

**BOSTON COLLEGE
MORRISSEY COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

PREPARING AND PRESENTING PROMOTION CASES

Among the most important decisions made by the university are promotion and tenure decisions. Ideally, the process should produce decisions that are fair, uphold high academic and professional standards, and be respectful of the candidates under consideration.

This document is intended to guide department chairs as they advise candidates preparing their promotion dossiers and as they manage the promotion case within their departments and before the Promotion Committee. To facilitate the process, this document also suggests “recommended practices” based on recent experience in the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences. In addition to this material, the candidate and the chair should review carefully the relevant sections of the University Statutes (Chapter II, Sections 7 and 8) included in Appendix A.

Before discussing details, however, it is important to set out three general principles that should inform and guide these important personnel decisions:

- All departmental processes surrounding tenure and promotion should both embody the principles of fairness and respect for candidates and reflect the centrality of tenure and promotion decisions to the teaching and research mission of the university. The quality and reputation of academic departments, the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences, and Boston College depend ultimately on the quality of the faculty.
- Departments should specify, and adhere to, clear procedures for undertaking tenure and promotion reviews. Information about these procedures should be available to candidates. Candidates should be provided with the pertinent sections of the Statutes and department guidelines and should be given a clearly articulated time line to help them to prepare the necessary materials. The chair and senior faculty should be willing to answer questions and discuss all aspects of the process.
- In order to improve faculty performance and to ready candidates for promotion, departments should also have clearly articulated procedures for monitoring the professional development of faculty with periodic reviews and, for assistant professors, written feedback at specified points during the probationary period.

PREPARING THE PROMOTION FILE

Materials Submitted by the Candidate

The candidate is responsible for preparing and submitting a promotion file including materials supporting the case for promotion. While the file is not due until the fall semester, candidates are encouraged to start gathering materials and preparing documents the previous spring since elements of the file will form the basis of the external evaluations.

The promotion file is material to be submitted by the candidate and should include the following items:

- An updated *curriculum vitae*
- The record of scholarly activity (books, articles, artistic creations, working papers, etc., with accompanying reviews if available)
- Statement of the candidate's current and future research agenda
- Statement of the candidate's teaching goals and activities
- The MCA&S Course Evaluation Trends Report - The Dean's office will request this report from the Institutional Research and Planning department. The report provides a statistical summary of the candidate's teaching evaluations for all courses taught at Boston College during the past ten semesters (excluding summers and/or time spent on faculty fellowships. The candidate and chair will receive a copy of this report in early fall and it should be included in the dossier.
- Summary of the candidate's areas of and experience with service

Candidates are strongly encouraged, although not required, to include the original student course evaluations, with the students' written comments. In addition to the required items, candidates may submit sample syllabi, instructional resources, and other materials that will help the department and the Promotion Committee assess the merits of the case.

All of these materials are to be submitted via posting on the Canvas Learning Management System.

Materials Submitted by the Department

The materials submitted by the candidate form the basis of the department's evaluation. In addition to the material prepared by the candidate, the department is responsible for adding the following items to the promotion file submitted to the Dean's Office via the Canvas Learning Management System:

- A report on departmental deliberations that summarizes discussions, highlights strengths and responds to weaknesses identified in the external reviews, and records the vote for each voting member. Please contact the Dean's office if you would like an example of a department report (redacted for confidentiality).
- A list of external referees indicating which referees were recommended by the candidate and which chosen by the department
- A copy of the letter(s) sent to referees soliciting their assistance and providing instructions regarding the reference

- An explanation of how and why the referees were selected along with identifying information (brief biographical statement or *curriculum vitae*) establishing the expertise of each of the external referees
- All letters received from referees
- Statistical summaries of the department's teaching evaluations for the relevant semesters, to compare with the candidate's summaries
- Peer evaluations of teaching, feedback generated by student committees, **and all** letters solicited from students

The Dean's Office carefully reviews all files at the time of submission to ensure that all required materials have been included. The department should work with the Dean's Office to ensure that all required materials are available on Canvas and ready for review by the Promotion Committee.

Recommended Practices

The candidate's case should hinge on the merit of the case, not on the organization of the promotion file. Department chairs are encouraged to be available to candidates for advice about how to prepare their credentials and to present their files in an accessible and reader-friendly manner. When preparing the materials, the candidate and the department should adhere to the following practices:

- The strongest promotion files use language accessible to colleagues in other disciplines and include examples to illustrate key points. They contain all of the required promotion materials from both the candidate and the department, without redundancies, and offer sufficient evidence to substantiate claims of accomplishment or expertise.
- The promotion file should clarify the relative contribution of the candidate to co-authored work. In many disciplines, it is assumed that the order of the authors reflects the scholarly contribution. There may, however, be circumstances in which the order of authors is misleading. When appropriate, the materials should identify and explain such instances so that credit can be accurately assigned.
- The promotion file should clearly indicate whether contributions to edited volumes, *Festschriften*, special issues, and similar works have been subject to peer review. Along the same lines, the file should distinguish between conference presentations or exhibitions that are reviewed, or otherwise subject to some form of selection, and those that are not.
- Particular care should be taken when characterizing the status of work "in preparation," "under review," or "in press." Whenever possible, the appropriate paperwork (letter from a journal editor, page proofs, etc.) should be included as documentation. Any material, such as a newly published article that is added to the promotion file after the department vote should be appropriately marked.

