

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM
Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion Review Letters

A. The Departmental Peer Committee Letter

(The evaluation must be based on the Unit's evaluation criteria.)

1. Evaluation of Teaching

- Evaluate the faculty member's performance as a teacher and advisor of undergraduates (classroom, laboratory, office, special projects, etc.). Comment on strengths and weaknesses, student evaluation results, syllabi, and evaluations by colleagues.
- Evaluate the faculty member's role in the program of the department, college, and/or University.
- Evaluate the faculty member's performance as a graduate teacher and thesis advisor when applicable.
- Note any special efforts undertaken to enhance the effectiveness of the faculty member's teaching.

2. Evaluation of Scholarship

- Evaluate the quality of the faculty member's scholarly writing and the journals in which it appears. Which appear in the major refereed journals in his/her field?
- Assess the faculty member's regional, national, and/or international reputation in his/her field. Has the faculty member been sought out to review papers submitted for publication/presentation, grant proposals, and/or to serve as a member of a review panel?

(Frequently faculty members are active in more than one area of scholarship and collaborate with persons in other departments or in scholarly groups off campus. Letters that speak explicitly to the kind and quality of the faculty member's contributions should be requested from the responsible individual in such scholarly organizations.)

3. Evaluation of Service

- Evaluate the faculty member's public service activities, both compensated and uncompensated, that utilize professional expertise. These should be activities carried out as a faculty member, rather than those performed as a citizen.

(Particular emphasis should be given to service that contributes to the economy, culture, and quality of life of citizens of Maine, the region, and the nation. If appropriate, letters of evaluation of public service activities should be included in the appendices.)

- Evaluate the faculty member's service to the department, if applicable, and to the University, school or college, or other committees.

B. Departmental Peer Committee: Recommendation/Recommended Action Document

- The dated recommendation should be prepared on separate **departmental letterhead. It must list the names of the voting members of the committee along with their signatures, and be copied to the unit member.**
- If the recommendation for action is not unanimous, the vote tally should be noted.
- The recommendation should include a notation that the faculty member received a copy.
- Recommendations for tenure before the end of the probationary period represent an exception to Board of Trustee policy. If this recommendation is an exception, the departmental peer committee evaluation should include a brief rationale for such an exception.

C. Other Review Letters

1. Letters Internal to the Campus

- Review letters should address one or more of the three areas of evaluation: teaching, scholarship, and service.
- **In the area of teaching**, the letter should be based primarily on first-hand observation of the candidate in the classroom or in other recognized teaching contexts such as workshops, as well as on review of teaching materials and syllabi.
- **In the area of scholarship**, the letter should be based on examination of the

candidate's written and/or creative work as well as on scholarly discussions with the candidate or attendance at conference presentations where applicable. The writer should have expertise in the area being evaluated.

- **In the area of service**, the letter should be based on first-hand experience with the candidate in some service activity. The service activity in question should be directly related to the candidate's academic expertise or to his/her collegial or governance role as a faculty member. The letter should address the candidate's academic contribution to the shared service activity or evaluate the way in which the candidate carried out his/her responsibilities as a faculty member. For the purposes of tenure evaluation, service activities do not include activities that one engages in simply as a neighbor, organization member or citizen. They must relate directly to the academic expertise of the candidate or to institutional expectations of faculty members as participants in the governance and administration of their campus.

2. Letters External to the Campus but Internal to the University of Maine System

- (See the Guidelines for Letters Internal to the Campus)

3. Letters External to the Campus and the University of Maine System

- (See the Guidelines relevant to the Institution)
- Those who comment on service activities from outside the campus and the University of Maine System should have first-hand experience of the candidate's activities and have the relevant expertise to evaluate the candidate's performance.