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# What Should I Include In My PIF?

**Tips and advice from those who review them in the College of Humanities**

There are two files utilized in academic personnel considerations at CSUN: (1) your Personnel Action File (PAF), and (2) your Professional Information File (PIF).

Every tenured and tenure-track faculty member has a PAF in the Dean’s office and the Dean is the custodian of your PAF. This file includes permanent items maintained throughout your employment at CSUN, e.g. your hiring letter, acceptance letter, personnel review letters, teaching evaluations, etc.

Each faculty member at CSUN also has the responsibility of establishing, maintaining and submitting a record of professional information (i.e. a PIF) for use in evaluation for retention, tenure, promotion, and service salary increases. The PIF is submitted in a 3-ring binder. The remainder of this document is to assist you in preparing your PIF; however keep in mind that it is the responsibility of the probationary faculty member to ensure the completeness of the PIF.

Section 600 is the Administrative Manual provided to faculty members that supplements policies and procedures of the Faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement, Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, and Executive Orders of the Office of the Chancellor, all of which would prevail in case of a conflict with Section 600. It is electronically available at: http://www.csun.edu/faculty-affairs/policies.

# Preparing Your Professional Information File (PIF)

* 1. Normally, the review of a faculty member’s PAF and PIF begins in the fall term of his/her second probationary year. Third and subsequent year PAFs and PIFs are reviewed in the spring.
  2. Review deadline dates are publicized each academic year in Section 600. The Department Personnel Committee determines the deadline for submitting your PIF for the department- level review.
  3. Recommendations and decisions about reappointment, tenure, promotion, and service salary increases are based on evaluations of items in your PAF and evidence and documentation that you place in your PIF binder. Thus, it is extremely important that you take care to prepare your PIF to completely and accurately provide evidence of your contributions and accomplishments.
  4. In cases where prior service credit was granted, that time interval shall also be documented in the second probationary PIF review, as well as the final cumulative review for tenure and/or promotion.
  5. For probationary faculty electing to be reviewed for either tenure or promotion, the PIF shall be cumulative and representative of performance covering the period from the beginning of probationary service.
  6. For tenured faculty, the PIF shall be cumulative and representative of performance, covering the period since the submission of the file for promotion to Associate Professor.
  7. The policies according to which you will be evaluated are public documents: *Section 600, Academic Personnel Policies and Procedures* (also known as “The Blue Book”) and your Department Personnel Standards (available on the Faculty Affairs website).
  8. Throughout the review cycle and at every level of review, you will receive the evaluations and recommendations of the committees and individuals who are reviewing your performance and, at each level, you may respond by requesting a meeting to discuss the recommendations and/or *in writing* within 10 calendar days of receiving their review, before your PIF goes to the next level of review.
  9. The contents of the PIF are described in Section 606. To assist you in preparing your PIF the College has prepared a formatted PIF binder that includes a cover sheet, checklist, and dividers with labels. The use of these templates is optional.
  10. Bulky items such as books are reviewed by the Department Personnel Committee and Department Chair. Bulky items (usually presented in a separate appendix) do not accompany the PIF to the College- and University-level reviews.
  11. Do not use plastic covers or sleeves for materials inside the PIF.
  12. All items should be three-hole punched and inserted into one 3-inch binder.[[1]](#footnote-1)
  13. Your PIF is returned to you at the end of each review year.

# Major Sections of the PIF

Table of Contents/ Index

* 1. You must prepare an Index of the contents of the PIF. The Index is your table of contents. To assist in your PIF preparation the College has created a Table of Contents template to help you get started. This Index can be adapted to meet your individual content needs; however please attempt to maintain the template format.
  2. Each year you are evaluated, you should prepare and submit two copies of the Index (Table of Contents). One copy remains in the PIF and the other is placed in your PAF each year.

Professional Resume

1. Make sure your Resume is current and reflects accomplishments and work described in your PIF. If you were granted service credit at the time you were hired, you must provide the same documentation for the service credit years as for your years at CSUN.
2. To assist the reviewers in finding the most pertinent information, consider organizing your resume using the three review categories—Contributions to Teaching Effectiveness and Direct Instructional Contributions, Contributions to the Field of Study, and Contributions to the University and Community.
3. The Resume should include your academic and professional employment history since you started at CSUN, hence, the resume is cumulative. It should list accomplishments in reverse chronological order, meaning your most recent activities come first, in each of the three areas of review (teaching, scholarship, service).
4. Be sure to list published work using a standard scholarly citation format, e.g., American Psychological Association (APA), Modern Languages Association (MLA), etc.
5. One copy of your Resume is placed in your PIF, and an additional copy can be placed in the PIF binder pocket. These copies are used by the College Personnel Committee to facilitate the review of your file.
6. Print and place a copy of relevant evidence of professional preparation with your resume.