- In addition to the specified material, the promotion file should include any other documents relevant to the case. These might include, for example, letters from colleagues or from faculty in other departments.
- The Promotion Committee carefully assesses the merits of each case. Given the number of cases, however, there is a limit to the quantity of material that can be considered.

THE DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW

While departments have a natural desire to protect colleagues whom they know and like, they also have a stake in maintaining their credibility when it comes to personnel matters and a professional responsibility to apply rigorous standards in an equitable manner. The best interests of both departments and the University may sometimes require very difficult decisions.

According to the Statutes, “Academic achievement, the chief criterion for promotion, is comprised of excellence in the areas of teaching, research and publications.” In addition to academic achievement, the Statutes also require candidates to fulfill the “more generalized responsibilities of the faculty” and this requires the Promotion Committee “to determine whether or not the candidate has demonstrated the collegueship necessary to an academic community, and a satisfactory level of departmental and college service.” Each of these areas--scholarly activity, teaching, and service--will be considered in turn.

Evaluating Scholarship

The candidate’s scholarly activity is a central consideration in assessing a promotion case. A thorough evaluation involves a review by both the department and by external reviewers expert in the candidate’s area of scholarship. The department should not “outsource” the review of the candidate’s scholarly activity to the external reviewers.

Departmental Review

The department should carefully assess the candidate’s scholarly activity and likely trajectory. In a few departments, a special committee is appointed to perform this task. In most departments, all faculty members are expected to review the candidate’s materials. In either case, the internal review should be as rigorous as the external reviews.

The department’s report on the candidate’s scholarly activity should begin by summarizing the candidate’s research interest, comment on publications and presentations, and assess the potential for continued scholarly productivity. A meaningful review will offer more than vague platitudes and will provide normative measures for assessing the candidate’s scholarly activity. For example, the department should highlight the significance of the scholarly or artistic contributions, identify

the leading journals and venues in the candidate's discipline, or comment on whether the level of research funding is above or below the department's expectations.

External Reviews

To supplement and inform the department's evaluation, letters from external referees should be obtained to offer independent assessments of the candidate's scholarly activity. The Statutes do not require a specific number of letters and this has resulted in files that include anywhere from four to more than fifteen letters. In an effort to achieve some measure of consistency among dossiers, the Promotion Committee recommends that a department submit a minimum of six to (preferably) eight letters. A recent report by the Modern Language Association recommends six reviews, but that leaves no margin for promised letters that never arrive, or for shallow letters that contain little critical insight. There is no maximum, but experience suggests that it is not helpful to submit more than ten letters.

When developing the list of potential referees it is appropriate to invite the candidate to suggest relevant scholars. The candidate should not contact these potential reviewers beforehand. If the department solicits eight letters, no more than three (roughly one-third of the letters) should come from the list of names suggested by the candidate. The candidate may also identify individuals who, for whatever reason, should not be asked to serve as a referee. The list of referees is confidential and under no circumstance should the candidate be informed of the identity of the referees.

The process used by the department to choose referees is of special concern to the Promotion Committee. Based on past practice, the strongest promotion files use one of the following strategies to empanel referees:

- Best departments. Many professional associations rank departments by subfield. One way to select referees is to identify scholars working in the appropriate area at the elite graduate programs.
- Peer departments. As an alternative to using best departments, a department might identify departments at peer institutions. This might include departments at universities like Boston College, departments that Boston College competes with for graduate students, or departments with similar demographics and research interests.
- Subject matter experts. In some instances, the most knowledgeable referees might not be from the best departments or from peer departments. If so, the department should explain why these individuals were chosen.

Rather than mandating one approach, the Promotions Committee will defer to the judgment of the department. It is essential, however, that the department explains how the referees were selected. In addition to identifying the reference group, the department should provide a biographical paragraph or *curriculum vitae* for each of the referees. Finally, the promotion file should clearly distinguish between referees suggested by the candidate and referees selected by the department.

When soliciting external evaluations, it is courteous for the department to contact potential reviewers and obtain consent before sending written materials. (See Appendix B for a sample letter.) Reviewers should be instructed to make an assessment that is candid, fair, and based on professionally relevant criteria. Comparisons to other scholars in the field who are at a similar stage in their careers can be very helpful, as is a summary recommendation about the proposed promotion at Boston College.

