

Guidelines for the Preparation of TPAC Dossiers



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Dean of the Faculty
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You Decide What Matters

TPAC Charge:

a. The Committee will review recommendations concerning (1) the renewal of appointments ..., (2) ... promotion ..., and (3) the awarding of tenure ... **in light of each academic unit's written criteria for contract renewal, promotion, and tenure.**

c. In reviewing recommendations for tenure and promotion, the Committee is guided by the following statements:

Candidates for tenure and promotion at Brown must show evidence of **outstanding scholarship**. They must also be **highly effective teachers**, and be **positive contributors** to faculty governance as well as to the intellectual life of their department, university, and profession....

Peer esteem, both within and outside the University, is a valuable indicator of scholarly ability and achievement. In all cases, it is important to consider the **quality and not only the quantity** of scholarly production.

Explain Your Thinking Throughout

- Standards and Criteria
- What are the markers of excellence you look for?
- How do you judge author position in co-authored work?
- Are grants important? If so, why and how?
- Are invited talks important?
- Do citations matter? If so, what is a good citation count or other metric?
- How do you evaluate course feedback? If you use the quantitative scores, to what do you compare them?

Preparing the TPAC dossier

- **Reappointments, Promotions, Tenure Reviews and Senior Searches** culminate with the preparation of a dossier to present the evidence on which the department's recommendation is based. The materials should also describe and document the process and procedures by which the dossier was assembled.
- TPAC reviews:
 - Teaching Track
 - Tenure Track / Tenured
 - Professor of the Practice and (Research) tracks only for DoF and SoE

Resources

Faculty Tenure and Promotion Page (also includes information on reappointments) has guidance on:

- TPAC dossier preparation
- Annual and mid-contract review preparation
- Deadlines & timelines for TPAC actions & annual reviews
- Policy documents
 - Faculty Rules and Regulations
 - Handbook of Academic Administration
 - Departmental standards and criteria documents

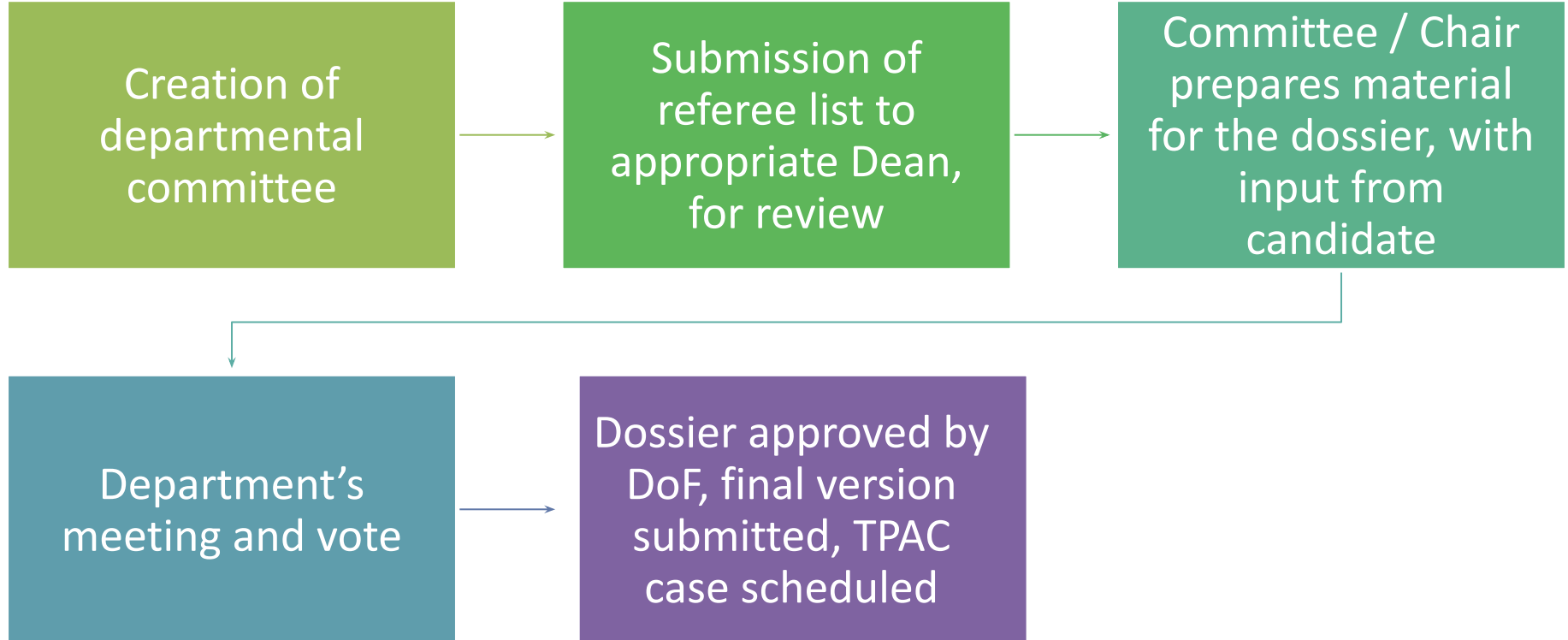
Contacts in DoF: anne_windham@brown.edu and matthew_wheeler@brown.edu or TPAC@brown.edu

