



AY 2026-2027 Reappointment, Tenure, Fixed Term, and Promotion Requirements, Guidelines, and Procedures

Reappointment, tenure, fixed term and promotion decisions are the most important that the university makes. In accordance with university regulations, candidates for reappointment, fixed term (with and without rolling contracts), tenure, and promotion are evaluated on the academic functions they are expected to perform. The purpose of this document is to provide, hopefully in one place but with appropriate links as needed, the requirements, guidelines and procedures necessary to reach these decisions.

1. GOVERNING REGULATIONS AND GUIDANCE MATERIALS

The following regulations and Standard Administrative Policies and Procedures (SAPs) govern the reappointment, tenure, fixed term rolling contract, and promotion processes, as well as other important related issues.

1. [UW Regulation 2-1](#) (Academic Personnel)
2. [UW Regulation 2-7](#) (Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion and Fixed term),
3. [UW SAP 2-7.1](#) (Procedures for Implementing and Evaluating Rolling Contracts)
4. [UW SAP 2-7.2](#) (Procedures for Conducting RTP Reviews)
5. [UW SAP 2-7.3](#) (Criteria and Sources of Information for Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Review)
6. [UW Regulation 2-9](#) (Faculty Workload)

Guidance documents for faculty and reviewers can be found on the [Academic Affairs website](#) by clicking on the “Faculty Affairs” tab and then clicking on “Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion, and Fixed-Term Contracts”. This can be reached directly as well at [Reappointment, Tenure & Promotion, and Fixed-Term Rolling Contract Procedures](#). From this page, click on the appropriate links for [Information for Candidates](#), [Information for Reviewers](#), [Online Tools & Resources](#), and [Forms and Ballots](#) for additional information.

The AA Pythian Papers may be found on the [Academic Affairs website](#) by clicking on the “Faculty Affairs” tab and then clicking on the “Policies & Guidelines” tab. This can be reached directly as well at [Pythian/White Papers on Academic Careers](#).

While the purpose of this current document is to decrease the need to examine the direct regulations and guidance materials, we still recommend taking time to familiarize yourself with the online resources. If you have questions or need assistance in locating documents, or you identify errors in the links, please contact facultyaffairs@uwyo.edu.

2. CALENDAR FOR AY 2026-2027 RTP PROCESSES

Consistent with UW Regulation 2-7 Section XI, the Provost has the authority and responsibility for establishing the calendar for the submission of reappointment, tenure, and promotion materials, and the meetings of the URTP Committee to consider the candidates for reappointment, tenure, fixed-term, and promotion. Candidates and their unit heads are responsible for preparing clear, concise, and convincing cases.

Table 1 provides recommended and hard deadlines. Colleges are strongly encouraged to set their own internal deadlines.

Table 1. Recommended and Hard Deadlines for AY 2026-2027 RTP Processes

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
February 2026	Faculty Affairs distributes 2026-27 RTP Key Dates and Procedures
By May 1, 2026	Colleges prepare internal deadlines and Departments initiate internal processes.
May 22, 2026	<i>Recommended deadline</i> for Department heads and candidates for promotion to have completed the preliminary process for selecting external reviewers. NOTE: Colleges may require an earlier deadline or allow a later deadline.
June 1, 2026	Worksheets distributed by Academic Affairs to colleges for reappointment, tenure, fixed-term rolling contract, and promotion cases
February through August 2026	<p>Create case(s) in WyoFolio for faculty requiring external review (work with college Dean’s office to determine who will be responsible for setting up the cases)</p> <p>Department heads solicit external reviews; monitor return rate. See guidance document at https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/reviews/tp_reviewers.html.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty and departments upload required documents for external reviewers in WyoFolio case. • Solicit external letters of reference. Send notification from WyoFolio to external reviewers. • Reviewers should be given at least 6 weeks to complete the review. • Regularly check WyoFolio for receipt of letters. There is no automated notification when letters are uploaded. • Please note: Colleges may require external letters for fixed-term reviews depending on college and department policy. <p>Note: Deans may set later deadlines as long as the department and college level reviews are not impacted.</p>
August 14, 2026	Worksheets containing updated reappointment, tenure, fixed term rolling contract, and promotion cases returned to facultyaffairs@uwyo.edu
August 31, 2026	Fall classes begin
September 15, 2026	<i>Recommended deadline</i> for all materials, including external reviews, to be complete and uploaded to case files in WyoFolio. NOTE: Colleges may require an earlier deadline or allow a later deadline.
September – December 2026	Department and college reviews completed in accordance with the college’s internal deadline.

December 1, 2026	Deans notify Faculty Affairs of cases likely to be considered by URTP Committee. This category of cases includes those with conflicting recommendations from different levels of review, cases receiving negative recommendations from all levels of review, and early cases.
January 5, 2027	<u>HARD DEADLINE:</u> All mid-probationary, tenure, fixed-term rolling contract, and promotion reviews must be completed. Deans forward cases in WyoFolio to Academic Affairs.
January 22, 2027	All cases reviewed by Academic Affairs and the docket for URTP Committee is finalized.
February 8-9, 2027	<u>HARD DEADLINE:</u> URTP Committee meets to review cases.
By March 2, 2027	Provost completes review of cases and prepares recommendations for all cases.
By March 5, 2027	Academic Affairs notifies candidates of recommendation to the President and/or Board of Trustees.
March 9, 2027	<u>HARD DEADLINE:</u> Academic Personnel Report submitted to Board of Trustees for March meeting
March 2027 Board Meeting	Trustees vote on all cases involving tenure, 5-year fixed-term with rolling contracts, and promotion.
April 2027	All candidates notified of review outcome.

3. PREPARING FOR RTP REVIEWS

3.1 APPLICABILITY FOR ALL FACULTY

The guidelines and procedures described herein are applicable to tenure-stream faculty (as defined in UW Regulation 2-1 Section III.B) and non-tenure track faculty (as defined in UW Regulation 2-1 Section III.C). While UW Regulation 2-7 governs all faculty, two SAPs provide additional procedural information. UW SAP 2-7.1 applies to non-tenure track faculty and UW SAP 2-7.2 applies to tenure-stream faculty. The procedures within the SAPs are reasonably consistent, but the timelines for different actions (e.g., tenure, fixed term, etc.) are different due to the different faculty categories.