Once an individual agrees to serve as a referee, the department should send an instruction letter, a *curriculum vitae* and the candidate's research statement, and examples of scholarly activity. (See Appendix C for a sample letter.) Departments and disciplines differ with respect to what materials are sent to reviewers. Depending upon the number and types of publications, the department may choose not to send all publications to all reviewers but may, instead, specify a selection of scholarly materials, or different subsets to different reviewers.

As part of the report, the department should discuss the external reviews in detail. This section should highlight areas of strength, respond to concerns identified by the referees, and correct any factual errors contained in the reviews. In many instances, the department's response is fully as important as the content of the reviews.

Recommended Practices

It would be difficult to offer a single set of recommended practices for external reviews that will cover all of the departments in the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences. Recognizing that there will be exceptions, the Promotion Committee encourages departments to adhere to the following guidelines when soliciting external reviews:

- Departments should provide ample time for referees to complete a thorough review. External referees, who are performing a time-consuming professional task, cannot be expected to produce a review in less than six weeks from the time they receive the written materials. Therefore, it is essential that the department begins the process of choosing reviewers and soliciting reviews as early as possible, ordinarily in the spring semester preceding the deliberation on the case. With the summer months ahead, reviewers are more likely to agree to cooperate.
- There is a risk that letters from known friends or associates, collaborators or co-authors will be given less weight by the Committee. Any personal or professional connection between the candidate and a referee should be disclosed in enough detail to allow for an informed judgment of the referee's appropriateness and objectivity.
- Less than half of the letters should come from scholars at foreign universities, research institutes, or corporations. This is not meant to slight these institutions, but it is sometimes difficult for referees in these settings to understand fully the tenure standards at an American research university like Boston College.

- Departments should request evaluations by means of a common form letter and make it clear to the candidates that it is inappropriate for them to solicit letters on their own behalf. The instructions should ask for a frank assessment of the candidate's scholarship and should not ask for a reference or a letter "supporting" the candidate's application for promotion.
- Departments should ask the referees to compare the candidate being evaluated with an appropriate reference group. To support such a comparison, it is important for the department to provide the referees with both a context (i.e., large undergraduate department) and an aspiration (i.e., goal of being a top twenty-five department).
- **Departments should acknowledge receipt of all external reviews. In many disciplines, it is also customary to inform the referee of the outcome when promotion and tenure decisions are formally announced.**
- Departments should account for all letters. If a referee declines to serve, for whatever reason, the department should note that fact in the report. Once a letter has been solicited and received, it is inappropriate to exclude it from the file on the basis of its content or tone. Any letters independently solicited by the candidate should be clearly labeled and placed in a separate section within the promotion file.
- All who are privy to the contents of external evaluations must understand the importance of maintaining confidentiality of the identity of referees and the contents of the letters.

Evaluating Teaching

The Statutes require "excellence" in teaching and the Promotion Committee is very concerned with the quality of instruction, broadly defined. While scholarship is central to the promotion decision, it would be a mistake to underestimate the importance of teaching, advising, and mentoring and departments should give due weight to instruction when making promotion and tenure decisions. A thorough evaluation of the candidate's teaching should include self-assessment (usually contained in the teaching statement), student evaluations, peer review and often, reports from student committees.

Student Evaluations

As part of the promotion file, the candidate should include a Course Evaluation Trend Report for all courses taught at Boston College during the past ten semesters. Because these statistics need a context, candidates should be encouraged to include detailed course evaluations with student comments for the last ten semesters. This is particularly important if the teaching evaluations are either very good or very bad. The written comments can sometimes lend special insight into the source of the numbers.

Teaching evaluations vary across the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences and departmental averages help place the candidate's numbers in perspective. It is also helpful if the department includes information about the candidate's grading practices as some published research suggests rigorous graders may receive lower teaching evaluations from students.

Department Evaluation

The department's assessment of teaching will entail a careful review of the candidate's statement on teaching goals and activities, the statistical summaries of course evaluations (as well as the original forms with students' written comments if supplied by the candidate), and any instructional materials supplied by the candidate.

In addition to reviewing the materials in the promotion file, the department should conduct an independent review of the candidate's teaching. Departments are encouraged to formulate additional strategies, appropriate to the discipline and its pedagogy, for the assessment of teaching. While a complete review of these approaches is beyond the scope of this document, past experience suggests three approaches can be particularly effective.

- Peer evaluation. Unlike mentoring, peer evaluation is conducted for the purpose of gathering information needed for promotion and tenure decisions. A good peer evaluation will share feedback to improve teaching and, at the same time, provide an overall evaluation of teaching.
- Student committees. To supplement peer evaluation, some departments convene special undergraduate or graduate student committees to discuss the candidate's teaching.
- Student letters. Because students who graduate cannot participate in the student committee, and because it is often difficult to summarize the student discussions, some departments invite student letters. This practice allows the students to speak in their own words, to discuss both traditional instruction and also mentoring outside of the classroom, and it allows the departments to include feedback from graduates. **If student letters are solicited by the department, the identity of these students should be kept confidential.**

The assessment of the candidate's teaching and mentoring should not be limited to the student evaluations included in the promotion file. The department should use one or more of the approaches to gather additional evidence, assess course content and grade practices, and identify any unusual or innovative teaching strategies. In addition to classroom teaching, the department should describe and evaluate teaching-related activities such as academic advising, thesis and dissertation supervision, and collaborative research projects with students.

