

Guidance for Content and Formatting of Promotion and Tenure Dossiers

College of Agricultural Sciences

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Contents of Dossier

Note: All of the following are required for the mid-term P&T review for tenure-track and professor of practice faculty except for the letters from external evaluators.

Cover Page

- Include name of candidate, department and college, and what action is being requested (e.g. Promotion to Professor).

Form A

- Include check list [Form A](#).

Confidentiality Waiver (optional)

- All faculty have the option of signing a "[Waiver of Access](#)" form for outside letters of evaluation. The signed original should be included in this section. Execution of the waiver is voluntary. If the candidate chooses not to sign the waiver of access, include a statement to that effect in this section.

Position Description

- The position description is where the specific work assignments and expectations for the faculty are enumerated. This document serves as the basis for evaluating whether the candidate has met the criteria for promotion and tenure. The three criteria relate to: 1) performance of assigned duties; 2) scholarly achievement; and 3) service. See [Criteria for Promotion and Tenure](#) for the definition of scholarship and the specific criteria and expectations for granting tenure and promotion.
- The first requirement of the position description is that it clearly delineates the candidate's assigned duties as the basis for assessing the candidate's performance of those duties. The format must follow university [Guidelines for Position Descriptions for Academic](#) with assigned duties divided among teaching, advising, research, extension, and service. These assignments reflect how the candidate is expected to allocate their time and must add up to 100%.
- Under the University's definition of scholarship, research is not synonymous with scholarship. This distinction is particularly important for a college with the diversity of positions found in the College of Agricultural Sciences. Thus, the second requirement of the position description is that it clearly specifies what proportion of the candidate's assigned duties is expected to generate scholarly outputs, as well as the types of scholarly output expected for that particular position. A minimum of 15% of the candidate's effort is expected to result in scholarly output; for some positions, scholarly outputs may

comprise the majority of the expectation for the position. For example, an endowed research professor with assigned duties of 100% research might have an 80% scholarship expectation. For faculty with split appointments, the scholarship can come from any or all of the areas of assigned duties (e.g. scholarship of teaching, research or Extension).

- If there have been shifts in a candidate's assignments in the review period, all position descriptions should be included. In these cases, a helpful practice for all candidate dossiers is to provide a table that summarizes actual FTE distribution across primary activities for each year of the review period.

Candidate's Statement

- **PART A:** Three page maximum, single-spaced, 12 point font, and one inch margins. Address the individual's contributions in the areas of teaching, advising and other assignments; scholarship and creative activity; diversity, equity and inclusion; and service.
- **PART B:** An optional COVID-19 impact statement may be included (1-page maximum, 12 point font, one inch margins). This statement is in addition to the 3-page candidate statement and does not impact the length of that statement. COVID-19 impact statements describe the impact of the pandemic on the ability to perform duties in the position description. Impacts may include the following examples: personal circumstances that impede work, lack of access to research facilities and sites, inability to collect data, publication delays, cancelled conferences and seminars, or other circumstances attributable to the changed landscape of working under pandemic conditions.

Student Letter of Evaluation (candidates with a teaching and/or advising responsibility only)

- **PART A: Student Evaluation Letter**
 - Document the students' perspective of the candidate's effectiveness as a teacher and advisor.
 - Include a description of the process used in the unit for the selection of the student committee; a copy of the instructions given to the students; a short description of the group of students that provided letters, the nature of their relationship to the faculty member and whether the candidate or the P&T committee nominated the student to be a member of the committee; and the summary letter from the student committee, signed by the members of the committee (refer to current University guidelines for more specific information on the process).
- **PART B: Peer Review of Teaching Letter**
 - Candidates with a teaching appointment are required to have substantive peer evaluations of teaching. Based on university [P&T Guidelines](#), "Peer evaluations should be based on a review of course syllabi, texts, assigned reading, examinations, class materials, and other assessments such as attendance at lectures as appropriate for the field and subject area. Peer teaching evaluations should be systematic and on-going, following unit guidelines for peer review of teaching."
 - A summary letter of peer reviews of teaching should be provided. Do not include individual reviews. Peer reviews should be conducted on a regular basis, sensitive to teaching load and other administrative needs. Candidates should receive ongoing feedback on their teaching before they reach a promotion juncture. Best practice for pre-tenure candidates is for peer reviews of teaching to be conducted annually and to thoughtfully sample observations from the full range of courses taught.

