

Utah State University

College of Science

Supplemental Guidance for Pre-Tenure Faculty E-Dossier (Packet) Preparation

Packet Preparation – General Comments

- The Faculty Code dictates that performance in the major area of emphasis must be judged to be “excellent” and your performance in the remaining area(s) of emphasis must be judged to be “effective”.
- The packet should be a work in progress throughout the pre-tenure period with periodic revisions and updates. At a minimum, it should be updated to include the material reviewed each year by the Tenure & Promotion Committee.
- The goal is to not only document excellence/effectiveness, but also to show your professional trajectory over time. Incorporate your responses to evaluations in appropriate sections of packet.
- Openly address any gaps, inconsistencies, or shortcomings, providing underlying perspectives as appropriate.
- Brevity and efficiency are appreciated by the reviewers. We encourage you to think about your packet (or the individual teaching, research, and service sections) as being analogous to a well-written scientific paper, where data are condensed in charts, tables, and graphs along with clear explanations.

Self-Assessment Letter (*maximum 6-8 pages*)

This should be a very well thought out document that clearly articulates your trajectory toward achieving excellence and effectiveness in the respective areas of your role statement. It is the executive summary of the outcomes that are further detailed in the packet. Be positive and promote your achievements. If you receive any sort of award or recognition related to one of your roles, make sure to highlight this. Openly address any weaknesses, but do not excessively focus on them. Tables and graphs should be incorporated to summarize data and demonstrate impact.

Clearly define your area of emphasis (i.e., research, teaching, or extension)

- In the appropriate section, provide evidence for the development of excellence in the major area of your role.

For research active faculty, define your research program

- Use terminology that is understandable to a non-specialist.
- Describe the research philosophy that has guided your development of an independent research program.
- Show how your efforts have led to achieving excellence/effectiveness in research.
- Explain the outcomes (support with data in the packet).

- Address previous (outstanding) difficulties and how you worked (are working) to overcome them.
- Demonstrate how your achievements to date position you for future successes.

Define your approach to teaching

- Could be a condensed version of your teaching philosophy.
- Discuss your approach to achieving excellence/effectiveness in teaching.
- Provide a high-level summary of the outcomes of your efforts.
- Describe how you have addressed any deficiencies in your teaching.

For extension faculty, define your approach to extension

- Provide information on your programs (e.g. needs assessment, innovative approaches, funding, impacts, and recruitment).
- Discuss your ability to reach diverse audiences.
- Provide information on your work with county agents and/or other specialists.
- Discuss your efforts in disseminating information.
- Discuss the impacts of your program(s) – support with data in the extension section.

Define your approach to service and outcomes

- This section can be brief and summarize key activities. Include service to the department, college/university, profession, and community as appropriate.

Research Documentation

List all Publications and Creative Activities

- List refereed publications with official authorship list, publication year, doi, and page range.
- Use special font style to identify student or postdoctoral co-authors (e.g., italics, bold, or underline).
- Clearly differentiate publications/creative activities performed at USU versus those of prior appointments, including graduate student and postdoctoral accomplishments.
- Include a citation analysis and indicate relative range of h-index in your field.
 - Explicitly call out high-impact papers, including any popular press coverage and/or altmetrics.
- Clearly explain authorship sequence and practice in your field.
- Use brief (1-2 sentence) annotations to:
 - Identify the outcomes and activities for which you are primarily responsible.
 - Explain your contribution to multi-authored papers.
 - Provide evidence for the quality of your research publications/creative activities, including:
 - Journal impact factor
 - Number of citations
 - Other evidence of impact

- List other technical reports or non-refereed publications with attention to detail described above.

External Funding

- List all proposals submitted including title, agency/foundation, requested amount
 - Indicate funding status (i.e., awarded, declined, under review)
 - For funded proposals include award amount, start and end dates.
 - For declined proposals, the College of Science encourages the inclusion of information such as scores, reviewer comments, funding agency pay lines (if known), and strategy for resubmission.

List Scholarly Presentations

- Clearly list all presentations at professional meetings (include abstract citation or dates, organization, invited or contributed, and location of meeting).
- Provide evidence of impact (i.e., describe venue, note if it was a major meeting in your field).
- Clearly differentiate who made the presentation (you, student, etc.) and distinguish between poster and oral presentations.

