# Revisions to the Promotion and Tenure Administrative Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Policy AC23 for 2024-2025 and Changes to the Recommended Charge to Committees

**Changes to the Administrative Guidelines**

- II.C.1.a. (Page 4) – Updated name of student feedback form to Student Educational Experiences Questionnaire.
- II.C.1.c. (Page 5) – Added reference to Appendix A.
- II.C.2.a. (Page 6) – Updated name of student feedback form to SEEQ and reemphasized that alternate assessments are not to be included in dossiers.
- III.A.2. (Page 8) – Clarified that all dossier forms are available through Activity Insight.
- III.B.2. (Page 8) – Added clarifying language regarding candidate's responsibility for the dossier.
- III.G.5. (Page 14) – Added clarifying language related to the external log.
- V.I.3. (Page 24) – Added clarifying language.
- V.I.9. (Page 26) – Added reference to Appendix N.
- Appendix A (Pages 28-30) – Updated to reflect changes to the student feedback form, frequency of peer reviews, and future changes to summaries of student feedback.
- Appendix B (Pages 31-36) –*Timetable for 2024-2025 Promotion and Tenure Reviews*, the following is updated.
  - Updated the Timetable for 2024-2025 Promotion and Tenure Reviews.
  - Added the date by which feedback can be provided to those candidates seeking promotion to professor who were not supported at the first level of review.
- Appendix F (Pages 39-49) – Dossier Dividers and Forms have been updated to reflect any changes needed
- Appendix I (Pages 52-54) – Added clarifying language regarding confidentiality of external letters for Immediate Tenure candidates.
- Appendix M (Pages 59-65) –past COVID guidance (Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness, and Options for Alternative Assessment)

Additions and Changes to the FAQs (Nos.  4, 10, 11, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45, 63, and 71)
- FAQ #4.- Revised response to reflect changes to GURU site.

    *In PTORP, the "View Entire Candidate Dossier" feature does not include all the uploaded documents or does not include the most recently updated documents. How do you fix this?*

    **Frequently, re-uploading the affected document will correct the problem. To do so,**

**open your document in Adobe Acrobat and "print" to PDF. Replace the old PDF with the newly saved version.**

- FAQ #10.- A new question has been added addressing which letters should be included when a re-review occurs.

  *If new information is added to the dossier after any levels of review occur and it must return through the review levels, should the original letter remain in the dossier?*

  **Yes. If a subsequent review occurs, both the original letter and the new letter should be included in the dossier. Regardless of whether the new information impacts the recommendation, a new letter must be written, even if only to state that the dossier was re-reviewed and the committee decided not to modify the letter.**

- FAQ #11.- Clarified when candidates may be provided information regarding the review decisions.

  *Can a dossier be withdrawn after it has been sent forward for review?*

  Once a dossier has been completed and the candidate has signed that they reviewed it, and the peer review committee begins its review, the formal process has begun. However, if it is a promotion review only, and if the peer review committee does not recommend promotion and the academic unit head agrees, after consulting with the dean of the academic unit the head should discuss with the candidate the advisability of withdrawing the dossier from further consultation. **While candidates may be provided the information about the decision, feedback should not be provided to candidates about the reasons why until February 2, 2024; these candidates may choose to withdraw their dossier before being reviewed by the next level of review.** (Page 20, V.D.)

- FAQ #34.- A new question has been added addressing appropriate inclusion of peer reviews of teaching in the dossier.

  *What is appropriate to include in the dossier in the way of peer reviews of teaching?*

  **As part of the Faculty Assessment of Teaching Framework, all academic units are expected to develop peer review guidelines. See Appendix A in the Administrative Guidelines for more information about peer review guidelines.**

- FAQ #38.- Updated response to include new recommendations and implementation deadlines.

  *When will the changes recommended by the Senate pertaining to teaching effectiveness take effect?*

**Effective fall of 2023, the Student Educational Experiences Questionnaire (SEEQ) was administered in all courses and alternate assessment were no longer included in promotion dossiers. Effective fall of 2024, the mid-semester SEEQ (m-SEEQ) will be administered in all courses and the peer review guidance recommended by the Senate will be implemented. A new approach to summarizing student feedback will be implemented in fall of 2025.**

- FAQ #39.- Added clarifying language.

  *When a previous promotion occurred five or more years ago, how far back may one go in regard to including teaching and service information?*

  Our Guidelines do not specify or mandate a minimum number of years as there is no requirement for time-in-rank to be promoted. Normally, teaching assessments or evaluations and service activities since **the effective date of** the last formal review are included. To provide sufficient evaluations of teaching and service, a faculty member may choose to report information about teaching and service for up to 10 of the most recent consecutive years since **the effective date of** the last formal review. When running the University Dossier report in Activity Insight, please note that the Teaching and Service sections will reflect the data entered for the time period selected while the research section will include information that spans the faculty member's entire career.

