**Best Practices for Successful Preparation of P&T Dossiers**

**College of Engineering**

*Adapted from Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost Document*

**For departments and chairs:**

All documents, templates and guidelines for the college of engineering (adapted from the Provost’s documents) are available on the college website at <https://www.engineering.iastate.edu/hr/faculty-advancement/>

* Department chairs have overall responsibility for preparing P&T dossiers that are timely, and that meet departmental, college, and university guidelines.
* Candidates should use their college's standard templates for the CV and portfolio summary (Tab 2). It is helpful if the CV and portfolio clearly distinguish accomplishments and activity since the last promotion or initial appointment (in cases for which this is the first ISU P&T action) at ISU.
* Updates to the CV can be submitted in a consolidated fashion **thrice** using the template on the college website:
  + Once after dossiers have been submitted to external letter writers, but before submission of dossier to the college.
  + Once after the dossier is submitted to the college (around first week of January – exact date will vary)
  + Once after the dossier is submitted to the Provost’s office (around first week of March – exact date will vary each year)

These updates should be collected at the department level, reviewed, approved and forwarded to the college by the department chair. For updates prior to dossier reaching the college, the department chair will provide clarification which must include when the information became available and which evaluators have considered it in their deliberations. The department chair will provide all information and submit to the Dean’s office for review.

* Candidates will prepare and submit a “Factual Summary” as part of Tab 1 of their P&T package. The college of engineering template of the “Factual Summary” with embedded instructions is posted on the College of Engineering website.
* The Position Responsibility Statement (PRS) should be unique to each faculty member. The PRS should accurately reflect the expectations for each area of responsibility preferably using weighted percentages. The PRS serves as the benchmark for gauging faculty productivity when evaluating promotion and tenure cases.
* Teaching loads vary across disciplines and within departments. The P&T materials should accurately reflect a candidate’s actual teaching load and be consistent with actual teaching activity reported for recent years, not the departmental average. Where a candidate’s teaching load diverges significantly from the departmental norm, this divergence should be clearly explained.
* Peer teaching evaluations provide a valuable perspective in addition to the numerical student teaching evaluation scores.  Each candidate should include a summary of their peer teaching evaluations in Tab 2 (Portfolio Summary) for those candidates with teaching responsibilities. The original peer teaching evaluation reports may be included by the department in Tab 3.
* Student teaching evaluation scores presented in tabular format should be included in every Tab 2 (Portfolio Summary). Evaluations should be forwarded using the institutional standard of 1=very poor and 5=excellent. Comparative departmental data must be provided. Candidates should address any negative trends in their teaching evaluation record, particularly sustained deviations from the departmental average.
* While placement of articles in top tier journals is an important criteria, we expect the department and college to place more emphasis on the impact of the candidate’s scholarship.
* Report citations of publications using conventional tools accepted in the discipline, such as the Web of Science database, Google Scholar, and h-index.
* Institutional service activities (e.g., committee service) should not be included as extension or outreach activities.
* The chair should meet with the departmental P&T committee at the start of the process to deliver the committee’s charge and to review expectations, conflict of interest (see the CoE conflict of interest guidelines at https://www.engineering.iastate.edu/hr/faculty-advancement/), and process. Once the entire P&T review process is concluded and final decisions delivered, the chair should again meet with the committee to review outcomes and to assess expectations and process, with an emphasis on continuous improvement.
* The departmental P&T committee’s report should be evaluative and analytical in its presentation of the case. Disciplinary standards for research/creative activities should be provided as context for non-experts evaluating the dossier. Include the name of the chair of the departmental P&T committee and names of the faculty members who served on that committee in the departmental report.
* Departments are responsible for obtaining letters from external referees. The Faculty Handbook Section 5.3.3.2 specifies a “maximum” of six letters and a “minimum” of four. Departments should make every effort to secure six (6) external letters.
* At least one, but no more than three, of the external letters should come from referees suggested by the candidate as supported by the Faculty Handbook 5.3.3.1.
* Referees should be among the top faculty in their discipline who are at or above the rank being sought and at institutions having equivalent or higher stature than Iowa State.
* Selection of referees must avoid conflict of interest as defined in the COI document on the college website. Major professors, post-doctoral advisors, and former students should not be selected as external referees.  Co-PIs, co-authors, and research collaborators should also be excluded except in very unusual circumstances that should be explained.
* Other than in exceptional cases, departments should not obtain multiple letters from the same institution – and if that is done, they must explain why.
* A copy of the letter sent to external referees should be included.
* The referee log should be complete and show whether the candidate or department chose each referee. In Part II of the log, departments should give a several-sentence-long statement of why that evaluator was chosen.
* The bio-sketch for external referees should be brief (ideally a paragraph and no more than a page). Under no circumstances should the entire vita of any evaluator be forwarded in the dossier.
  + External letters are expected to be written on letterhead (not just an email).  An electronic/digital signature is acceptable.
* Whenever possible, only faculty at or above the rank for which a candidate is being considered should vote on promotion, e.g., associate professors should not vote on cases for promotion to full professor. We strongly discourage the practice of having untenured faculty vote on cases for promotion and tenure. We encourage departments that allow it to reconsider the practice.
* Faculty input into Promotion and Tenure cases is an important part of shared governance and abstentions undermine this principle. It is the responsibility of each faculty member who is eligible to vote to evaluate the merits of each case and to provide a recommendation by casting a vote.
* While it may not be possible for the department chair to address the exact reason for negative votes, the chair should make some effort to address the reasons and/or provide some context where appropriate.
* If there are loose ends in the case, such as the status of a Ph.D. student who is expected to graduate soon or who may have graduated, or a pending grant or publication, the chair should conduct the necessary fact-finding and include that information in his/her letter.
* The chair’s letter should clearly state what the standard expectations are for scholarship in the candidate’s particular discipline (e.g., “the gold standard is” published conference proceedings, juried exhibits, single-authored journal articles, case studies, etc.) and provide an evaluation of the candidate’s accomplishments compared to these disciplinary norms or expectations.
* The chair’s letter to the dean must be analytical, candid and evaluative. It should point out, discuss, and analyze any weaknesses in the case, and any aspects of the process that are unusual or of concern.   We suggest the following format: 1) description of departmental review process; 2) synopsis of case; 3) evaluation of any concerns; and 4) chair’s recommendation on the case.
* The issue of timing of the promotion should be addressed in the chair’s letter, particularly if the promotion can be considered early (fewer than six years in rank) or if the interval between promotions is lengthy.
* When there are concerns in a candidate’s case, the chair’s letter should describe feedback given to the candidate through the written annual or preliminary (third-year) reviews, mentoring interventions, and proactive measures taken by the candidate (for instance, receiving training from CELT to address low teaching scores).

***Updated July 2018***