

Issues Associated with External Reviewers

Current policy about the selection of outside reviewers:

At least one of the reviewers, but not all, should be suggested by the candidate. [From Faculty Handbook 5.3.3.1]

Proposed policy about the selection of outside reviewers:

Half of the names of the reviewers solicited are to be chosen from a list submitted by the candidate and half from a list submitted by the department. These lists are to be proposed independently of each other so that duplicated reviewers can be counted as both a candidate selection and a department selection.

Proposed best practices about the selection of outside reviewers:

Candidates may consult with colleagues about appropriate reviewers and their institutions. Candidates are permitted to request that a few people in their field not be contacted for review. The request must, however, be made at the same time candidates put forward the names of potential reviewers that they choose.

Proposed best practices for biographical sketches of outside reviewers:

Biographies of outside reviewers should be brief (between ½ and 1 page in length) and should highlight the credentials of the reviewers relevant to their being chosen.

Proposed policy about the content of letters soliciting outside review:

Letters soliciting outside review of a candidate's work must make clear what is to be covered by the reviewer. The letter should state that reviewers are not to give their opinions about whether candidates would or should receive tenure at the reviewer's institution or at Iowa State University.

Proposed best practices about the content of letters soliciting outside review:

With regard to the candidate's research, the letter might request, for example, comments concerning its originality, impact, breadth, depth, or clarity. If the reviewer is to comment upon teaching, professional practice, extension activities and/or performance (e.g. music or theatre), then parallel and appropriate language should be spelled out for these areas of professional work.

Proposed policy about the confidentiality of external letters

External letters are confidential. They are to be available for review by all those individuals who evaluate candidates either in formal vote or advisory capacity. These letters are not to be shared with others.