TPAC composition and work cycle

- The **Tenure, Promotions, and Appointments Committee** (TPAC) is made up of 12 senior tenured faculty members who are drawn from each division of the university. Starting last year, 4 Teaching Professors were elected as members of TPAC and review cases of the Teaching Professor ranks only. A list of members can be found on the FEC webpage.
- The committee meets every Wednesday afternoon throughout the academic year, with a break from early December until late January. The last meeting of the year is usually in late April/early May.

Steps in the Preparation of the Dossier

(for promotion and appointment cases)



Instructions & Tips:

- Number the documents in the dossier according to the checklist below. Do not re-number the documents— skip those not required.
- Review the document “Submitting a dossier through Interfolio” for instructions on organizing and formatting the dossier
- Do you prefer to see what a well-prepared dossier looks like? Email matthew_wheeler@brown.edu for access to our template dossier

[illegible]

Dossier Materials

1. Cover memo

Use the form on our website and fill out all relevant fields

- Start dates (and end dates for term appointments)
- Include in official vote only those present and/or participating in the discussion (via telephone or Zoom)
- Be clear about electorate
 - Retired faculty don't vote
 - Do your S & C allow faculty on sabbatical to vote?
- Draft memo is circulated to all voting faculty for comments and suggestions

Dossier Materials

Cover memo, Dept Chair's Report:

- The unit's view of how the candidate's academic specialty is important, within the larger field or discipline
- A discussion of the issues raised in the department meeting, and of the strengths and weaknesses of the case
- The Chair's report should be brief, 2-4 paragraphs
- Its should complement, not duplicate, the department report
- Provide an overview of the evaluative process and considerations that led to the recommendation. Address any concerns.

Dossier Materials

2. Informing the candidate

All internal candidates should be informed in writing of the results of the department's vote within a week after the meeting. Include term lengths, if applicable.

The voting faculty should have an opportunity to vet the communication first.

- OK to first inform the candidate in person or by phone, then follow up with written communication (email DoF for a template)
- Positive vote: brief message, followed by an email.
- Tie or negative recommendation: more detailed letter from the chair

Dossier Materials

3. Waiver of right to appear at the department meeting (only for internal candidates, not external hires)

Waiver form is available on DoF Tenure & Promotion page

- The candidate should be invited to dept meeting well in advance of the meeting date.
- If the candidate chooses to appear, include a summary of appearance in the meeting minutes (#12).

