

GUIDELINES ON ASSEMBLING MATERIALS FOR PROMOTION [AY 2023-2024]

Promotions Committee (PC) has prepared this document in consultation with the Associate Dean of the Faculty with responsibilities for tenure-track personnel and the Dean of the Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs. Modeled on the DOF/VPAA's guidelines on assembling materials for tenure, it includes two sections:

- **Section I** reproduces Faculty Handbook specifications regarding the content of promotion files. Detailed information regarding promotion criteria, eligibility, and mandatory procedures is in the Faculty Handbook, Part One, Article VIII, Sections A and F. *You are encouraged to review these sections thoroughly and to keep them in mind while assembling your file.*
- **Section II** provides additional guidance intended to help candidates assemble files that are as informative as possible. These are not requirements, but rather suggestions from PC based on its prior experience reviewing promotion files.

Detailed information regarding PC's deadlines and procedures is in the PC Operating Code and Calendar (distributed via the faculty email list and on the PC webpage [Promotions Committee \(skidmore.edu\)](http://www.skidmore.edu/promotions-committee)). The handbook of your department/program may also include relevant information. Guidelines regarding the management of electronic promotion files are in the document "Procedures for the Creation and Maintenance of Electronic Faculty Academic Portfolios" (on the DOF/VPAA webpage and in the Department Chairs/Program Directors Handbook; see www.skidmore.edu/dof-vpaa¹).

The materials that you present and the way in which they are organized convey a professional narrative to multiple constituencies. These include members of your department(s)/program(s), members of PC, the ADOF with responsibilities for tenure-track personnel, the DOF/VPAA, and the President. While department/program colleagues may (or may not) be familiar with your discipline and professional practices, it is likely that most members of PC and the administration will have little knowledge of them. The external, internal, and department/program letters submitted on your behalf are expected to address various aspects of your work. Ultimately, however, *it is your responsibility to document, explain, and contextualize your accomplishments in the categories of teaching, scholarship/creative work, and service as these categories are defined in the Faculty Handbook.*

SECTION I: Faculty Handbook specifications regarding the content of promotion files

The Faculty Handbook states, "Promotion files shall include the following" (Part One, Article VIII, Section F, number 2, a, vii):

- (1) "An updated CV, which makes clear what has been achieved since the last promotion.
- (2) "All scholarly, creative, or professional materials produced since the submission of the file supporting the last successful promotion candidacy; candidates may add some earlier materials for purposes of context or to show continued growth. The candidate may wish to

¹ See Committee Information/Promotions Committee/Assembling Materials for Promotion Guidelines.

seek letters from Skidmore colleagues outside their department/program qualified to speak to their professional accomplishment. The candidate shall include a Research/Artistic Statement, which articulates the significance, scope, and future directions of scholarly/creative work.”

- (3) “The ten most recent semesters of teaching evaluations. For purposes of context, the candidate may wish to include other evaluations. The candidate shall also add copies of syllabi, and may include assignments and handouts. The candidate shall include a Teaching Statement, which articulates teaching goals and methodologies, and charts one’s development as a teacher over time. The file may include peer evaluations of teaching.”
- (4) “A cover sheet showing courses taught, sabbatical leaves, and any course releases over the previous six years.”
- (5) “Service credentials presented within the context of the broad statements about service” in the Faculty Handbook (Part One, Article VIII, Section A). “The candidate may wish to provide relevant documents and seek letters from Committee Chairs or members who can speak about the quality and extent of service. The candidate shall include a Service Statement, which articulates service goals and accomplishments that demonstrate a record of sustained, significant, and effective service to the college.”
- (6) Annual reports for the past six years.

SECTION II: Additional suggestions from PC

(1) CV

- PC asks that you format all sections of your CV to distinguish achievements before and after submitting the file for your previous successful promotion. The clearest way to distinguish is to change font color and use bold typeface.
- When relevant and if available, similar documents to our Annual Reports from a prior institution may help to document aspects of teaching, scholarly/creative work, and/or service that may not be detailed in your CV.

(2) External and internal letters

- It is important to follow your department’s/program’s personnel policies regarding the solicitation of external and internal letters, as this process may vary. Note to Chairs/Directors: you will find a model letter for requesting external letters (including information about Skidmore’s evaluative criteria and procedures) in the Department Chairs/Program Directors Handbook.

