

**COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
2020 PROCEDURES FOR SOLICITATION OF LETTERS
OF EVALUATION FOR THE TENURE AND PROMOTION PROCESS**

- a. Both the **chair** and the **candidate** are to propose a list of reviewers in the candidate's field. Reviewers contacted by the **chair** will be representative of **both** lists and must be labeled in the biosketch paragraph within the P&T packet as to whether they come from the **candidate's** list or the **chair's** list. All reviews which are received will be included in the candidate's nomination packet. We recommend the solicitation of about seven to ten (7-10) letters. At least **five letters are to be obtained from individuals outside the University of Florida.** Outside means individuals not employed either currently or in the past ten years by the University of Florida. Letters from reviewers at the Gainesville VAMC will not be considered as outside reference letters.
- b. Evaluators must be obtained from those who do not have a personal, professional or mentoring relationship with the candidate, such as a dissertation director, residency director or post-doctoral mentor. The guiding principle is whether the individual being asked to evaluate the candidate stands to benefit from the success of the candidate, either professionally or personally. In general, this includes those who have shared a common grant or coauthored a publication within the previous 5 years. Additionally, external research collaborators should usually be excluded. Exceptions can be made in the case of very large national clinical trials where multiple authors have a very distant relationship or in the case of serving on national research or service panels. In rare circumstances, such individuals may be justified because of the limited scope of the candidate's field or other compelling reasons which must be stated in the chair's letter in the packet. Please note that these are to be letters of evaluation offering evidence of recognized contributions and not simply letters of support.

Outside letters should normally be written by faculty of higher rank than the nominee. Letters from faculty who are at the top of the candidate's field and at the very best institutions are particularly valued. The emphasis should not be on the number of letters solicited, but on the quality of the review. The focus of the letters of evaluation should be to present evidence of recognized contributions, not simply to support or recommend. Letter writers should evaluate the candidate's record holistically to determine if it supports the claim that the candidate's work has made a substantial impact in the field, as well as being nationally and/or internationally recognized. In order to give the reviewer an opportunity to develop a quality response, the request for review should be **sent no later than June 19, 2020.** We recommend that you ask for the letter to be **returned by August 7, 2020.**

- c. Internal letters (**no more than five**) should be requested from those best able to assess the candidate's clinical, teaching or research accomplishments. Members of the candidate's research team may also be included to comment on the research contribution of the candidate to the research team's accomplishments. These must also be objective evaluations of the evidence for excellence in these areas and not merely letters of support. The solicitation letter from the chair should indicate which mission area(s) the evaluator is to address.
- d. **The candidate may not solicit letters, only the chair.**
- e. The candidate, working with the chair, will be responsible for developing a very brief description of the reviewer's credentials. To aid in the preparation of the description, you may wish to ask for copies of the evaluator's curriculum vitae when soliciting input. The brief (1 paragraph) biographical sketch will be placed in the nomination packet with the reviewers' letters. The description may also include a statement about why this individual is suitable to evaluate the candidate's contribution. The description will also include a statement as to whether the reviewer was solicited from the **Chair's** or the **Candidate's** list.

- f. An example of the basic letter for solicitation of evaluations by the chair is enclosed. We suggest only limited modifications of the letter. ***Be sure that evaluators are asked to comment on both tenure and promotion readiness, if applicable.*** Please emphasize that the letters should form an objective evaluation of the candidate's evidence for distinction and that the writer should not be someone who knows the candidate well or has been a supervisor or collaborator. If the evaluator knows the candidate by reputation for clinical, teaching or research accomplishments, they may certainly contribute a letter.

A sample of the solicitation letter (from the chair) will be included in the candidate's packet. Be sure that the sample is appropriate for the candidate's rank and track (e.g. promotion to associate professor with tenure; promotion to professor in the multi-mission track.)

- g. We **recommend** that the following information be included with the request for letters of evaluation: 1) The candidate's P&T packet without annual letters of evaluation (this need not be the final packet, but will contain available information about research, teaching and clinical service when relevant); 2) a limited number of publication reprints or preprints; and 3) a copy of the relevant COM Tenure and Promotion Guidelines.
- h. External letters of evaluation will be considered as part of the evaluation of research, publications, patient care, and a candidate's contribution to the profession. These letters serve as a check on the quality of internal review procedures.
- i. Unsolicited letters (letters which are not solicited by the chair or the candidate) may be included in section #33 at the rear of the packet under "Further Information." Please type "Unsolicited Letter" at the top of the page.
- j. If a faculty member has waived his/her right to see the letters, the letters will be considered confidential. The reviewers will be advised of the waiver status in the letter of solicitation. The candidate will not be able to see the list of final reviewers, if rights are waived.