3.2 TENURE AND PROMOTION EXPECTATIONS

As stated in UW SAP 2-7.3 Section II: “*Documented, discipline specific and mission-driven criteria shall be developed by academic units to inform candidates and their reviewers about expectations for tenure and promotion.*” Therefore, it is the responsibility of the faculty in the academic units, e.g., departments, to develop expectations for tenure and promotion. The development of these expectations can be done concurrently with the development of annual review performance criteria.

Specifically, academic units (departments) must have documented expectations that are consistent with the standards of their respective fields and disciplines. Expectations for each rank (for each type of position) should be sufficiently clear so that candidates understand what the recommended outputs are that indicate they are deserving of tenure and/or promotion. These outputs may specify the type, quantity, and/or quality of those work products.

Expectations should appropriately recognize the proportion of time and effort allocated in the job description for each category of duties assigned to the candidate. For example, quantitative

outputs associated with publications may vary due to different workload percentages assigned to the research category. Reviewers should consider any adjustments to job descriptions that have been made when making decisions about the degree to which a candidate meets expectations.

Department expectations for reappointment, tenure, promotion, and fixed term should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. This review is best conducted outside of the tenure and promotion review process and before the deadline for preparing the case for consideration.

Department expectations must be included in the case file when it is prepared. This is the only mechanism for communicating to higher level reviewers what the department expectations are.

3.3 JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND THE REVIEW

In accordance with UW Regulation 2-9, unit heads shall determine individual workloads that are consistent with the overall mission of the academic unit, college, and university. Job descriptions should accurately reflect the relative distribution of workload. The candidate's packet should include copies of the job descriptions that were in place during the period for which the review is taking place. Unit heads should discuss implications of different workload distributions at the time the job description is revised (e.g., expectations associated with an increase in research load and reduction in teaching load), and sufficient time should be given to allow candidates to produce expected outputs.

3.4 HISTORY SHEETS

Unit heads should work with the college/unit Interfolio lead to ascertain that the candidate's history sheet is accurate, including the adjustment for and notation of any clock stops, notation about early decisions, and any other notations that help to provide an accurate picture of the candidate's review schedule. The Lifecycle Management tool in WyoFolio should provide information helpful for completing this. The most recent forms can be found on the Academic Affairs website <https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/reviews/ballots.html>

3.5 PEER GROUP

The peer group is a subset of faculty peers who are responsible for reviewing case files and providing recommendations for reappointment, tenure, and promotion. As specified in UW SAP 2-7.2 Section II, the composition of the peer group is determined by the tenure track and tenured faculty in accordance with academic unit protocols and college bylaws.

As per UW SAP 2-7.2 Section V.D: "The peer group must include at least faculty at rank or higher than the position for which candidates are being reviewed. It is recommended that the peer group be limited to faculty at rank or higher; however, depending on department/academic unit policy it may include additional members of the department/academic unit who hold appropriate academic qualifications considering rank, academic degree, or job description. The college or unit dean or director may direct a department or academic unit to include appropriately qualified members of other departments or units in the voting protocol in circumstances, such as department size, warrant such inclusion. The peer group composition shall apply consistently across candidates, and candidates may not choose different peer group

compositions. Each department or academic unit shall review its peer-group composition at least every three years.”

As per UW SAP 2-7.1 Section V, procedures for conducting fixed term rolling contract reviews “will be conducted in accordance with university policy and the unit’s tenure and promotion procedures.” This means that the peer group is established in accordance with unit protocols and college bylaws. Frequently, these protocols allow for the tenure and promotion peer group to be augmented by non-tenured faculty and non-tenure track faculty for the review of non-tenure track cases for fixed term rolling contract and may require the non-tenure track faculty to be at a specific rank and/or hold a 3- or 5- year fixed term rolling contract.

It is advisable that the review of peer-group composition be conducted well in advance of any department review meetings for candidates. Best practice would be to conduct this review in conjunction with a review of the academic unit’s tenure and promotion expectations.

Each academic unit must have a written copy of the voting protocol on file as well as documentation indicating how the protocol was established (e.g., by faculty vote and date). Where appropriate, voting protocol involving joint appointments should be articulated in the document. This material should also be included in the case when it is prepared.

3.6 EARLY TENURE CASES

There is often confusion about early tenure cases. This stems from the language in UW Regulation 2-7 Section V.C, which states: “A faculty member must be considered for reappointment, tenure and/or promotion after having served the time period required by existing regulations. A faculty member with an exceptional record in all the major dimensions of the candidate’s professional responsibilities may apply for early tenure. The determination of an exceptional record is grounded in the performance standards and expectations of the discipline as evaluated by departmental colleagues, external expert reviews, the Unit Head, the college committee, the Dean, and the university committee. A tenure decision is considered to be early if it takes place before the probationary period has come to conclusion. If early tenure is not granted and reappointment is approved, the candidate shall continue on the original timetable.”

The language in UW SAP 2-7.2 Section IX.D states: “A candidate may request consideration for tenure prior to the date specified in the offer letter. This action occurs prior to preparation of candidate materials and separately from the formal tenure review. Requests for consideration for early tenure must be made and evaluated prior to the deadline for requesting external reviewer letters, as specified annually by the Provost and Executive Vice President. Requests received after that deadline will be denied. Guidelines for this process shall be provided by the Office of Academic Affairs.”

Another factor to consider is UW SAP 2-7.2 Section VIII.A which states: “The University Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Committee shall deliberate and provide a recommendation and comments when the recommendation from one of the lower units is in conflict with that of another or the case is for early tenure.”

This language requires some interpretation but fortunately the UW SAP 2-7.2 explicitly directs the Office of Academic Affairs to develop guidelines for the early tenure process. As part of those guidelines, provided herein, Academic Affairs will also provide clarification.

3.6.1 What is Meant By Early?

An early review for tenure and promotion simply means that the candidate has requested to be reviewed prior to the end of their probationary period. The probationary period is explicitly identified in the hiring documents (offer letter and/or Academic Appointment details). Recent hiring practice at UW is to not provide “credit” toward tenure in the hiring documents so most new faculty hired without tenure are given the full probationary periods described in UW Regulation 2-7 Section VI.A (six years for assistant professors, four years for associate professors, and three years for professors).