Clientele Survey (candidates with an Extension appointment only)

- A summary of clientele surveys is provide to clearly demonstrate an independent evaluation of the Extension program. Similar to student teaching evaluations, the methods used to obtain these evaluations should be clearly documented.
- In addition, [Citizen Evaluation of Teaching \(CET\)](#) is required. Several CETs per year may be required depending on Extension FTE and a summary of CETs should be included in CV.

Unit and College Promotion and Tenure Committee Letters

- Unit (academic department in the case of CAS) and college P&T committees are charged with evaluating candidates; they are not in an advocacy role.
- The letters should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's performance and should comment on key points in the dossier, address all responsibilities identified in the position description, and provide a fair and balanced summary of all peer and external solicited evaluations. The letter must address key points (including any negative comments) in external letters of evaluation (coded to protect confidentiality).
- Committees should not compromise their own assessments by drawing extensively on choice quotes from external reviewers.
- Evaluations should be based on the professorial responsibilities of the candidate. Significant administrative responsibilities, such as department chair, center/station director, or associate dean, are not in the scope of a unit or college P&T committee's evaluation.
- Letters should explicitly assess how the candidate fulfills the university's requirements for promotion and/or tenure. For cases involving a second promotion (e.g., to Professor), letters should explicitly address achievements since the last promotion alongside an evaluation of the candidate's total record.

Unit Letters of Evaluation

- If the candidate reports to, or works closely with, more than one supervisor and more than one unit, letters from each supervisor should be included. The letters from the supervisor(s) evaluates the relative strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's performance and should comment on key points in the dossier, address all responsibilities identified in the position description, and provide a fair and balanced summary of all peer and external solicited evaluations.

Administrative Letters (Letters from Department Head and Dean)

- These letters are to evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's performance. If the candidate reports to, or works closely with, more than one supervisor, letters from each should be included. These letters should not simply be a restatement of evaluations at previous administrative levels and should summarize and comment on key points in the letters of evaluation solicited from qualified reviewers in the candidate's field - Focus on what you are uniquely able to add to the evaluation.
- These letters should offer perspective on any dissent in the unit or college committees, as well as address any negative comments made by external reviewers.
- These letters should address any concerns raised in the student summary letter.
- For cases involving a second promotion (e.g., to Professor), letters should explicitly address achievements since the last promotion alongside an evaluation of the candidate's total record.

- Evaluators should be identified only by a coded reference number or letter when referring to a comment in a confidential letter and every effort should be made to maintain anonymity of the reviewer when referencing comments.
- All letters must be signed by all committee members.

Promotion and Tenure Vita

- The vita for promotion and/or tenure review should be formatted to follow the section headings stated at [Promotion and Tenure Dossier Preparation Guidelines](#).
- Templates of promotion and tenure dossier vita for CAS faculty with specific comments on the content and format can be located at [CAS P&T website](#).

External Letters of Evaluation

- Solicited letters of evaluation from outside leaders in the field (6 minimum, 8 maximum) for professorial faculty.
- For the 2023-2024 promotion cycle, the University no longer requires external letters of evaluation for promotion to the ranks of (1) Senior Instructor I & II, (2) Senior Faculty Research Assistants I & II, and (3) Senior Research Associates I & II.
- Selection of external reviewers should come from peer institutions or similar.
- Individuals must be at or above the rank being pursued; if they are not, there should be a rationale for their inclusion.
- Letters should not be solicited from co-authors or co-principal investigators who collaborated with the candidate in the last five years. In general, letters should not be solicited from former post-doctoral advisers, professors, or former students. If letters from any of these generally excluded evaluators are critical to candidate assessment, a detailed explanation of why their participation is essential and of why there is expectation for objectivity must be provided by the unit leader who requested their letter.
- Letters should generally be from tenured professors or individuals of equivalent stature outside of academe who are widely recognized in the field. External letters for professorial faculty should never be solicited from clients or others whom the candidate has directly served in his/her/their work.
- A full accounting of solicitation attempts, including those who declined or never responded, must be included in the dossier preceding the letters.
- No more than half of the 6-8 external letters can be from the candidate list.

Candidate's Signed Statement

- Prior to the dossier receiving its first formal review by the unit promotion and tenure committee, the candidate should sign a statement that he or she has reviewed the open part of the dossier and that it is complete and current. The candidate retains the right of access to recommendations added by deans, heads, chairs, directors, and unit promotion and tenure committees.