and past positions. The CV should be dated and the pages numbered. The names of professional organizations and journals should be written out on first reference so that they are intelligible to readers outside the candidate’s discipline. The titles of the publications submitted with the promotion/tenure dossier should be identified in the CV by an asterisk or other designation.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND SERVICE CONTRIBUTIONS:

Research:

Research contributions may be described in the curriculum vitae or in a separate supplement; the research description is included with the CV sent to external reviewers. The description of research contributions must include funding history with dates, amounts, and total cost for the years of the funding; sources of research grants; and the candidate’s percentage effort and role (e.g., principal investigator, co-investigator) in the project. Unfunded grant applications may also be described (project, agency, dates, candidate’s role). The narrative description must be concise, not more than two pages. It is not intended to restate the CV in narrative form.

Teaching

Teaching contributions and philosophy may be described in the CV or as a separate supplement not exceeding two pages; the teaching description is included with the CV sent to external reviewers. The narrative description must be concise, not more than two pages. It is not intended to restate the CV in narrative form.

Service

Service activities are usually documented sufficiently by listing them in the CV. The listing, together with comments that are made in other documentation, such as a committee report, department chair’s letter, or external evaluators’ letters, are usually adequate to document the candidate’s role as a citizen of the academic or professional

community. If service activities are described in a separate document, the description should be one page or less. The service description is included with the CV sent to external reviewers.

REFEREE LIST:

The dean is responsible for determining which referees are asked to write from a list of potential referees, some of whom are suggested by the candidate, the department chair or other appropriate person, and the dean. **Those asked to write are drawn from more than one source and in any case not all suggested by the candidate.** All external referees should be at the academic rank of professor or equivalent and when possible include chaired faculty, department chairs, and deans. Some of the external referees for candidates for promotion to *associate professor or tenure* may be at the academic rank of associate professor or equivalent in cases where they are the most qualified to assess the candidate's specific contributions. The dean should evaluate the appropriateness of including external referees at the rank of associate professor.

The referee list submitted with the file lists all the suggested referees and indicates who suggested them, which were asked to write, and which responded. A copy of one of the request letters is to be enclosed in the promotion/tenure file. To avoid a late effort to obtain the requisite number of letters, most schools solicit more than the minimum required number of letters.

LETTERS OF EVALUATION:

REQUEST – format and language

The dean or other person designated by the dean (e.g., department chair, an associate dean or other person charged with managing the process) invites potential evaluators to write letters of reference using the approved request letter provided in the ATTACHMENTS section of this packet. Letters to external reviewers are standardized to help ensure that the promotion review process is applied equally to each candidate. The letter states the academic rank and tenure status for which the candidate is being considered and assures the letter writer that the response will be held in confidence. The letter says that the candidate is under consideration for the proposed action and does not express the school's position on the candidacy. To help potential evaluators understand the school's standards, a copy of the faculty's guidelines for promotion and tenure should be enclosed with the letter of request.

It is not appropriate for the candidate or the candidate's colleagues to approach potential reviewers to discuss the candidacy or the letter request.

Selection of Referees

External referees

Evaluations from carefully selected referees are essential to support promotion. An external referee is someone with whom the candidate has not had a working relationship as colleague, collaborator, trainee, or student. Professionals within the same discipline might be acquainted with a candidate and still be classified as external referees if they are “arm’s length” referees whose knowledge of the candidate comes from their awareness and understanding of the candidate's work through publication, presentation, or even personal exchange, so long as that personal exchange is not in the context of a mentor, boss, co-worker, etc.

Biographical sketches

Each external referee letter should be accompanied by the author’s biographical information. The purpose of the biographical information is to help file reviewers discern the candidate’s independence from the evaluator and the evaluator’s qualifications to assess the candidate’s accomplishments. Biographical information that includes the reviewer’s credentials and appointment history can often be found on a university website or similar source. If an evaluator submits a full-length CV, only the pages that convey the author’s credentials and appointment history, often the first 1-3 pages, should be enclosed with the file. Responsibility for collecting the referees’ biographical information might be delegated to the candidate’s department to minimize the magnitude of the task on any one staff person. The professional biosketch should not be a paragraph retyped from the website or CV nor a website listing that does not include the reviewer’s credentials and academic appointments.

Research collaborators (only if required)

If the candidate’s research program is highly collaborative in nature, letters from research colleagues may be sought from collaborators who can describe the candidate’s independent or unique contributions to the group effort. Two to three such letters should be sufficient. Letters from research collaborators are to be sought only for the reason described.

EVALUATION OF TEACHING:

Methods of evaluating teaching may vary among faculties and from candidate to candidate. Standardized student evaluation forms collected over a reasonable period of time (usually the previous three years), may be sufficient to portray the candidate’s effectiveness as a classroom teacher. If there is a large set of evaluations, they should be not be submitted; they should instead be summarized by a department chair, curriculum director, or other appropriate person. The summary is to identify the preparer and indicate that the supporting evaluations are available for reference in the department or other office. If a candidate’s major educational contributions occur in a venue that does not lend itself to standardized evaluation, comments from faculty colleagues and past trainees are of paramount importance in documenting teaching performance. Evaluations from individual referees also help to augment standardized teaching evaluations.

Educational activities other than direct teaching, e.g., course design or curriculum development, may be documented in a number of ways and conveyed through a combination of sources, such as letters from teaching colleagues, the candidate's self-description of teaching, or the report from the department or faculty CAPT.

LIST OF POTENTIAL TEACHING EVALUATORS AND REQUEST LETTER:

The list of potential teaching evaluators from whom letters are requested should be drawn from names of individuals suggested by the candidate and the dean, department chair, or other curriculum director and not all from the same source. In the case of student evaluations, those who are asked to write should be randomly selected from a list of former students. The letter or e-mail to selected evaluators is to follow the approved format in the ATTACHMENTS section of this packet. The list of all from whom teaching evaluations were requested includes their status (current student, former student, colleague), and the source of the name.

PUBLICATIONS:

The candidate is to select three representative publications for the file. Titles of the representative publications are to be clearly marked on the CV. Copies of the publications are to be sent to external reviewers.

CRITERIA DOCUMENT:

Each faculty has an approved document that describes the standards and qualifications for promotion. A single copy of the relevant document is to be included with the school's files submitted to the provost's office for ready reference by reviewers at the provost's and president's level. **This document or an abbreviated version of it might be provided to external evaluators to familiarize them with the school's standards.**