

TO: Deans, Chairs, and Directors

FROM: Ellen Weissinger  
Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

RE: Promotion and/or Tenure in 2011/2012

DATE: April 21, 2011

This letter is being sent to all chairs and deans with faculty scheduled to be reviewed for tenure and/or promotion in 2011/2012.

Attached to this letter are the forms to be completed for all candidates:

- The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Transmittal Forms
  - Transmittal Form for Promotion and/or Tenure for Tenured or Tenure-Track Faculty
  - Transmittal Form for Promotion for Research Faculty
  - Transmittal Form for Promotion for Professor of Practice Faculty
- The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Waiver of Right to See Information Form
- The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Course Listing and Evaluation Form

Also attached are the Documentation Formats to be followed by all candidates:

- The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Documentation Formats
  - Documentation Format for Promotion and/or Tenure for Tenured or Tenure-Track Faculty
  - Documentation Format for Promotion for Research Faculty
  - Documentation Format for Promotion for Professor of Practice Faculty

See also the attached list of SVCAA Due Dates for Tenure and Promotion Recommendations.

**Information for chairs and deans preparing tenure and/or promotion nominations.**

The tenure and promotion reviews you will conduct this year and the advance work you will do to prepare for next year's reviews are among the most important activities in the academy. Those individuals whom we invite to join the senior faculty will continue to shape the University's academic aspirations and profile for the next generation. It is extremely important that your reviews be conducted in

strict accordance with University procedures and by-laws, that they be characterized (and perceived to be characterized) by fairness, and that you apply appropriate and rigorous standards in forming your evaluations and recommendations.

The attached Documentation Formats outline the materials to be included in every promotion and tenure file. **Every file must be in a binder with clearly labeled sections in “documentation format” order.**

*Please submit two copies of each file to my office. Neither the candidate’s publications nor the teaching evaluation forms need be included. If there are materials that you want returned to the College, please mark them clearly. The College should retain most of the original documents, and we will only return those materials that are marked to be returned.*

In addition to the information required on forms, I ask that you attend to the following:

- **All discussions, reviews, and evaluations must be based on the material submitted in the file.** While understandably a candidate’s colleagues may have other knowledge of the candidate based on departmental interactions, or other activities not cited in this file, it is very important that the review be based only on material in the file. Part of the task of constructing an appropriate file is making sure that all relevant information is contained in it.
- **The candidate’s vita must clearly noted refereed or juried work and the extent of contribution if collaborative work.** It is important also for candidates to indicate whether they are the primary author or principal investigator of collaborative projects.
- **All evaluation letters must assess the quality and impact of the candidate’s research or creative activity and of the candidate’s teaching.** This is of much greater importance than a mere listing of the quantity of pieces or course evaluation numbers with little assessment of their value. Each candidate must include in their documentation a statement identifying that portion of the candidate’s work that in the candidate’s judgment represents his or her *most significant* work, explains *why* he or she thinks this work is significant, and points out what its *impact* has been or will be. When external reviewers are solicited for reviews, they should receive copies of the statement and should be asked to address the quality and impact of the candidate’s work
- **It is the responsibility of the department chair, the chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, or the Dean--not the candidate--to solicit external letters of review.** Generally, external reviewers should have full professorial rank, but they must at least occupy a rank equal to or above that being considered for the candidate. Reviewers must be chosen who are qualified to judge the quality of the candidate’s work because of their own knowledge of the field. Generally, we

would expect reviewers to hold positions at institutions comparable to or more highly-ranked than UNL.

The UNL *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure* state:

*Any unit that intends to solicit outside reviews as a part of its review process shall develop rules for solicitation of such reviews that are consistent with this section. In situations where outside review is undertaken, the faculty member is entitled to know how, and by whom, the panel of potential reviewers is to be identified and selected. Every reasonable effort must be made to assure that the external reviewers represent an appropriate subset of peers; a candidate shall have the opportunity to propose names to the panel and to object to the inclusion of others, but the final identification of the reviewers remains the responsibility of the person charged with conducting the review.*

**Every tenure file must include at least three external (to UNL) and independent letters of review.** “Independent” means letters will be from individuals who have had no (or only limited) professional or personal relationships with the candidate *and* who have been chosen by the department chair (or the tenure and promotion committee or dean, as appropriate) for their ability to provide a disinterested (“objective”) assessment; these would **not** include dissertation advisors, current or former collaborators, former colleagues, personal friends or others who have any special relationship to the candidate. In the file, the authors of external letters should be clearly identified in terms of whether they were chosen by the department (chair or committee) or the candidate, the qualifications of each reviewer, and the relationship (if any) of the reviewer to the candidate. A copy of the letter soliciting the review should also be included. Other external letters of review, not independent and/or solicited by the administrative officer, may be included but must be so identified in the file.

- **Ordinarily, each promotion-to-full professorial rank file should also contain at least three external and independent letters of review.** In cases where the extreme prominence of a candidate makes independent letters impracticable, special care should be taken to solicit letters from exceptionally prominent reviewers.
  
- **The department committee, the chair or unit administrator, College tenure and promotion committees and/or the Dean of the College must include in their evaluation letters an assessment of the quality of the candidate’s record in each of the major assignment areas (research or creative activity, teaching, outreach and service, administration), making clear the reasons for the recommendations.** The evaluation should be based on a clear statement of expectations in each of the areas. Letters resulting from group evaluation must include a summary of discussion indicating reasons for negative and positive votes. The various review committees and individuals offering assessments are advised to place quality considerations foremost in

their evaluation of research and creative activity and, indeed, in their assessments of all aspects of the candidate's performance.

Thank you for attending to these considerations and requirements.

xc: Chancellor Perlman  
Vice Chancellor Green  
Vice Chancellor Jackson  
Vice Chancellor Paul  
Vice Chancellor Franco