Promotion and Tenure External Evaluator College Approval Process
Revised February 19, 2020

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. Full professors from institutions that are in the Association of American Universities (AAU), https://www.aau.edu/about/default.aspx?id=16710 or Big 10 Alliance (BTA), http://www.btaa.org/about/member-universities, and who are in the same field as the candidate, are pre-approved but should still be reported on the list provided to the college.

2. If the potential evaluator is from an academic institution that is not clearly a peer or aspirational peer for OSU (e.g., a liberal arts college, a non-R1 university), 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 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).

3. The use of multiple evaluators from the same field in 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).

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.). The college APT states that “a minority of evaluations may come from associate professors.” 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. If external evaluations were solicited for the fourth year review of an assistant professor, those evaluators should not be solicited to review the promotion and tenure case. Exceptions should be requested at the time of approval (see details below). Evaluators who reviewed candidates’ tenure and promotion cases may evaluate their promotion-to-full professor case, but this fact should be noted on the approval request.

6. Evaluators should be chosen for whom there is no conflict of interest. Previous advisors are not appropriate as evaluators, per OAA and college policies; former faculty at OSU can be included if no conflict of interest is apparent, but emeritus faculty at OSU are not appropriate. Conflict of
P&T External Evaluator College Approval Process

interest is based on whether the success of the candidate has a potential impact on the success of the evaluator. In general, collaborators should not serve as external evaluators; exceptions (e.g., for minor collaborations) require approval from the college. Letters from collaborators may be solicited by the chair 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 chair or the P and T chair to Tina Henkin, associate dean for faculty affairs, as soon as is practicable but no later than May 25, 2020. If an extension is needed, please let Tina Henkin 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 to henkin.3@osu.edu and provide separate lists 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 and/or Big Ten Alliance schools only: a brief justification of why they are an appropriate evaluator
   d. For evaluators who are associate professors, provide justification for why this evaluator is important for reviewing this candidate
   e. 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 (an overlap with the fourth year review case will be approved only in exceptional circumstances).

Please provide longer lists if you expect issues in identifying evaluators. If additional names are provided later, please provide the complete list of evaluators who have accepted at that time, or who have not yet responded (for context).

Associate Dean Tina Henkin will screen the lists, consult with the divisional deans as needed, and inform the chair (or P and T chair, if that person provided the list) when approval is granted and/or if any adjustments need to be made. Please consult with Tina Henkin if additional names are required.

Note that while no justification is required at this stage for reviewers who are full professors at AAU or Big Ten Alliance schools, a justification will be required for ALL reviewers as part of the complete dossier.
EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS

External evaluations of scholarship are obtained for all promotion reviews. These include all tenure track promotion and tenure or promotion 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 faculty members unless the faculty member has been involved in a significant amount of research. The decision to seek external evaluations for a clinical 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 (http://trustees.osu.edu/university/facultyrules) 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 the appropriate divisional dean.** The department follows the Office of Academic Affairs suggested format, provided at http://oaa.osu.edu/leaders/handbook/sampledocuments.html, 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.***


*Note: most units in ASC solicit letters late spring/early summer.
**Note: this approval is now handled by Tina Henkin as associate dean for faculty affairs
***Note: please consult with Tina Henkin for questions of this type