

**Dossier Guidelines**  
Nominations for Distinguished Professor Appointments  
Spring 2007  
*revised 1/21/07*

Dossier preparation specifications

- Use Arial or Verdana 11-point font. (The *curriculum vitae* may be submitted with existing font and formatting.)
- Margins of one-inch top/bottom and left/right.
- Single-space; double-space between paragraphs.
- **Print on one side only.**
- The dossier, including letters of recommendation, should not exceed 30 pages. The *curriculum vitae* is not included in that page limitation. Page limitations have not been identified for all sections below so that the balance of the dossier can best reflect the candidate's accomplishments.
- Number all pages consecutively in the upper right hand corner, beginning with the cover page as page one. Do not insert pages numbered as 1.a, etc.
- The entire dossier should be submitted as one clean paper document (no staples; no three-hole punch; no binding or clips). The Provost's Office will be responsible for duplicating the dossiers.

Dossier contents

Cover page, including table of contents

- Faculty member's name, current rank, department, college.
- Year appointed at Virginia Tech.
- Provide a table of contents with sections identified with page numbers.
- Please use the attached cover page template, which may also be found on the Provost's website at [www.provost.vt.edu](http://www.provost.vt.edu).

I. Statement from the dean (1-2 pages)

- Review and approval of the nomination by the college honorifics committee and dean are expected and required, independent of who writes the nomination letter. (See section 2.4.2 of the *Faculty Handbook*.)
- The statement from the dean should be an informative, individualized assessment of the candidate's credentials, and should reflect the dean's unique perspective.
- The dean's statement should reference approval by the college honorifics committee for the record.

## II. Nomination Letter (2-3 pages)

- The most informed and compelling nomination letters tend to be written by the department head and/or departmental honorifics committee. However, the letter may come from the college honorifics committee, or even others, as appropriate.
- Should be a thorough summary, which pulls together the most important contributions of the faculty member's career relevant to ADP or UDP appointment.
- Should be written with an audience OUTSIDE the discipline in mind. For example, explain the nature and importance of various national or international honors or awards from professional societies if not obvious.
- This letter should make the case for the specific nominee. Highlight his or her effectiveness or success in teaching, research, and service, and the impact of his or her contributions on students and the university community (especially for ADP, but also relevant to UDP) and on the discipline, especially for UDP.

## III. Candidate's Statement (no more than 3 pages)

- Similar to the candidate statement in the P&T dossier, this statement should explain such matters as the character, coherence, direction, and purpose of the candidate's professional work throughout his or her career, including teaching, research, scholarship or creative activity, outreach, extension, and professional and university service.
- The statement should enable members of the selection committee to understand clearly the candidate's professional aims and achievements.
- Given the important emphasis on teaching accomplishments for ADP appointments, the statement should incorporate the candidate's teaching philosophy. UDP statements should focus on the evolution, coherence, and impact of their research on the field.
- The statement should explain but not evaluate the work.

## IV. Teaching and Other Instructional Accomplishments

- Instructional accomplishments should be broadly conceived. Possibilities include but are not limited to those outlined in the promotion and tenure dossier format. Given the page limitation, it is expected that only selected accomplishments can be highlighted in the dossier. Include honors, recognitions, and awards for teaching or advising.
- Include a table that shows all classes taught for a minimum of the past 5 years. The committee would prefer to see a table that includes all courses taught during the candidate's career at Virginia Tech, if possible. Include one set of verbatim student comments for a recent course as an attachment. (A full career history of teaching evaluations and verbatim student comments are not necessary for UDP nominations.) Reduced teaching loads for sabbatical or buyouts, etc., should be clearly indicated.

Any classes not evaluated also should be noted in the table. The table should include:

- The name of each course taught.
  - The number of students in each course.
  - The number of students completing the evaluation.
  - The student ratings: If the standard university evaluation form (SPOT) is used, the table should include at least the three measures for overall student rating, success in communicating, and concern and respect for the student. If the SPOT form is not used, then the form used to acquire student perceptions must be included with the dossier and will not count as part of the dossier page limitation. Include comparisons with departmental averages for similar courses to provide to put the nominee's ratings in an appropriate context.
- For those faculty members significantly involved in graduate work, include titles and dates of completed theses and placements for graduates.
  - Highlight cross- and interdisciplinary work.
  - Identify significant involvement and contributions in support of students from diverse backgrounds.

#### V. Research and Creative Activities

- Identify the most compelling accomplishments in research, scholarship, or creative achievement.
- Identify awards and honors.
- Include items such as those in the promotion and tenure dossier.
- Since the full *curriculum vitae* will be attached, there is no need to duplicate the entire list of publications, conference presentations, or similar items in this section. Be selective in highlighting signal accomplishments and providing summary information as appropriate.
- Do not include copies of publications as attachments.

#### VI. Outreach and International Accomplishments

- Identify the most compelling accomplishments in outreach and international affairs.

#### VII. University and Professional Service

- Service to the university community is a major component of the selection criteria for ADP. Highlight contributions beyond the immediate discipline and department, and those that have had a significant impact on the university community. Highlight contributions to diversity. Provide documentation or measures of such impact wherever possible. [Evidence of significant university service is also relevant for UDP nominations.]

- UDP nominations would also typically have considerable accomplishment in relation to professional service—editorial boards, leadership of national disciplinary associations, and so on. [Professional/disciplinary accomplishments for ADPs are often evident in successful nominations, but are not usually as extensive as UDPs, nor weighted as heavily in the selection process as *university service*.]

#### VIII. Letters of Recommendation (no more than 7 pages)

- Either complete letters or summaries of excerpts may be included.
- Statements or letters may be from:
  - Nominee’s present or former students; excerpts from student comments on evaluation forms may also be used.
  - Nominee’s colleagues in or outside the department (one of whom could be the department chair if not the author of the nomination letter).
  - Additional letters from anyone qualified to comment on the nominee’s extraordinary achievements and impact on the life of the Virginia Tech community (especially for ADP nominations).
  - Letters of support for UDP positions typically are from national or international experts in the field (academic, industrial, federal agency, professional association, etc.) attesting to the nominee’s contributions.
- Letters of support can be overdone and redundant. What is most effective is a set of well-written letters representing a variety of viewpoints (student, colleague, external supporters if relevant), which address the candidate’s varied contributions. Summaries of excerpts can be very effective to highlight a particular theme.

#### IX. Other Relevant Material

#### X. Attachments

- Verbatim student comments from one course (for ADP nominations).
- *Curriculum Vitae*: Clearly indicate educational background and dates of promotions in rank.