

Appendix C: The Dossier

Dossier Inventory

An internal candidate for reappointment, promotion or tenure is entitled to receive from their department a written itemized inventory of all items included in the relevant dossier that is sent to TPAC. Please note that the dossier contents as detailed below is a complete listing for tenure cases; certain other faculty actions do not require all of this material (for example, reappointments do not required letters from external evaluators). The exact contents for specific faculty actions are listed on the Dean of the Faculty's Tenure and Promotion [webpage](#).

Dossier Contents

The TPAC dossier should include all of the elements listed below unless one or more of these items is expressly excluded in particular cases by the following discussion. The contents of the dossier are as follows:

1. Cover memo to TPAC from the department (the template form for this memo is available on the Tenure and Promotion webpage). The cover letter should state in precise language the specific recommendation that is being made, including (except in the case of a negative recommendation) the date of the proposed action and, in the case of a reappointment, the length of the proposed new term.

Any recommendation to TPAC must contain information on the following:

- the names of the faculty who attended the meeting at which the final recommendation to TPAC was agreed;
- the names of faculty who, though eligible to participate in this decision, did not attend the above meeting;
- the (numerical) vote upon which the final departmental recommendation is based;
- the department quorum at such meetings;
- a general explanation of the reasons for abstentions (if any);
- an explanation of the views of those voting in the minority;
- the academic unit's view of the importance of the candidate's academic specialty within the larger field or discipline; and
- in addition to the foregoing, a full and candid discussion of the issues raised in the department meeting relative to this candidacy.

The Chair is required to show in draft form their cover letter to TPAC reporting the above decision to all faculty members who participated in the vote upon which the unit's recommendation rests, for their comments and suggestions. At this time, the Chair should also inform all such faculty that if any of them has a serious objection to

the text of the proposed letter - an objection which the Chair is unable to resolve after reasonable efforts have been made to do so, such individuals may, if they wish, communicate their objections in writing to TPAC within ten (10) working days, individually or collectively. Any such minority communications will be available to all members of the department who participated in the vote.

2. The department's written explanation provided to the candidate that outlines the reasons for the recommendation. *(Not required for external candidates)*

3. The candidate's written waiver of their right to a personal appearance before the department before the vote is taken should be included. If the candidate chose to appear, the cover letter should include a summary of the appearance. *(Not required for external candidates)*

4. Department review of scholarship, teaching effectiveness, and service. Candidates should be evaluated primarily if not exclusively on the basis of published and/or completed work that has elicited scholarly reaction and appraisal outside of Brown. Where appropriate and possible the department review of scholarship must include a summary of the impact of a candidate's work on the disciplinary area. The candidate's published record should show evidence of having developed projects beyond the dissertation or its equivalent (for promotion from assistant to associate professor) or professional and scholarly growth beyond the level at which tenure was originally granted (for promotion to full professor).

While evaluation of teaching effectiveness is an important element of all recommendations, the following guidance is of particular relevance for internal cases. Multiple modes of assessment should be used in the evaluation of teaching, including thorough discussion of students' qualitative evaluations (use of student quotations is encouraged), comparative data, and peer evaluation if this information is systematically collected by a department. If the candidate supervised independent study and/or engaged in mentoring, an assessment of these activities should also be included.

Service expectations vary depending on department and candidate rank, but a candidate should be evaluated following departmental standards and criteria for service to the department, the University, and the profession.

The departmental review must contain an honest appraisal of any aspects of the candidate's performance in any of these areas which might appear to argue against the department's overall recommendation on the candidate.

Departments should be particularly careful in documenting cases in which candidates are being proposed for promotion or tenure earlier than might be expected from the candidate's service in their current rank. Although TPAC aspires to apply a consistent standard of achievement to all cases of promotion and tenure of similar type, an

important part of that standard is a judgment of the extent to which the candidate's dossier gives evidence of sustained and sustainable accomplishment in all areas of the candidate's professional life. Candidates who present relatively few years of such evidence may find it difficult to meet that standard.

