

Department of Pediatrics

Guidelines for External and Internal Letters of Reference

The medical school promotion committees review letters from referees to solicit objective evaluations of the candidate's work and impact. Candidates for promotion work with their division directors and Chairs to provide a list of external and internal referees, which the department sends to the medical school Office of Faculty Affairs (OFA). The OFA solicits and receives all referee letters. A candidate is **not permitted** to solicit a letter from a referee. No referees may be in the candidate's own department.

Number of names required: The required number of internal (within Pitt) and external names (outside Pitt) varies as below.

	TOTAL NAMES REQUIRED *	MINIMUM EXTERNAL REQUIRED	INTERNAL PERMITTED	TOTAL POSSIBLE (external + internal)
Non-Tenure	12	8	up to 4	12
Tenure Track/ Tenure	12	12	Up to additional 4 (optional)	16

Potential referees:

- are well-qualified scientists, scholars, educators and/or clinicians who are familiar with the candidate's field and can provide a fair and objective evaluation of the candidate's work.
- have an "arm's-length" relationship with the candidate: i.e., who know the candidate mainly through candidate's work and impact on field, not through ongoing collaborative or mentoring relationships. to be "arm's length", suggested referees should not have worked closely or collaborated with the candidate within the past 3 years but are familiar with the candidate's work.
- at least 4 external referees should have had no prior relationship with the candidate.
- are of a rank that is equivalent to or higher than the candidate's proposed rank.

The referee list:

- is developed by the candidate with the division director, the department promotions committee and the department Chair.
- (SOM requests letters from a maximum of 3 nominees suggested by the candidate.)
- must include all required information (below).

Referee information (use associated Referee Nomination Table to submit this information):

- You must provide 1) full name, 2) academic rank, 3) institution, 4) email & 5) phone number. **Please ensure ALL this information is provided. SOM will not complete referee information.**
- Indicate the nature, if any, of the relationship with all referees (select up to 3 per referee)
 1. No relationship
 2. Associate through editorial boards, committees, Professional societies, study sections, etc.
 3. Professional acquaintance
 4. Collaborator/Co-Investigator/Co-Author
 5. Local colleague
 6. Current mentor/advisor
 7. Former Chair/Chief/Supervisor
 8. Former Colleague
 9. Former Mentor/Advisor
 10. Former Student/Trainee
 11. Other (specify)

See also: SOM OFA Guidelines for External and Internal Letters of Reference:

<http://www.medfaculty.pitt.edu/guidelines-external-and-internal-letters-reference>

* In order for the School of Medicine committee to successfully obtain at least 6 referee letters (minimum necessary for appointment or promotion) letters must be requested from a larger number of referees.