



Provost Office Guidelines for Faculty External Evaluation

The department chair should consult with the candidate on the preparation of the proposed external evaluators list. The candidate may nominate their own external evaluators. At least one, but no more than two, evaluators in the final group of letters should be from the candidate's proposed list. The candidate should have an opportunity to review the department list so that they can register any objections to specific individuals whom they feel cannot render a qualified, fair, and impartial evaluation. Disagreements will be resolved by the Provost.

For each proposed evaluator, **the department chair and/or dean should provide brief context** (a sentence or two) as to why an individual is a suitable choice, especially when the criteria below are not fully applied.

Institution type:

Evaluators must come from institutions comparable to or better than Lehigh University. Any exception to this rule should have a reasonable explanation as to why the proposed candidate is on the list.

Rank:

For the final group of evaluators, no more than one at the Associate Professor level is permitted for tenure cases. If the list of proposed evaluators from the department or candidate includes more than one Associate Professor, then the department should reach out to no more than one at a time.

No faculty under the rank of Professor should be considered as external reviewers for promotion to full cases.

Independence of Reviewers:

External reviewers should be able to provide an independent, objective assessment of the candidate's work, and as such, should remain at "arm's length." This includes having ever been a former advisor or supervisor or being a recent close collaborator. Close collaboration is defined as co-authorship, co-editorship, co-PI on a grant, or similar close relationship within the last three years. In some fields, papers can include hundreds of co-authors. In these cases, co-authorship should not necessarily disqualify a reviewer as such a relationship is unlikely by itself unlikely to create a conflict of interest or to interfere with an independent assessment.

Non-U.S. Scholar:

Promotion to full professor should indicate that the faculty member has an international reputation as a scholar. Therefore, at the promotion to full professor level, at least one letter should come from a non-US-based scholar or a scholar who has significant experience at a non-US-based institution. There are some academic fields where this may not be applicable - such as fields in which work by researchers outside the US is minimal. In those cases, a brief explanation should be included with the proposed list of reviewers.

Previously reviewed for tenure:

It is the department's responsibility to note whether a proposed evaluator previously reviewed the candidate for tenure. More than half the number of required external evaluators for a Promotion to Full review must be new. Example: If 5 or 6 are chosen for the final list, no more than 2 evaluators can be from the tenure list; if 8 are chosen for the final list, no more than 3 can be evaluators from the tenure list.

Finalized list (following Provost Approval) should not include multiple evaluators from the same institution, unless they are beyond the five required reviewers.

**These revised Guidelines were vetted by the Deans in March of 2021, and it is the Provost's expectation that Department Chairs and Deans reviewing lists of external evaluators follow these revised Guidelines, as well as R&P, and any additional College Guidelines.*