

## Summary of Survey Results

### Background

The campus Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee has generated a set of recommendations for external review for the past several years, although each year it is clear to the committee that departments use a variety of procedures in soliciting and incorporating external reviews. In the Fall of 2007, the Office of Academic Affairs undertook a survey of departments' procedures and practices regarding external review. All departments with promotion and/or tenure cases in the past decade responded (N = 33). A few significant points are summarized below.

### Use of External Reviews

It was clear from the survey that departments use many procedures to solicit and incorporate external reviews. All departments at IPFW use some form of external review in promotion and tenure. In the table below, there is a summary of the purposes for which departments solicit external review. The number of departments is listed in the appropriate cells of the table, and the percentage in parentheses.

Research Only	Area of Excellence Only	Research plus Any Other Area of Excellence	All Three Areas	Other <sup>1</sup>
9 (27%)	10 (30%)	8 (24%)	4 (12%)	2 (6%)

When reviews are solicited about more than one area (e.g., teaching as an area of excellence, plus research as an area of competence), some departments use different reviewers and others ask the same reviewers to comment on both.

### Timing and Number of Reviews

Departments generally reported that they solicited letters in the Spring semester prior to the cases going forward, generally between March and May, most in March or April, and that they usually contacted reviewers in advance to ascertain willingness to complete the review. There was a range in the number of desired reviews from 3 to 10, with the majority of departments desiring at least 4, and many seeking 5-7. The large majority of chairs said they would send all reviews forward with the case. Those few who said they might not send some forward suggested that late reviews or those indicating a conflict of interest might not be sent forward to the higher levels, but that this would be very unlikely or infrequent.

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<sup>1</sup>One was teaching and research, the other was teaching plus area of excellence.

### **Choosing Reviewers and Soliciting Reviews**

Most chairs (31/33) said they collaborate with the candidate (and sometimes with senior faculty) in choosing a list of potential reviewers. Sometimes the faculty member is aware of who is ultimately chosen as reviewers from the list (22/33), and sometimes they see the list but don't know who actually completes reviews (8/31). One chair was not aware of what the practice had been. Two department chairs reported that they alone chose the reviewers without input from the candidate. In one of these departments candidates are shown the list compiled by the chair, but they don't know who ultimately completes reviews. In the other department candidates are provided no information about the reviewers chosen by the chair. In all cases the chair solicits the reviews, and they are returned to the chair.

### **Access to Reviews and to Reviewers' Identities**

There is great variability in the extent to which candidates are provided information about the content of the reviews when they are returned. In some departments, candidates see the reviews in their entirety (15/33); in others they see the content of the reviews, with identifying information removed (8/33); in still others a summary is provided (3/33)<sup>2</sup>; and in others no information about the reviews is given to the candidate (6/33). Two chairs were unsure what the practice had been.

The greatest amount of variability in access is from one college or school to another, although there is also some variability within the same school or college. On the other hand, some schools and colleges have quite consistent practices for all departments in the school or college. For example, in SBMS, SOE, and VPA all candidates know who the reviewers are, and all see the reviews in their entirety. The same is true of all departments in ETCS except one.

There is some variability in Health and Human Services, but the greatest amount of variability is in the College of Arts and Sciences. The one department which permits candidates no input into choosing reviewers nor the opportunity to see the list or the reviews is in A&S; five of the six departments which provide no information about the content of reviews are in A&S, and all the departments providing only summaries of the reviews are in A&S. Only one A&S department reports that it provides complete information about reviewers and complete content of the reviews to candidates. In several others candidates have seen the list of reviewers, but don't know which ones actually served (4), and/or see the reviews with identifying information about the reviewers removed (5).

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<sup>2</sup>In reality, in all cases some kind of summary would be seen by candidates when they are provided with the written recommendations of committees and administrators as their cases go through the process. However, the summary here refers to one provided in advance of the process as the candidate is preparing the case.

### **Informing Reviewers about Confidentiality**

Chairs were also asked whether they informed the reviewers about the candidate's degree of access to the reviews, and whether they informed reviewers, that by law, the reviews could not be confidential if requested by the candidate in the event of a grievance or lawsuit.<sup>3</sup> With respect to the first question (candidate's access), 27/33 (82%) chairs said that reviewers were informed. Most of the chairs (4/6) who said reviewers were not informed about this were in the College of Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science. With respect to the second question (the reviews could be made available on request), 23/33 (70%) said yes, 9/33 (27%) said no, and one said he didn't know for sure. Again, four ETCS chairs (not including OLS) answered that reviewers were not given this information.

### **What Reviewers Are Sent**

All department chairs said that reviewers were sent the candidate's CV and a letter from the chair<sup>4</sup>. Most (28/33; 85%) said that they included the department's promotion and tenure criteria document with the packet sent to reviewers (occasionally the school and/or university senate criteria documents were also included). Other materials varied, and depended to some degree on whether the case was based on excellence in scholarship/creative endeavor or teaching. The number of publications sent varied from a few significant or representative ones, to the entire publication record. Some included unpublished work, and some did not. All included some scholarship or creative endeavor in some form; many fewer included teaching portfolios or other teaching materials. Some departments (10/33) included a statement from the candidate with the packet, although it was often optional.

### **How Reviews Are Accepted**

Chairs were asked whether they required the review to be sent on hard copy on institutional letterhead, with a signature. The majority (21/33; 64%) required reviews in this form only. Most of the remainder (10/33; 30%) accepted an electronic or faxed copy if a signature was verifiable in this form (e.g., an attached pdf of letter on letterhead with a signature). Only two chairs said they would accept reviews in any form, including in the body of an email message without any signature.

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<sup>3</sup>Actually, external review letters are accessible via a public records request by the candidate under the Indiana Access to Public Records Act under any circumstances

<sup>4</sup> Copies of these letters were also collected during the survey process