

SECTION 10A: INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL REVIEWER LETTERS – TENURE TRACK AND CONTINUING TRACK

Independent External Reviewers

Place solicited letters from independent external reviewers in this subsection. Use the **required** template letter in Appendix D to solicit independent external letters for the designated track:

- [Continuing Status & Promotion – Appendix D Template Letter](#)
- [Promotion & Tenure – Appendix D Template Letter](#)

The letter sent to reviewers must not deviate from the sample letter without permission of a dean. Letters with substantial changes must be approved by the Office of the Provost.

Three to eight (*minimum of three, however, five are strongly encouraged*) letters signed and printed on letterhead from independent, external reviewers who are NOT collaborators of the candidate.

Letters that may be identified as coming from collaborators, as defined below, will not be considered among independent external letters. They will be placed in the section for collaborator letters. Letters must be solicited and received during the current promotion cycle.

As with the provisions used by the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, and other groups to ensure the impartiality of reviews, collaborators are defined as individuals who have co-authored books, articles, abstracts, or grant proposals within the last five-years. Collaborators also include individuals who have been a candidate's dissertation advisor, mentor, supervisor, co-instructor, or close coworker in a lab, department, or residency program, even if this relationship occurred more than five years prior to the review.

The University looks to external reviewers to provide an independent assessment, and their impartiality is paramount to maintaining the rigor of the external review process. Collaborators must not serve as external or internal reviewers. Questions about the independence of reviewers can lead to Dossiers being returned to departments and colleges.