Letter of Agreement No. _
Procedures for External Peer Review

Introduction:

The goal of external peer review is to seek expert assessments of scholarship produced by candidates for tenure and/or promotion. Reviewers should be chosen based on their areas of expertise and should be shown to have no meaningful conflict of interest in rendering judgment on a candidate's scholarly record.

This process shall begin early in the spring semester preceding the fall in which a candidate's dossier will be considered at Kean for promotion or tenure (linked with promotion), thereby giving the Provost's Office time to secure a pool of at least three reviewers and to have those reviewers prepare a written report that will be seen by the department ARTP committee, the University Promotions Committee, the Provost, and the President.

External reviewers are uniquely qualified to describe how the candidate has made scholarly/creative/professional contributions and evaluate how the candidate's scholarly/creative/professional record has matured. External reviews are to be used as only one piece of the evaluation of the candidate's scholarly/creative/professional activity. The letters are meant to inform, not determine, the promotion/tenure decision.

Procedure:

1. Nominating Reviewers: At least three reviewers should be nominated by each of the following:
    a) The candidate;
    b) the Chair of the candidate's department or Chair of a special promotion committee appointed by the College Dean.
    c) For candidates seeking promotion to associate professor, a committee of the tenured faculty who are associate and full professors; and
    d). for candidates seeking promotion to full professors, a committee of the tenured faculty who are full professors.

2. Confidentiality: Reviewers' identities and the content of their letters shall be confidential, shared only by Chairs, members of the ARTP committee(s) reviewing cases, the UPC, the President's Office and the Provost's Office.

3. The list of candidates proposed by all parties will be shared with the candidate. The candidate will have the opportunity to strike names of parties she/he/they believe to be unable to provide an objective review. The candidate must provide a written rationale for striking the name of a prospective reviewer. Should the candidate choose to strike the

names of reviewers, the nominators will have the opportunity to add additional names for consideration. The Provost must approve the final list of names.

4. The candidate has the option of submitting a list of reviewers to the Provost that are unacceptable. Those reviewers will not be used in assessing the candidate's portfolio for promotion.

5. A minimum of three external reviews must be received for the process to be considered valid as part of the evaluation process. If three external reviews are not received then none may be considered.

6. Desired characteristics of reviewers: Reviewers should be tenured associate or full professors or equivalent -- (preferably full professors for candidates seeking promotion to that rank). The reviewer should be recognized for their expertise in the candidate's field and/or subfield. Nominees shall, through their own publications and the quality of their appointments, be able to present a CV that clearly shows the ability to make an informed judgment about the candidate's dossier. Qualified international reviewers may be included in the pool of candidates.

7. Appropriate reviewers should not be in a position to benefit from the promotion of the candidate. In keeping with standard professional principles regarding conflict of interest, no reviews may be made by relatives or household members of the candidate; former thesis advisors or thesis students of the candidate; individuals with whom the candidate has collaborated within the past four years; individuals with whom the candidate has a financial relationship; individuals for whom the candidate's spouse, parents, or dependent children work; or individuals who have employed the candidate within the past 12 months. Reviewers cannot be current faculty members at Kean University.

8. Candidates will electronically provide to the Provost's Office, through Interfolio[1], all of the materials she/he/they wishes to have considered by the external reviewers. This should include at a minimum, all of the scholarship and/or creative work that a candidate has produced while employed at Kean. Work produced prior to arrival at Kean may be included as well. Candidates may choose to submit work submitted to journals, presses, competitions, or performance venues that is still under consideration but has yet to be accepted.
9. Prospective reviewers will be sent the candidate's CV together with a letter outlining the charge should she/he/they accept the nomination to review. All prospective reviewers who agree to review will receive the candidate's scholarly activities dossier together with a letter detailing the candidate's teaching load, service roles, and other responsibilities for each semester while employed at Kean and instructions for submitting the written review. The teaching load shall be confirmed by the candidate before the letter is sent.

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[1] *In Fall 2023, the University will use Interfolio for distributing materials and collecting responses for candidates being considered and will assess our experience with the platform. If the University decides to change the platform for the next cycle, the Union and faculty will be notified of such change within a reasonable time period (not less than six months).*

10. The University's letter shall indicate that the reviewer is to make a written judgment regarding whether the candidate's materials evidence that the candidate has met an appropriate standard for tenure and/or promotion in their area of scholarly/creative activity appropriate to their field of study given the teaching load, service roles, and other responsibilities of the candidate during the period of review. A template of the University's letter shall be provided to the KFT prior to dissemination. A template of the letter sent to reviewers shall be provided to all candidates.

    The invitation sent by the Provost's Office will ask reviewers to promptly commit to, or decline, the invitation to review, by indication in the electronic system. The reviewer will be asked to submit their letter within ten weeks of the invitation and will be prompted automatically by the electronic system on a weekly basis until the letter is submitted, the reviewer declines the invitation, or the submission deadline is reached.

11. Reviewers should be given a period of not less than ten [10] weeks to provide a written response. The deadline for the submission of external review letters is ten (10) days prior to the promotion or tenure application deadline, after which any letters submitted will not be considered.

    Due to the timing of when this agreement was executed, for the Fall 2023 review cycle, the reviewer will have to submit their letter within six to nine weeks of the invitation in order to meet the deadline included in Paragraph 11 of this agreement.

12. Reviewers will upload their written review directly through Interfolio. Should a written review be received outside of this electronic system, it will be uploaded by Provost's office staff and visible only to the ARTP Committee; the UPC; the Provost; the President; and to staff managing the external review process.

13. Reviews will be valid for a minimum of three academic years and may be used in subsequent years if a candidate is not promoted.

14. This agreement will be in effect immediately for candidates applying for tenure linked with promotion in Fall 2023. The external review process will take effect for candidates applying for promotion not linked with tenure in Fall 2024.

15. This Memorandum of Agreement shall not serve to amend or modify the parties' Collective Negotiated Agreement.

In WITNESS HEREOF, Kean University and the Kean Federation of Teachers, Local 2187, have acknowledged their understanding of this Letter of Agreement and affix their signatures below.

For the University:

Zahire D. Estrella-Chambers
Zahire D. Estrella-Chambers (Jun 24, 2023 10:22 EDT)

Zahire Estrella-Chambers

Date: June 24, 2023

For Local 2187:

Frank Argote-Freyre
Frank Argote-Freyre (Jun 23, 2023 10:18 EDT)

Francis Argote-Freyre

Date: June 23, 2023