# NACOE Guidelines for Preparing a Dossier

Original: February 1, 2010

Revision: May 15, 2014 by JJH to reflect changes associated with electronic dossier

Revision: May 30, 2019 by JJH to reflect the 2019 Role and Scope document

At Montana State University a *dossier* is required for retention, promotion, and tenure reviews. The dossier is intended to contain all the information needed to adequately determine if you have met the standards for retention, tenure, and/or promotion. The required contents of the dossier are specified, and the goal of this document is to aid in preparing the dossier.

**The Rules (the Role and Scope document)**

Since 2010, the NACOE has had a single Role and Scope document used by all departments. You may use the current Role and Scope (approved in 2019) **OR** the previous version from 2010 in the following situations:

* retention candidates that were hired in 2018 or earlier,
* tenure candidates that were first hired in 2018 or earlier, and
* promotion candidates may choose any Role and Scope document in effect during the previous two years.

The two most significant changes in the 2019 Role and Scope document are: candidates no longer choose an area of excellence (teaching or research) and pedagogical research is now in the scholarship section of the dossier instead of the teaching section. This change should benefit faculty that conduct both discipline specific research and pedagogical research.

**Timing of Dossier Preparation**

Dossiers contain a great deal of information, and it takes time to collect and produce all the required items.

***When Should You Start Collecting Materials?***

When you are hired at MSU, it is a good time to begin collecting information for the dossier. It is recommended that you have a folder (both a physical folder and an electronic folder on your computer) where you can routinely place materials that may ultimately end up in your next dossier.

The types of information that you should collect include:

* A copy of your letter of hire
* Annual review documents, especially any time your expected distribution of efforts (% Teaching,

% Research/Scholarship, % Service) is renegotiated

* Grant activity (proposals submitted and funded)
* Publications (refereed, non-refereed, conference presentations, invited papers)
* Course assignments and student evaluations
* Peer reviews of teaching
* Graduate students you have advised
* Undergraduate research students you have advised
* Awards you have received
* Public service and outreach activities in which you have participated
* Professional positions you have held (e.g., editorships, conference committee memberships)

The Activity Insight database can be used for storing some of this information but having a backup copy of the data is recommended. Some contents of the dossier are compiled years in advance of the review, including peer assessment of classroom instruction, which needs to be accumulated over the years preceding the review.

***When Should You Start Preparing the Dossier?***

The first step is notifying your Department Head that you plan to submit a dossier for the next year’s review cycle during the preceding Spring semester (roughly, April 1). Most reviews (not retention reviews) require sending materials off to external reviewers and waiting for them to return reviews. It generally takes 6 to 10 weeks to obtain external reviews. A list of recommended external reviews should be provided to the department head by roughly June 1, and the materials that must be sent to the external reviewers should be available by roughly June 15. Due dates of remaining materials are included in the checklist at the end of this document with the earliest being August 15. Most faculty members can assemble their portion of their dossier in a couple of weeks.

**Dossier Sections**

The contents of the dossier are strictly prescribed. The individual responsible for each section of the dossier is listed in Table 1.

**Table 1. Dossier Sections and Responsibility**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Location** | **Responsibility** |
| **Role and Scope Document** | Main folder | Staff |
| [**Cover Sheet**](https://www.montana.edu/provost/documents/promotion_tenure/CoverSheet2016filable.pdf) | Main folder | Candidate |
| [**Vote Talley Sheet**](https://www.montana.edu/provost/documents/faculty-review/votetallysheet52015.docx) | Main folder | Staff |
| **Review Documents** | 01ReviewDocuments folder | Staff |
| **External Peer Reviews1** | 02ExternalPeerReviews folder | Department Head |
| **In-Depth Assessments1** | 03InDepthAssessments folder | Department Head |
| **Internal Peer Reviews** | 04InternalPeerReviews folder | Department Head |
| **Assignment and Performance** | 05AssignmentPerformance folder | Candidate |
| **Curriculum Vitae** | 06CurriculumVitea folder | Candidate |
| **Personal Statement / Integration Statement** | 07PersonalStatement folder | Candidate |
| **Materials Indicative of Teaching Performance** | 08TeachingPerformance folder | Candidate |
| **Materials Indicative of Performance in Research** | 09ResearchCreativeActivity folder | Candidate |
| **Materials Indicative of Performance in Service** | 10Service folder | Candidate |
| **Documentation of Professional** **Development2** | 11ProfessionalDevelopment | Candidate |
| **Supporting Documentation 3** | 12Appendix folder | Candidate |

Notes:

1. External reviews and in-depth assessments are not required for retention reviews; leave empty.

2. The Professional Development section is not used in the College of Engineering; should be empty.

3. Supporting documentation beyond what is included in the dossier. Some candidates elect to put verbatim course evaluations in the appendix instead of the teaching folder (08).