3.6.2 Why Not Provide Credit Toward Tenure Upon Hiring?

UW often hires faculty who have prior experience elsewhere. The primary reason that UW prefers to not provide credit toward tenure upon hiring is that tenure is granted by the Board of Trustees. Providing credit toward tenure upon hiring implicitly presumes that the Board of Trustees supports such credit, a presumption that should not be made. An important secondary reason that UW prefers to not provide credit toward tenure upon hiring is that this now forces a candidate to achieve tenure in a shorter time frame and if they do not, they will be dismissed. Painful experience has shown that anything can happen during a probationary period that may adversely affect a candidate’s progress. While there are tenure clock stop procedures available, the Office of Academic Affairs recommends giving all new hires the full probationary period available for their rank. Then, a candidate with significant experience may request an early tenure review while still having the full probationary period available to earn tenure.

3.6.3 What is an Exceptional Record?

This language in UW Regulation 2-7 is subject to interpretation by every individual involved in the multi-level review process. Simplistically, an “exceptional record” is when a candidate meets the expectations for tenure (as developed by academic units) in a significantly shorter time than the probationary period. For example, an assistant professor is hired with no previous faculty experience. This person immediately begins to excel in all aspects of their job compared to the expectations developed by their unit. They reach a quality and quantity of productivity by year three that is consistent with expectations for year five. This person may be a good candidate for early tenure with a review in year four.

In another example, an assistant professor is hired with five years of previous faculty experience at a peer institution. They are hired with a full six-year probationary period. They transition successfully to UW and maintain the quality and quantity of productivity of their work, excelling in all aspects of their job during their first year at UW. This person may be a good candidate for early tenure with a review in year two or year three. What is exceptional here is that, because of their deep experience elsewhere, the candidate is clearly meeting the expectations for tenure within this shorter time frame.

Note that both examples suggest that the candidate *may* be a good candidate. They also may not be – each case must be considered separately against the expectations developed by the academic unit.

3.6.4 How to Proceed with an Early Case

To proceed with an early tenure review, a candidate must request early consideration, preferably by a letter addressed to their unit head. This request must be made prior to the “**Recommended deadline** for Department heads and candidates for promotion to have completed the preliminary process for selecting external reviewers. NOTE: Colleges may require an earlier deadline or allow a later deadline.” specified in Table 1. Department heads are then responsible for working with and counseling a candidate who has requested consideration for tenure and promotion before the end of the probationary period specified in their offer letter.

Best practice after a request for early consideration has been made is to use an informal process wherein the candidate and unit head discuss the case to identify the pros and cons of moving forward. The candidate and unit head may also wish to discuss the case with the dean as well. The unit head may also consult informally with the peer group in the unit who will vote on the case. The information gathered can help guide the department head when counseling the candidate. This informal process minimizes the potential for surprises should the formal review be initiated. If the case is not initiated, the information received through this informal process can help inform the candidate about what needs to be accomplished prior to initiating their candidacy.

Formal review activities (i.e., establishing the case file, seeking external reviewers, uploading materials, making the case file available for unit review, scheduling the review meeting, etc.) should only be initiated after the informal process has been completed and the determination has been made to proceed with an early tenure process.

3.7 RECOMMENDING PROMOTION

The timelines for promotions depend on the faculty category. At UW, tenure-track faculty at the assistant professor rank are reviewed for promotion to associate professor at the same time they are reviewed for tenure and on the timeline specified at the time of their appointment. Exceptions for early review are discussed in Section 3.6 above. All other promotions occur at the time when the faculty member has demonstrated sufficient growth and performance to merit the promotion.

The previous sentence is necessarily vague and follows from the language in UW Regulation 2-7 Section VI.C.1 which states: “Promotion decisions for associate professors being considered for the rank of professor are not tied to years of service. Instead, they hinge on the depth, level, and national or international scope and recognition of the candidate’s contributions to the discipline and the University’s mission. Associate professors seeking promotion to professor normally undergo a period of additional growth that results in a greater level of accomplishment and intellectual leadership.”

UW Regulation 2-7 Section VI.C.2 states: “Non-tenure track faculty will normally be considered for promotion after six years. However, nothing shall prevent a faculty member from seeking

promotion at an earlier time. Promotion to the highest rank is not tied to years of service. Instead, promotion decisions hinge on scope and recognition of the candidate's contributions to the discipline and the University's mission. Non-tenure track faculty seeking promotion to the highest academic rank normally undergo a period of additional growth that results in a greater level of accomplishment and intellectual leadership."

In short, faculty members may request consideration for promotion at such time as they feel they meet the expectations developed by their academic unit for the next highest rank. See Section 3.2 above for more information about these expectations.

The procedures for promotion from associate professor to professor are identical to those for promotion from assistant professor to associate professor. As per UW SAP 2-7.1 Section VII: "Promotion reviews [for non-tenure track faculty] will be conducted in accordance with tenure and promotion procedures described in University Regulations and consistent with academic unit/college processes." In practice, this means non-tenure track promotion reviews are conducted in the same manner as reviews for fixed term appointments with the added step that the Board of Trustees must approve (as they do for all faculty promotions.)

Because there is no set timeline for promotions, the procedures provided in Section 3.6.4 should be followed. This provides the notification needed for the academic unit leader to initiate the process.

3.8 JOINT APPOINTMENTS

As per UW Regulation 2-7, the following procedures must be followed for faculty holding joint appointments:

- Section IV.D.2. In the case of a joint appointment involving two Academic Units within one college (or college-type units) the candidate's materials will be reviewed by both Academic Units, beginning with the Academic Unit of record. The materials will then be reviewed by the College Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Dean, before being submitted to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.
- Section IV.D.3. In the case of a joint appointment involving two or more colleges (or college type units), the candidate's materials will be reviewed by each Academic Unit head, beginning with the Academic Unit of record (i.e., unit where the largest workload percentage is distributed). If appropriate, the college level review will be conducted by a subcommittee made up of one or more members from each College Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committees and the Deans from the respective colleges, before being submitted to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

The regulation does not specify how college-level meetings are arranged. Deans should work with their tenure and promotion committees to determine a process for selecting an equal number of representatives from those committees to serve on the subcommittee. The college where the tenure home resides should take the lead on arranging for this meeting.

