

# GUIDELINES FOR LETTERS OF REFERENCE FOR PROMOTION AND TENURE

## UTHSC FACULTY HANDBOOK SECTION 4.11.2.1

**NEW in 2019:**

**Letters can only be solicited by the College / Campus official; Chairs and Faculty may not solicit.**

- Letters **MUST** be signed and on letter head. E-mails are **NOT** accepted.
- All letters received, positive and not so positive, must be forwarded to the Office of Faculty Affairs and the Dean with the faculty P&T package.
- Letter writers must list their rank and credentials. If the letter is for tenure consideration then letter writer must state tenure status (for letters supporting tenure consideration they must be tenured)
- The letter of reference is an objective evaluation of one’s accomplishments and professional standing. All reference letters must describe the relationship (current or previous) between the individual writing the letter of reference and the nominee. Individuals who write letters of reference should address one’s knowledge of the faculty member and evaluate his/her abilities as an educator, clinician, scientist or leader/administrator
- Do not ask faculty to write letters of recommendation for a nominee when there is a conflict of interest. Common examples of this conflict include faculty who are co-investigators on active grants, past mentors, current practice partners or same department/division membership with the nominee. However, it is also recognized this conflict is sometimes unavoidable, i.e. assessment of the nominee’s teaching by a course coordinator.
- For nominations in the basic science departments, written comments regarding teaching performance from the dean(s) of other college(s) where a nominee has teaching responsibilities should be obtained, and included in the P&T packet.
- The table below outlines what the rank of the individual writing a reference letter should be for the promotion of an individual to a certain rank

Type of Faculty Appt Nominee Holds	Rank Proposed for Nominee			
	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Professor	Tenure
<b><u>Regular Faculty</u></b>	Letters must come from Associate Professor or higher	Letters must come from Associate Professor or higher	Letters must come from Professors in other institutions NOT affiliated with UT	<b>Letters must come from <b>TENURED</b> faculty at the Associate Professor rank or higher</b>
<b><u>Volunteer Faculty</u></b>	Letters must come from Assistant Professors or higher, regular or volunteer	Letters must come from Associate Professor or higher, regular or volunteer	Letters must come from Professors in other institutions NOT affiliated with UT	

*Information for External Letters of Evaluation*

**External Letters of Evaluation**

In addition to internal letters of evaluation, external letters of evaluation must be obtained for all reviews for promotion and for the final probationary review for the award of tenure.

**Number of Required Letters - Minimum requirements by rank and type of action**

Type of Action	# of internal letters (1)	# of external letters (2)
a. Instructor to Assistant Professor	3	0
b. Assistant Professor to Associate Professor WITHOUT tenure	3	2
c. Assistant Professor to Associate Professor WITH tenure	2	3
d. Associate Professor to Professor WITH or WITHOUT tenure	2	3
e. Instances of tenure at any rank WITHOUT promotion	2	3

Definitions for each category of evaluators:

1. **Internal evaluators** are individuals who are employed by or affiliated with the college, UTHSC, or UTHSC's affiliated institutions.
2. **External evaluators** are individuals who are not employed by or affiliated with UTHSC or UTHSC's affiliated institutions.

See Faculty Handbook edits (for Summer 2018) for specific details as to how the external and internal evaluators should be selected and as to how letters of evaluation should be solicited