Dossier Materials

4. Department review

Covers research and/or professional development, teaching, and service

- A qualitative and frank assessment of the candidate, connected to S&C
- Focus on published and/or completed work
- Summarize impact and discuss future trajectory
- Address strengths and weaknesses

Dossier Materials

Department review, cont'd:

Summary of letters of evaluation (not required for reappointments)

- Letters of evaluation should be summarized in the department report
- It's appropriate to include direct quotes from the letters
- Any criticisms expressed by an evaluator should be addressed fully, and not summarily dismissed.

Dossier Materials

Department review, cont'd:

Candidate's teaching effectiveness in both undergraduate and graduate courses, and their record of advising

- Multiple modes of teaching assessment are recommended:
comparative data, peer observations, student feedback, review of teaching materials, etc.
- Advising is considered teaching, not service

Dossier Materials

Department review, cont'd:

Service to the department,
the university, the
profession, the community

How does the candidate's
service compare to
departmental expectations.

- Assistant Professors are not expected to have extensive service obligations
- Teaching track faculty are expected to demonstrate increasing service commitments as they achieve higher ranks (Associate/Full Teaching Professor)

Dossier Materials

5. Information on Teaching

- Dept generates report, “TPAC Summary of Teaching” (instructions on the DoF Faculty Tenure and Promotion page)
- Include online teaching material, if relevant
- Include class observations by peers

Impact of major disruptions on teaching

Spring 2020 and Fall 2025 course feedback is automatically excluded from the course feedback reports. If a candidate wishes to include that feedback, they must confirm the decision in writing (email is fine) before the it can be included.

No other semesters are excluded

TPAC has been instructed not to disadvantage candidates for the absence of course feedback results from these periods.

Dossier Materials

6. Candidate's current c.v.

*see the [curriculum vitae guidelines](#) on the Faculty Tenure and Promotion page

- It is helpful to identify author order practices for the discipline
- Indicate student co-authors

Dossier Materials

7. Candidate's statement

- No required format for statement (2-5 pages is recommended, but rarely adhered to)

8. Copies of annual reviews since last appointment

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- If tenure/promotion review follows soon after last reappointment, consult with DoF about including the reappointment review in dossier.
 - Include signed confirmation of receipt and candidate response, if applicable

Dossier Materials

9. Copies of relevant department correspondence, including sample request to referees and responses (for tenure, promotion, and appointment cases only)

Sample solicitation letter is available on DoF Tenure & Promotion webpage.

- The evaluator list is **NOT** shared with the candidate.
- Discuss deviations from standard solicitation letter with DoF in advance of contacting evaluators
- Include all declines and any substantive responses
- Complete evaluator chart to record all evaluators who were approached for letters

Dossier Materials

[Candidate's name here]

name	institution	rank/title	candidate or committee recommended	accept/decline /no response	letter received	letter writer response (you may want a separate document for these, if they are extensive)

This spreadsheet, available on the Faculty Tenure and Promotion page, should be included at the beginning of #9, Department Correspondence with evaluators. It helps TPAC to see at a glance the list of evaluators who were contacted.

Dossier Materials

10. For promotions to associate with tenure (at least) 8 letters from scholars who are not advisors, close collaborators, or writers from an earlier action, although these people may supplement the requirements.

Promotions to full Professor:
8 letters, 5 of which are from arm's-length evaluators

Promotions to Associate or Full Teaching Professor, Professor of the Practice or (Research) Professor:
5 letters

Dossier Materials

11. Brief biographies of letter writers

- Indicate why the evaluator's opinions are given particular weight by the department.
- Note any relationships with candidate, or previous Brown affiliation

Dossier Materials

12. Minutes of the official meeting on this matter

- Provide full accounting of the issues discussed.
- Anonymize discussants, but provide each with a unique identifier (Prof A, Prof B, etc.)
- Redact as appropriate to exclude personal/irrelevant information, or discussion of other candidates.
- If candidate comes to the meeting, the minutes should indicate that.

