

Guidelines for Selection of Reviewers for Specialized Faculty

Guidelines for Selection of External and Internal Reviewers for Library Specialized Faculty Promotional Cases

Please read Provost Communication #26 for overview of reviewer selection process at: <https://provost.illinois.edu/policies/provosts-communications/communication-26-promotion-to-teaching-research-or-clinical-associate-or-full-professor-titles/>

In accordance with Provost Communication #26, Library candidates for promotion and their Division's advisory committee are required to supply two separate lists of external and internal reviewers for final consideration by the Library Executive Committee.

The Division will finalize its nomination list of three external reviewers and three internal reviewers after having received the candidate's lists. Divisions are asked to avoid duplication or overlap with the candidate's lists. Candidates are not privy to final Division lists submitted to the Executive Committee. Upon receipt of the lists, *the Executive Committee selects more reviewers from the Division's list than from the candidate's list.*

The following guidelines outline key considerations, specific to library faculty cases, for the selection of external and internal reviewers.

External Reviewers

The candidate must select three external reviewers. These reviewers comment on the quality and significance of the candidate's Research, Scholarship, Teaching, Service, Public Engagement and Creative Activity as possible and as evidenced in their representative publications and dossier. They *do not* comment on the candidate's personal attributes. The following are general guidelines to assist with the selection process; the overall qualifications of each individual reviewer should be evaluated through a balanced consideration of each of these criteria:

- ***Expertise in candidate's area of scholarship and publications.*** Select colleagues who have a national reputation and strong publication record in the candidate's area of study. The reviewer should be able to write effectively about the candidate's work and its scholarly impact on the field.
- ***Familiarity with the academic promotional process and understanding of the difference between specialized and tenure system faculty appointments.*** As stated in Communication 26: **"It is extremely important that letters soliciting external reviews of specialized faculty explain the standards for promotion at our institution and define the role of specialized faculty as an appointment that is focused on a particular area: teaching, research, or clinical.** An external reviewer may not [be]

familiar with the specialized faculty appointments at Illinois. External reviewers will be aided in their evaluation by knowledge of the nature of the candidate's academic activities and the percentage of time allotted to each area of academic activity. Because specialized faculty appointments are unique to the campus, please include a statement in the letter to external reviewers that describes the nature of the candidate's academic activities and the departmental and campus expectations for those activities. Letters to referees should indicate that the candidate's promotion does not include "indefinite tenure."

- **Faculty status and rank.** Select colleagues who have faculty status at their institutions. For Specialized Faculty candidates, colleagues may be either tenure system or specialized faculty and must be of a senior rank regardless. Full professor review cases require reviewers who, at minimum, hold full professor status. A senior librarian/archivist working at a prestigious institution (example: Library of Congress) without faculty status may be nominated if the nominee has held senior faculty rank at another institution or if he/she has been awarded a rank at their institution that is truly equivalent to senior faculty rank at the University of Illinois. The candidate must justify their selection in the reviewer biography by citing evidence that the reviewer has an excellent scholarship record in the candidate's area of study.
- **Peer Institution.** Select colleagues from peer institutions when possible. Per Communication 26, reviewers *may* be from the University of Illinois. However, since the Library already requests internal letters from library and campus faculty, the expectation is that external letters will be from outside the institution. Definitions of peer institutions vary widely, and there is no comprehensive list for libraries. Candidates can consider (but should not be limited by) the following suggestions: the Association of Academic Universities [list of member research institutions](#) and the member institutions in the Big Ten Academic Alliance (<http://www.btaa.org/about/member-universities>). Candidates can also select colleagues who are from non-peer institutions or from non-academic institutions of recognized importance and quality *if* they have appropriate and substantial credentials—expertise, reputation and publication record. *However, the candidate must provide sufficient justification for their choice in the reviewer biography.*
- **Neutrality.** Do not select close colleagues, collaborators or co-authors, former professors and/or mentors. The reviewer's objectivity is crucial to the review. Candidates may select colleagues from the candidate's Alma Mater as long as the colleague is not a former professor of the candidate or is not closely associated with the candidate's research as to create appearances of a conflict of interest.

[External Reviewer Template](#)

Internal Reviewers

The candidate must identify three internal reviewers from the University of Illinois to critique and comment on the impact of the candidate's librarianship (and service as relevant) as part of

the final tenure review process. The following considerations should guide the candidate's selections.

- ***Faculty status.*** Select colleagues who are faculty members of senior rank. For positions with responsibility to engage academic units outside of the Library, candidates should include among their recommendations senior faculty in relevant campus units. For positions which have limited interactions with faculty outside of the Library (for example, those without liaison responsibilities to a specific academic department), Library faculty will often be the best choice for reviewers.
- ***Non-faculty exceptions.*** In certain cases, administrators with whom the candidate works closely may be appropriate reviewers. Please consult with the chairs of the Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee regarding selection of non-faculty administrators.
- ***Neutrality.*** Do not select colleagues from the candidate's Peer Mentoring Committee, other mentors, mentees, collaborators or co-authors, personal friends, or former advisors and professors. Objectivity is crucial to the review process.