5. In the case of internal candidates, quantitative information on teaching should include:

- A summary of departmental teaching (i.e., course) evaluations, if these data lend themselves to such a summary.
- class observations by peers, if available
- Teaching materials, such as syllabuses
- If possible, provide comparative information, i.e. how the ratings compare to those from other similar courses.

6. All recommendations require submission of an updated curriculum vitae for the candidate. All publications listed therein should be completely cited following standard bibliographic practice, including for each entry the year of publication and, for articles from journals, page numbers. Where there are multiple authors of published research, the cv should indicate accepted author order in the discipline. In multi-authored work it is advisable that the candidate annotate a select number of their most recent or most important multi-author publications, describing their specific contributions. Finally, graduate co-authors should be identified for each publication.

7. The candidate's own statement. All internal candidates are expected to prepare a brief written statement for inclusion in their dossier in which they reflect upon their professional accomplishments to date in research and teaching and their plans for the future. *(Not required for external candidates)*

8. Annual reviews. This applies to all regular, untenured Brown faculty under consideration for reappointment or promotion. In all these cases, the dossier should include copies of all departmental annual reviews of the candidate that have been prepared since the last appointment, and the candidate's written response(s), if any. If, as is sometimes the case, a department has substituted in a particular academic year another sort of review (e.g. for reappointment) for the usual annual review, a copy of the former report should also be included. *(Not required for external candidates)*

9. Relevant department correspondence, including a sample of the letter sent to evaluators and all substantive correspondence from the evaluators. For example, any messages that discuss the candidate's qualifications or work should be included, as should all declinations to submit a letter. It is also helpful to provide a single-page table (template available on the Dean of the Faculty's [Tenure and Promotion page](#)) in this section that lists the names, institutions, and responses (accept/decline/no response) of all persons solicited for external letters of

recommendation, and also indicates if they were recommended by the candidate or the department. (*Not required for reappointment or contract renewal*).

10. External letters of evaluation (*not required for reappointment or contract renewal*). For internal promotions from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, with tenure, a minimum of EIGHT letters from external evaluators are required. TPAC requires that the eight letters of recommendation should be from individuals who are not: (i) current or former dissertation or post-doctoral supervisors of the candidate, (ii) frequent or recent research collaborators of the candidate, or (iii) persons who previously provided written evaluations of the candidate at the time of an earlier personnel action at Brown (initial appointment, reappointment, tenure or promotion). Letters from such individuals may be included in the dossier for the information they convey, but only as additions to the minimum of eight letters required from external evaluators. Departments that find the foregoing restrictions impractical in a particular case may appeal in writing to TPAC through the appropriate divisional dean requesting an exemption. This may be granted, given sufficient convincing argumentation of the case. Such an appeal should be made as early as possible so that if it is denied by TPAC, the department can respond without unduly delaying the process overall.

For internal promotions from Associate Professor to Professor (tenure previously granted) and external appointments to tenure (whether at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor), EIGHT letters are required. However, it may be possible to solicit letters from advisers, collaborators, or scholars who have previously written, whether for initial appointment or promotion to Associate Professor, as long as the majority of letters are from new evaluators. It is recommended that no fewer than FIVE of these letters be from evaluators who are not close collaborators. Please consult the Dean's office with questions about repeating the use of evaluators.

Promotions or appointments to Senior Lecturer, Distinguished Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor or Professor without tenure, Associate Professor (Professor of the Practice or (Research)) or Professor (Professor of the Practice or (Research)) require a minimum of FIVE letters of recommendation from distinguished scholars in one or more areas of the candidate's research who can evaluate the significance and impact of that research (see 10.5 for further information on appropriate reviewers for these promotions and appointments).

Note that for any of these actions, the list of evaluators should be reviewed by the appropriate divisional dean before any letters are solicited.

All individuals invited to be external reviewers should be of a stature in their respective fields commensurate with that expected for the academic rank for which the candidate is being considered. For example, associate professors or their equivalent should not be asked to serve as external evaluators of candidates for promotion to full professor at Brown.