Dossier Materials

13. Department Standards and Criteria

- TPAC will evaluate the candidate using the criteria in the departmental s & c
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14. Publications

- Actual publications, or links embedded in a document.
- For promotions to full or senior appointments, a **representative sample** of publications is appropriate.

Dossier Materials

15. Course feedback

- Dept generates report, “course feedback” (instructions on the DoF Faculty Tenure and Promotion page)
- For senior hires, it’s helpful if you can get some course evaluations to include in the dossier

A Deeper Dive . . . Promotion and Tenure

Tenure cases (promotion from assistant to associate): When providing the evaluator list for the dean's review, the department will prepare a brief summary of the candidate, a description of the candidate's field of research and her/his impact in the field (one to two paragraphs in length)

For each evaluator bio, the department will provide a rationale (one or two sentences) of why they have included this evaluator.

Selecting evaluators, tenure-track

- Promotions to Associate, with tenure, may include a small number of Associate Professors (no more than 2-3)
- Internal promotions to full may include a small number of previous writers, if appropriate, to demonstrate trajectory
- For senior scholars, it may make sense to cast a wider net than just their subfield, to show impact
- Consider having the department or committee chair send the solicitation to evaluators with department manager Cc'ed. Name recognition may yield a better response rate
- Letters from students are discouraged

Selecting evaluators, teaching track

- The final group of letters should have more evaluators from the committee's list than from the candidate's list
- For promotions to Associate Teaching Professor, some of the evaluators may be internal to Brown. For Promotion to Teaching Professor, the evaluators should be external to Brown
- Look for evaluators at the appropriate rank in the teaching track (above the rank of the candidate) or tenured faculty with a focus on teaching
- Letters from students are discouraged

What to send to evaluators

University guidance is that the CV and publications should be sent to evaluators. Departments should consider and discuss with the candidate other material to be sent:

- Candidate statement
- Teaching material (especially for Teaching Professor actions)
- Departmental S & C, or the section that is relevant for the proposed action

A Deeper Dive . . . Reappointments

- Reappointments do not require letters of evaluation
- Consideration of term length
 - Assistant professors: 4 years, two years, no reappointment
 - Assistant Teaching Professors: up to 3 years
 - Associate and Full Teaching Professors: up to 6 years
- Written feedback is important for assistant teaching professors and assistant professors! After the reappointment review has been completed, provide written feedback that is
 - appropriately modified for its audience (candidate, not TPAC) and
 - reviewed by the dean before being shared with the candidate