3.8 REVIEW FOR FACULTY HOLDING SER APPOINTMENTS

Review will begin with the SER faculty (excluding any faculty member in the candidate's Academic Unit of Record), who will discuss the candidate's reappointment, tenure and

promotion materials and contributions to the SER mission, followed by the Executive Director of SER. Review materials will then be reviewed by the candidate's academic department, Unit Head, College Tenure and Promotion Committee, and Dean, before being submitted to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

4. EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

External reviewers are required by UW for reviews resulting in tenure, tenure and promotion to associate professor, and promotion from associate professor to professor. External reviewers are not required by UW for reviews of non-tenure track faculty for fixed terms with rolling contracts or promotion. Academic units, however, may (and some do) specify a requirement for external reviewers for non-tenure track faculty in their bylaws or their reappointment, tenure and promotion procedures.

UW SAP 2-7.2 discusses external reviewers in Sections V.B and IX.B. Key points are:

- “External letters of reference are critical in cases involving tenure or promotion or both. Their purpose is to provide independent, convincing appraisals – from outside the University – of a candidate's national or international scholarly stature.”
- “A tenure or promotion case file should contain *at least four letters* from referees **who have no personal connection to the candidate**. Examples of personal connections are serving as a dissertation advisor or advisee, previous or pending co-authorship, sharing of research funding, and family relationships.”

During the review process, peer groups, heads, deans and RTP committees should refrain from identifying the external reviewers in their comments.

More information about external reviews, including procedures and materials to submit to the case file, are found in Appendix I. Read Appendix I in detail.

5. UNIT MEETINGS

5.1 DEPARTMENT AND COLLEGE REVIEW MEETING PROTOCOLS

As per UW SAP 2-7.2 Section V.E, each academic unit shall have a documented set of meeting protocols consistent with these guidelines provided by the Office of Academic Affairs. These protocols should address items like who is present at the meeting and who participates in the discussion. There is no single standard format for these meetings. For example, in some units, candidates are asked to make a formal presentation, in other units the candidate or the candidate's mentor provides an overview of the case, and the candidate stays in the meeting to answer questions but then leaves during the deliberation, and in still other units, the candidate does not attend the meeting at all.

5.1.1 Confidentiality

These meetings involve personnel matters and shall be treated with confidentiality (i.e., materials and discussions). There have been cases reported to Academic Affairs in which a participant in the meeting has communicated with the candidate or someone else about the context of the meeting discussion. This is a violation of confidentiality and can have consequences for one or all of the parties.

All faculty are expected to complete the confidentiality acknowledgement form before participating in any aspect of the review process. It is recommended that department and college protocol also address this important expectation. The forms should be retained by the academic unit's administrative staff person. Forms need to be completed only once, but department and college protocols may specify annual completion.

5.1.2 Participation in Meetings by Non-Voting Members

Department meeting protocol may allow for participation in departmental meetings by department members who do not vote. All participants in the meeting, voting or non-voting, are expected to complete the confidentiality acknowledgement form.

5.1.3 Confidentiality Reminder at the Beginning of Meetings

At the beginning of all review meetings, the person chairing the meeting shall read the notice provided in Section II.1 of Appendix II.

5.2 GUIDELINES FOR MEETINGS

Departments should adhere to the following guidelines for conducting meetings to discuss candidates' cases for reappointment, promotion, tenure, or fixed term rolling contract.

5.2.1 Review/Meeting Schedule

Departments should have review meeting protocols established (and documented) prior to the date of the review meeting.

Departments should hold at least one meeting specifically for reviewing reappointment, tenure, and promotion, and fixed term rolling contract decisions, with no other business on the agenda. Please allow ample time for full review of all candidates. Complete case files should be available to voting members sufficiently in advance (e.g., 1-2 weeks) of the meeting(s) so that a thorough review may be done by the voting members. All materials, including any documents or reviews pertaining to joint or SER appointments, must be included in the case files before the department review and meeting.

All voting members as specified in the department peer group protocol must be invited to participate in the department meeting and must have the opportunity to review the candidate's case.

These meetings should be scheduled at a time when all participants (i.e., candidate, peer group) are available to attend, either in person or virtually. Avoid holding meeting(s) during holidays that are not recognized as official university holidays but are observed by eligible participants, or at other times eligible participants are unable to attend. Participants on sabbatical leave, non-emergency leave with pay, and leaves without pay should make every effort to participate in the meeting, either in person or virtually, and provide recommendations and comments.

Some units have protocols that include holding multiple meetings to review different types of cases and/or to allow the candidate to present their case. Other units do not have the candidate

present and may assign a committee member to serve as the lead presenter of the case. Participation by the candidate during deliberations should be determined in advance of the meeting and as documented in the meeting protocols. It is advisable to have a *pre-review meeting* in advance to review department protocols (and modify as needed).

5.2.2 College or University Level Committee Members – Where Do They Vote?

Departments and colleges must be judicious in establishing and enforcing meeting protocols for non-voting members, including faculty members who vote at a different level. Every faculty member eligible to vote on a case is allowed only one vote on any given candidate throughout the multi-level review process. There should also be no appearance of voting twice by an eligible faculty.

Members of the University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion (URTP) Committee vote at the department level. The reasons for this are as follows:

- Academic Affairs will only provide ballots to URTP Committee members who are not in the same home department as the candidate.
- Because most candidates for RTP are not reviewed by the URTP Committee, voting at the department level thus ensures that every faculty member eligible to vote receives that opportunity.
- The policy of the URTP Committee has customarily addressed the voting/discussion issue by having members recuse themselves from the presentation and deliberation of a case if the candidate is from their home department.

Colleges may follow the same procedure, i.e., having members of the college RTP Committee vote at the department level and recuse themselves at the college level. Colleges may, however, have college RTP Committee members recuse themselves from voting at the department level, if so, those members will vote at the college level. The key principle remains that any faculty member, regardless of whether they serve on a college or university RTP committee will have only one vote for any given candidate.