**Contents of Each Section of the Dossier**

***Cover Sheet***

**Responsibility:** Candidate

**Candidate’s Information**

You complete the cover sheet. Leave items blank that do not apply to your situation (e.g., “tenure date” has no meaning if you are preparing for a retention review.)

**Primary duties and responsibilities** – space is provided for a one-paragraph description of your primary duties. This paragraph is part of your letter of hire, but if your responsibilities have changed since the time of hire, you may update the paragraph.

**Type of review** – you need to indicate which type(s) of review you are seeking (retention, tenure, promotion). For promotion reviews, you need to specify the rank you are seeking (e.g., Associate Professor, Professor).

**Comments:**

More than one type of review may be requested, except for retention, which is always handled alone.

If you are an assistant professor requesting review for tenure, you will be reviewed for promotion to associate professor at the same time, and you should indicate that you are seeking both tenure and promotion reviews on the cover sheet.

**Area of emphasis** (only applies for tenure and/or promotion and if you elected to use the 2010 Role and Scope document) – you must select only one area.

All NACOE faculty are instructional (not professional practice).

***01. Review Documents***

**Responsibility:** Staff members add reviews and other correspondence as reviews are completed.

**Intent**

The Review Documents section is used to accumulate the various letters from reviewing administrators and P&T Committees. It will be empty when you submit the dossier to your department head.

***02. External Peer Reviews***

**Responsibility:** Your department head solicits the external reviews and adds them to your dossier.

***Note:*** *MSU requires that the letters from external reviewers be treated as confidential. Your review letters may contain quotes or summaries of the external reviews that do not compromise the identity of the reviewers.*

**Applicability**

This section is a required part of tenure and promotion reviews for all faculty members. This section is left empty for retention reviews. ‘**External’** means outside of the University.



**Process Overview**

By approximately June 1, you provide your department head with a list of names and contact information for several (roughly 4-10) potential external peer reviewers. These should be individuals who are familiar enough with your scholarship to be able to judge your performance.

***Note:*** *You should not use past academic or research advisors, or individuals you would identify as collaborators (i.e., co-PI or co-author) or friends. If colleagues must be used because of a small pool of qualified individuals, be sure to describe the extent of your interaction with the individuals you nominate.*

Your department head creates his/her own lists of potential reviewers. He/she then selects sets of reviewers from the combined lists.

***Note:*** *MSU requires that half or more of individuals be named by the department head*

Your department head contacts prospective external reviewers to see if they can act as reviewers. This is to ensure that enough reviewers agree to evaluate your materials and at least 4 (the MSU minimum) return letters for inclusion in the dossier.

Your department head sends the selected external reviewers the following items:

1. Cover letter – describes the type of review, the applicable standards, your expected percentage effort in your *area of emphasis*, and the necessary timeframe for the peer review
2. A CV and a copy of the materials you provided in the scholarship section of the dossier.
3. A copy of the appropriate *COE Role and Scope* document
4. The external reviewers will be asked to specifically state whether the applicable standard (*accomplishment* for tenure reviews or *excellence* for promotion reviews) based on his/her review of your scholarship.

Your department head receives the reviews from the external reviewers and adds them to the dossier in the *External Peer Reviews* section. It is the responsibility of your department head to ensure that the required numbers (4+) of external peer reviews are included in the dossier.

Your department head also includes a copy of the cover letter that was sent to the external reviewers, and a brief CV of each external reviewer.

***03. In-Depth Assessments***

**Responsibility:** Your department head solicits this teaching assessment and adds it to your dossier.

**Applicability**

An independent in-depth assessment of teaching is required for candidates being reviewed under the 2010 Role and Scope document. The 2018 Faculty Handbook allows the in-depth assessment of teaching to be performed by the department P&T review committee, but this is not recommended.

***04. Internal Peer Reviews***

**Responsibility:** The candidate provides names of prospective internal (internal to MSU) reviewers. The department head solicits the reviews and adds them to your dossier.

**Applicability**

The internal (internal to the University) peer reviews serve three primary purposes:

1. Providing an opportunity for faculty members inside the candidate’s department, but not on the Department’s (or College’s) P&T Committee, to provide input to the review process.
2. Providing an opportunity for colleagues within the University to provide input to the review process.
3. Providing an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to provide more comprehensive assessments of teaching and mentoring.

**Process Overview**

1. You may provide your department head with the names and contact information for individuals that you believe can provide significant input to your review.
2. Your department head solicits letters of review from all members of the department faculty, knowledgeable students, and from individuals outside the department.
3. Your department head inserts the internal review letters in section 04 of your dossier.

