



GUIDELINES FOR CHOOSING EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

PURPOSE:

This guideline outlines the recommended practice for selecting external reviewers. All tenure track faculty undergoing 6th year, promotion to full Professor, and/or tenure only review as well as non-tenure line faculty undergoing promotion to full Research Professor must submit a list of potential external reviewers to the College of Health and Human Development Office of Faculty Affairs and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

NUMBER OF REVIEWERS:

This section is as stated in the HHD [Tenure Line Faculty Promotion and Tenure Guidelines](#) and the HHD [Non-Tenure Line Faculty Appointment and Promotion Guidelines](#).

- a.) The Dean will receive from the academic unit head a list of eleven unique potential evaluator names, five (5) names provided by the candidate, three (3) by the academic unit review committee, and three (3) by the academic unit head as well as a back-up list of six unique potential evaluator names with three (3) additional by the academic unit review committee and three (3) additional by the academic unit head. The list will be provided in alphabetical order; will indicate whether each name was provided by the candidate, committee, or head; and will include a one-paragraph rationale (that includes a summary of the individual's relevant academic credentials) as to why that individual would be an appropriate reviewer. The Dean will choose six (6) names from this list to start the solicitation process.
- b.) External reviewers must be senior to the person being reviewed. Thus, candidates for promotion to associate professor must be reviewed by people at the rank of associate or full professor whereas candidates for promotion to full professor must be reviewed by full professors. Where applicable, reviewers may be drawn from research-related institutions outside the academy that are relevant to the candidate's field as long as they are seasoned, highly regarded researchers.
- c.) Relatives, former teachers, colleagues or students of the candidate and anyone else who is not in a position to provide a fair and impartial assessment (such as co-workers, co-authors/investigators, and friends) should be avoided as referees.
- d.) In general, references should be senior faculty from research universities similar to Penn State.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

When deciding who to include as a potential external evaluator, please keep the following in mind:

- The Dean tries to solicit reviews from people at different institutions. Including multiple names from the same institution for the same candidate limits the pool of potential evaluators.
- Evaluators should be in a position to make informed judgments about the candidate's work.
- External evaluators should be senior-level faculty from research universities/institutes similar to Penn State and be of higher rank than the candidate:
 - Candidates for promotion to associate professor must be reviewed by people at the rank of associate or full professor whereas candidates for promotion to full professor must be reviewed by full professors.
- It is acceptable to include evaluators from international institutions and people working in research-intensive organizations as long as they are seasoned, highly regarded researchers, such as NIH Intramural researchers.

The list should **NOT** include anyone who has the appearance of a vested interest in the career advancement of the candidate under review due to personal or professional associations, including:

- Candidate's former mentors or teachers, graduate school colleagues, or former students;
- Those who have collaborated with the candidate;
- Others whose relationship to the candidate might make objective assessments difficult.

CONTACT:

If the faculty member has outstanding questions or needs additional clarification, it is recommend that they confer with their Department Head or Director. They may reach out to the administrative assistant of the Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion if necessary.

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DOWNLOADABLE TEMPLATE

Potential External Reviewer List Template.xlsx