Recommended Practices

Over time, departments have developed their own methods for evaluating teaching. While a diversity of approaches is appropriate, some recommended practices have emerged:

- Student evaluations are most meaningful when comparisons can be made to similar types of courses. To facilitate such comparisons, departments are encouraged to generate statistics for comparable offerings. These categories could include, for example, large lecture courses, laboratory courses, studio courses, seminar courses, honors courses, and graduate courses.
- Peer evaluations should be conducted on a regular basis over the duration of the probationary period and thereafter. Meaningful peer evaluation is time-intensive, so departments should plan ahead to assure that the file includes reviews from different faculty members and covers the range of courses taught by the candidate.
- If student committees are used, there should be separate forums for undergraduate and graduate students. One or more students should be appointed to serve as rapporteur and to prepare a detailed summary of the deliberations. Instead of offering broad generalizations, the report should offer specific examples and, whenever possible, quote the committee participants.
- **If the department invites student letters, special care should be taken to achieve a representative sample of students. Toward that end, the department might invite the candidate to submit names of students with the remainder of the letters coming from randomly selected students. If the candidate submits names, the candidate should not contact these potential reviewers beforehand. In soliciting student letters, the yield may be poor, so departments are encouraged to cast a broad net.**
- However the department decides to evaluate teaching, it is important that the reviews be candid. Peer reviewers should be encouraged to identify both strengths and weaknesses. Along the same lines, the report on the student committee should reflect the full tenor of the discussion. If student letters are solicited, the department should avoid the temptation to hand pick students or to limit feedback to students who received high grades from the candidate.

Evaluating Service

Although service may seem a lesser consideration, there have been cases in which unsatisfactory service and expectation of the same in the future has been decisive.

The Definition of Service

As part of the “generalized responsibilities of the faculty,” the Statutes require the Promotion Committee to consider whether the candidate has provided “a satisfactory level of departmental and college service.” Because it would be difficult to establish a common standard for service, the Statutes continue to define unsatisfactory service: “Such service shall be considered unsatisfactory to the extent that it manifests a consistent record of refusal to carry out legitimate administrative requests for service or an unreasonable unwillingness to carry one's appropriate share of departmental and collegiate obligations of a service character.”

Every faculty member is expected to serve the department and this includes attending faculty meetings and serving on committees when asked. While the Statutes only refer to “departmental and college service,” some departments broaden the definition of service to include work done on behalf of learned societies, professional organizations and the community. This would include reviewing manuscripts for journals or proposals for funding agencies, moderating sessions or serving as a discussant at conferences, serving on committees, and participation in accreditation visits.

Assessing Service

To help the department evaluate service, candidates should be encouraged to maintain a record documenting their service to the department, to the college, and to the discipline. Because a simple list of activities has limited meaning, departments will need to assess the candidate's commitment to service. Common criteria include the quantity, quality and the impact of the service.

In general, service is satisfactory if the faculty member serves on a reasonable number of committees when asked, fulfills the responsibilities involved, and receives generally favorable reviews from colleagues and administrators for his/her contributions.

An unsatisfactory record of service would be characterized by one, or more, of the following forms of behavior: excessive absences from faculty meetings, unwillingness to serve on departmental committees, failure to complete service assignments in a timely manner, or unfavorable reviews from colleagues or administrators.

Recommended Practices

When assessing service, departments should be guided by the following recommended practices:

- The assessment of service should reflect the candidate's career arc. It would be unreasonable to expect an assistant professor to play important roles organizing academic conferences or to serve on especially time-consuming college or university committees. In fact, many departments protect their junior faculty from extensive service, so the Committee is often looking for evidence that the candidate will become a contributing member of the department.
- In some instances, it may be appropriate to add commentary or to request letters commenting on the candidate's service, especially if the candidate has assumed special responsibilities for the department, the university or in professional organizations.
- Because women and AHANA faculty are often drawn into service duties to achieve a diversity of perspectives, it is particularly important for the department to fully document and credit these activities when presenting such cases.

The Department Vote and Report

The Vote

Consistent with the Statutes, only those faculty who are senior to the candidate should take part in the departmental deliberations and vote. Colleagues at the same or lower rank to the candidate neither take part in the formal deliberations nor cast a formal vote on the case. Thus, when an Assistant Professor is being considered for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure, the tenured Associate and Full Professors discuss and vote upon the promotion; when an Associate Professor is being considered for promotion to Full Professor, the tenured Full Professors discuss and vote upon promotion.