***05. Assignment and Performance***

**Responsibility:** Candidate

Departmental staff can provide assistance in obtaining copies of the required information.

**Contents:**

1. Letter of Hire (should include any awarded years of credit towards tenure)
2. Annual Evaluations for prior 7 years
3. Review letters from most recent review

***06. Curriculum Vitae***

**Responsibility:** Candidate

**Applicability**

An up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV) is required for all levels of review.

**Intent**

Your CV provides a lot of information about your activities and accomplishments over time. This is a highly significant part of your dossier.

**Contents** (You are not required to use this format)

A typical faculty CV focuses primarily on research/scholarship, but a broader focus is suggested here. A CV designed to highlight information needed for a P&T review might include:

* Name and contact information



* Education (degrees, institutions, dates)
* Experience, or Appointments (titles, institutions, dates)
* Teaching
  + Courses Taught (titles, dates)
  + New Courses Developed (titles, dates)
  + Advising (numbers of students, dates)
  + Undergraduate Researchers Advised (names, majors, dates)
  + Graduate Students Advised (names, majors, dates, project, awards)
* Scholarship (include personal contribution when it is ambiguous for collaborative scholarship)
  + Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles, Chapters, Books
  + Other Journal Articles, Chapters, Books
  + Invited Papers and Presentations
  + Conference Presentations
  + Patents
  + Awarded Grants and Contracts
  + Journal Articles, Chapters or Books (with a pedagogy focus)
  + Conference Presentations (with a pedagogy focus)
* Service
  + Memberships in professional societies
  + Review panels, journal review, professional committees and advisory boards
  + University, College, Department committees

***07. Personal Statement/Integration Statement***

**Responsibility:** Candidate

A personal statement is required for all levels of review. It is typically 2 or 3 pages in length.

**Intent**

Your personal statement is your opportunity to provide your assessment of your performance and the context for that performance. For many reviewers, this is the first section they read. This is the most unspecified section of your dossier, but you should cover all expected *areas of responsibility* (teaching, research/creative activity, outreach/service). This section provides an opportunity to provide context and explanation for information in other sections.

For reviews under the 2019 Role and Scope document, an integration statement is also required in this section. This is typically a few paragraphs describing how you have integrated two of the review areas. For example, candidates might describe how their scholarship has influenced their teaching or service.

It is fully expected that you will present yourself in the best possible light.

***08. Teaching***

**Responsibility:** Candidate

**Applicability**

Information on teaching is required for all levels of review for faculty.

**Intent**

This section contains the basic data that will be used to perform an assessment of teaching. The amount of information depends on your percent effort in the teaching area.

**Evaluation Materials**

The NACOE has identified the following materials as useful in assessing teaching. This list is intended to be informative, but you do not have to include each item from the list in your dossier, and you may include additional items.

1. **Statement** – [Required] A brief (up to 500 words) statement in which the candidate describes her/his approach to teaching and learning. You should specifically address how you gauge/assess the level of student learning.
2. **Course List** – [Required] You supply a list of courses taught during the review period, number of credits and/or contact hours for each course, and number of students per course.
3. **Summary of Student Evaluations** – [Required] You provide a summary of student evaluations including a brief synopsis of written comments. The actual forms are optional, and, if they are included, they are placed at the end of this section or in the appendix. The complete set of forms/reviews are available to the P&T administrative reviewers and committees upon request, but these reviewers are reminded and trained to be cautious due to bias. You are encouraged to supply a brief narrative offering your interpretation of the results.
4. **Course Materials** – [Typically required] For each of two different courses you have taught, you should provide the course syllabus listing course learning objectives, a sample student assignment, a sample examination, and other relevant course materials. This should be accompanied by a description that explains why the course is designed the way it is, how it coordinates with other courses or programs, and how the evidence presented is designed to help students meet the course objectives.
5. **Student Work Samples** –When appropriate, you may supply student work samples as evidence of improvements in student understanding or performance.

***Note:*** *Examples that demonstrate student development are more useful than exemplary final products and candidates are cautioned against focusing on the work of only their top students.*

1. **Classroom Observations** – Peer observations of teaching should be conducted according to the departmental procedure for peer observations of teaching, which is available from the department head.
2. **Evidence of Innovation** – You should provide evidence of any innovations and an explanation for why the evidence demonstrates innovation in teaching. Assessment data on the effectiveness of the innovations is encouraged.
3. **Letters from Students --** Letters from students that were given to the candidate (e.g., thank you letter) may be included in this section of the dossier.

***09. Research/Scholarship***

**Responsibility:** Candidate

**Applicability**

Information on research/scholarship is required for all levels of review for faculty members.

**Intent**

This section contains the basic data that will be used to perform an assessment of research/scholarship. It is important to provide enough information for the assessment committee.