5.2.3 Role of Department Head/Dean in Meeting

The department head may or may not be present at the department meeting, depending upon departmental protocol. Regardless, another faculty member should preside over the meeting. Because the head is responsible for making an independent recommendation, the head's role at the meeting should be limited to providing procedural information and factual clarification. At the college level, the chair of the college RTP committee should preside over the meeting. Since the dean is responsible for making an independent recommendation, the dean need not be present. If the dean chooses not to attend, they have the prerogative of having a delegate present. The dean's (or delegate's) role at the meeting, if any, should be limited to providing procedural information and factual clarification.

5.2.4 Meeting Attendance

Attendance at the meeting by a voting department member is not a prerequisite for making a recommendation. For example, employees away from the university on sabbatical or professional-development leave should vote if otherwise eligible, unless it is highly impractical to do so. All eligible voters, however, should have an opportunity to review cases

before the department meeting, even if they are unable to be present at that meeting. All case files shall be available to eligible voters via WyoFolio.

6. ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

6.1 ADDING MATERIALS TO THE CASE FILE

Once the case file has been finalized (for 2026-2027, the recommended date for this is September 15, 2026), there are only very limited opportunities for additions to the case file. These include:

- When the tally of ballots and comments are added after the department review
- When the department head uploads their comments
- When the tally of ballots and comments are added after the college RTP committee review
- When the dean uploads their comments

Additionally, the candidate will be provided with the opportunity to include clarifications and corrections, updated information, and their rebuttal of any comments received in the *candidate's response* following each level of review. This is typically provided in conjunction with the candidate's acknowledgement of having seen the department head's comments, and again with their acknowledgement of having seen the dean's comments. Candidates will not be allowed to upload or change other materials in the case, however.

6.2 VOTING

6.2.1 Voters

Voters for cases are those explicitly designated by the peer group protocol established by the academic unit. In those cases where the peer group has been established or augmented by the college dean, the individuals so identified will vote. All voters shall submit both votes and comments.

Votes should be recorded by faculty category (i.e., designation and rank, appointment type). Exceptions to this provision may be made, however, when confidentiality of votes would be compromised, for example for small peer groups or when a voter's designation, rank, and/or appointment type would make them immediately identifiable. Units head should consult with Academic Affairs to determine if this exception is needed.

6.2.2 Ballots

Departments must use the standard forms posted on the Academic Affairs [website](#) to gather votes and comments. Units/Colleges may not alter the content of the ballots. If a candidate is being considered for two different decisions (e.g., Fixed Term Rolling Contract and Promotion), two separate ballots may be required. Please work with your college Wyofolio lead if you have questions about the ballot.

6.2.3 Voting Timeline

Voters should have ample time to complete and submit thoughtful recommendations. Generally, ballots should be cast within 72 hours of the end of the meeting, excluding weekends and holidays.

6.2.4 Reporting/Transcribing Results

When transcribing the results of departmental and committee recommendations, *clearly indicate which reasons are linked to affirmative recommendations, negative recommendations, and abstentions*. Comments alone do not always make the voter's intent clear.

6.2.5 Candidate Acknowledgement

Candidates should have the opportunity to review the votes and comments after each level of review. They must provide a written acknowledgement that they have read the comments prior to moving the case forward in WyoFolio. They may also insert a written response to each level of review that provides corrections and clarifications as well as any update to their academic record.

6.2.6 Abstentions

Abstentions are only allowable under certain, limited conditions. For example, faculty members must abstain in cases involving relatives, spouses, or domestic partners. (See [Employee Handbook](#) Section I.D.13 Nepotism for a more complete list of those who must recuse themselves from decisions affecting reappointment, tenure and promotion.) In general, however, faculty members have a duty to stay informed about their colleagues' work and to cast meaningful RTP recommendations. Abstention should not be a vehicle for ducking difficult judgments or shrinking from disagreement. This behavior effectively cedes power to administrators, who cannot abstain. If a voter abstains, they may only include comments specifying why they are abstaining, e.g., "Candidate's spouse". They may not include any evaluative comments about a candidate's performance. Such comments shall be omitted and not uploaded into the case files.

6.3 REQUIRED DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS

6.3.1 History Sheet

Units/colleges should complete the history sheet. This information will enable the University RTP Committee to review a faculty member's history. Please load the candidate's history sheet in the internal case section of the case. When creating a history sheet for a new Assistant or Associate Professor, do not insert a date for promotion to full professor as there is no hard deadline for becoming a candidate for that rank. The history sheet can be found at <http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/reviews/ballots.html>

6.3.2 External Referee Coversheet

Supervisors must complete the external referee coversheet and upload it into WyoFolio under the External Evaluations section. The external referee coversheet can be found at http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/reviews/tp_reviewers.html

6.3.3 Past Review Materials

All past review materials must be uploaded in WyoFolio. Please talk with your college WyoFolio administrator to determine who will upload these items. These materials include all annual reviews; past year(s) vote tallies and comments from all levels, including any formal reviews from the University RTP Committee; and previous recommendations from the academic unit head and dean. If the candidate reports to another administrator and/or is affiliated with another unit (e.g., SER, Science Initiative, School of Computing, REDD, joint

appointment in another academic unit), please make certain review letters from those units are included. Materials should also include previous narratives and CVs. All documents should be in separate PDF documents by year and uploaded in sequential order.

6.3.4 Vote Tallies

In cases involving both tenure and promotion, please record the votes for promotion and the votes for tenure separately. All votes should be accompanied by comments. In the case of votes accompanied by no comment, please write “[no comment].” Abstentions should be accompanied by brief reasons, such as “the candidate is my partner.”

Academic Affairs uses the tally sheets to identify cases that are conflicted, so accuracy is essential. The vote tally sheets can be found at <http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/reviews/ballots.html>

6.3.5 Evaluations

The evaluation form to be completed by supervisors is now built into WyoFolio and should be completed in that system. Prior versions of the form will not be accepted. Please use the percentages of effort assigned in the candidate’s job descriptions for the years under review to describe their expected time commitments.

