

Promotion and Tenure External Evaluator College Approval Process

Revised January 25, 2022

RATIONALE:

To ensure that all external evaluators meet college standards and approval as articulated in the college APT document (see appendix), and to facilitate filling in the OAA cover sheets for submission of the final dossier.

GUIDELINES:

1. The majority of letters in the final dossier should be from full professors from institutions that are in the [Association of American Universities \(AAU\)](#) or [Big 10 Academic Alliance \(BTAA\)](#). Individuals in this category, and who are in the same field as the candidate are pre-approved but should be reported on the list provided to the college. No written justification is required for individuals in this category.
2. The use of multiple evaluators from the same institution is strongly discouraged; provide justification for any requested exceptions, and list how you will prioritize invitations (i.e., plan to invite a second evaluator only if the first evaluator from that institution has declined).
3. If the potential evaluator is from an academic institution that is not clearly a peer or aspirational peer for Ohio State (defined as AAU or BTAA), or if the potential evaluator is from a nonacademic institution (e.g., a public policy think tank, a private art academy or music conservatory, a museum, a biomedical company, or a governmental agency), provide a brief justification, e.g., based on the prestige of the institution, the credentials and experience of the evaluator, or specific relevance to the candidate's activities. The research credentials of the evaluators should generally mirror those of a professor at the full professor rank at Ohio State (e.g., in a single marker department where a second book is the gold standard, a full professor should have published two books).
4. For reviews of assistant professors, a limited number of evaluators who are associate professors is permitted by the college, but justification should be provided (e.g., a small or new field for which more senior people are not available, evaluator has gained prominence as a national or international expert in the field, etc.). These individuals must be from AAU or BTAA institutions. For reviews of associate professors, all evaluators must be full professors (or equivalent). Emeritus full professors at other institutions are acceptable as long as they are still active researchers.
5. International evaluators from strong institutions are allowed. These should be a minority of the final set of letters.
6. No more than half of the letters in the final dossier can be from individuals named by the candidate. If an evaluator is INDEPENDENTLY named by both the candidate and someone else (e.g., the P&T committee), the evaluator counts as having been named by the P&T committee as the committee suggested that name without candidate input.



7. If external evaluations were solicited for the fourth year review of an assistant professor, effort should be made to minimize overlap between the sets of evaluators for the fourth- and sixth-year reviews. Exceptions should be requested at the time of approval (see details below). Evaluators who reviewed candidates' promotion and tenure cases may be evaluators for their promotion to full professor, but this fact should be noted on the approval request.
8. Evaluators should be chosen for whom there is no conflict of interest. Previous advisors are not allowed as evaluators, per OAA and college policies; former faculty at Ohio State can be included if no conflict of interest is apparent, but emeritus faculty at Ohio State are not appropriate. Conflict of interest is based on whether the success of the candidate has a potential impact on the success of the evaluator. Letters from collaborators may be solicited by the TIU head to provide information on the role of the candidate in the collaborative work. These letters are placed in the "Other Letters" section and are informative not evaluative. No approval from the college is required for letters of this type.

PROCESS:

External evaluator lists should be submitted by either the TIU head or the P&T chair to Shari Speer, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, no later than May 25, 2022. If an extension is needed, please let Shari Speer know the reason in advance of the deadline. These lists should be submitted and approved before contacting the potential evaluators. Lists should be checked with the candidate to ensure that there is no conflict of interest, and any working relationship should be disclosed.