The Statutes also require the chair to consult with other faculty at the same or lower rank to the candidate in order to determine their opinions about the candidate, and to report the results of these discussions during the departmental deliberations. Care must be taken to ensure that consultations with these faculty are completely free from any kind of coercion, and those being consulted should be informed that they can choose not to express an opinion.

The Report

The departmental report should include a complete, fair, and neutral summary of the departmental deliberations. It is essential that this report give a full accounting of the arguments for and against promotion, contradictory evidence, and dissenting opinions. It should also report on the chair's consultations with those faculty not taking part in the

deliberations and should clarify the procedures used to solicit external letters and to evaluate teaching.

Before its final inclusion in the promotion file, the report should be available for comment in the chair's office to all who took part in the formal deliberations. Individual faculty or groups of faculty should feel free to send separate communications to the Promotion Committee.

Please contact the Dean's office if you would like an example of a department report (redacted for confidentiality).

Recommended Practices

Differences between departments and disciplines make it difficult to set hard guidelines for reports. The process is well served, however, if departments adhere to the following recommended practices:

- All faculty members participating in the evaluation process should be treated with respect. Department votes should be held in strict confidence and any critical comments voiced during deliberations should be treated as confidential. Under no circumstances should information about either the discussion or the department vote be shared or leaked to the candidate.
- The best department reports contain an assessment of the promotion file and provide critical insight. A report that offers little more than an executive summary of the file does a disservice to the candidate.
- A good report will help the Committee understand the quality and impact of the candidate's scholarship, and the types of scholarship expected in this discipline. It can include publication counts, data on the quality of journals and conferences (standing, rejection rates, etc.), citation counts, and information about grant applications and awards. A good report will also provide insight into department expectations and unique disciplinary culture (conference volumes vs. journals, books vs. articles, etc.), and will discuss the candidate's likely scholarly trajectory.
- A good report will help the Committee evaluate the candidate's teaching. It will interpret the student evaluations provided by the candidate, review peer evaluations or other student feedback, and explain how the candidate's courses fit into the department curriculum. A good report will also highlight mentoring and advising activities, innovative teaching strategies, or other evidence of teaching effectiveness.
- A good report will help the Committee interpret the candidate's service. It will document a record of satisfactory service and, at the same time, it will explain the importance of that service to the department, the College, or the discipline.

- Most significantly, a good report will accurately reflect the department's deliberations. Even if the department vote is unanimous, the report should still highlight concerns that were identified in the department's deliberations. There are few perfect candidates and the department's report should demonstrate that the final decision was based on a careful assessment and substantive discussion of the promotion file.
- **Each voting member of the department is expected to submit a justified ballot to the Dean. The ballot should provide a justification for the vote cast, whether positive, negative or abstaining.**

PRESENTING THE PROMOTION CASE

The Promotion Committee is responsible for making an independent judgment about the candidate's past performance and future trajectory in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service. Part of the assessment process is a meeting with the chair of the department that is presenting a case. (If the proposed promotion is to Full Professor and the department chair is at the Associate level, then the presentation is made by a Full Professor, who may be accompanied by the department chair.)

The Committee Hearing

The faculty member who is presenting a case before the Promotion Committee can assume that the Committee members are familiar with the details of the case, and will be given the opportunity to provide a brief overview. Such a statement gives the chair a chance to highlight important dimensions of the case; draw attention to matters that might be overlooked; acknowledge any evidence contrary to the direction of the vote; explain any aspects of the discipline that have implications for teaching or scholarship; and account for any dissent from the departmental majority.

In the ensuing discussion, committee members may, for example, ask for clarification about the department's procedures; about the nature of the discipline and its expectations for scholarly production; about the content of external evaluations, the full list of external referees whose evaluations were solicited, reasons for choosing particular reviewers, and any relationship they might have to the candidate; about the candidate's grading practices; and about any developments since the department's deliberations. A department representative who understands his or her discipline and is aware of the weaknesses in a strong case (or, conversely, the strengths in a weak one) is likely to be more credible.

Those making presentations are strongly advised not to draw inferences from the questioning about the ultimate direction of the Committee's recommendation to the Provost and President. It

is sometimes necessary for the Committee to ask hard questions to solicit an honest assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate being considered.