7. HIGHER LEVEL REVIEWS

7.1 COLLEGE LEVEL REVIEWS

In academic units that are part of a college, a candidate’s case will move to the college’s reappointment, tenure and promotion committee for review after the unit’s peer group review and the unit head’s review. College bylaws should define the composition of the college’s RTP committee. College RTP committees shall develop and document their protocol for reviewing candidate and evaluating packets. The ballots used by peer groups and the vote tally sheets used for the peer groups, found at <http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/reviews/ballots.html>, should be used for collecting the votes of the committee and preparing the vote tally. The college dean will complete their evaluation after the college RTP committee has completed its deliberations. The dean should use the evaluation form that is built into WyoFolio.

For those academic units where the dean is the direct supervisor, the procedures described above for academic units that are departments should be followed unless the college bylaws specify otherwise.

7.2 ACADEMIC AFFAIRS REVIEW

Once evaluations through the college level are completed, Academic Affairs will review the cases. This review includes a check that appropriate protocols have been followed and examines all the votes and comments for each case. A case may be returned to a lower level if errors are identified or deviations from protocols are observed. A summary of the cases is then be prepared for review by the Provost.

The Provost identifies those cases to be reviewed by the the University Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion (URTP) Committee. The URTP Committee is a Faculty Senate

committee with members determined as specified by Faculty Senate's Bylaws and Committee designation documentation. Per UW SAP 2-7.2 Section VII.A, cases that will be reviewed by the URTP committee include those where one or more of the following conditions apply.

- A disagreement on the recommendation occurs between the department faculty (or alternative peer group, if needed), department head (or direct supervisor), college committee, or dean. This is considered a “conflicted” case.
- The faculty member seeks an early decision for tenure or fixed term rolling contract. This is considered an “early case.”
- The Provost or President requests consideration of a particular case. This will include all cases where the faculty member is recommended for denial of reappointment, tenure, fixed term rolling contract, or promotion by all review levels. This may also include any cases that are neither conflicted nor early for which the Provost or President would like additional consideration. These cases are considered “Provost request” or “President request” cases.

7.3 REVIEW BY THE UNIVERSITY RTP COMMITTEE

The URTP committee will review all cases presented to them as indicated in the previous section. The committee will determine those candidates to invite to their meeting. Typically, all candidates with “conflicted” cases will be invited to meet with the committee. Other candidates may also be invited to meet with the committee at the committee’s discretion. Additionally, consistent with past practice, candidates may request to meet with the committee by contacting facultyaffairs@uwyo.edu.

If a candidate is invited to attend by the URTP committee chair, the department head and dean “shall be requested to appear” (UW SAP 2-7.2 Section VII.B) as well. If the candidate is not invited to attend, neither the department head nor the dean will attend. The candidate will be given the opportunity to present a written and/or oral statement at the meeting.

For AY 2026-2027, the URTP committee will meet to evaluate RTP cases on ***February 8-9, 2027***.

7.4 COMPLETING THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL REVIEW

After the URTP committee reviews the cases presented to it, the steps described in UW SAP 2-7.2 Section VII.C will be completed. Please refer to the SAP for these steps.

8. **FEEDBACK TO ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

If this document does not address a specific situation, or if some component of the guidance in this document is found to be confusing, please contact Faculty Affairs at facultyaffairs@uwyo.edu. The Office of Academic Affairs is committed to continuous improvement of its administrative processes and welcomes this feedback.

APPENDIX I. EXTERNAL LETTERS OF REFERENCE

I.1 PURPOSE

External letters of reference are critical in cases involving tenure or promotion or both. Their purpose is to provide independent, convincing appraisals – from outside the University – of a candidate's national or international scholarly stature. It is in UW's clear long-range interest to insist on rigorous peer review by nationally or internationally prominent referees who have expertise in the candidate's field of study.

College deans, faculty tenure and promotion committees, and administrators in Academic Affairs will insist on high standards in the evaluation of external letters. Unit heads and candidates should do so as well. Cases have failed for want of enough high-caliber letters. (Note: Colleges may require external letters for fixed-term rolling-contract/promotion reviews depending on college and department policy.)

I.2 PROTOCOLS FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWS

I.2.1 *Timeline for Initiating External Reviews*

Table 1 in Section 2 of this document (above) provides recommended deadlines for the solicitation and receipt of external reviews. The specific timeline for soliciting external letters may vary, depending on the custom of a department or college and the availability of external reviewers. However, “earlier is better than later” is a good guideline.

External reviews must be received before the unit peer group reviews the case. Because department reviews typically begin shortly after the fall semester commences, the process for selecting the external reviewers should be completed before the conclusion of the previous spring semester. That way, unit heads can contact and secure prospective reviewers before the end of summer, ensuring that the reviewers have at least six weeks to complete their review. All faculty members who vote on a case and all administrators who make recommendations will have access to the external letters.

The recommended deadline for uploading all materials to the WyoFolio case file, including the external reviews, is also specified in the review schedule (Table 1 in Section 2 above). With that date in mind, there may be discipline-specific reasons for adjusting deadlines for department reviews to allow for more time to receive external reviews. Regardless, the deadline for colleges to complete their reviews and forward the cases to Academic Affairs will not change.

I.2.2 *Composition of the External Review Panel*

A tenure or promotion packet should contain *at least four letters* from external reviewers who have no personal or professional connection with the candidate. These external reviews are assessments of the candidate's scholarship dossier; they are not personal recommendations. Therefore, candidates should avoid recommending those with whom they have worked closely in the past or with whom they have a relationship (e.g., dissertation advisor or advisee, previous or pending co-authorship, sharing of research funding, friend, and family relationships). In the unusual event that the candidate's area of inquiry or creative endeavor consists of such a small group of scholars/artists that avoiding external reviewers who are collaborators is virtually impossible, then exceptions with clear justification may be allowed.

The ideal external reviewers will be scholars who hold national and international reputations in the discipline of the candidate. There may be instances where these scholars hold senior level research positions in entities other than universities, such as national and federal laboratories and research centers. In some cases, an appropriate external reviewer may be someone without an academic background but instead has preeminent standing within a particular area of endeavor (e.g., a prominent musician or artist). Remember that the external reviewers are not asked whether they support tenure and/or promotion. They are asked to focus on the candidate's scholarly contributions.

