

# Promotion and/or Tenure Guidance

#9: School/College Review and Recommendation



**UNIVERSITY OF OREGON**

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prepared by Kenneth M. Doxsee  
Office of Academic Affairs

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## #9: School/College Review and Recommendation

*Throughout this document, reference is made to the department, the Department Committee, and the Department Head. It is understood that specific details will vary for those academic units that do not have a departmental configuration, including the Schools of Law, Journalism & Communication, and Music. Please adapt the guidance provided here for your circumstances, in accord with your established promotion and tenure criteria document.*

Following completion of the Department Head's report and a thorough review of the complete dossier and all supplementary files to ensure all required documents are provided and in the correct locations, the dossier and any supplementary files are forwarded to the Dean's office.

### ***Initial review by the Dean's Office***

The Dean's office should carry out their own thorough review of the dossier for completeness and compliance. If corrections are required, they should be requested from the department. Common issues at this stage include the following.

- The candidate's CV and statement must be signed and dated, ideally prior to being sent to external reviewers. If not signed and dated, or if dated after reviews were requested, ensure *and document in the dossier* that the version as seen by the external reviewers is included in the dossier. Signed and dated updates from the candidate are permissible, ideally in the form of updates to specific items rather than full copies of the CV and/or statement, but it is essential that the dossier include the version seen by the external reviewers.
- The teaching section must provide the required information and not more; in particular, signed, written student comments must be provided *only* in the supplementary file.
- Brief biographies of the external reviewers must be included, in which any relationships with the candidate are clearly stated and consistent with statements made by the reviewers. For example, rather than stating "No known relationship" regarding an external reviewer whose letter begins with a statement like, "I have been a close friend of the candidate for 20 years," consider something like, "While unaware of any relationship when we requested the review, the reviewer's letter alerted us to a long-term friendship with the candidate."
- If a central element of the candidate's scholarship is an as-yet-unpublished book manuscript, any correspondence with or updates from the candidate or the publisher should be included in the dossier – either under the CV tab if provided by the candidate or under the appropriate review/committee tab if obtained in response to a request from that reviewer or committee.
- If the candidate is a tenure-track faculty member being considered for tenure or a non-tenure-track faculty member being reviewed for promotion, ensure that the *current* contract is included under the Conditions of Appointment tab.

- In cases of co-authored publications, the candidate’s statement and/or the Department Committee report and/or the Department Head’s report should establish the significance of author order and, particularly for co-authored books, the relative contributions of the co-authors.

The Dean’s office can and should also anticipate likely questions from the school/college Personnel Committee and request appropriate clarifications from the department. Most often, such clarifications relate to publication details, but they could pertain to other matters, including teaching loads (including any release time granted) or the timing of the case, particularly in cases of credit for prior service or of leaves, for which it is important to establish clearly the nature of the consideration – “early” or “on-time.”

Following this review of the dossier for completeness and compliance, the Dean’s office releases the file to the school/college personnel committee for their review, recommendation, and vote.

### ***School/College Personnel Committee Review and Recommendation***

The school- or college-level Personnel Committee is appointed or elected by a process determined by the Dean. The committee prepares an independent report and votes, and then forwards the entire file and their report to the Dean. The Collective Bargaining Agreement allows this step to be bypassed in schools or colleges whose Deans choose not to convene a Personnel Committee. However, at present, each school and college does convene such a committee, with the exception of the Robert D. Clark Honors College, for which current practice is to refer dossiers to the Dean’s Advisory Committee in the College of Arts and Sciences.

As the Dean convenes the school- or college-level Personnel Committee, the specifics of the committee’s function are best established by the Dean. However, the following general guidance should prove valuable.

- If a member of the Personnel Committee is in the same department as the candidate, he or she is *most strongly urged* to participate in the discussion and vote at the department level and to recuse himself or herself from the case at the level of the Personnel Committee, avoiding any attendance at committee meetings or participation in committee discussions or votes.
- Committee members may develop their own preferred approach to reading and evaluating dossiers. There is great value in beginning with the candidate’s CV, then working downward in the file, through the candidate’s statement, the waiver letter, *etc.*, thereby allowing development of a personal opinion about the strengths of the case and any potential issues of concern prior to being influenced by the opinions of other reviewers or review committees. Next, study the external reviews, noting their potential endorsement or rejection of your perceptions and any additional observations of strengths or weaknesses. Only then, examine the Department Committee and Department Head reports and recommendations and evaluate them in the context of your independent appraisal of the case.
- The Personnel Committee may request additional information. Any such requests should be made not to the candidate or candidate’s department, but rather to the Dean, who will determine whether to approach the department or candidate. Please note that requests to provide additional information or clarifications to the file after it leaves the department can contribute significant

stress and anxiety to an already emotionally-charged process. Attempt to distinguish between things that could make a real difference in the evaluation of the case and those that might merely be interesting to know.