Recommended Practices

The candidate's prospects should not hinge on the chair's skill at presenting the case. If a case is properly presented, the departmental report should contain the essential information and the hearing should help the Committee understand the case. To prepare for the hearing, the following recommended practices are offered:

- By design, the Promotion Committee is composed of representatives from the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences. The chair should be prepared to speak intelligently to a diverse audience and to explain complicated concepts in simple language.
- Members of the committee prepare for the hearings by carefully reading the materials relevant to the case. It is, therefore, not necessary to read lengthy passages from the departmental report or the reviews. The most effective opening statements are brief (five minutes) and provide either a broader perspective or important information that might have been overlooked in the file.
- When presenting the case, the chair may be tempted to assume the role of an advocate. Experience suggests the promotion and tenure process works best when the chair focuses less on defending the candidate and more on accurately representing the department's deliberations. It is often necessary and appropriate for the chair to acknowledge problems present in a particular case.
- The chair should anticipate and be prepared to discuss different aspects of disciplinary culture. Given the breadth of the departments in the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences, the Committee frequently asks questions that transcend the candidate under consideration. So, for example, in some disciplines a single-authored book with a university press is a condition for tenure while other disciplines value conference presentations more than journal articles. To fully assess a case, the Committee often probes department norms and expectations.
- The chair should carefully scrutinize the external letters. Referees are increasingly reluctant to be critical and, as a result, they often damn candidates with faint praise. This behavior forces the Committee to carefully consider the reviews in an effort to find nuances or omissions that might lend insight into the referee's true feelings.
- All who take part in a tenure hearing have a responsibility to maintain the highest level of confidentiality. Not only is this an important ethical principle, but it is essential professional behavior given the potential for litigation.

CONCLUSION

Adherence to the guiding principles, the statutory process, and the recommended practices outlined in this document imposes a substantial burden on the department. It is, however, a burden that must be assumed as the awarding of promotion and/or tenure is among the most important decisions made by an institution. A poor decision can have dramatic consequences for the individual and for the university, so departments are encouraged to invest the time and energy required to carefully assess candidates, to reach informed decisions, and to provide solid recommendations.

APPENDIX A
University Statutes on Promotion and Tenure
(Chapter II, Sections 7 and 8)

SECTION 7. PROMOTION POLICY

- A. The term "promotion" includes promotion in rank and the granting of tenure. Promotion of an individual may consist of promotion in rank, or the granting of tenure, or both.

Promotion in rank and the conferral of tenure are granted or declined upon the basis of: (a) evaluations of academic achievement proportionate to the rank under consideration as set forth in Section 3; (b) satisfactory fulfillment of the duties and manifestation of personal and professional standards of the faculty set forth in Section 9; (c) reasonable expectation that these achievements will continue in the future; (d) the determination that the granting of promotion or tenure is consistent with the needs and plans of the Department, School or College, and the University as a whole.

- B. In applying these standards, the Promotion Committees, established in Section 8D of these Statutes, shall form their evaluations as follows:
1. Academic achievement, the chief criterion for promotion, is comprised of excellence in the areas of teaching, research and publications.
 - a. Research and scholarly publication shall be judged by the standards of excellence generally accepted by scholars expert in the field in question. In making their judgments, Committees shall obtain opinions as to the quality of scholarship and its excellence as an academic or scholarly work from experts in the field from within the University and, where it is judged necessary or desirable, from scholars outside the University known to be highly skilled in the field.
 - b. Excellence in teaching shall be judged by interpreting evaluations of the candidate's teaching skills from students in courses taught by the candidate, as well as by informed reports from members of the Department.
 2. Fulfillment of the more generalized responsibilities of the faculty shall be judged upon the basis of reports from the Department and other colleagues throughout the University with and for whom the candidate has worked in the varied aspects of faculty duties. In judging this performance, the Committee shall, in all cases, seek to determine whether or not the candidate has demonstrated the collegiality necessary to an academic community, and a satisfactory level of departmental and college service. Such service shall be considered unsatisfactory to the extent that it manifests a consistent record of refusal to carry out legitimate administrative

requests for service or an unreasonable unwillingness to carry one's appropriate share of departmental and collegiate obligations of a service character.

3. In determining whether or not the requested promotion is consistent with the needs of the University, the Committee shall consider the projected needs of the Schools or Departments in the areas of academic specialization, of curriculum or research programs and of adapting instructional staff to changing enrollment patterns. The Committee shall also review the needs of the School or Department in light of the distribution of its faculty by rank and tenure status, as well as plans for improvement of its academic quality. The Committee's determination of University needs shall include a judgment that the proposed promotion generally reflects the University's commitment to seek out the highest levels of academic excellence.
- C. The weight given to each of these factors in the overall evaluation may vary in the several Schools. However, all of the above considerations must be included in every promotion decision and unsatisfactory performance in any of the areas enumerated in Section 7A may be reason for declining promotion. Among strictly academic accomplishments, although promotion requires excellence in the areas of teaching, research and publications, distinction in one area may be balanced against less distinguished achievement in another. In cases where accomplishments in accord with other statutory criteria are present, but to a degree inadequate to the rank under consideration, compensatory weight may be accorded to performance of significant service to the University, to one's profession or to society at large. However, in no case is promotion to be recommended without a determination that the candidate has demonstrated excellence in teaching.