Avoid selecting academic external reviewers who are not tenured and/or who do not hold rank at or above Associate Professor. If a candidate's scholarly or creative research field is so narrow or new that the pool of willing external reviewers is small, some exceptions may be merited. Department heads at other institutions, even if their specific area of expertise differs from the candidate, can be strong external reviewers. In any case, a goal should be an external review panel comprised mostly of professors who hold the same or higher rank as the one for which the candidate is reviewed.

External reviewers will preferably be from different institutions. Avoid selecting more than one external reviewer from the same institution.

As a Carnegie R1 classified institution, UW's expectations for scholarly accomplishment should be comparable to other R1 institutions. Therefore, when possible and appropriate, external reviewers should be selected from other universities that hold Carnegie R1 research classification.

1.2.3 Protocol for Determining External Reviews

Per UW SAP 2-7.2 Section V.B.: "The candidate and the unit head shall each make a list of at least six possible reviewers for cases involving tenure or promotion. The candidate may delete up to one-third of the names on the department/unit list. The unit [head] shall choose an equal number from each list (excluding the names deleted by the candidate) for a minimum of **four** potential reviewers. In the event the unit head is the candidate, the dean shall identify a delegate to complete this process."

In practice, some unit heads develop a list of at least eight possible reviewers and request the same from the candidate. This allows a larger pool of possible reviewers from which to obtain a minimum of **four submitted reviews** (not just "four potential reviewers.")

Special attention should be given to obtaining national/international experts in the candidate's specific area of scholarship. Failure to obtain sufficient letters from academic scholars in the appropriate field of study can jeopardize the candidate's case.

Deans have the authority to review and approve reviewers if they choose to do so.

During their preliminary meeting, the unit head and candidate should discuss whether the candidate will waive their right to see the letters. A written statement must be included in the

candidate's WyoFolio case file that specifies if this right has been waived. External reviewers will be informed that the candidate has or has not waived their right to review letters. Reviewers may be reluctant or unwilling to provide a review letter if they don't have assurance that their letter will be kept confidential. This in turn may make it difficult to obtain the minimum number of letters required.

If a candidate waives their right to see the content of the letters, they may not see any part of the letters directly, even in redacted form. Nevertheless, the unit head may still discuss their general observations from the external letters with the candidate and may also quote or paraphrase from a reviewer's letter as long as no identifying information is disclosed.

A candidate may instead waive their right to see identifying characteristics while not waiving their right to see the content of the letters. In this case, they may see a redacted letter -- all identifiers, including letterhead and identifying text, must be removed.

Finally, a candidate may choose to not waive their right to see the letters. In that case, candidates will be allowed to see both the contents and identifying information. This is not recommended as reviewers must be informed of which choice the candidates have chosen and this choice may lead to letters that are less informative.

1.2.4 Procedures for Soliciting Reviews

Unit heads must exercise diligence in soliciting enough letters to obtain the required number and in monitoring receipt of those letters. For that reason, many unit heads solicit eight or more letters, both to make sure that the final packet contains at least four letters and to gain a broad professional perspective.

The candidate is responsible for having their activities up to date in WyoVita so that a current and comprehensive curriculum vita (CV) can be generated for the case file in WyoFolio. Depending on unit custom, the unit head may also ask the candidate for a printed or electronic copy of the CV. The candidate is also responsible for providing the unit head representative examples of recent scholarly and/or creative contributions by the deadline established in the department protocol. Unit heads will also work with their college/unit coordinator (i.e., WyoFolio lead) to ensure that all materials are uploaded into WyoFolio and invitations to serve as external reviewers are sent via WyoFolio.

Potential external reviewers are often contacted in a two-step process. First, the unit head contacts a prospective reviewer to request an external review for a candidate. In this message, the unit head requests a "yes" or "no" response and indicates that the reviewer will receive additional information if the response is "yes". This first contact is often made outside of the WyoFolio system.

As a courtesy to external reviewers, departments should solicit letters early and allow at least six weeks for a thorough evaluation of the candidate's portfolio. In all contacts with external reviewers, the unit head should maintain a neutral tone regarding the candidate.

The second step is to prepare a formal solicitation message. Once the potential reviewer has agreed to provide a review, units heads should send a formal solicitation through WyoFolio. Avoid using biased or leading language in the letter. This message shall request an evaluation by the reviewer *of the scholarly and/or creative contributions of the candidate*. Teaching, service, extension, and other elements of the candidate's job description are outside the scope of the external review. Experience indicates that some external reviewers will nevertheless still comment on areas other than scholarly and/or creative contributions. The solicitation message shall also request that the reviewer identify in their review their relationship to the candidate, if any, and disclose any potential conflicts of interest.

Formal solicitation messages should:

- Identify the requester's relationship to the candidate (e.g., department head, dean, director, etc.).
- State whether the candidate has waived or has not waived the right to see the letter or its contents.
- Instruct the reviewer to base their evaluation of the candidate on the scholarly and/or creative contributions of the candidate.
- Not ask referees to state whether the candidate would receive tenure or promotion at their institution.
- Provide instructions to the referee on how to complete their recommendation via WyoFolio, including links to support documents.
- Request that the reviewer upload, as a separate document to their review, their current CV.

The formal solicitation message may also include:

- A description of the University of Wyoming, e.g., Established as a land-grant institution in 1886 when Wyoming was still a territory, UW has since grown to nearly 200 areas of study, drawing over 10,000 students from all 50 states and 90 countries. Throughout its existence, UW has been the only four-year university in the state of Wyoming. Its global impact begins with innovative undergraduate and graduate research opportunities and extends through numerous state and federal partnerships. UW has been designated a Carnegie Foundation Community Engaged university and a Carnegie R1 university.
- An accurate description of the unit, including number of faculty and degrees offered.

The formal solicitation message should be sent to the external reviewers through WyoFolio. The instructions for setting up and sending a message to external reviewers in WyoFolio can be found at [Requesting External Reviewers Through WyoFolio](#) in the "External Reviews" column.

At the "Add Files" part of the WyoFolio process, be sure to add:

- The letter that indicates whether the candidate has waived the right to see the letters or their contents and the degree of confidentiality of the response.
- The candidate's curriculum vita.
- Representative examples of recent scholarly and/or creative contributions.
- A guide to assist external reviewers with using WyoFolio. (This document may be provided to the reviewer outside of the WyoFolio system.) This document can be found at [Guide for External Reviewers](#) in the "External Reviews" column.

