

Guidelines for External Evaluation Letters and Cover Letter

Three to five letters from external reviewers must be included as part of the candidate's dossier. Five letters are required for cases involving promotion to professor. The external review letters should be added to the dossier by the chair or department designate and available to the tenured members of the department and members of Department Advisory Committee as they evaluate the candidate. The process of soliciting external letters should begin no later than June to ensure that the dossier is complete prior to review of the candidates.

The external letters will only be accessible to the candidate upon legal request.

In selecting and submitting these letters, the departments should follow these guidelines:

- The Chair or department designate should solicit all external reviewer letters. Reviewers should receive the candidate's vitae, their personal statement, and selected articles, books, or other examples of creative or scholarly activity. The reviewer should be supplied with the department's criteria for tenure and/or promotion to the aspired rank.
- Prospective reviewers should be affiliated with institutions at least similar in quality and profile to TCU. As a rule, external reviewers should be tenured faculty or administrators at their home institution and prominent scholars with expertise in the research and creative areas of the candidates seeking tenure/promotion. Where appropriate, however, reviewers may be solicited from industry or government agencies.
- In only rare instances, which shall be explained by the Chair with documentation included in the candidate's dossier, should reviewers be graduate student colleagues, former professors, collaborators on publications and research projects, or close friends of the candidate.
- A majority of the external reviewers should come from names provided by the chair in cooperation with tenured members of the department. This selection process should be documented as part of the department tenure/promotion procedures. In all cases, at least one of the external reviewers should come from names supplied by the candidate. In cases of promotion to full professor, two reviewers should come from the list supplied by the candidate.
- In some instances, a candidate can provide names of individuals which should not serve as external reviewers because of a conflict of interest. For example, if the candidate has had a conflict of interest over a publication or grant proposal with an individual which could compromise a fair and objective evaluation, then that should be brought to the attention of the Chair.
- In an effort to ensure that between three and five letters are available, departments may contact additional reviewers. If more than the desired number of letters are received, all letters should be placed in the candidate's dossier.

- The external letters must address the candidate's scholarly record and contribution to his or her discipline but should not comment on whether or not the candidate would qualify for tenure or promotion at the reviewer's institution.
- Departments should follow the boilerplate example in preparing letters for potential external reviewers.
- During the promotion and tenure process, the candidate should not communicate with any of the individuals s/he suggested as potential reviewers.