

External Evaluations: General Instructions

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GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Identification of Evaluators. The head or designate initiates the process of obtaining external letters of assessment far enough in advance of the review process that letters are in the dossier and available to peer review committees and administrators at all levels of review. In no case should the candidate directly solicit the external letters of assessment or contact prospective or actual external evaluators. The following process may be observed:

- The department head or designate, in consultation with departmental faculty, assembles a list of potential external evaluators;
- The department head or designate requests the names of potential evaluators from the candidate;
- The department head or designate also requests names of individuals the candidate wants excluded and the reasons for the exclusions.

Solicitation of Letters. Letters from external evaluators can be solicited directly from Interfolio or outside of Interfolio.

1. Directly from Interfolio:
 - If you solicit letters via Interfolio, you **do not need to maintain a communication log** since most of your actions will be logged by Interfolio. The only information in the communication log that is not in the Interfolio log is whether the reviewer is from the candidate's or department's list. You can provide this information in the **Method of Selection and Qualification** section below (see example document in that section).
 - First, send potential reviewers an email invitation from Interfolio so that your initial request is logged.
 - We recommend you follow-up your request by sending a personal email letting them know to expect an email invitation from UTK/Interfolio (check spam folder!) and to please accept or decline the Interfolio request.
 - If the person replies to your personal email (accepting or declining), direct them to the Interfolio message.
 - Anyone who agrees to provide a review will eventually have to accept the invitation from Interfolio so they can upload their review to Interfolio.
 - The log will show those who were asked via Interfolio but did not respond to the request, so you don't need to worry if these people do not respond.
 - Interfolio will send periodic reminders to reviewers. You can also resend requests and/or change the submission deadline if someone needs extra time.
2. Outside of Interfolio. You are welcome to solicit external evaluations outside of Interfolio and then manually upload the letters you receive to the appropriate section below. Please upload each letter separately. If you choose this option, you will be required to maintain and upload a separate communication log (see appropriate section below).

Number of Solicitations. The department head or designate will normally solicit 8-10 letters. No more than half of the letters solicited may come from the list suggested by the candidate.

Required Number of Letters. The dossier will typically include **no fewer than five letters** from external evaluators. In the event that a dossier has fewer than five letters from external evaluators, the department head must discuss the reasons with the dean and/or chief academic officer. The dean or the chief academic officer may ask the department head to solicit additional letters in order to meet the typical required minimum number of external assessments.

Right of the Faculty Member to Review External Letters: External letters of assessment will be made available to the candidate upon the candidate's written request to the department head.

External Evaluations: Materials Provided to External Reviewers

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The department head or designate will send to the external evaluators information and documentation for use in preparing the external assessment including the candidate's curriculum vitae, appropriate supporting materials concerning the candidate's research or creative activity, and the departmental and collegiate statements of criteria for promotion and/or tenure.

Sharing Materials with External Reviewers

Version Control. When possible, the versions of the materials that are shared with external reviewers should be the final versions so they are identical to the ones that are used for internal review.

Sharing via Interfolio. When sending email requests through Interfolio, you will be able to attach materials the candidate has uploaded to Interfolio. **Please note(!):**

- The candidate must *Submit* these items in order for you to share them (i.e., click on the Submit button associated with the section).
- Once items are submitted only you or your administrative staff can unlock the section for the candidate to edit them.
- **If you share something with the reviewer via Interfolio and it is edited after it is shared with them, the reviewer will lose access to the file.**
- You can reshare items with reviewers through Interfolio by sending them another email.

You can make use of the "Link to External Repository of Scholarly/Creative Works" section of the dossier. This section allows the candidate to upload a file that contains a link to an external repository (i.e., OneDrive, Google drive) that contains scholarly work (e.g., journal articles). You can share this document with external reviewers and also ask the candidate to include their CV and/or research statement in this repository.

Updates to Candidate Materials Once They Have Been Shared

On occasion, a candidate might learn of a significant status change to one of their accomplishments (e.g., a pending NSF grant has now been accepted). If you believe the change is significant enough to send an update to the external reviewers, then you can ask the candidate to resubmit their CV and then share the new version with reviewers.

We ask you to be judicious and only re-share updated materials in the case of *significant changes* that are likely to have a *major impact* on the evaluation.

External Evaluations: Template Letter

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The template letter can be found [at this link](#). You can copy and paste it into the email request you send from the Interfolio interface.

You are encouraged to use the template letter when requesting reviews. If you use the provided template, you do not need to do anything in this section.

- If you use your own letter and **do not** use Interfolio to solicit external reviews, then you are **REQUIRED** to upload a copy of this letter in this section.
- If you use your own letter and solicit external reviews via Interfolio, then you do not need to upload a copy of your letter since it will be captured in the log.

External Evaluations: Log of Communications

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For Those Who Use Interfolio to Solicit External Letters

The only information in the communication log that is not in the Interfolio log is whether the reviewer is from the candidate's list or from the department's list. You can provide this information in the **Method of Selection and Qualification** section below (see example document in that section).

Please do not ask external reviewers to upload CVs to Interfolio as they will insert in the middle of the candidate's dossier.

REQUIRED For Those Who Solicit External Letters Outside of Interfolio

You will need to create and upload a manual log of your communications with external reviewers.

- The log documents the dates on which each external letter was requested and entered into the dossier.
- All requests should be entered regardless of whether a response was obtained.
- All letters solicited and received must be included in the dossier unless the chief academic officer approves their removal from the review process.
- If multiple versions of a letter are received, then all versions should be retained in the candidate's dossier.

[See this link for an example log.](#)

External Evaluations: Method of Selection and Qualifications

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REQUIRED FOR ALL

Method of Selection. The department head should include a description of the procedure used for selecting external evaluators.

Evaluator Qualifications. The department head or designate is responsible for providing and including in the candidate's dossier a brief biographical statement about the credentials and qualifications of each external evaluator; special attention should be given to documenting the evaluator's standing in their discipline as part of the biographical statement.

See link for example [Method of Selection and Qualifications](#)