

Promotion and/or Tenure Guidance

#5: The Formal Request for External Review



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

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As noted in guidance document #4, there will typically be three communications with those selected to serve as external reviewers, and one example of each communication should be placed in the dossier.

- Inquiry regarding availability to serve
- Formal request for evaluation
- Acknowledgement

Document #4 addressed the first of these; templates for the remaining two communications are provided on the following pages. While these may be “customized,” please ensure that the same set of materials is sent to each reviewer and that each reviewer is asked to address any personal or professional relationships with the candidate.

Each external reviewer should receive:

- The candidate’s statement (signed and dated)
- The candidate’s CV (signed and dated)
- The candidate’s scholarship portfolio
 - A “comprehensive portfolio of scholarship, research, and/or creative practice; and appropriate evidence of national or international recognition or impact”
 - Depending on departmental/unit norms, may include all or a selected illustrative set of publications, etc.
 - Should include only materials that appeared during the period under review
 - May include examples of work in progress
- The department/unit promotion and tenure criteria document

Sample Letter upon Agreement to Provide the Requested Evaluation

July 1, 2014

Professor _____
Department of Accounting
University of Texas at Austin
1 University Station B6000
Austin, TX 78712

Dear Professor _____:

Thank you for agreeing to evaluate _____, Assistant Professor of Accounting, who is being considered for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure at the University of Oregon. As part of our evaluation process, we seek outside assessments from highly regarded faculty in the candidate's field to help us assess the faculty member's scholarly contributions to the field. When you submit your evaluation – by September 16, 2014, as previously agreed – please also provide a copy of your current curriculum vita or biographical sketch, which we will provide to the University's personnel committees.

Enclosed you will find Professor ____'s current CV, personal statement, and representative examples of scholarship, as well as the Department's statement of expectations for tenure and promotion. It will be very helpful to us if your written evaluation addresses the following questions.

- What is the nature of your relationship, if any, to Professor ____? (e.g., co-author, thesis advisor, etc.)
- What are the most significant scholarly results produced by Professor ____, and what impact have those results had on the discipline?
 - Please comment on the appropriateness of the venues/outlets used by the candidate to disseminate scholarly products.
 - Please consider contextualizing your remarks in terms of common practices within the discipline or sub-field of the candidate with respect to collaboration, co-authorship, grant funding, or other characteristics.
- How does Professor ____'s record of scholarship compare – both qualitatively and quantitatively – with other scholars in the field at comparable stages in their academic careers?
- How do you assess Professor ____'s potential for producing high-quality scholarship going forward?
- Would Professor ____'s record of scholarship support a positive tenure recommendation at your institution?

- Optionally, you may comment on the impact of any professional (disciplinary) service rendered by Professor _____. We do not ask you to evaluate the significance of Professor _____'s teaching or local service activities, unless you have had the opportunity to personally observe those activities.

[Insert paragraph regarding waiver status here, choosing from one of the two options below.]

[If appropriate, insert a paragraph here that clarifies the time period for which review is requested. See examples on the following page.]

I sincerely appreciate your time and effort, and thank you in advance for your evaluation.

Sincerely,

_____, Title

Address

Telephone

e-mail address

Sample Paragraph Waiving Access to the External Letters

Your letter will become part of the official personnel review file. Professor _____ has voluntarily waived in advance access to the evaluative file, with the expectation that this waiver will enable reviewers to provide thorough and candid evaluations. Since this waiver has been reviewed for its legality, I can assure you that the University will not disclose your letter to the candidate, although we cannot predict whether challenge in a court might result in such disclosure. With the waiver, however, Professor _____ retains [his/ her] right to request a substantive summary of all evaluative remarks, carefully edited to avoid disclosure of the identity of the referee.

Sample Paragraph for Retaining Access to the External Letters

Your letter will become part of the official personnel review file. Oregon law permits full access of a faculty member to his or her personnel files unless such access is voluntarily waived. I must tell you that your letter will be seen by Professor _____ should [he/she] request access to [his/her] file.

Sample Paragraph for Candidates who Have Taken Leave(s) of Absence

It is University of Oregon policy not to count leave-of-absence periods toward the promotion and tenure “clock.” However, all professional activity reported during or arising from a leave period should be included in the promotion and tenure evaluation. Professor ____ was credited with a one-year leave of absence, and thus the primary focus for your review should be from [year]-present.

Sample Paragraph for Candidates who are using Credit for Prior Service

Professor ____ was hired with credit for prior experience. The primary focus for your review should be from [year]-present. While you are of course welcome to comment on earlier activities, these activities will receive secondary consideration in our internal processes.

[If the candidate is using all the initially allotted years of credit for prior service, identify the year at which the employment leading to this assignment of credit began. If the candidate is using only some of the allotted credit years, identify the year that, when combined with the candidate’s years of service at UO, provides a six-year “window” as the period of primary consideration.]

Sample Thank You Letter upon Receipt of Letter of Evaluation

September 17, 2014

Professor _____
Department of Accounting
University of Texas at Austin
1 University Sta B6000
Austin, TX 78712

Dear Professor _____:

On behalf of the Department of Accounting, I am writing to express our sincere appreciation for your review of Professor ____'s qualifications for promotion and tenure.

I recognize that reading an extensive file like this, and preparing a thorough and thoughtful evaluation, takes time and adds to the burden of many tasks that you face each day. I can assure you that your input is extremely valuable and will play an important role in our decision-making processes both within the Department and at the College and University levels.

Sincerely,

_____, Title
Address
Telephone
e-mail address

Guidance document #6 will address construction of the dossier in preparation for review within the department.