

General recommendations for conducting outside reviews as part of the WPAF

For Departments that use outside reviews as part of the WPAF, the Office of Faculty Affairs offers the following set of general recommendations and template letters for conducting the outside review process:

- I. Recommendations for the process to conduct outside reviews**
- II. Template letter to invite potential outside reviewers**
- III. Template Letter to send instructions and review materials to outside reviewers**

I. Recommendations for Process

1. Outside reviews are invited by the RTP Committee (not by the candidate).
2. Candidates may suggest names for outside reviewers. RTP Committee can add additional names.
3. The RTP Committee chooses the outside reviewers and sends out invitation (See template).
4. Preferably outside reviewers will not be close colleagues or collaborators with candidate.

It is further recommended that:

5. Outside reviewers be at comparable institutions or higher.
6. Outside reviewers be at a higher rank as the candidate being reviewed.
7. Outside reviewers be asked to include a description of their relationship to the candidate.
8. Outside reviewers be asked to state potential conflict of interest in doing the review.
9. The RTP Committee provide a bio sketch or abbreviated c.v. of the outside reviewer.
10. Invitations for outside reviews be sent out no later than the month of May before the Fall semester in which the candidate's file is due.

II. Template letter to invite potential outside reviewers

Dear Dr. XXX:

I am writing to seek your assistance in evaluating the scholarship of Dr. YYY, our colleague in the Department of [...] at SF State University. Dr. YYY is being considered for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure in fall [year].

You have been suggested as someone who might be willing to review examples of Dr. YYY's scholarly work and prepare a written evaluation for inclusion in her/his file. Would you be willing to assist us in this way? If you are, and if there is no conflict of interest, would you please let me know by [date] ? Once I hear back from you, we will forward the relevant materials with detailed instructions. Your written evaluation will be due by [date]. If you are not familiar with Dr. YYY, you can access a brief description of her research on-line at: [link]

I realize that accepting this request requires considerable time, thought, and effort, but I hope you will consider doing so as your insights will help assure that Dr. YYY's scholarship receives a thorough and thoughtful review. If you have any questions or concerns about this request, please let me know. I would be happy to talk with you at any time.

Sincerely,

Chair of RTP Committee

III. Template Letter to send instructions and review materials to outside reviewers

Dear Dr. XXX:

Thank you for agreeing to review Dr. YYY's professional achievements and scholarship. Dr. YYY is being considered for [tenure or promotion to the rank of] in the Department of [...] and your input will be an important part of our overall evaluation process. We appreciate your independent, honest, objective assessment of the candidate's scholarly accomplishments as evidenced by the attached materials.

San Francisco State University is a member of the 23-campus California State University System. We are a comprehensive, non-PhD granting university serving 29,500 students. SF State faculty are expected to be outstanding teachers, demonstrate professional achievement and growth through research, scholarship, and/or creative work, and provide service to the campus and community. Dr. YYY's teaching assignment over the past 5 years has averaged [...] courses per semester..

For the decision on tenure and promotion we consider the faculty member's accomplishments and attainments while in current rank. In the case of Dr. YYY, he/she was appointed to his/ her current rank in

Enclosed is Dr. YYY's dossier including the following documents:

- [*List all materials that are sent to reviewer*]

We are interested in your evaluation of the quality and importance of Dr. YYY's scholarly contributions to his/her field including comments about the strengths and weaknesses reflected in Dr. YYY's professional work. We are not looking for a specific recommendation about granting tenure or promotion, but appreciate your review of the strength of Dr. YYY's accomplishments in the area of scholarship.

As a part of your letter, please describe your relationship with Dr. YYY. This should include how long you have known the candidate, whether you have a personal or professional relationship with the

candidate, and whether there is a potential for conflict of interest. Finally, we ask that you send with your review a copy of your current abbreviated curriculum vitae. *[This sentence to be included only if the RTP Committee cannot easily obtain the cv from the web.]*

Again, thank you for agreeing to perform this review. We greatly appreciate your time and effort and value your candid professional opinions highly. Please be advised that outside reviews are not confidential to the candidate. In order for your review to be included in the candidate's review process, we would appreciate receiving your review via email (email address) or regular mail no later than

Sincerely yours,

Chair of RTP Committee