

Tips for Candidates Preparing Dossiers

With additional tips for Peer Review Committees Reviewing Dossiers

Tips are listed according to the "Outline of Promotion Dossier" as amended for the Library Statements in *Italics* are for the candidate. Statements with **PRC:** are for the PRC members.

I. Personal History and Professional Experience

E. Invited Lectures and Invited Conference Presentations Since Last Promotion

PRC: Review this section carefully to be sure that the candidate is following these ‘rules of thumb’ for putting conference presentations in the correct part of the dossier.

Rules of thumb for distinguishing between these and contributions to be listed under Service:

- *If you are invited to give a conference presentation or lecture without any prompting on your part, then it is invited and it belongs here.*
- *If you are giving a presentation because of your job title, it is Service and should be listed in that section.*
- *If you do research to prepare for the presentation, unless it is published, it is still Service.*
- *If your paper or presentation is selected as a result of rigorous review and competition, it is still Service.*
- *If you do research to prepare for the presentation and it is published, it goes under publications.*

Note: The Campus P&T Committee does not like it when candidates take liberties with the concept of "invited." Invited means that people asked you to write/present something based on what they already knew about you. Being selected through competition is not Invited.

H. Grants Received Since Last Promotion at UIUC

Grants which have the Library as primary beneficiary, e.g., CARLI, list under Service. It is not necessary to list dollar amounts of grants, especially for smallish RPC grants.

II. Publications and Creative Works

PRC: It is essential that the works cited in this section be written in the correct format. Review CAREFULLY all citations and compare to the printed guides. Have the candidate correct any errors before sending the dossier forward.

WRITE YOUR BIBLIOGRAPHIC CITATIONS IN THE CORRECT STYLE! –*We are librarians and ought to be able to do this section correctly. When in doubt, USE the citation guides that are on the web and in your set of documents. If you have questions about format, please bring the citation guides and question to any member of your Peer Review Committee, the FRC, or PTA.*

PRC: Review the candidate’s dossier to be sure that these phrases are used accurately and updated as the status of the manuscript changes from year to year.

Throughout: Follow explicit instructions and use the distinctions from Communication # 9 regarding the use of the phrase, "Accepted for publication": "The phrase, 'accepted for publication' should be used only where a written commitment to publish has been received from a publisher, subject only to final technical editing. The term should not be used to describe works still in initial development, even if a contract or invitation to publish has been offered. Works in the latter category should be described with the phrase "Incomplete work under contract to ..."

Throughout: When a work is still in manuscript (accepted for publication), indicate the extent in pages, with the phrase "in typescript." Use digits rather than words for the number. For example, "33 pp. in typescript."

Throughout: Use "At press" only if you've returned the page proofs. Be sure to include volume and issue number.

Throughout: Don't annotate the citation. ("Just the facts, Ma'am.")

B. Books Authored or Co-Authored

C. Books Edited or Co-Edited

PRC: Make sure that reviews are not listed here. PRC will use published reviews of the candidate's books in the Departmental Evaluation of Research

Don't list reviews of your books anywhere.

J. Book Reviews (in print or accepted)

PRC: Make sure that regular book reviews are listed under Service, not here in Research.

Include book reviews here ONLY if they are several-page, substantial review essays. Put regular book reviews under Service

III. Resident Instruction

A. Summary of Librarianship and Instruction

PRC: Review this section to be sure that the position description is brief and focused on the essentials. This is the place for the candidate to identify the position he/she holds in a little more depth than just the job title. The candidate is communicating to the Campus P&T committee members and others on Campus and letting them see the position. The rest of this section will let everyone see the PERSON in the position.

Give a brief statement (maximum two SHORT paragraphs) describing your position. Use narrative rather than bullets. You are describing the position for the benefit of those who may not be able to deduce what you do from your title alone. For example, "As the English Librarian, I am responsible for the management, collection development, and the instruction and reference services of the English Library."

0. Descriptive Data: Librarianship

PRC: Review this section with a caring and critical eye. Be particularly aware of statements that seem to be cut and pasted from an annual report and suggest deletion or serious re-writing. The candidate should be writing statements of impact. Look for statements that reflect why THIS PERSON is the best person for this position. Look for links between qualities and results. It is critical to avoid jargon.