Teaching Documentation

Teaching Philosophy (1-2 pages)

Topics to include:

- Your expectations of students; what you want them to learn and for what purpose, stating how your expectations shape your practice.
- How you think students learn in your discipline; how you facilitate learning, techniques and methods you use to maximize the probability of learning.
- How you motivate and establish rapport with students.
- Your theory of assessment; how your philosophy informs your assessment strategies.
- How your philosophy informs the kind and timing of the feedback you give students.

Teacher/Course Evaluations

- Provide a table or graphical summary of student evaluation data; summarize, explain, and provide context for this data (e.g., provide an explanation for low or anomalous scores on student/course evaluations).
- Be sure to include all teaching assignments by semester and year, including current year.
- Check to see that required information is complete (dates, courses, scores, # of respondents).
- Selectively include student-written comments or solicited letters from students.
- Include a self-evaluation of teaching:
 - Carefully document changes made over time in response to student/peer evaluations.

Peer Evaluation

- The department head should visit at least one course each year and other faculty should visit annually. It is desirable for peer reviews to be regularly completed by committee members and included in annual updates to the dossier.
- Peer evaluators should include constructive comments. Observations and recommendations should be in memo format, copied to the instructor.

Supporting Materials

- Include only one syllabus for the most recent iteration of each course. If substantial changes have been made to a course, multiple syllabi may be provided to describe the changes.
- Full IDEA PDF files for all courses taught should be included in a supporting materials section (e.g., appendix).
- Describe how technology is used in the classroom.
- Comment on any innovative teaching strategies or techniques that you use.
- Include invitations to present a paper at a conference on teaching in your discipline or on teaching in general.
- List pedagogical achievements:
 - Identify the outcomes and activities for which you are primarily responsible.
 - Provide evidence for the quality and impact of these outcomes and activities.
- List teaching awards or other recognition.
- Provide evidence of student learning (e.g., pre/post scores before and after a course).
- Give evidence that you are continually working to refine your teaching skills and to understand student learning. Document workshops that you've attended, books you've read, and data you have collected from your classes.

Student Engagement in Research (mentoring belongs in the teaching section)

- Indicate research performed by undergraduates, graduate students (indicate degree level if still in the program and degrees completed under your advisement), and post-docs (provide dates).
- Note any unique accomplishments of these students (placement on graduation, awards received, contributions to your research, co-authorship, etc.).

Extension Documentation

Few faculty in the College of Science have roles in extension. Those that do will want to demonstrate sustained, high-quality extension program(s) with evidence of a strong effort in program planning, development, management, and coordination.

Extension Summary (2-4 pages)

Topics to include:

- Content and description of extension program(s). Include information on clientele.
- Context for meaning and value of extension program(s). Include information on needs assessment.
- Description of impact of extension program(s).

Evidence of Impact

This will vary by program. Some examples include:

- Application/adaptation of scholarly activity.
- Delivery methods and use of novel media in information transfer to clientele.
- Intra- and extramural applied research and/or extension funding.
- Leadership in applied or adapted scholarly activity directed toward solving current problems and issues created by new ideas.
- Evidence of a strong ability to interact with colleagues and transfer information from research programs to clientele groups.
- Major contributions to public service for growers, industry, commodity organizations, consumers, and/or county extension.
- Documented improvements in practices of growers, consumers, and/or government clientele.
- Documented outputs, impacts, and outcomes through surveys or other data collection tools.

Service Documentation

- Clearly list all committee service (both external and internal to USU) with start/end dates.
- When listing service on thesis/dissertation committees, indicate student's name, college, department, degree, and dates.
- Professional service includes reviewing manuscripts and grant proposals, chairing sessions at professional meetings, chairing symposia, etc.

Other Comments

- All acronyms should be defined when first used.

External Reviewers

While the code indicates that external peer reviewers should be “of rank equivalent to or higher than that sought by the candidate,” candidates are encouraged to submit a strong list of senior scholars who can provide insightful comments on their record. External reviewers should be respected scholars in the candidate's discipline and should have sufficient rank, experience, and perspective to judge the candidate's record and compare it to others of equivalent experience in the field. Candidates are advised to recommend colleagues who can serve as objective evaluators; i.e., not a former mentor, former collaborator, close friend, or former classmate.

The ideal external reviewers are not invested in the career of the candidate but, rather, have sufficient distance to serve as objective external reviewers. Candidates should avoid any appearance of close personal relationships with suggested reviewers.