

**Revised: June 5, 2013**

**[Advisory to Deans #AA2013-05-REVISED](#)**

**DEANS, EXECUTIVE ASSOICATE DEANS, ASSOCIATE DEANS, ASSISTANT DEANS,  
CHAIRS, AND ACADEMIC PERSONNEL ANALYSTS**

Re: Modification of practices regarding additional external letters for appointment of  
Assistant Professors, Steps IV-VI

Dear Colleagues,

In response to your questions and concerns, I have decided to clarify and revise this advisory. The intent of the advisory is to respond to streamlining efforts by instituting change. First, I want to reiterate that "Arm's Length" letters will **not** be required for appointments in the Assistant Professor rank. Additionally, based on feedback received thus far from deans' offices and the current and previous chairs of CAP, a minimum of 4 up to 6 letters is now expected for appointments at the upper Assistant Professor rank (Steps IV, V and VI).

The original Advisory is included as it was distributed.

Sincerely,



Maureen L. Stanton  
Vice Provost-- Academic Affairs  
Professor-- Evolution and Ecology

May 20, 2013

**Advisory to Deans #AA2013-05**

**DEANS, EXECUTIVE ASSOICATE DEANS, ASSOCIATE DEANS, ASSISTANT DEANS,  
CHAIRS, AND ACADEMIC PERSONNEL ANALYSTS**

Re: Modification of practices regarding additional external letters for appointment of  
Assistant Professors, Steps IV-VI

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, the Chart for Extramural Letters and 'Arm's Length' Requirements issued to the Deans by Academic Affairs has long indicated that appointments above Step III within the Assistant Professor rank require some extramural letters that are "arm's-length." Although it is certainly possible for an Academic Senate appointment candidate to provide arm's-length references as part of their application, it is common for many of these extramural reviewers to have close associations with the candidate. Accordingly, the requirement for arm's-length letters has meant that many departments need to seek new reference letters before submitting a formal appointment dossier. For several reasons, I am rescinding this requirement for additional external letters for all faculty appointments being made in the Assistant rank.

- 1) For some time now, CAP has not expected or required additional letters as a matter of course when making recommendations on any faculty appointments within the untenured Assistant rank. (In contrast, any appointment of a faculty member with tenure requires substantive arm's-length extramural letters.)
- 2) The requirement for arm's-length letters for appointments of Assistant Professor Steps IV-VI causes delays that have the potential to undermine a time-sensitive recruitment, especially when the candidate has competing offers. Such competing offers are common for top candidates.
- 3) Prior to granting tenure, the campus will certainly seek arm's-length extramural letters. Some of these requests are likely to go to the same referees from whom additional appointment-evaluation letters were requested, potentially resulting in referee fatigue. Extramural reviewers who write for a candidate at the Assistant rank, Steps IV-VI may be asked to write again in a few years for the promotion review.

Although I am no longer requiring additional arm's-length letters for the appointment of Assistant Professors, I recognize that there are some situations in which such letters could be appropriate. The department chair or CAP may determine that there is an unusual need for more substantive, arm's-length assessment of the candidate's record to determine the desirability of the appointment or the most appropriate appointment step. However, for the majority of the cases, this will not be necessary.

Sincerely,



Maureen L. Stanton  
Vice Provost-- Academic Affairs  
Professor-- Evolution and Ecology