Expectations for Departmental Letters

The letter from the department chair that accompanies the tenure-track faculty member’s portfolio is an integral part of the tenure process. The more detailed the letter, the more the administration will be able to use it to inform decisions for contract renewal. On the rubric completed by the administration, there is a section for the administration to comment on the depart chair letter, which reads as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Letter from the Department Chair | | |
| Does the department recommendation support granting the faculty member a second contract? | **☐ Yes** | **☐ No** |
| According to the chair, has the faculty member adhered to the published departmental procedures? | **☐ Yes** | **☐ No** |
| Comments: | | |
| What additional issues or comments have been brought up by the department chair? | | |

The Tenure Process Report will also include a review and evaluation of the quality of these letters.

The following elements should DEFINITELY be included in the letter:

* result from the departmental vote
* the extent to which the faculty member met the departmental criteria as outlined in the published departmental criteria and procedures
* thorough justification for the department chair’s recommendation, whether similar or different than the result of the departmental vote

The following elements are HIGHLY RECOMMENDED for inclusion in the letter:

* specific examples of the faculty member’s teaching effectiveness in the classroom, including details from observations, pertinent student feedback, and any other appropriate data.
* evidence of growth and willingness to integrate feedback
* how current activities are likely to lead to meaningful contributions to the department, college ore district in the future.
* an evaluation of the syllabus and explanation and assessment and explanation from the faculty member’s portfolio as viewed through your disciplinary lens. **Note:** **This will help administrators who may not know much about your discipline!**

**Stronger, more detailed letters with inclusion of specific and pertinent evidence will be more likely to guide administrative decisions!!**