

2024– 2025 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RANK AND TENURE Best Practices

- **Mentoring**

1. Mentoring is an important part of the development of both tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty. There should be a mentoring plan for each faculty member which guides the candidate toward rank and/or tenure and the candidate should receive feedback from their mentor and/or Chair (i.e. when to apply for rank/tenure; what to include in the portfolio; what not to include in the portfolio).
 2. Chairs, Deans, and senior faculty members should mentor junior faculty in all areas, including service.
 3. Chairs and Deans should be mindful not to burden individual faculty, particularly those on the tenure track, with too much committee work.
 4. Candidates should be mentored to do community service and to include a list of such service in their dossier.
 5. When candidates have demanding clinician duties, there is a need to mentor the candidate to develop lines of inquiry in which the candidate can contribute to original research.
 6. Non-tenure-track faculty need clarity from their deans as to what they need to do for promotion.
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- **Letter Writers (General Notes)**

- A. No more than nine letter writers per candidate is allowed.
- B. A clear and evaluative conclusion (support or not support) should be made in regard to a candidate's **overall performance** and on **each facet of performance** (i.e., teaching, research, service, clinical) as it pertains to the application for rank and/or tenure.
- C. **Select letter writers well, prioritize external letter writers who present minimal conflict of interest (i.e. close working relationships) and choose internal letter writers from a variety of departments and/or schools.**
- D. It is important for the chairs, deans, and school/college committees to articulate how teaching was assessed and what standards were applied in the judgment of the quality of the teaching and scholarship for the clinician-educator in order to help UCRT evaluate the quality of the candidate's contributions. The Department of Medicine has a metric for quality and chairs could use something similar.
- E. Reviewers should have the department or school/college guidelines and should address them in their letter.
- F. Any shifts in the candidate's duties should be made clear, especially for candidates in administrative roles, and especially if it is a change from what was written in the original contract.

1. Deans

- A. Deans' letters should explain expectations of the particular clinician-educator duties and explain why someone who is clinician-educator has no clinical site.
- B. Deans should explain why a candidate was put on the TT or NTT initially since this is not always clear and yet can make a difference to the faculty member and the department.
- C. Deans should explain if a candidate's chair letter comes from someone other than the current academic department chair.
- D. Requests from the dean's office should direct letter writers to speak to the relevant rank and/or tenure requirements.
- E. Dean's choice letters should be marked on the document or clearly identified within the candidate's file.
- F. In cases when deans cannot get external letter writers, deans should include an explanation.
- G. The Dean's letter should clearly discuss and identify any agreements made in regard to receiving credit for contributions at past institutions. This includes, but is not limited to, agreements regarding tenure timeline and other unique circumstances. Deans' should also confer with the Provost's office on these issues.

2. Department Chairs

- A. Chairs' letters should explain expectations of the particular clinician-educator duties and explain why someone who is clinician-educator has no clinical site, if relevant.

3. Internal and External Reviewers

- A. Letter writers should explain the impact of the candidate's scholarship and whether, per Boyer's scholarship of application, the candidate's scholarship should not be measured by more traditional measures, such as impact factor.

4. Committees

- A. College and school committee members should sign the committee letters.
- B. Letters should articulate the rationale for the vote, as well as candidate strengths and weaknesses.
- C. The college and school rank and tenure committee should provide clarity on recusals needed throughout the process. A list of committee members from each college or school should be included in each college rank and tenure committee letter written.
- D. Committee members should recuse themselves if they are letter writers for, or co-authors with, the candidate.
- E. All committee members must be accounted for in the final committee vote. The only four acceptable responses are yes, no, recuse, or absent. Do not simply write "unanimous."
- F. Each school should have a checklist of materials to be included in the dossier.
- G. Exemplars for CV and Faculty Profiles should be available for candidates.
- H. The committee letter will reflect committee membership, the date the meeting was held, and clearly state the number of votes (yes, no, recusal, members absent on that date).

- **UCR&T**

1. The Committee may consider developing guidelines for Chairs, Deans and Schools.
2. If the clock was stopped (e.g., due to Covid-19), this should be included in UCRT archives and in the Provost's office, but not necessarily explained (because the reasons may be confidential).
3. Every committee member is expected to read every dossier.
4. At the first meeting of the year, the committee will discuss how to best approach a dossier with an aim toward orienting new members.
5. At the end of each committee meeting, there should be discussion about how to use the standards of each college or school that is being reviewed the next week. For example, do the standards require a checklist or is it a preponderance?