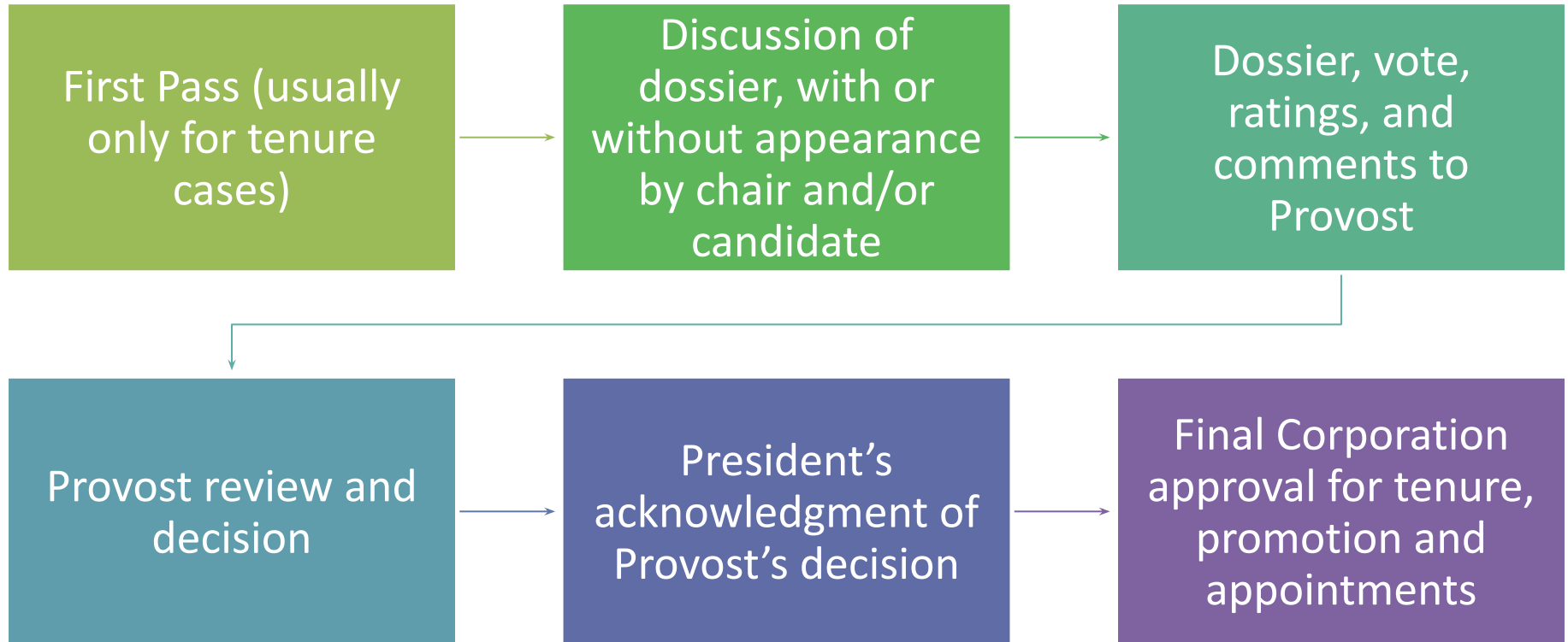
Joint Appointments

- Each department/unit should submit its own:
 - Candidate notification (#2)
 - Candidate appearance waiver (#3)
 - Meeting minutes (#12)
 - Standards and criteria (#13)
- Department review (#4) should be jointly authored.
- Departmental division of labor (e.g., managing Interfolio, budget, etc.) should be worked out at time of hire.
- Candidates should know by what standards and criteria they are being evaluated.

Senior Searches

- Special considerations
 - Timeline (must be complete in time for spring review)
 - Solicit names of potential evaluators from the candidate (not letters). The department should then request the letters using the standard solicitation template.

Consideration in TPAC and beyond



sample TPAC comment form

Comment Form

(committee member comments supplement the official vote, are shared only with the provost, and are not part of the candidate's record)

Recommendation by the Department of Anthropology that **Louis Leakey** be appointed as Professor, with tenure, effective July 1, 2015

(Please select one number)

No (1-5; where 1=strong opposition)

Yes (6-10; where 10=strong support)

1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 10

Please use this space for any additional comments you wish to provide about this case.

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Important deadlines in the tenure process*

- **Early April** DOF notifies academic unit chair/directors of upcoming tenure review candidates
- **April 15** The chair/director, consulting with candidate, selects 3+ person tenure committee
- **May 1** The candidate and tenure committee create independent lists of potential evaluators

*For a candidate with an academic year appointment (July 1- June 30). Departments with calendar-year faculty appointments should speak with DoF staff to develop a timeline

Important deadlines in the tenure process

- **June 1** The combined (candidate & committee) list and brief evaluator biographies are submitted to appropriate dean (DOF/BioMed/SPH/SoE) for review. After approval, chair or tenure committee contacts potential evaluators using the standard solicitation letter
- **January 7** Dossier is due to DoF
 - Review by TPAC, which either approves or denies department's recommendation; the committee can also make its own recommendation
 - Dossier is passed to Provost, who may take up to 30 days to review

Important deadlines in the tenure process

- **June 30** Notification of tenure decision must occur by this date. In the case of a negative decision, the appointment terminates a year from this date.

Questions?

