

## Provost's Guidance on Selecting External Evaluators:

### External Evaluator List:

The dean is responsible for determining which external evaluators are asked to write from a list of potential evaluators, 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 may not be only those suggested by the candidate.** All external evaluators should be of the academic rank equal to or higher than that for which the candidate is being considered.

The external evaluator list submitted with the file lists all the suggested evaluators and indicates who suggested them, which individuals were asked to write, and which ones 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.

Minimum Number of Letters based on P and/or T case:

- Promotion to senior instructor – requires a **minimum of two letters** from external evaluators
- Promotion to Assistant Professor – requires **a minimum of three letters** from external evaluators.
- All other senior-level promotion and/or tenure cases require **a minimum of six letters** from external evaluators.

### Selection of External Evaluators

Evaluations from carefully selected external evaluators are essential to inform promotion and/or tenure decision. For assurance of quality and integrity of the review, it is a best practice that external evaluators are viewed as **being independent of, and at an arm's length from, the candidate** under review. This does not mean that the evaluator must never have met or heard of the candidate, but it does mean that evaluators should not be those who are likely, or perceived to be likely, to be predisposed, positively or negatively, about the candidate. Evaluators should be from outside the University, but preferably not outside the academy. External evaluators are expected to provide an objective assessment of the candidate's accomplishments, and comment on the impact of the candidate's work on their field.

Examples of **what may violate the arm's length** requirement include:

- Serving as the candidate's doctoral or postdoctoral supervisor
- Being supervised by the candidate (e.g. as a former mentee, trainee, or student)
- Serving as supervisor of the candidate (e.g., in an employment relationship)
- Having a close familial/friend relationship with the candidate
- Being a former departmental colleague (or school colleague for schools that do not have a departmental structure) within the past seven years. Visiting faculty members are considered colleagues for the purpose of this restriction.
- Having a close research collaboration with the candidate within the past seven years, or actively planning to collaborate with the candidate. (See exception for team-science interactions noted below.)
- Coauthoring with the candidate within the past seven years, or actively planning to

coauthor with the candidate. (See exception for team-science interactions noted below.)

- Having received compensation from or on behalf of the candidate

Examples of **what does not violate the arm's length** requirement include:

- Having conversation(s) with the candidate at a conference
- Participating on a panel or a committee with the candidate
- Inviting the candidate to present a paper at a conference organized by the evaluator, or to write a chapter in a book edited by the evaluator
- Presenting a guest lecture or seminar at the university of the evaluator
- Reviewing for publication a manuscript authored/coauthored by the candidate
- Participating in team-science<sup>2</sup> research, and/or coauthoring publications based on team-science research, provided that the evaluator certifies that there is significant distance within the team (no or very little direct interaction) between the evaluator and the candidate.

Biographical sketches:

Each external evaluator's **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 external evaluator's 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.**