- **Dossiers**

Curriculum Vita

1. Candidate CV should be formatted to be consistent with the Faculty Handbook.
2. CVs should not include manuscripts not yet accepted in the publications section, although it is proper to list "works in progress" as they are labeled as such. They should also indicate if publications are peer-reviewed or not.
3. When describing contributions, candidates should match their contributions to the standards to show how they fulfill the standards.
4. Candidate should list all authors in citations (i.e. as done through APA, MLA, and other standard journal citations) and highlight their contribution to the research project. This could include what specific role they played on the authorship team and a percentage of contribution.
5. Candidate should separate out funded and unfunded grants into different sections.

Faculty Profile

1. Candidates should make their case in the Faculty Profile and address any weaknesses.
2. The length of the required Faculty Profile should be six or fewer pages.
3. The candidate may include supporting appendices, such as tables, to summarize teaching evaluations, for example.
4. The Faculty Profile should not be seen as a regurgitation of the candidate's vita. It is an opportunity for the candidate to highlight the ways in which they are qualified for tenure and/or promotion.
5. Faculty profiles should be written in first person so the authorship is clear.
6. In the Faculty Profile, candidates should clearly discuss and identify any agreements made in regard to receiving credit for contributions at past institutions. This includes, but is not limited to, agreements regarding tenure timeline and other unique circumstances.
7. Faculty contributions to multi-authored publications should be made explicit.

8. The Faculty Profile should directly demonstrate evidence of meeting rank and tenure guidelines. The Faculty Profile should be less of a 'story' and more direct in illustrating how candidate meets the criteria and why the candidate has earned tenure and/or promotion.
9. The Faculty Profile should include references to the specific standards in parenthesis after evidence of meeting the standards is presented.

Teaching

1. Any charts representing something like a candidate's teaching should indicate who compiled the chart and the date it was compiled.
2. Candidates should list IDEA scores by course – one folder per course that includes all years the course was taught by the faculty member.
3. The inclusion of candidate teaching evaluations is an important element of the application and should be included. If there is a reason why teaching evaluations are incomplete, the committee would benefit from knowing why they were not available. Candidates may include evidence of teaching effectiveness beyond teaching evaluations such as peer-to-peer observation. Candidates may reach out to the Center for Faculty Excellence for additional guidance.

Letters of Evaluation

1. The candidate should include both external and internal letters.
2. The candidate should seek letters from those with the rank for which the candidate applies.
3. Candidates should abide by the Faculty Handbook and have the minimum 6 letters.
4. A complete list should be included in each dossier of the contacts from whom a letter request was sent in each of the possible categories (i.e., dean's letter requests, peer letter requests, student letter requests).
5. While 2 external letters are the minimum for a dossier, additional external letter writers are helpful, especially in applications to Professor when impact of scholarship should be addressed.
6. The Faculty Handbook does not indicate a minimum of internal letters, but candidates should include some internal letters.
7. The letters from the various category of letter writers (e.g., deans, peer reviewer) should be clearly marked in the dossier and identified in the appropriately labeled folder.
8. Candidates should choose letter writers carefully, with focus on balance between internal and external references.

- **College/School Rank and Tenure Committees**

1. The School/College Rank and Tenure Committee letter should include a list of all committee members who were present for each vote. If committee members are absent, this should be clearly noted in the vote totals.
2. It is important that College or School Committees have a quorum when holding votes for candidates.
3. Consistency in forms and process across the various colleges is recommended.
4. College committees on rank and tenure should consider bias training for members.

5. College committees on rank and tenure should hold forums to advise candidates about deadlines and the process of dossier preparation.
 6. Committee members who vote against the majority may present their opinion in a separate memo or letter.
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- **Standards**

1. Provide clarity regarding what is considered a normal or standard amount of teaching for clinician-educator (e.g., bedside, medical students, fellows, residents) and how teaching is assessed and determined effective teaching.
 2. There should be clarity as to what counts as service, and whether service to Creighton is required in addition to service at a clinical site such as a hospital.
 3. Standards should allow for moving beyond student evaluations as the sole form of evidence of teaching effectiveness.
 4. College and/or department standards should be applied consistently in each category and for each candidate.
 5. Standards need clarity in each school/college – i.e. confusion around ‘meet majority’ vs. ‘meet all criteria’ in each category and subsequent category.
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Respectfully submitted,
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Note: Text presented in blue represent new or heavily edited changes to the best practices document for 2024-2025.