SECTION 8. PROMOTION PROCEDURES

A. SCOPE OF APPLICATION.

1. The procedures presented in this Section shall be followed whenever a faculty member is considered for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor or Professor and/or to tenure. These procedures shall not be used in promotion from Instructor to Assistant Professor. Appointments to the rank of Assistant Professor shall be made by the Academic Vice President after recommendation by the Dean of the appropriate School or College.
2. In unusual circumstances, promotion and tenure decisions may be made under these procedures at other than the regularly scheduled times.
3. If an individual, who has an ex officio role in the promotion process, is under consideration for promotion, the Academic Vice President shall appoint a faculty member to perform that part of his duties relating to the promotion

process for that year. If a Department Chairman or Dean is an untenured faculty member, he shall, in any case where a member of his Department, School or College is being considered for tenure, be replaced by a tenured faculty member appointed by the Academic Vice President.

B. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURES

1. The Chairmen of Departments, where applicable, and Deans, where applicable, shall, in consultation with all tenured faculty members senior to candidates for promotion, review each year before October 15, the promotion status of all faculty members within the Department, School or College. The Chairman of each Department, where applicable, shall submit to the Dean of the School or College, by or about October 15, a statement either that this review has been accomplished or the reasons why, under unusual circumstances, it could not be done. In the latter case, the Dean shall appoint a committee of not less than five senior tenured faculty members, at least three of whom shall be from disciplines related to that of the faculty members being evaluated; and this committee shall conduct the review.
2. After review of promotional status, the Chairmen of Departments, where applicable, and Deans, where applicable, shall make known to all faculty directly involved in the process, the names of those chosen to be considered under the full promotion procedure. A faculty member not so named, who is not in the final year of a terminal contract, may request in writing that his name be added to the list, which request shall be granted. A faculty member whose name is on the list may request in writing that he not be considered, and such request shall be granted. Once the list of candidates is established, the Chairman or Dean shall initiate the next stage of the review process. Each candidate for promotion shall provide to the appropriate Chairman or Dean, for review by all relevant committees and individuals, a dossier that includes a current *curriculum vitae*, a summary of recent teaching activities, an account of current and projected research, a complete list of publications and materials submitted for publication, and a list of University and other services. If a Department wishes to consult persons outside the University, it must give the candidate an opportunity to suggest names of those who may be consulted. One of the candidate's nominees must be among those from whom the Department solicits opinions.
3. By or about November 1, the Chairman or Dean shall transmit in writing to the Academic Vice President the list of all candidates for promotion and tenure. The Deans of the Schools and Colleges shall submit the names of the Promotion Committee to the Academic Vice President.

C. EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES BY DEPARTMENT, SCHOOL OR COLLEGE

The Chairmen of Departments, where applicable, and Deans, where applicable, shall ensure that the following procedures are carried out:

1. If possible, a student committee or committees, as deemed appropriate by the student body directly interested, shall prepare an opinion or opinions on each faculty member being considered for promotion whose duties include teaching and advising. Representatives of this committee or these committees shall meet with the Chairman or Dean and senior tenured faculty members of the Department, School or College to discuss the report or reports. There shall be available at this meeting a summary of recent course evaluations by students of the faculty members under consideration.
2. The Chairman, where applicable, or Dean, where applicable, shall arrange a meeting of the tenured senior faculty members of the Department, School or College. At this meeting, the tenured senior faculty shall discuss and vote upon the question of recommendation for promotion of each Assistant Professor and untenured Associate Professor who is a candidate for promotion. The Chairman or Dean shall report on the results of his consultation with all junior and untenured faculty members of the Department, School or College, to determine their opinions and recommendations on each candidate for promotion to be considered at this meeting. The tenured senior faculty shall review the dossiers of all Assistant Professors and untenured Associate Professors who are candidates for promotion, along with the reports of the students and the Chairman's or Dean's written summary of the judgments of the junior and untenured faculty. The tenured senior faculty, including those unable to attend, shall be polled on each Assistant Professor and untenured Associate Professor who is a candidate for promotion, and the vote of each individual shall be recorded.

The Chairman or Dean shall also arrange a meeting of the tenured Professors. The tenured Professors shall discuss and vote upon the question of recommendation for promotion of each tenured Associate Professor and untenured Professor who is a candidate for promotion. Prior to this meeting, the Chairman or Dean shall have consulted with the Assistant and Associate Professors and untenured faculty to determine their opinions and recommendations on each candidate for promotion to be considered at this meeting. The tenured Professors shall review the dossiers of all tenured Associate Professors and untenured Professors who are candidates for promotion along with the report of the students and the Chairman's or Dean's written summary of judgments of the Assistant and Associate Professors and untenured faculty. The tenured Professors shall take into account all of the

criteria mentioned above. All tenured Professors shall be polled on each tenured Associate Professor and untenured Professor who is a candidate for promotion.

