

Duke School of Medicine Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure (APT) Guidance for APT Letters of Evaluation

Letters of Evaluation Requirements:

- **Medical Instructor:** No additional letters of evaluation are required beyond those provided through the standard processes for evaluating, hiring, and credentialing of new faculty at this rank.
- **Assistant Professor – initial hire:** No additional letters of evaluation are required beyond those provided through the standard processes for evaluating, hiring, and credentialing of new faculty at this rank.
- **Assistant Professor – promotion from Medical Instructor:** Three (3) letters of evaluation are required. Reviewers can be internal or external. All reviewers are expected to be sufficiently independent without a direct, vested interest (i.e., absence of a personal relationship, direct mentoring responsibilities).
- **Associate Professor without tenure – Career Track and Tenure Track:** Six (6) letters of evaluation are required. Reviewers can be internal or external but preferably external. Up to three (3) letters may be internal; at least three (3) letters must be external. All reviewers must be qualified to evaluate the candidate and hold the rank of Associate Professor or higher at their institution; absent an academic rank, external reviewers in leadership positions (e.g., Chair, Chief, Director) are permitted. External reviewers must meet the qualification and disqualification criteria for external reviewers below. Internal reviewers are expected to be sufficiently independent without a direct, vested interest (i.e., absence of a personal relationship, direct mentoring responsibilities).
- **Associate Professor with tenure:** Six (6) letters of evaluation are required. All reviewers must be external to Duke University, be qualified to evaluate the candidate, and hold the rank of Associate Professor or higher (with or without tenure) at their institution. Absent an academic rank, external reviewers in leadership positions (e.g., Chair, Chief, Director) are permitted. Reviewers must meet the qualification and disqualification criteria for external reviewers below.
- **Professor (with or without tenure):** Six (6) letters of evaluation are required. All reviewers must be external to Duke University, be qualified to evaluate the candidate, and hold the rank of Professor (with or without tenure) at their institution. Absent an academic rank, external reviewers in leadership positions (e.g., Chair, Chief, Director) are permitted. Reviewers must meet the qualification and disqualification criteria for external reviewers below.

External Letters – Characteristics

- The **intent** of requiring external letters of evaluation for the APT process is to obtain **broad** and **independent peer evaluation** of the candidate’s achievements, contributions, and future potential.
- External letters should be sought from a broad sampling of institutions and not restricted to one or two.
- If the minimum requirements for letters of evaluation cannot be met, or there are difficulties with obtaining external letters of evaluation for the faculty member because of the size of the field, the circumstances should be explained in the letter of recommendation to the Dean from the Department Chair or Center Director.

External Reviewer Qualifications and Disqualifications

- External reviewers must be sufficiently independent to not be biased in their review. Required qualifications include:
 - Appointment external to Duke University
 - Recognized expertise in the discipline of the faculty member preferred
 - Rank equal to or higher than the faculty member, or leadership position (e.g., Chair, Chief, Director) absent an academic rank
- The following are disqualifications:
 - Personal relationships (e.g., friends and family)
 - Current affiliation with Duke University
 - Significant role in training or career development of the faculty member (i.e., direct mentor or sponsor)
 - Emeritus rank academic appointment
- The following are time-limited disqualifications if within the past 7 years:
 - Collaborators / co-investigators in the design, conduct, publication, or dissemination of original studies
 - Co-authorship of scholarly works (e.g., manuscripts, book chapters, books, other media)
 - Serving as the faculty member’s Department Chair, Division Chief, Institute / Center Director, or other administrative supervisory capacity
- The following are exceptions to the co-authorship disqualification above:
 - Co-authorship of guidelines, policies, consensus statements, and similar works sponsored by professional societies and organizations, subject to a limit of 2 Letters of Evaluation per dossier
 - Co-authorship of a team science study (e.g., network or study group) where both the faculty member and the reviewer are contributors (e.g., site investigators) and not principal investigators of the study, subject to a limit of 2 Letters of Evaluation per dossier per dossier
 - Total of co-authorship exceptions is 3 Letters of Evaluation per dossier