For promotions to associate professor with tenure and promotions to full professor, the final list of external evaluators to be contacted should include at least three names suggested in the first instance by the candidate as well as names suggested independently by the department. Ideally, the dossier should have more letters from committee-recommended evaluators, than from candidate-recommended evaluators; the candidate should be advised to supply 3-4 names and no more than that in order to maintain the appropriate ratio. For promotions requiring five letters in total (see above), the number of names suggested by the candidate may be proportionally smaller (two names). The candidate also has the right to identify any evaluators who they prefer not be asked to write, and to provide a written statement describing the nature of the objection(s), and this statement must become part of the dossier. A candidate's right to object to one or more external evaluators is not however a veto right; the department retains the prerogative to solicit the views of one or more external evaluators to which a candidate has registered an objection, although in this event it may be asked in its meeting with TPAC to explain its decision. In the end, TPAC desires to know which of the external reviewers actually solicited were initially suggested by the candidate, and which by the department.

Letters of recommendation from external evaluators should comment in some detail upon the professional attainments of the candidate, and in particular compare the candidate, if possible, with others (by name) of similar career stage and/or experience in the same sub-field. In addition, the department should ask external evaluators whether they would be prepared to recommend the candidate for a position such as the one contemplated at Brown at their own institution, or at other major research universities, based on the candidate's scholarly ability and achievement. TPAC should receive as part of the dossier a copy of the letter sent by the Brown department to prospective external evaluators soliciting their assistance. See the letter template in Appendix B.

The suggested text may be reworded in consultation with the Dean's office, but all information specifically requested in the sample letter must be included.

In the event that a department later finds it necessary to "follow-up" its initial letter of solicitation with one or more additional communications with a prospective external referee, TPAC desires that these "follow-up" contacts be noted and briefly described.

The above paragraphs should not be read to preclude a department soliciting additional commentary on a candidate from professionals other than the external evaluators agreed to as above. But these additional individuals should be professionals - e.g., former students, journal editors, teaching collaborators, chairs of committees on which the candidate has served, etc. - who by virtue of their previous or on-going professional relationship with the candidate can be expected to have a well-informed, if limited, special perspective on the candidate's work that the department might wish to have reported to it. In such cases, however, the department's standards and criteria must explicitly allow for special solicitations of such individuals and the process by which the names of such individuals will be

chosen should be more clearly stated. Letters on a candidate from any source that have not been actively and officially solicited by a department, i.e., that are un-solicited, may not be placed in that candidate's dossier.

11. Professional biographies of external evaluators. (*not required for reappointment reviews*). Where the candidate's dossier necessarily includes letters of recommendation from external evaluators, the department should provide a brief identifying statement for each such referee sufficient to indicate to TPAC why the opinions of that individual are given particular weight by the department. In presenting such biographical information on the external evaluators, departments should not only describe the credentials of each but also indicate the basis for selection, particularly in the case of evaluators who either have a working relationship with the candidate or have previously provided an assessment of the candidate.

12. Minutes. The dossier should include the minutes of the official meeting at which the vote was taken. Minutes should be a detailed transcript of remarks, providing a full accounting of the issues that arose in discussions of the case. There is no need to attribute remarks to participants. It is recommended that the meeting participants be anonymized, and identified by a unique signifier such as a letter (Professor A, Professor B. etc).

If more than one candidate is discussed at the same meeting, the minutes should be redacted so that each candidate's dossier includes only a discussion of their case.

13. Standards and Criteria. TPAC requires a copy of the department's current Standards and Criteria for faculty reappointment, appointment, promotion and tenure so that TPAC members can evaluate the stipulations of this document against the arguments advanced by the department in support of the recommendation.

14. Actual publications/completed work. The dossier transmitted to TPAC should include the candidate's principal publications and/or completed work. Hard copies of books will be returned to the department after the case is complete.

15. Course Feedback. All course feedback from students since the last TPAC review should be included. If this is the first time the candidate is being reviewed by TPAC, evaluations since the start of the appointment should be included.