- *Put your most substantial categories first. Treat this like an application letter for a permanent position. What do you want the Campus to know about your most important contributions. Start with a bang.*
- *It is likely that most of us will be able to achieve greatness in up to three areas of librarianship. It is much less likely that we will be able to do so in six or seven areas of librarianship. This is not the time to create a laundry list of everything you do or have ever done. Focus!*
- *Do not include or consider categories that don't comprise a substantial part of your work. While we have to list "empty" categories (with "N.A.") in other parts of the outline proper, the librarianship categories are not mandatory, so there is no need to have an empty category under Librarianship.*
- *Do not feel limited to or bound by the categories. Write **YOUR** librarianship! You can write a "user-centered" narrative or a "collection-centered" narrative or whatever central principle or value guides your librarianship.*
- *Even if you use bullets, write a NARRATIVE of your librarianship. Think (and write) in terms of your contribution to the University.*
- *Distinguish between yourself and the job or unit. YOU are going up for tenure, not THE JOB or THE LIBRARY. Along the same lines, use "I" not "We." "We" isn't going up for tenure.*
- *Write for an audience that does not know you or the Library. Think of a sculptor in FAA or an agricultural economist in ACES. Avoid professional jargon! (Have someone you trust outside the profession do a "jargon check.")*
- *Do not use statements that lack a focus, e.g., "spent a lot of time" or "worked on."*
- *Don't use hours per week in describing library responsibilities.*
- *Don't list web pages here as Systems activity. List under Service, if a major contribution. Summarize under the appropriate activity if undertaken as a part of that. For example, "As part of XXX, I redesigned and reorganized the web pages for self-guided tutorials." Make your involvement explicit.*
- *Don't separate responsibilities or activities into a year-by-year listing.*

1. Descriptive Data: Instruction

Don't list course presentations separately. Talk about your contribution to courses.

2. Supervision of Graduate Student Research

PRC: Note the criteria for this section. It will be little used by our Library faculty.

Ordinarily, "supervised graduate student research" wouldn't apply to us (unless we are doubling as a member of the graduate faculty in another college). In this category, "graduate student research" results in a thesis.

3. Other Contributions to Instructional Programs

- *Identify practicums by content, not by person.*
- *Identify independent study by content, not by person.*

B. Evaluation of Instruction

2. Candidate's Report and Self-Review of Activities in the Area of Librarianship

PRC: This statement will show considerable change from year to year as the candidate matures and defines his/her librarianship. The job grows and the candidate must. This statement must reflect that growth and change in perspective. If it does not, have the candidate rewrite.

- *Very important here to focus on overarching themes and goals. What is your philosophy of librarianship and how does it inform your work? How are you contributing to the mission of the University? What is your PASSION?!!*
- *Indicate WHY what you have been doing is important and HOW you succeeded in accomplishing it.*
- *Show growth and development.*

3. Departmental Evaluation of Teaching and Course Documentation

PRC: This section must be evaluative rather than descriptive. The focus is on **HOW WELL** the person is doing the job. That the **job** is necessary and important is assumed. Are there areas where the candidate needs improvement and strengthening? Specify those areas and include strategies for improving performance. Be kind to those who will be reading the document: Clean up typographical errors and incomplete sentences. Remember that evaluation of librarianship is just part of the picture. Maintain a balance among the three areas to be evaluated. This is the section in which to identify strategies for the candidate to develop non-Library faculty relationships.

Because the candidate will see this evaluation, it is critical to maintain the confidentiality of persons consulted in the PRC process. Use "a faculty member stated ..." not, "Professor Perfect stated..." The list of the people consulted needs to be maintained as a separate document, confidential from the candidate, which will accompany the PRC report when it is sent to FRC. Note that in the final promotion dossier, individual reviewers are listed and named.

IV. Service

A. Summary of Service

Insert a brief statement here (3 sentences maximum) characterizing your service.

