

University of Kentucky
Office of Provost
Guidelines for Expediting Initial Appointments for Senior Faculty
[Revised 8/31/2011]

Purpose: These guidelines are intended to advance the University's interest in hiring outstanding senior-level faculty by permitting appointments and tenure decisions to be made as efficiently as possible while still insuring that a rigorous, fair review of each candidate is conducted.

Procedures for Senior Level Appointments, With or Without Immediate Tenure

1. It is strongly recommended that the Dean consult with the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs well in advance of negotiating an offer with the candidate. The CV and recommendation letters should be sent, along with an assessment by the Dean of the case for a tenured appointment. The Associate Provost will give a timely response as to the appropriateness of going forward with a tentative offer with consideration for immediate tenure. There is a presumption that someone who has earned tenure at a more highly ranked department/institution will be eligible for tenure at this university.
2. Chairs and Directors are responsible for preparing appointment dossiers. In the case of appointments at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor, the Chair (Director) shall solicit letters of evaluation pertaining to the recommended appointment from external referees and from all faculty in the academic unit who are required, according to the Administrative Regulations, to be consulted on the appointment. It is strongly encouraged that letters of evaluation from at least five external referees be obtained; however, a minimum of three such letters will be required.
3. The solicitation of letters from referees external to the University should be made as soon as possible after a hiring decision has been made by the Chair (Director), Dean, and academic unit. The solicitation should make clear the recommended level of the appointment and whether the awarding of immediate tenure is anticipated with the appointment. Any letter of nomination originally written in support of the candidate's application for a senior position should be acceptable as one of the required external letters in support of appointment, with or without tenure, if that letter satisfactorily addresses the criteria for appointment and the granting of tenure for the candidate. For the purpose of moving the dossier forward, faxes or e-mailed letters are acceptable as long as a signed letter is ultimately received from each referee.
4. After formally soliciting required letters from the faculty in the academic unit, the Chair (Director) should forward the dossier within one week of this request for letters. Faculty letters shall clearly address the criteria for the recommended level of appointment and the granting of immediate tenure if applicable. The Chair (Director)

shall include in the forwarded dossier all faculty letters that have been received; faculty who do not submit a written recommendation within the one-week time period will be regarded as having abstained from this part of the process.

5. The College Dean should ask for a recommendation from a college advisory committee, if required, within one week of submitting the dossier to the Committee.

6. The Provost typically renders a decision on such appointments **within one week**.

Conclusion: Faculty and administrators involved in evaluating new senior appointments need to respect the dual importance of (a) upholding high standards for advanced, tenured appointments, and (b) making these decisions in an efficient fashion that recognizes the unique needs and context for many senior-level scholars. A commitment to both these principles should enable the University to complete stringent evaluations of senior-level appointments **within one month** of the dossier being forwarded from the academic unit in which the appointment will be made.