

Faculty Personnel Policy and Review

Guidelines for the Personnel Committee

Role of the Personnel Committee

The role of the Personnel Committee (PC) is to determine whether the faculty review file demonstrates that the candidate has met the criteria in each of the areas under review: teaching, scholarly and artistic work, and service. The PC should draw on the expertise of its members to evaluate and, where appropriate, provide professional context for the evidence in the file. If a PC finds that the evidence is insufficient, it may make a request to the Review Committee (RC) to enter into investigative mode to obtain the necessary materials.

The PC makes a recommendation as to whether or not the candidate has met the criteria. The RC reviews the contents of the file as well as the PC's report and recommendation. The RC can either agree with the PC or not and sends its own recommendation to the President who makes the final decision. The President has the review file, the PC report, and the letter from the RC as a basis for making that decision.

It is not the role of the PC to make the case for the candidate. Instead, the PC report should judge the file contents using the appropriate criteria and help the RC and the President by providing disciplinary context. For example, are the teaching methods used by the candidate consistent with the current state of the art in the discipline? Is the candidate's scholarly or artistic work a significant contribution to the field? What are the expectations for service contributions to the department? PC members should see it as part of their mission to consider and explain the weight of the evidence in the file.

There are restrictions on the amount of material candidates can submit to their file. As with much academic writing, candidates must make good choices about the best evidence to include and provide a clear and convincing narrative to help the committees understand all aspects of their work at DePauw. It is possible that either the PC or the RC will find that the review file is missing information needed to make a recommendation. In such a case the PC, upon request, or the RC may enter into investigative mode to obtain the information needed. While this sounds intimidating, investigative mode is not a negative thing and does not indicate the likelihood of a negative recommendation. It is simply a committee requesting additional information. The committee must be specific about the information it needs, and the open file policy continues to be in effect.

Contents of the Review File

A faculty review file is divided into four sections on Interfolio.

Introductory Review Materials includes documents automatically uploaded by the VPAA/Office of Academic Affairs that provide context for the review (i.e. the review period, job description, and criteria).

Candidate Materials includes four subsections that are submitted by the review candidate: Curriculum Vitae, Teaching, Scholarly and Artistic Work, and Service.

Formal Review Reports includes reports automatically uploaded by the VPAA/Office of Academic Affairs (i.e. annual reports and responses, and if applicable, interim or term review reports).

Supportive Review Materials includes additional documents automatically uploaded by the VPAA/Office of Academic Affairs (i.e. peer observations, FDC awards, letters, student opinion surveys, etc.).

Please refer to the [Guidelines for the Review Candidate](#) for a detailed list of materials in each section.

All members of the PC must read all parts of the review file. The new guidelines stipulate page limits, however, the candidate may choose to include additional items in the Scholarly and Artistic Work section in an appendix. The RC may or may not look at the appendix materials. However, if the PC finds that some of the appendix items are essential for a complete evaluation, the report should make note of this to alert the RC.

While PCs are required to read the full file, an extensive FDC file or Scholarly Work appendix may substantially increase the size of a file. We have, however, in the past clarified that reading does not necessarily mean a word-by-word parsing of the documents, but may be done by skimming and reviewing, as might be done when scanning a large body of literature. You should read in a way that enables you to understand the meaning of the included documents in the context of the file.

Frequently Asked Questions

How should we use the JC report?

The JC report was created as an *example* of a good PC report and as a reminder of what *categories* of assessment must be included and what *criteria* (including specific language) the Handbook requires you to apply. Please note that the report has been revised (2021) to reflect changes to Handbook criteria by the action of the faculty.

Please do not regard the JC report as a straitjacket that must be followed exactly line by line. Every case is different. The strengths and concerns your PC identify in the candidate you are reviewing may or may not coincide with the issues that JC's PC identified; please approach the case on its own merits. If the PC has questions about whether an issue should or should not be raised, or about how to effectively support their decision, it may be better to consult the Criteria for Decisions on Faculty Status, or the Chair of the Review Committee.

The JC report is approximately 3000 words long. This is a good indicator of the desired length of the PC report. The report should not in any case exceed 3500 words.

What else should report writers bear in mind?

The Review Committee has representation from broad areas across the faculty, but there most likely will not be anyone on the committee who is familiar with your particular field. PCs should bear this in mind when making and supporting arguments. Terms that are very familiar to *you* may need to be defined or described. Or, there may be a practice that is usual in and valued by your discipline, but less common outside that discipline, where an explanation would be helpful. The PC report can help contextualize aspects of the file that may be puzzling to outsiders.

Most important points: you are making an argument, which should use only the criteria as stated in the *Academic Handbook*, and should be supported by evidence in the file, without reference to anything that is not in the file. If you have relevant information, make sure you place it in the file in the form of a letter prior to the deadline for submitting letters.

Are all publications given equal weight in the review process?

No. The Review Committee recognizes that some publications have a greater impact than others. The candidate and the PC should both help the RC understand the significance of the candidate's scholarly work. It is not enough to say a particular journal or publisher is prestigious. You should provide evidence to support that claim such as journal impact factors.

How should we work to be aware of and address bias in our evaluative process?

We are ensuring all PCs and RCs receive instruction for best practices for reading files and implicit bias training that helps clarify how bias can shape surveys, peer observations, letters, and other sources of evidence in ways that are not necessarily easily identifiable but that are statistically and substantively relevant. Bias can also shape how these materials are read and assessed. We are supporting PCs, the RC, and candidates with materials for identifying, understanding, and naming how bias can shape faculty evaluation and providing tools and strategies that PCs, the RC, and candidates can use to identify, flag, and address bias both in their own process and in the evidence in the file.

How should we use documents in the Supportive Review Materials section?

Supportive materials (i.e. letters, peer observations, student opinion surveys, etc.) are generated by external parties or by the candidate in conversation with those parties. As with all sources of evidence, they may be subject to implicit bias and are best understood in the broader context of the file, the candidates' own statements, and the PC and other reviewers' understandings of the field. Candidates are aware of the full content of the Supportive Review Materials section and refer to and analyze these in the development of their statements and narratives. PCs read the full file and should use the documents in the Supportive Review Materials section to gain a fuller picture of the candidate's work.