

Best Practices in Procedures for External Reviews in the Promotion and Tenure Process

1. **Use of external reviews:** External reviews are expected to be solicited about any area in which the candidate is claiming excellence.
2. **Timing:** Materials should be sent to reviewers during the Spring semester, no later than early to mid-April prior to the subsequent Fall semester when the case is to be submitted. Reviewers should be contacted at least a month in advance to ascertain their willingness to do the review. Materials should be returned to campus by late June or early July.
3. **Number of reviews:** The goal should be six letters for any area of excellence.
4. **Choosing reviewers:** Reviewers should be chosen in collaboration between the chair and the candidate. Candidates should have the opportunity to contribute names which are ultimately used, but the chair may use reviewers in addition to those recommended by the candidate. The chair should solicit the reviews and they should be returned to the chair. Reviewers should be credible and independent, and generally at or above the rank sought by the candidate. Reviewers should be asked to provide a cv, and to explain in what context they know the candidate.
5. **Confidentiality of reviewers and of reviews:** It is IPFW's practice to share the names of the reviewers and the full content of external letters with the candidate; departments are expected to follow this practice.
6. **Informing reviewers about confidentiality:** Reviewers should be told that candidates will have full access to the reviews and the identities of the reviewers.
7. **What to provide:** At a minimum, reviewers need information in the chair's letter about the nature of this campus, the teaching and service loads, and the expectations for scholarship and creative endeavor. They should also know what level of promotion the candidate seeks and whether the candidate is seeking to demonstrate competence or excellence in a particular area. They should be provided with the department's promotion and tenure criteria document and sufficient information to make a judgment about the case.
8. **Accepting reviews:** Hard copy with a signature on institutional letterhead is the best form in which to receive external reviews. It is also acceptable to receive reviews as attachments to email messages, as long as letterhead and signature are embedded in the document. Unsigned email reviews are not an acceptable format.
9. **Sending reviews forward:** All reviews that are received in time for the primary committee to use them in deliberation should be sent forward with the case. Any reviews received after the primary committee has voted are to be excluded unless the department makes a formal request to reopen the case. Contact the Office of Academic Affairs for guidance in the procedures for making such a request.