By or about November 15, a record of the results of these meetings, including the votes cast by individual faculty members, shall be sent to the appropriate Promotion Committee by the Chairman or Dean along with his recommendation on each candidate and the records of the consultation with non-voting faculty members and students.

D. PROMOTION COMMITTEES

1. Each School and College within the University shall establish a Promotion Committee, of which the Dean shall act as Chairman. The Committee shall, if possible, have at least four members other than the Dean who shall be from among the tenured faculty of the School or College. The members of the Committee shall be elected in the spring and shall serve two-year terms. The terms of office shall be arranged so that, as nearly as possible, one-half of the terms expire each year. At least three members of the Committee shall hold the tenured rank of Professor, except in Colleges and Schools with an insufficient number of faculty members of that rank. In the latter case, when an Associate Professor is considered for promotion to Professor or an untenured Professor for tenure, the Dean shall request the Academic Vice President to appoint an appropriate number of tenured Professors from cognate disciplines to constitute an ad hoc Promotion Committee with the Dean as Chairman.
2. In the College of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences shall be a voting member of the Promotion Committee.
3. The Academic Vice President shall participate in the final deliberations on the promotion of each faculty member being considered by each Committee, but shall vote only in the event of a tie vote.
4. The Committee shall employ the judgment of qualified members of the University community and also may consult with qualified scholars outside the University. The Committee may also receive written statements from individual faculty members of the College, School or Department, in support of or advising against a possible promotion being considered.
5. After reviewing the full record on each candidate, the Committee shall determine whether each candidate shall be recommended for promotion, in the light of the criteria of Sections 3, 7 and 9.
6. The Chairman of the Committee shall prepare a written report of the actions of the Committee, the reasons therefore, including any comments which its

members wish to include, and shall, after review of the report by the members of the Committee, transmit it to the President of the University not later than January 15.

E. DECISION BY THE PRESIDENT

1. If the President questions or disapproves any recommendation, he shall notify the appropriate Committee and convene a meeting to discuss the case. If, after the meeting, the President disapproves the recommendation, he shall forward to the appropriate Committee, no later than February 15, a letter stating the reasons for his disapproval.
2. The President shall communicate notice of his decision to each faculty member who has been considered for promotion and to the appropriate Dean and/or Chairman.

F. CONFIDENTIALITY

All promotions and tenure proceedings are confidential in nature, and all persons participating in the process shall respect this confidentiality by refraining from any disclosure of the proceedings or their results.

APPENDIX B
SAMPLE LETTER SOLICITING AN EXTERNAL REVIEWER

Springtime, 2007

Dear Professor _____,

Among the most important decisions made by any university are promotion decisions. Letters from external referees offer a crucial outside assessment of a candidate's professional achievement and are a vital source of information in making promotion decisions.

I am writing to ask your assistance in evaluating XXX, who will be considered in the fall for promotion to [Associate Professor with tenure/Full Professor] at Boston College. I have enclosed a copy of Professor XXX's *curriculum vitae*. If you agree to our request, I will supply you with copies of his/her scholarship. The department would need your letter of evaluation by October 1, 2007.

I understand that these requests impose a burden on the most distinguished members of the profession, but I very much hope that you will be able to assist in this matter. I shall call you next week to follow up. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me (phone; e-dress).

Thank you for your consideration in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Name
Chair, Department of ZZZ

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE COVER LETTER WHEN SENDING SCHOLARLY MATERIALS

Springtime, 2007

Dear Professor _____,

Thank you very much for agreeing to assist in our consideration of XXX for promotion to [Associate Professor with tenure/Full Professor] at Boston College. I have enclosed Professor XXX's *curriculum vitae* and copies of his/her scholarship.

Tenure at Boston College is based on research and scholarly publication, excellence in teaching, and service to the University. The department has reviewed professor XXX's teaching and record of service. While you are free to comment on either of these areas, we are most interested in your evaluation of Professor XXX's scholarly activity and trajectory.

When writing your evaluation, we would appreciate your comments on the following areas, as well as any others you think are important:

- 1) whether or not you have previously been acquainted with Professor XXX and his/her work and, if so, how;
- 2) the relative productivity of XXX when judged against the standards of our discipline;
- 3) the quality and impact of Professor XXX's scholarship; and
- 4) how Professor XXX compares to peers at other research institutions at similar stages of their professional careers.

We need to receive your review by October 1, 2007. If your letter arrives after that date, it may not be considered by the faculty during our deliberations and vote. Finally, if it is not available on your department's web site, please include a current copy of your CV or several biographical paragraphs. This information will help the department in establishing the credentials of our external reviewers.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve as an external reviewer. I recognize the time and energy necessary to prepare such a review and I appreciate your willingness to participate in this process. Please feel free to contact me if I can provide any additional information about Dr. XXX or answer any questions about the tenure process at Boston College.

Sincerely,

Name
Chair, Department of ZZZ

Enclosures