

PROVOSTAL EXPECTATIONS FOR EXTERNAL REVIEW LETTERS
University of Cincinnati

The research and creative work of all faculty members under consideration for tenure or promotion should be subjected to review by scholars in the discipline who are external to the University. The following procedural guidelines are not rules; they do not override or supplant any provost-approved procedures that are already in place. They are intended to guide academic units in revising RPT procedures to assure that the external review process is consistent with the provost's expectation that it be rigorous and meaningful.

1. The candidate and the academic unit head should each submit a list of names to the unit's RPT committee or, if that committee is not to be so involved, the candidate may submit a list of names to the unit head, who will draw up a separate list of names. The committee's or head's list should be prepared before receiving the suggestions of the candidate.
 - a. The lists should be made up of scholars who have the expertise to evaluate the candidate's research or creative productivity.
 - b. Generally, these scholars will hold senior rank in a comparable academic department.*
 - c. The persons on each list should not have a close association with the candidate or the unit head, such as former teacher, mentor, dissertation advisor, or post-doctoral advisor. If any are co-authors or collaborators with the candidate, their comments should focus on the candidate's contribution to joint effort.
2. The RPT committee or unit head should select three to six names from the two lists, being careful to avoid selecting persons who are disqualified under I.C. above.
3. The unit head should contact each of the persons selected. If any decline to serve as a reviewer, more names may be added from the original lists by the head. In no case should fewer than three external reviewers be used.
4. The unit head should send each external reviewer representative pieces of scholarship or creative work authored by the candidate along with the candidate's vita. The candidate may choose which works will be reviewed, but the head may elect to send additional completed works by the candidate. It is the candidate's responsibility to copy the material as well as to provide three copies of any book s/he may wish reviewers to evaluate. **
5. The unit head should instruct the reviewers in writing to evaluate the quality of the work and its contribution to the field and should provide any necessary context about the research or publications under review. Reviewers should be informed that their letters will not be confidential and will be included in the dossier. A sample letter from the unit head to the reviewers should be included in the external review section of the dossier.
6. The reviews should be solicited in time to receive and include them in the dossier prior to the unit RPT committee's evaluation of the candidate. It is the responsibility of the unit head to assure the timeliness of the solicitation and to request postponement of the committee review if the letters are not all assembled.
7. The candidate and/or the unit head should provide an introduction to the external review section of the dossier that describes, in three or four sentences each, the qualifications of the reviewers and that explains any past relationship or affiliation with the applicant.

*If the comparable academic department is primarily a teaching unit and the work to be submitted for review is research within a discipline other than pedagogy, the external reviewers should be sought from faculty in research departments.

**In disciplines where it is difficult to send representative pieces, such as in music or theatre performance, it is appropriate to send copies of the entire dossier to each reviewer.