- 1. Public Service**
- 2. Service to Disciplinary and Professional Societies or Associations**
- 3. University/Campus Service**

For the most part, what we do will fall under 2) Service to Disciplinary and 3) University/Campus Service. Very little, IF ANY, of our activities will meet the stringent definitions of Public Service. This is normal and to be expected. Do not try to force activities into 1) Public Service just to have something there. It is better to have an honest N/A than an inappropriate entry. Activities incorrectly listed under Public Service do not strengthen your case. Here is the text from Communication #9: "Indicate the public service performed in assisting agencies, schools, businesses, governmental

agencies or other groups and individuals who benefit from the knowledge, information and services resident within the University community. To be recognized as public service, the activities should meet the following test:

- a. They contribute to the public welfare or the common good.
- b. They call upon the faculty member's academic or professional expertise.
- c. They directly address or respond to real-world problems, issues, interests or concerns."

An EXCELLENT source of information, *A Faculty Guide for Relating Public Service to the Promotion and Tenure Review Process* is to be found at:
http://www.conted.uiuc.edu/html/tenure_guide.html

Use whatever format works best for you in this section. Bullet format might work well, or an outline format to show organizational relationships (in professional societies).

B. Evaluation of Service

- 1. Public Service**
- 2. Service to Disciplinary and Professional Societies or Associations**
- 3. University/Campus Service**

PRC: You will have to make an evaluation of service in each of the three categories, even though typically there will be no activities in the area of Public Service. This is OK. In the other areas, be sure the candidate provides substantial evidence to support an evaluation. When writing the evaluation of service, identify if the candidate is weak or needs improvement in 2) Service to Disciplinary ... and 3) University/Campus Service, and make specific suggestions for strategies to improve the service record. This is a good section for identifying ways in which the candidate should develop contacts and colleagues on a national level.

V. Research

A. Candidate's Statement of Research Goals and Accomplishments

PRC: It is essential that the candidate address the questions of **Why** research these questions? And **So what?** in this section of the dossier. The candidate must tie the different elements of the research into an integrated research agenda. This section must show both an active research activity profile and a projection into the future of how this research will continue. The candidate's statement should show evidence that you can use to support your evaluation of future research potential.

- *Your narrative should explain what research questions you have investigated and why they are important.*
- *Be very explicit in stating how you have contributed to the advancement of knowledge in your field. Focus on IMPACT. You must persuade the reader of the importance of your work and its relevance and utility for those in the same field.*
- *You are describing your entire oeuvre here, not just a series of projects or articles. How does it tie together? If volume of output is sufficient, it's OK to have more than one area of research, but typically we will have a single area of research with some overarching theme.*
- *Do not focus on the particulars of the research. Focus on the WHY this research and WHY you! What qualities do you bring to your research that make it better?*

- *This section must show that you have a research agenda with a future. That is, it should not be defined so narrowly or be time-bound in such a way that you give the impression that a few years after promotion your research career will be over.*

B. Departmental Evaluation of Research Accomplishments

PRC: In evaluating research accomplishments and measuring them against expectations, be specific in terms of what progress needs to be seen and in what timeframe. State these expectations in concrete, measurable terms. Say, "Finish the article by June 30" rather than a vague "Finish the article in a timely way." Evaluate the anticipated value of any proposed research project for the candidate's specific research agenda. Identify those projects which lie outside of that agenda and counsel the candidate not to pursue those projects. Clear, objective evaluation of the whole research and publication record is critical. This is not the place for 'fudging.'

B. Departmental Evaluation of Future Potential

PRC: This evaluation looks at the future dimensions of the candidate's research agenda. Carefully evaluate the candidate's track record and plans for the future. If there is a mismatch or if the future research trajectory is underdeveloped, be clear about what has to happen to achieve a positive evaluation. It is important to include an assessment of the probable standing of the candidate within the discipline five years from the present (See Provost's Communication 9

<<http://www.provost.uiuc.edu/provost/Communications/comm9/comm9criteria.htm#ler>>)

The dossier is incomplete if this candid evaluation is not included in the evaluation. The Library and the Campus are not going to support a case of 'terminal tenure' where the candidate does not have clear and strong research lines going forward.