

## **Guidelines on Requirements for External Evaluations Promotion and Tenure Review: 2008-2009**

These guidelines present the essential standards and procedures for external evaluation letters required across Schools, the College, and Research units for files submitted to the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure. Schools, the College, the Libraries, and Research & Graduate Studies may have additional requirements for external evaluations. Accordingly chairs of initial review committees should consult the guidelines of the appropriate administrative unit in addition to these.

The purpose of external peer evaluations is to provide an independent, unbiased evaluation of the candidate's scholarly attainment in the discipline or achievement in professional performance. For tenure-track and tenured faculty, external evaluators are to focus on scholarly attainment in the discipline. For unclassified academic staff, external evaluators may be asked to focus on research, professional performance, or teaching, depending upon the nature of the appointment (e.g., scientist, clinical faculty, joint appointment as a tenured/tenure-track faculty member, etc.) and criteria for promotion within the unit.

Comments and reviews by outside scholars and professionals in the same discipline or performance area shall be provided as part of the material forwarded to UCPT. All files are expected to contain 6 external evaluations. In exceptional cases, the number may be less than 6, but **never fewer than 4 evaluations**. *The department/unit/school must provide a justification for files with fewer than 6 evaluations.*

**NOTE:** The solicitation process for external evaluations should begin in sufficient time to confirm and receive six evaluations providing thorough appraisals of the candidate's work. All evaluations solicited and received **must** be included in the file.

**Identification of Reviewers:** The school, department, or unit conducting initial reviews is responsible for making every effort to obtain qualified evaluators who can provide fair and objective assessments of the candidate's work. **In the case of joint appointments**, the two units should consult on the selection of the external evaluators.

**Qualifications of Evaluators:** Evaluators should possess credentials that will document their expertise in evaluating the candidate's work within the context of the discipline or profession. **Outside evaluators must hold a rank at least equal to the rank to which the candidate is seeking promotion or have comparable professional standing in a non-academic setting.** It is also expected that evaluators from academic institutions will be at institutions comparable to KU.

**Objectivity:** One criterion in determining the degree of objectivity of external evaluators is the nature of the relationships with the candidate. Therefore, external evaluators should not include individuals who have a close academic or personal connection with the candidate (for example, dissertation advisors, former professors, graduate school colleagues, co-authors, KU faculty, personal friends, one's own former students, etc.). In rare cases, the candidate's specialized research or very narrow, specialized field of expertise requires drawing from individuals with close professional connections. In these instances, the unit is responsible for explaining and justifying an exception to this requirement. This justification should be transmitted to the UCPT.

While the University does not have a standardized university-wide selection procedure, all department/unit/school/college processes must meet the following guidelines:

- The criteria and process for selection of external evaluators must be communicated to the candidate.
- Candidates should be asked to provide up to 6 names of potential external evaluators to the chair/director/dean, and may identify up to 2 individuals that they would not wish included as external evaluators.
- Candidates must not themselves solicit external evaluators, nor should they be involved in the final selection of external evaluators.
- The department/unit/school/college is responsible for using its judgment in the final selection of external evaluators.
- In the case of joint appointments, the two units should consult on the selection of the external evaluators.
- The final list of external evaluators should include no more than 3 evaluators suggested by the candidate. The need for any exceptions to this standard should be explained and justified in the promotion and tenure file.

**Confidentiality of External Reviews:** Policies governing the confidentiality of external evaluations are established by the schools and the College. The decision concerning confidentiality will not be delegated below the College or School administrative level. UCPT should be informed of the School and College policy at the annual meeting with the Academic Deans. All letters to external evaluators must disclose the College or School policy.

**Materials Sent to External Evaluators:**

Evaluators should be sent an appropriately representative body of the candidate's work to review along with a letter outlining the review expectations (See next section). The same set of materials should be sent to all reviewers. The candidate should have input into the selection of work to be sent.

**Required Statements in Letters to External Evaluators:**

1. Confidentiality of the external evaluations:

*Confidential*

“As a part of the promotion and/or tenure review process, we are soliciting assessments of Professor \_\_\_\_\_’s research contributions from academic colleagues and distinguished professionals. These letters will become part of the candidate’s promotion and tenure dossier and are treated as confidential by the University to the extent we are permitted to do so by law.”

*Not confidential*

“As a part of the promotion and/or tenure review process, we are soliciting assessments of Professor \_\_\_\_\_’s research contributions from academic colleagues and distinguished professionals. These letters will become part of the candidate’s promotion and tenure dossier. Following the regulations within the \_\_\_\_\_ School, the candidate may have access to these letters.”

2. Request for a short form of the evaluator’s CV.

3. Areas that must be addressed by the evaluator in the evaluation letter:

- 1) Length and nature of his/her association with the candidate;
- 2) The quality of the candidate's work as reflected in the candidate's CV and works sent for the evaluator's review;
- 3) The significance of the candidate's work to the discipline/profession;
- 4) The pattern of productivity reflected in the candidate's record compared to discipline characteristics;
- 5) The extent to which the candidate's record reflects a sustainable program of scholarly activity;
- 6) The level of state, regional, national and/or international stature of the candidate as a result of this work;
- 7) Any special distinction achieved by the candidate.

**Accompanying Documentation in the Promotion and Tenure File:** The following materials must be collected for inclusion in the promotion and tenure dossier:

- One copy of the letter requesting evaluations from outside scholars or professionals;
- Copies of all responses to requests (including declines and explanations of non-responses); original or faxed letters on official letterhead and signed are required for all external evaluations.
- A brief biographical statement establishing the scholarly reputation of each external evaluator and identification of the personal or academic relationship of the evaluator to the candidate;
- List of materials sent to each evaluator;
- Evaluators' CV (short form); AND
- All letters solicited and received from external reviewers. **Electronic Submission of External Letters:** Any e-mail letter included in the file instead of the required signed hard copy must be accompanied by a departmental e-mail requesting submission of a hard copy with signature. **ONLY** evaluations requested by the unit for the purpose designated in this section of the form should be included here.

**NOTE:** These evaluations remain a part of the permanent promotion and tenure dossier.

**Contact for Questions:** Mary Lee Hummert, Vice Provost for Faculty Development:  
[mlhummert@ku.edu](mailto:mlhummert@ku.edu)