

Faculty Handbook Review Committee

*Proposal Concerning Process with Fewer than Three Eligible Voting Faculty
Unanimously passed by the committee.*

Summary: These revisions clarify what happens when there are few or no eligible voting faculty in a department and clarify that the appointment of outside faculty to serve as departmental voting faculty should be with the majority approval of the tenured and tenure-track faculty. Note that this only happens in case there are fewer than three eligible faculty. This language also clarifies what happens if there are zero eligible faculty.

3.6.5.E. The Department's and Dean's Recommendation

The eligible **department** faculty who voted on a candidate's promotion and/or tenure will write a summary letter that reflects the vote and represents all aspects of the discussion leading to that vote. The department head/chair will also write an evaluative letter (that will count as his/her vote) with an explicit recommendation for or against promotion and/or tenure. In addition to these two required letters, individual faculty members may write letters explaining why they do or do not favor promotion and/or tenure. Where there are fewer than three faculty members in a department who are eligible to vote ~~write letters of evaluation~~, the head/chair shall appoint additional faculty to participate in the vote, ensuring a minimum of three votes are available for tenure and/or promotion cases. The head/chair shall select additional faculty to appoint in consultation with the eligible department faculty and candidate(s) for promotion and/or tenure, giving preference to emeritus department faculty when possible, and otherwise giving preference to closely related disciplines within the university. The chair shall appoint these additional faculty to participate in the vote only after receiving majority approval by secret ballot from the department tenure-track faculty. ~~may ask for letters from faculty members in other departments who have knowledge of the candidate's professional performance.~~ Those faculty from outside the department will serve with the eligible faculty to accomplish the work of the faculty review and write the summary letter. In total, there must be a minimum of three faculty participating in the review, voting, and writing the summary letter. For faculty members hired under the research cluster initiative, the head/chair shall ask for a letter from the cluster leader prior to the consideration of the candidate for sharing with tenured faculty (and those of higher rank in cases of promotion). In such cases, the tenured faculty along with the head/chair will consider this information in making recommendations for promotion and tenure. Before writing the letter, the cluster leader shall seek advice from the steering committee of the cluster. Letters from the home department should address the quality of research/creative work and the candidate's potential for continued work, teaching effectiveness, effectiveness in the area of extension, service contributions, and, in tenure cases, potential to contribute as a productive and collegial member of the academic unit in all relevant areas. In the case of candidates for tenure-on-hire letters from the candidate's current colleagues as well as from Auburn faculty members are strongly encouraged and should address these same issues.

Faculty should bear in mind that letters to the Promotion and Tenure Committee are an important source of information for the committee. Letters can help the committee to make an informed judgment about the candidate's collegiality by addressing the candidate's performance of their duties within a department. Letters can also help the committee, whose members may not come from the candidate's field, understand the significance of the candidate's work and make a fair appraisal of it. Faculty, department heads/chairs, and chairs should note that, unlike letters from outside reviewers, which remain confidential, their letters will be made available to and may be rebutted by the candidate.