If the unit's protocol is to provide additional documents, such as relevant university, college, and/or unit policies, including department expectations and other university regulations, polices, and/or Pythian papers, these should be added here as well. If not added, some external reviewers will request this type of information. In those cases, the information may be shared. Note that external reviewers do not need this information because UW is not asking them whether the candidate should be tenured or promoted. UW is, instead, explicitly asking them to evaluate the candidate's scholarly and/or creative activities. Nevertheless, some external reviewers will want this information.

1.2.5 Completing the External Review Process

Every external letter that an academic unit solicits and receives in time must be included in the candidate's file before the unit peer group-level review and pre-unit level review in cases of joint or SER appointments. Culling external letters is not allowed.

As part of the administrative support documents submitted with the case, the unit head must include in the WyoFolio case file the completed External Referee Cover sheet found at http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/reviews/tp_reviewers.html. This form should be completed only for those external reviewers who submitted reviews.

In addition to completing the boxes for each external reviewer, unit heads should include the Carnegie Research classification of the institution (in the "Institution Affiliation" box). When completing the "Brief description" boxes, unit heads should provide specific reasons for choosing the reviewer (e.g., XXX is editor of a leading journal that publishes research in the candidate's field of study, XXX is an award-winning choreographer of numerous Broadway and Off-Broadway musicals, including ..."). If needed, address the inclusion of reviewers who have (or have had) a personal or professional relationship with the candidate, including a justification to show why the reviewer is appropriate and needed, and how an objective evaluation can be achieved.

Unit heads should also include a short summary of how the external reviewers were selected (in the box at the end of the document). If necessary, this summary should also:

- Explain why more than one reviewer from the same institution was selected.
- Explain why half or more of reviewers are not from R1 institutions.

If extenuating circumstances required original letters to be provided outside of the WyoFolio system, unit heads should contact their college coordinator, who will check with Academic Affairs on additional procedures. At minimum, the letters should be retained in the department or college (depending on college protocol) once a copy has been uploaded to the faculty's case file. E-mailed letters are acceptable, provided there is some mechanism for ensuring their authenticity. For example, the referee can follow an e-mailed version with a mailed, signed version that arrives later.

I.3 OTHER ITEMS

I.3.1 Late or Missing Reviews

If the required number of letters has not been received by the deadline for uploading all materials to the case file, the candidate and department head will have a tough decision to make. By policy, a minimum of four letters of reference must be included in the candidate's case file. Failure to receive the required number of external letters may lead some members of the peer group and administrators to recommend against granting tenure or promotion. If there is no prospect of obtaining the minimum number of letters by the date when the case file is released for department review, and the case is for promotion only, the candidate may be better served by withdrawing the packet and resubmitting the following year. There is less flexibility for candidates who are seeking tenure and promotion. In this case, the department head should explain in his or her review letter why they received fewer than four reviewers.

I.3.2 Discussing the External Letters with Candidate

As a matter of good practice and regardless of the candidate's choice about waiving their rights to see the content of the letters, the unit head may discuss their observations from the external letters with the candidate prior to the department review, without addressing specific information in the letters (e.g., all letters appeared to be positive and supportive, the degree to which external reviewers felt there was national or international impact seemed to be mixed, etc.). When doing this, the unit head must remind the candidate that other reviewers (at the department, college, and university levels) will draw their own conclusions from the external letters.

I.3.3 Referencing the External Reviews in Letter/Comments

Using quotations or paraphrasing reviewers' comments in the administrative letter or faculty comments is appropriate. However, avoid inadvertently referencing any identifying information about the external reviewers in your written comments/review.

I.3.4 Solicited Reviews

Letters from individuals whom the department head did not specifically ask to write a review should not be included in the review materials.

APPENDIX II. RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE FOR REVIEW MEETINGS

II.1 CONFIDENTIALITY

The person chairing the review meeting at the unit, college, and university level shall read the following notice about confidentiality (in *italics*) prior to beginning deliberations and verify that all participants have completed a confidentiality agreement.

Confidentiality protects and ensures honest, thorough, and robust review for reappointment, tenure, promotion, and fixed-term rolling contract appointments. All participants in these review processes will keep candidate dossiers and related personnel documents as well as committee discussions, deliberations, and voting information confidential. All participants in review meetings (i.e., eligible voters and non-voting participants [if allowed by department protocol]) shall complete a confidentiality agreement acknowledging their understanding and agreement to meet these expectations.

II.2 FACULTY RECOMMENDATIONS

The person chairing the review meeting at the unit, college, and university level shall read the following statement (in *italics*) prior to beginning deliberations.

Recommendations on matters of reappointment, promotion, fixed term rolling contract, or tenure constitute what is arguably the most important element of faculty governance. Please approach the review and recommendation in a professional manner that safeguards the rights of the individual being reviewed and rigorously advances the academic stature of the University. The process must permit faculty and others with voting privileges to comment honestly and freely.

A written rationale must accompany each vote or recommendation. It is the persuasiveness of these written recommendations that counts the most, not the numerical vote tally. The lack of thoughtful, factually based rationale weakens a recommendation, whether it is for or against the candidate under review. It is also important to provide brief, factual reasons for abstentions, so that subsequent reviewers interpret them correctly. A family connection is a valid reason for the abstention. Timidity, failure to read the case, or failure to schedule adequate time to review the case files are not valid reasons for an abstention.

Reviewers who abstain must provide a written reason (e.g., voted at another level, conflict of interest, etc.). However, reviewers who abstain may not submit evaluative comments. Any evaluative comment will be removed from the case file prior to the case moving to the next level review. Legally, recommendations and comments may not be privileged information, even if they are anonymous when collected. There have been court cases where faculty members were asked to identify their comments, and in some cases have been asked to explain them. The University of Wyoming has not been immune to this type of situation. It is awkward to explain baseless attacks, cowardly abstentions, or ill-informed support to a skeptical audience. The best way to avoid legal exposure is to perform one's responsibility, which is to make reasoned, academically based judgments based on professional expertise and facts.