

Item J: Letters from External Evaluators

See *Faculty Manual* §4.XI.4.(j).

1. Individuals who have access to this item:

- All those granted access to the dossier:
 - The initiator
 - The Associate Dean
 - Members of the Tenure and Promotion Committee
 - The Dean of the College
 - The President

2. Participants in preparing this item, and the role of each participant:

- *Candidate* –
 - Suggests potential evaluators to the initiator
 - Provides information to initiator describing his or her relationship with each prospective evaluator and explaining why each evaluator would be an appropriate choice
 - Provides initiator with six copies of his or her CV and six copies of professional materials to be sent to external evaluators and made available to the Tenure and Promotion Committee
- *Initiator* –
 - Consults with the candidate and tenured members to develop a list of potential evaluators, including a rationale for each
 - Consults with candidate and tenured members, and may also consult with Associate Dean, to rank-order the list of potential evaluators and prepare the rationale for each
 - Advises candidate on CV preparation (see Item A) and contents of portfolio of professional materials to be sent to external evaluators
 - Provides the Dean of the College with the appropriate version of the department's Statement on Significant Professional Activities (see Item O).
 - Provides final ordered list of recommended evaluators to the Dean of the College, with name, address, statement of relationship to the candidate, and rationale for each individual on the list
- *Tenured members of the department* –
 - Suggest potential evaluators to initiator, including a rationale for each
 - Provide feedback to initiator on the draft list of evaluators and accompanying rationale prior to submission to the Dean of the College

- *Associate Dean* – Upon request, provides feedback to initiator on the draft list of external evaluators and rationales
- *Dean of the College* –
 - Sends initial letter of inquiry to five individuals on the initiator’s list of potential evaluators to ascertain willingness to participate. Sends letters to additional individuals as needed.
 - After an evaluator has replied in the affirmative, the Dean of the College sends the following:
 - ✓ A personal letter of instruction to each evaluator
 - ✓ The Faculty Manual Standards for Faculty Evaluation
 - ✓ The department’s Statement on Significant Professional Activities and, in cases of tenure in a joint appointment, the portion of the statement of joint expectations focusing on professional activities
 - ✓ The candidate’s CV
 - ✓ The candidate’s portfolio of professional materials

3. Guidelines and suggestions:

- It is advisable to submit a list of at least five potential evaluators to the Office of the Dean, since not all of those contacted may be able to participate. The initiator may wish to keep the names of one or two additional evaluators on hand in the event that several of the individuals on the original list decline the Dean’s invitation.
- As a group, the external evaluators should be characterized by:
 - *Objectivity:* The nature of any relationship between the candidate and each evaluator should not be such as to compromise the objectivity of the evaluator’s review of the candidate’s professional work.
 - *Balance:* The evaluators should collectively reflect a breadth of expertise commensurate with the breadth of the candidate’s professional activities.
 - *Professional expertise:* The substance of the evaluators’ collective areas of expertise should be appropriate to the substance of the candidate’s work.
- The Office of the Dean of the College is responsible for ascertaining the availability of prospective evaluators. Neither the candidate nor the initiator should contact prospective evaluators in advance of the Dean’s invitation to write. The Office of the Dean is also responsible for following up with external evaluators in the event of any delay in the submission of the requested letter.
 - Typically, a candidate’s portfolio of professional materials for review by the external evaluators consists principally of materials completed since the candidate’s last review for tenure and/or promotion. However, activities or accomplishments of major significance that demonstrate the candidate’s suitability for the rank for which the candidate is being considered, but that occurred prior to the last review, may also be

included. This recommendation is consistent with a dual expectation for faculty performance conveyed by the *Faculty Manual*: that candidates for tenure and/or promotion will have an overall record of distinguished professional accomplishments, irrespective of when those accomplishments may have occurred, and that the candidate's commitment to professional activity is sustained and ongoing.¹

4. Additional resources:

5. Contact for questions or concerns:

- Executive Assistant to the Provost (x6799)
- Assistant Provost (x3004)

¹ Both these expectations – the expectation of distinction over the course of the entire career to date and the expectation of sustained and ongoing accomplishment -- are embedded in the criteria for both tenure and promotion. The criteria for tenure indicate that “[t]he granting of tenure is a recognition that the individual is a valued and productive member of the faculty as indicated by teaching effectiveness, scholarship, and service to the institution and profession. The decision to grant tenure reflects a comprehensive judgment about past performance and future potential...By granting tenure, the College is expressing confidence that a person with proven accomplishments in a tenure-track appointment will continue to perform in a way that is appropriate to the needs of the institution” (*Faculty Manual IX.*). The criteria for promotion similarly indicate that candidates “must have demonstrated that they meet high standards of professional competence in their disciplines and that they possess the ability and interest to ensure continued growth” (4.X.E.1).

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