Please submit lists as a Word document to speer.21@osu.edu and provide separate documents for each candidate for promotion. For each faculty candidate, list the following:

1. Faculty candidate's name, rank, TIU, joint TIU (if any), Discovery Themes Initiative affiliation (if any), and main areas of research or creative activity
2. For each potential evaluator, include the following information:
 - a. Evaluator's name, rank, institution, department, and any significant distinction (e.g., named professorship, academy membership, service as journal editor, etc.)
 - b. Evaluator's areas of expertise; if not in same area(s) as candidate, indicate how the fields of specialization overlap
 - c. For faculty at non-AAU or Big Ten Alliance schools only: a brief justification of why they are an appropriate evaluator (i.e., awards or honors, or circumstances for why their qualifications are equivalent to a full professor from a peer institution)
 - d. For evaluators who are associate professors, provide justification for why this evaluator is important for reviewing this candidate

If the evaluator has reviewed an earlier fourth year or promotion case, note that fact and include a brief explanation of why it is appropriate to solicit another review from this person. Please provide longer lists if you expect issues in identifying evaluators, and if additional names are provided later, please provide the list of evaluators who have accepted at that time (for context).

Shari Speer will screen the lists, consult with the divisional deans as needed, and inform the TIU head (or P&T chair, if that person provided the list) when approval is granted or if any adjustments need to be made.



Appendix: Section on External Evaluators in ASC APT document

EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS

External evaluations of scholarship are obtained for all promotion reviews. These include all tenure track promotion and promotion or tenure reviews, all research contract renewal and promotion reviews, and all adjunct faculty promotion reviews. External evaluations of research and scholarly activity are not obtained for Clinical/Teaching/Practice faculty members unless the faculty member has been involved in a significant amount of research. The decision to seek external evaluations for a Clinical/Teaching/ Practice faculty member will be made by the department chair or school director after consulting with the candidate and the chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee.

A minimum of five credible and useful evaluations must be obtained. A credible and useful evaluation:

- A. Is written by a person highly qualified to judge the candidate's research and/or creative activity (or other performance, if relevant) who can give an “arms’ length” evaluation of the research record and is not a close personal friend, research collaborator, or former academic advisor or post-doctoral mentor of the candidate. Qualifications are generally judged on the basis of the evaluator's expertise, record of accomplishments, and institutional affiliation. The department will only solicit evaluations from full professors at institutions comparable to Ohio State. In the case of an assistant professor seeking promotion to associate professor with tenure, a minority of the evaluations may come from associate professors.
- B. Provides sufficient analysis of the candidate's performance to add information to the review. A letter's usefulness is defined as the extent to which the letter is analytical as opposed to perfunctory. Under no circumstances will “usefulness” be defined by the perspective taken by an evaluator on the merits of the case.

Since the department cannot control who agrees to write or the usefulness of the letters received, more letters are sought than are required, and they are solicited no later than the end of the spring semester* prior to the review year. This timing allows additional letters to be requested should fewer than five useful letters result from the first round of requests. As described above, a list of potential evaluators is assembled by the TIU's Promotion and Tenure Committee, the unit head and the candidate. [Faculty Rule 3335-6-04](#) requires that no more than half the external evaluation letters in the dossier be written by persons suggested by the candidate. In the event that the person(s) suggested by the candidate do not agree to write, neither the Office of Academic Affairs nor the college requires that the dossier contain letters from evaluators suggested by the candidate.

All potential evaluators must be approved by the college through Shari Speer. The department follows the Office of Academic Affairs suggested format, provided in the [OAA Policies and Procedures Handbook](#), for letters requesting external evaluations from approved potential evaluators. Under no circumstances may a candidate solicit external evaluations or initiate contact in any way with external evaluators for any purpose related to the promotion review. If an external evaluator should initiate contact with the candidate regarding the review, the candidate must inform the evaluator that such communication is inappropriate and report the occurrence to the unit head who will decide what, if any, action is warranted (e.g., requesting permission from the Office of Academic Affairs to exclude that letter from the dossier). It is in the candidate's self-interest to assure that there is no ethical or procedural lapse, or the appearance of such a lapse, in the course of the review process. All solicited external evaluation letters that are received must be included in the dossier.



If concerns arise about any of the letters received, these concerns may be addressed in the department's written evaluations or brought to the attention of the Office of Academic Affairs for advice.

Source: [Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure Criteria and Procedures for The Ohio State University College of Arts and Sciences](#)

**Note: most units in ASC solicit letters in late spring or early summer.*