- In many cases, external letters (from individuals in the candidate's field) address scholarship/creative work, while internal letters (from Skidmore colleagues outside the candidate's department/program) address service. However, these letters may address any aspects of your professional practice that the authors are well positioned to evaluate.
- If your file includes teaching and/or service credentials from another institution, it may be beneficial for one or more external letters to address them.
- External letters that address scholarship/creative work should be solicited from reviewers who have the knowledge base and vantage point to critically evaluate your work fairly and objectively. Although this does not preclude the selection of reviewers whom you know, PC recommends that candidates include a range of letter writers who have expertise and stature in the field, knowledge of your work, and/or familiarity with the liberal arts setting.
- There is no expected number of letters. Most promotion cases are supported by 3-4 external ones and 2-3 internal ones.
- You will find PC's policies regarding unsolicited letters in the PC Operating Code (Section on Procedures, 18).

(3) Presentation of teaching

- The Teaching Statement is the opportunity for you to discuss your pedagogical approach and explain any issues in your teaching that may need clarification. The statement may address pedagogical innovations; classroom challenges and how you addressed them; distinctive contributions to your department/program, the all-college curriculum, or Skidmore's strategic priorities; possible reasons for inconsistencies in student course evaluations; and/or other topics that you consider relevant. The statement should explain what is next for you as a teacher as you think to your future work in the classroom. Clarity and brevity are appreciated by those who read your materials.
- If your file includes teaching credentials from another institution, the teaching statement may address whether/how the teaching expectations and circumstances of your prior position differed from those at Skidmore.
- Materials such as syllabi, classroom activities, assignments, etc. should be uploaded to the candidate's file on theSpring. Do not link your promotion materials to another course on theSpring or an external website. Similarly, do not add PC members to courses on theSpring as a means of sharing teaching materials.

- You may document notable changes in a course over time by including multiple iterations of the syllabus and/or addressing them in the teaching statement and/or annual activity reports. Other evidence of teaching effectiveness may include, but is not limited to, selected assignments, exams, examples of student work, examples of feedback to students, peer observations, and/or other items that you consider relevant.
- PC recognizes the limited value of quantitative forms to convey teaching excellence. However, for courses taught at Skidmore, PC asks that candidates construct a chronological list of the ten most recent semesters of teaching that includes course titles and enrollments/caps (e.g., 14/28) and the three summary numbers from student quantitative evaluations that address the course overall (item 2.1), instructor effectiveness overall (item 4.1), and learning overall (item 5.1). Information about other work with students (advising, independent studies, theses, lab supervision, etc.) may be included as well.
- If your file includes student course evaluations from another institution, please indicate whether they are complete sets or selections; explain the rating scale; and note how they were administered and used (required or voluntary, developmental or evaluative, etc.). This information may be included in the teaching statement or provided separately.
- Quantitative course evaluations in which data are reported in color should be provided in color. We ask that you annotate department/program course evaluation forms with faint handwriting or cut-off sections to clarify any illegible or missing portions. Please upload all evaluations to theSpring such that they can be viewed in portrait mode.

(4) Presentation of scholarly/creative work

- The Research/Artistic Statement educates readers about your professional accomplishments in the context of your discipline. Since many readers of your file are from outside your discipline, this statement is critical in helping them understand how your work may conform to and/or diverge from disciplinary conventions. What questions or themes does your work address and what methods do you use? How does your work demonstrate a trajectory that both builds upon itself and advances the discipline? How is your work disseminated, who is its audience, and how is its value assessed? In describing your current scholarship, you should also outline any future research/artistic plans. The readers of your file appreciate clarity and brevity in the presentation of your materials.
- External letters from individuals in your field may speak to professional conventions (e.g., co-authorship/collaboration, productivity rates, etc.); the quality of your work and dissemination outlets; and the position and impact of your work within a broader disciplinary context. See above for additional comments about external letters.

- If your file includes publications or creative work produced at another institution, the statement may address whether/how institutional expectations differed from those at Skidmore.

(5) Presentation of service

- The Service Statement situates your service interests and accomplishments in relation to students, your department/program, the college, and/or the profession. The statement should explain what is next for you as you think to future service work. The readers of your file appreciate clarity and brevity in the presentation of your materials.
- Provide an organized list of service activities to clarify the nature of your role and your contributions to them if such information is not already included in your CV and/or Annual Reports.
- If your file includes service credentials from another institution, the statement may address whether/how the service expectations and circumstances of your prior position differed from those at Skidmore.