

Guidelines for Writing Effective Tenure Evaluation Letters

Faculty Development Committee Fall 2019

In preparation for writing your letter:

- Observe the candidate in the classroom (see separate handout for teaching observation guidelines.).
- Examine some of the candidate’s professional materials, such as a CV, published books or articles, original creative works, and/or research presentations.
 - Especially if your field is outside that of the candidate’s, schedule time for the candidate to discuss his/her research and/or creative works with you.
- Investigate the candidate’s record of service to the institution, their profession, and the community.

Guidelines for addressing each tenure standard:

- Review the tenure standards in the Faculty Handbook before writing your letter. If you are not sure how one or more standard manifests in the candidate’s field/department, talk to that faculty member’s department chair.
- Your letter should clearly address the candidate’s strengths and areas of improvement for each of the three tenure standards: **Teaching**, **Scholarly Work**, and **Service**.

	Teaching	Scholarly Work	Service
Elements to Consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effectiveness of course delivery - Quality of course content, course development, and/or curriculum development - Effectiveness in managing multiple course sections - Recognition of teaching - Use of research and original/creative work and/or service to enhance teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ of research and original/creative work: - Quality - Productivity - Program or focus - Sustainability - Recognition - Use of teaching and/or service to enhance research and original/creative work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service to _____: - the Institution - the Profession - the Community - as a faculty mentor to tenure-earning faculty - Use of teaching and/or scholarly work to enhance service
Evidence to Support Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report of classroom observation - Review of syllabi - Review of instructional materials/assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CV - Published works - Original/creative works - Presentations - Success in obtaining grant funding - Supplemental evidence (i.e. downloads, citations, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CV - Outside letters - Faculty statement

When writing your letter, DO:

- Refer to the Faculty Handbook for Coe's tenure standards.
- Clearly address the criteria of teaching, scholarly work, and service in your letter. Support your assessment of the candidate's effectiveness in each area with evidence from your preparation phase (above).
- Be succinct, and give concrete examples of success and/or areas of improvement.
- Take into account the candidate's improvement over time, as well as his/her self-awareness of his/her own strengths and challenges.
- Offer constructive feedback; honest critiques lend credibility to the compliments.
 - When writing constructive feedback, do not write anything that you would not say to the candidate's face.
- Be consistent about referring to the candidate by his/her professional title (i.e. Dr. Blair).

When writing your letter, DO NOT:

- Refer to unsubstantiated rumors.
- Air dirty laundry or "vent."
- Comment on the candidate's personality.
- Use gendered descriptions.
- Use hyperbolic language (positive or negative).

When to say "no" to writing an evaluation letter:

- If you lack sufficient expertise;
- If your schedule prohibits you from preparing and/or writing such a letter;
- If you feel you have undue bias (positive or negative) toward the candidate.