- FAQ # 40.- Added clarifying language.

  *What is appropriate to include in the dossier in the way of student narrative comments?*

  If including student narrative comments in the dossier, these should be summarized rather than inserting all or a selection of the narrative comments. This summary can be prepared by the department head, division head, director of academic affairs, **or a department head's delegate who is either an academic administrator or faculty member**. Sometimes this may be done in consultation with the chair of the department's promotion and tenure committee in order to ensure consistency in presentation. A candidate should not be involved in preparing the summary of student comments.

- FAQ #41.- Added clarifying language.

  *Must I include an alternate assessment of teaching effectiveness in my dossier?*

  Effective July 1, 2023, candidates are not to include an alternate assessment in their dossier. However, alternate assessments that were included in the dossier for previous formal reviews should be retained as they may be referred to in previous promotion and tenure recommendation letters. **Please consult with the Office for the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs if you would like to include an alternate assessment in your dossier.** Moving forward, faculty at Penn State will be required to submit a self-reflection as part

of their annual review.

- FAQ #45.- Added clarifying language.

    *What is the timing of a decision to terminate in provisional years in regard to the candidate having an additional year of employment?*

    Any notice after March 1 of the first year **of the probationary period** requires the additional year.

- FAQ #63.- Clarified minimum number of required external letters.

    *If we cannot get the required minimum of external letters, is it all right to have fewer letters?*

    **An absolute minimum of f**our letters are required. If an evaluator who has promised to write a letter fails to deliver one, a substitute should be sought. It is, therefore, best to give yourself some leeway between when you are asking letters to be sent to you and when they are actually needed. (Pages 13-14, III.G.4.)

- FAQ #71.- Corrected the name of the form where academic years of any stays of tenure should be indicated.

    *What is appropriate to include in the dossier regarding staying of the provisional tenure period?*

    A staying of the provisional tenure period should not, in any way, penalize or adversely affect the faculty member during a tenure review and is intended to ensure equity in the tenure system. The **promotion and tenure form** contains an area to indicate, as appropriate, the academic year of any granted staying of the provisional tenure period. This is the only place in the dossier in which this should be referenced. No reference to the reason or rationale for the stay should appear anywhere in the dossier (including on the promotion and tenure form).

*Changes to unit guidelines due by July 1, 2025*

- Beginning July 1, 2025, all colleges are expected to incorporate the overarching principles for the incorporation of student feedback detailed below into promotion and/or tenure guidelines for tenure-line and non-tenure-line faculty members undergoing formal review. These changes must be reflected in the guidelines for academic units within the college no later than July 1, 2026.
    - o The goal of this approach is to provide a holistic review of SEEQ/SRTE student feedback that minimizes bias.
    - o This review of student feedback will replace the current summary of quantitative and qualitative student feedback on teaching effectiveness in formal promotion and/or tenure review materials.

- The unit at the first level of review will identify a minimum of two individuals to serve as student feedback reviewers, consistent with the criteria below:
    - at least one individual selected from a list of two or more Penn State faculty members nominated by the candidate
    - one member of the promotion and tenure committee at the first level of review
- The reviewers are charged with
    - examining student feedback from available courses for the period since a candidate's last formal review and/or covered by the review (whichever is the shortest)
    - writing a report of no more than 750 words (about one single-space page) describing insights about the candidate's teaching effectiveness derived from quantitative and qualitative student feedback from SEEQ/SRTE responses across the courses taught during the review period
    - as applicable, reviewers should incorporate attention to the elements of teaching: effective course design, effective instruction, inclusive and ethical pedagogy, reflective and evolving practice
        - NOTE: Reviewers are advised to consult with the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Effectiveness for guidance for how to interpret student feedback
- This report will be sent to the administrator at the first level of review and will be included in the dossier or promotion materials reviewed by the candidate. If a candidate perceives that the report inadequately represents teaching effectiveness based on student feedback, candidates may revise their narratives to address the perceived discrepancy.
- SEEQ/SRTE scores will be included in an appendix to the dossier. The delivery mode of the course and the distribution, mode, and median for SEEQ/SRTE items will be provided for each course.
- All candidates have the option of including raw data student feedback from the SEEQ/SRTE in their supplemental materials.
- As long as the principles articulated here are adhered to, academic units are free to incorporate this work into existing structures, such as teaching review committees.

*Revised: July 1, 2025*