**Evaluation Materials**

The College of Engineering has identified the following materials as useful for evaluating performance in research/creative activity. This list is meant to be informative, you do not have to include every item on this list, nor are you limited to listed items.

* Funding and proposal writing, including outcomes



* Student (graduate and undergraduate) research productivity and performance



* Documented research reports, conference presentations, refereed journal articles, conference articles, monographs, texts
* Invited papers and presentations
* Professional assignments with technical committees, technical editing, patents
* Awards or honors for research or similar recognition
* Use of research and creative activities to improve instruction
* Pedagogical publications in journals, book chapters, or textbooks.
* Pedagogical presentations, including conference presentations.

Your assigned percentage effort in research are considered when your performance is evaluated.

**Contents of Research Section**

The Research section contains the following items:

1. **Research Summary**: This is much like a personal statement with a research focus. It is intended to provide context for the evaluation of your research efforts. It is typically 0.5 to 2 pages.
2. **Complete list of proposals, publications, presentations, etc**.: This information is typically presented in a list or table and may be copied directly from the CV.
3. **Selected Journal Articles or Creative Works**: a set of 5 journal articles or other creative works is recommended. You are expected to choose a set of relatively recent works that best shows your abilities.

Tenure candidates are encouraged to read the expectations for Accomplishment in the Role and Scope document (Article IX). It states, “Accomplishment includes, but is not limited to, an ongoing record of independent research that has led to a regular and continuous record of publication in refereed journals.... A record of seeking extramural funds to support research activities is also expected.”

Promotion candidates are encouraged to read the expectations for Excellence in the Role and Scope document (Article XI). It states, “Excellence includes, but is not limited to, receiving national or international recognition from peers and colleagues as having made important scholarly contributions to the candidate’s discipline… Candidates with a scholarship assignment of 40% or higher will typically average more than two publications per year over the review period…and will typically have submitted multiple successful proposals for funding for their scholarly work.”

*Note: This section is sent to external reviewers.*

***10. Outreach/Service***

**Responsibility:** Candidate

**Applicability**

Information on outreach/service is required for all levels of review.

**Intent**

This section contains the basic data that will be used to perform an assessment of outreach/service.

**Evaluation Criteria**

The NACOE has identified the following materials as useful for evaluating performance in outreach/service. This list is meant to be informative: you do not have to include every item on this list, nor are you limited to listed items.

* Memberships in professional societies



* Leadership roles in professional societies
* Conference chair positions
* Service on University, College, Department committees
* Service on advisory boards
* Journal and proposal reviews

Many of the evaluation materials are simple lists and are documented as part of your CV, but the lists are typically reproduced in Folder 10: Service.

For a faculty member with a 10% work expectation in service, a simple list of service activities is generally adequate. However, a faculty member with a more significant expectation in outreach will need a more extensive collection of evidence of performance in this area.

***11. Professional Development***

**Applicability**

This section is not used in College of Engineering dossiers; it should be left empty.

***12. APPENDIX: Supporting Documentation***

**Applicability**

This section is rarely used but is available for additional information that may be required to adequately assess your performance. If you include information in this section, be sure to refer to the information in one or more of the other sections (folders 05-10), or the information may never be read.

**Dossier Preparation Checklist** Responsibility

\*all dates are approximate – consult with dept. head for precise dates each year

**Items to Department Head**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Notification of intent to submit dossier for review (Approximately April 1) | Candidate |
|  | Names and contact data for potential external reviewers in area of emphasis (June 1) | Candidate |
|  | Packet of materials to send to external reviewers in area of emphasis (June 15)  Folder 06. CV and Folder 09 Scholarship | Candidate |
|  | Names and contact data for internal reviewers (Aug 1) | Candidate |

**Items Added to Dossier Before Submission to Department Head**

(Aug 15 for retention review, Sept 1 for tenure review, Oct 1 for promotion review)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Cover Sheet | Candidate |
|  | Vote Tally sheet | Candidate |
|  | 05. Assignment and performance documents | Candidate |
|  | 06. Curriculum vitae | Candidate |
|  | 07. Personal statement/Integration statement | Candidate |
|  | 08. Teaching materials | Candidate |
|  | 09. Scholarship materials | Candidate |
|  | 10. Outreach/service materials | Candidate |
|  | Supporting Documentation (rarely needed) | Candidate |

**Items Added to Dossier Before Review Process**

 02. External review letters, cover letter to reviewers, CVs of external reviewers Department Head

 03. In-depth Assessment (if required) Department Head

 04. Internal peer review letters Department Head

**Items Added to Dossier During Review Process**

 Review letters added as reviews are completed Staff

 Decision and vote tally sheet updates added as each review is completed Staff