- The Personnel Committee should review, evaluate, and critically discuss the full file, including the external evaluations, the materials contained in the supplementary file, and the department-level reports and recommendations, leading to an independent evaluation and recommendation. The committee's recommendation need not coincide with the recommendation of the Department Head or the Department Committee. The committee's report should objectively and honestly discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate and should represent analysis, not advocacy.
- It is neither necessary nor desirable to duplicate material presented by the department-level reports. Rather, provide *additional* insights that help to interpret the file, particularly in cases of conflicting opinions among the external reviewers, department faculty, and/or the Department Head.
- The report should include an appropriate discussion of the candidate's record of scholarship, teaching, and service, as summarized in the candidate's CV and statement and exemplified in the supplementary portfolios.
- The report should include commentary on the candidate's discussion of contributions to institutional equity and inclusion and any evidence of these contributions provided by the candidate. The University broadly interprets institutional equity and inclusion.
  - Contributions may address a wide range of equity and inclusion issues.
  - These contributions may be made through scholarship, teaching, and/or service.
  - Activities are relevant whether carried out at the UO or externally – *e.g.*, within academic or professional associations, non-profit, governmental, and/or private sector organizations.
  - Impacts may be at the individual level (work with individual students, faculty, community members, or organizations), programmatic level (establishment or provision of leadership to a formalized program), or institutional level (strengthening of institutional policy or practice toward equity and inclusion).
- The Personnel Committee of necessity brings something of a “generalist” analysis to the case, as committee members will typically not be specialists in the candidate's area of scholarship. Thus, the committee will to some extent be “reviewing the reviews,” but the committee is both expected and empowered to go beyond that, contributing their own impartial and objective analysis of the case. Include a critical appraisal of the department-level analyses and recommendations. Are they convincing? Were important elements – either supporting or arguing against the awarding of tenure and/or promotion – disregarded or misrepresented? As appropriate, bring this critical appraisal to an analysis of each of the key components of the earlier internal reviews. Throughout the process, review the candidate's record in the context of expectations as presented in the approved departmental promotion criteria statement.
  - Do the external reviewers appear to represent an appropriate and balanced group of experts?

- Have any discrepancies or contradictory opinions within the external reviewers' letters been addressed in a forthright fashion, or have comments from an "outlier" reviewer been neglected simply because they are not consistent with other comments received? Could the "outlier" be identifying real and critical issues in the case – whether in support of or arguing against the awarding of tenure and/or promotion – that were missed by the other reviewers?
- Has the candidate's scholarship record been fully and properly evaluated in the appropriate context, including evaluations of the quality and impact of the journals or venues in which work has appeared?
- Is the candidate's record of intramural and extramural grant or fellowship support appropriate, and has it been appropriately discussed?
- Is the candidate's teaching record appropriately discussed, or are there issues that were understated or underappreciated, including possible discrepancies between student and peer evaluations?
- Have signed written comments submitted by students been appropriately reviewed and considered. *It is **not** permissible to quote from **unsigned** evaluations in any summary or evaluation statements associated with the review.*
- Have the candidate's teaching and service portfolios been appropriately reviewed and evaluated?

Often, the Personnel Committee report includes the votes and signatures of each member of the committee, but the committee should clarify this issue with the Dean to whom they will be reporting. If a candidate has waived access to the dossier, only the vote tally will be revealed, though in cases of unanimous votes, there is of course no way to avoid revealing the actual votes of each member, since committee membership is not confidential.

### ***Voting Summary***

The outcome of the Personnel Committee vote should be entered on the Voting Summary sheet and included in the dossier, with any explanatory notes included.

### ***Dean's Review and Recommendation***

The Dean will then prepare an independent report and recommendation, and then meet with the candidate to 1) discuss the case, 2) review the recommendations made by the Department Committee, the Department Head, and the school or college-level Personnel Committee (if applicable), and 3) convey the Dean's recommendation.

### ***Meeting with the Candidate***

The candidate must be provided with at least three days advance notice of the meeting with the Dean. This notice may be by letter, email, or telephone, or in person and should clearly identify the reason for the meeting – *e.g.*, “I would like to meet with you to discuss my recommendation regarding your promotion and/or tenure case.” Following the meeting with the Dean, the candidate may request from the Dean a redacted copy of the Dean’s report. *If the candidate requests access to the dossier, please consult with the Office of Academic Affairs prior to providing any access*, regardless of the candidate’s waiver status, as the question of timing of access to the full file or the redacted file is an as-yet-unresolved topic of continuing discussion. Experience suggests that the Dean’s report, representing a distillation of the complex dossier into the discrete set of specific evaluations that led the Dean to support or oppose the granting of tenure and/or promotion, is the single most useful document to a candidate considering a written response.

### ***Candidate’s Response to the Dean’s Recommendation***

The candidate may provide responsive material for the file within 10 days of the meeting with the Dean or, if requested, receipt of the redacted report, whichever is later. This material should be submitted by the candidate to the Dean, and should be included at the front of the candidate’s primary dossier. Beyond acknowledging receipt of the additional material and providing assurance to the candidate that the material will be included in the dossier, the Dean is not expected to respond to this additional material. While a written response is typically provided only by candidates whose tenure and/or promotion is *not* supported by the Dean, *all* candidates do have the opportunity to respond in writing at this time.

### ***Forwarding the Dossier to Academic Affairs***

Please attempt to determine if the candidate intends to provide a written response. If no response is planned – as in virtually all cases gaining the Dean’s positive recommendation – the Dean’s office should immediately forward the entire file to the Office of Academic Affairs. If a response is expected, hold the file until either the response is received or the deadline for submission has passed, then forward it to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Carefully review the complete dossier and all supplementary files to ensure all required documents are provided and in the correct locations. Rigorous attention to detail throughout this process will significantly reduce the likelihood of any need for further adjustments of the dossier. Requests to provide additional information or clarifications to the file after it leaves the department often contribute significant stress and anxiety to an already emotionally-charged process. Please do your best to ensure that the dossier is complete and compliant before sending it forward.

Guidance document #10 will address the final stages of the promotion and/or tenure process, particularly the process of review by the UO Faculty Personnel Committee.