

The Unofficial Guide to Contract Renewal

This is an unofficial guide. These are our opinions and suggestions, based on our experiences and the experiences of others at the DPC, DC, and TPRC levels. The intent is to help you put together a strong dossier and to forestall questions or problems that can arise at higher levels of review or at the time of tenure/promotion review.

Sections of the contract renewal application:

1. Teaching ability
2. Summary of accomplishments and activities
3. Goals

Sections of the Tenure Application:

1. Primary Responsibility - instruction or academic support
2. Professional and Self-development
3. College and community service
4. Shop or Lab duties

Address each area. It is ok to concentrate in some areas at the expense of others in any given year. It is possible that you have concentrated on some things in one year and were not able to cover all areas.

Explain extenuating circumstances that account for weak areas. Sometimes personal events are overwhelming. Explain in a professional manner.

If there is a weak area, show that you know about it and propose a plan for improvement.

In self-evaluation, say what has been done, the result, what will be done (goals).

Teaching Ability

You should include the student evaluation summaries and comments of the last two completed semesters (ex: Spring, 1994 and Fall, 1994 for dossiers submitted in Spring, 1995). Non-instructional faculty should use the appropriate evaluation instruments developed for their areas. You should also include at least two peer evaluations for each semester.

Student Evaluations: summarize by course and semester to show progression.
example:

	Student Evaluation Average of All Items		
	Fall, 1992	Spring, 1993	Fall, 1994
Biol 100	4.2	4.5	4.8
Biol 100	3.8	4.0	4.7
Sci 121	4.5	4.5	4.5

Summary of Accomplishments and Achievements

List the courses you taught and, as appropriate, comment on the retention rate, the results of changes you have made in your teaching, and on tasks or goals you set for yourself.

This should be a self-assessment and discussion of your effectiveness as a teacher.

Discuss:

learning outcomes

students' response to your approach

significant instructional materials or course revisions

comments/evaluations of last year's goals and objectives or the recommendations of reviewing bodies

actions taken to address recommendations from previous year

committee/college/community service

professional improvement activities

Note improvements in student evaluation results.

Emphasize the need for your services.

If there is low enrollment or a high drop-out rate for your courses, explain and watch out for these patterns.

What do you do, what do you read to keep up in your field?

Goals

Goals can involve:

new courses you would like to teach (but don't be too obvious about encroaching on someone else's territory)

professional development activities that will improve your understanding of the college, the UH system, students, and teaching effectiveness, as well as activities in your field of expertise.

strengthening weak areas - have a plan to improve

new instructional materials or course revisions

committee/college/community service activities planned (community service does not need to be limited to your area of expertise)

Have a plan for your career and a strategy that guides your actions.

Have a coherent, stated philosophy of education.

People should know who you are, participate in activities that give you visibility on campus and in the system.

Caution - do not commit to do too much. Next year, you will need to explain how well you have accomplished these goals.

Type up a representative sample or all of student comments.

Address any negatives in student evaluations. You need not agree or act upon it, but you should acknowledge it.

When administering the student evaluations, be sure to follow the guidelines. Give instructions, course code, and tell the students that 1 is low and 5 is high and then leave the room. Let a student collect the forms, sign the cover sheet, and deliver them to the division office. Failure to do this can allow someone to question the validity of the results.

Include the computer printouts of each class in your dossier. Reviewers will look at scores for individual items and may comment on unusually low numbers. Reviewers are looking for trends such as consistent low scores on certain items and increase or decrease in the numbers from semester to semester. It is to your advantage to spot these trends and address them in your dossier.

Peer Evaluations:

The standard form is preferred because it is easier for reviewers to see how you are doing in specific areas.

Although tenured faculty in your discipline or knowledgeable about your discipline are preferred, some evaluators from outside of your discipline should be ok - can they learn from you?

Avoid requesting peer evaluations from lecturers or non-tenured faculty unless there are special circumstances where this might be appropriate.

A discipline peer evaluator should do a repeat evaluation about 2 years later.

Negative comments in peer evaluations are good - enables you to show progress

In subsequent years, include DPC, and DC contract renewal evaluations from previous years. Show how you responded to suggestions. Do not ignore suggestions - they will remember.

Discuss what you have learned from student and peer comments.

Other Comments

An analysis of what you are doing to improve teaching is important.

Faculty should take advantage of the many on-campus workshops and seminars. Attend and say how it helped you in the classroom. Do not schedule classes or office hours during the TTh 12:30 - 1:30 hours when most of the workshops and meetings are held.

DPC and DC need to write reports - help them by addressing specific items.

The Tenure/Promotion application is not just another contract renewal. The format is totally different. Find out what is required in the Tenure/Promotion document well before you come up for tenure.

Keep a file folder for each different area (Teaching Ability, Professional Development, College/Community Service). Include letters, flyers, dates, put notes if there is no letter.

Your dossier should be neat, in logical order, and follow the format given in the guidelines. Do not forget to include the contract renewal signature forms that are sent to you.