Narrative Summary

1. The Narrative Summary is a succinct narrative (double-spaced 12-point font, about 1-2 pages for each area of review) that assesses and summarizes significant activities and contributions in each of the major categories considered in retention, tenure and promotion since your last review.
2. When you are in your final review year, your Narrative Summary is cumulative, referring to your entire probationary period, including service credit years, if you received service credit when you were hired.
3. The following are some suggestions, but not requirements, in preparing your summary narrative(s):
   1. Use your summary narrative to explain, contextualize, and interpret your approach in teaching and the results you are achieving. If problems are evident, for example, in a pattern of negative comments or ratings by students, discuss them, interpret them, and describe what you are doing in response.
   2. If suggestions regarding your teaching were included in prior evaluations, report on what you have done in response and the results you have achieved.
   3. It is imperative that you address areas that were indentified as needing improvement. The Narrative Summary is your opportunity to “tell your side of the story.”
   4. When referencing your scholarly and creative work, please include a complete citation of your work in standard scholarly citation form, e.g., APA, MLA, etc. Clearly identify your work as either peer-reviewed or not. You are encouraged to use the co-authorship disclosure form to identify your contributions to scholarly and creative activities.
   5. Put your work and activities into context for the reviewers. Remember that the reviewers may not be familiar with your discipline, so you will need to explain clearly the meaning and significance of your work. Why is this work important?
   6. Discuss completed work and also work in progress. Be sure to check your department standards to determine if work under submission is counted as a “publication or its equivalent.”
   7. Be specific. Include the names of professional organizations, meetings, or committees in which you played a significant role. Avoid the use of abbreviations and acronyms.
   8. Indicate whether each university service activity was at the department, college, or university level and the significance of your role and/or contribution.

Teaching Effectiveness and Direct Instructional Contributions

1. Note that “instructional contribution are made primarily through teaching, and teaching effectiveness is an essential criterion for retention, for tenure, and for promotion to any rank” (*Section 632.3.1*) “Teaching effectiveness refers to the individual’s success in providing learning experiences well designed to achieve the educational objectives of classroom instruction, student laboratories, and individual student projects, research, and field work” (*Section 632.3.2*)
2. Include a complete list of courses taught at CSUN during your probationary period but include only representative samples of course syllabi.
3. Provide evidence of teaching effectiveness and direct instructional contributions. Documentation of teaching performance may include other evidence in addition to Peer and Students Evaluations. You might include representative samples of course materials (examinations, paper assignments, grade distributions, etc.) to give the reviewers a feel for your approach and/or teaching philosophy. For example, a scoring rubrics or a sample of a graded paper can show how you respond to student writing (be sure to remove all traces of the student’s identity).
4. If applicable, include documentation of effective instructional improvements developed and disseminated.

Contributions to the Field of Study

1. Note that “Each faculty member shall demonstrate continued growth as a recognized scholar and contributor to the field of study” (*Section 632.4.1*).

2. Documentation of your scholarly and creative activity is the evidence to support what you say in the Narrative Summary of your PIF. The following are some suggestions, although not required, for documenting such evidence:

* 1. Ensure each citation in your resume is complete and accurate and formatted in the style customary to the faculty member’s discipline, for each scholarly and creative work.
  2. Include a hard copy of each scholarly or creative work published within the review period, including:

Peer reviewed publications and creative activities Peer reviewed abstracts

Book chapters

Non-peer reviewed publications Grant submissions and funding

Other evidence of scholarly and creative activities

* 1. It is essential for you to help the reviewers judge the quality of your work by describing for them the evidence of its quality in the form of the status or ranking of journals (if your discipline has such a ranking), journal rejection rates, comments of reviewers, etc. For each publication or equivalency, describe the peer review process by which the material was evaluated and accepted. As a cover sheet to each of the above works include a co-authorship disclosure form that describes your role and contribution to the finished product. You do not need to use the co-authorship disclosure form, but you do need to provide this information in some form or another.
  2. Include copies of letters of acceptance or those completed works that are “in press” or otherwise in the process of publication. (Also include a manuscript “in press” or galley proofs, if you receive them.)
  3. For works presented in a medium other than print, the copy may be in a form suitable for evaluation as appropriate to the discipline (e.g., photographs, audiotape, video tape, CD-ROM, computer disks, etc.)
  4. To document the peer-review you process may include:
     1. a copy of the journal’s peer-review process as printed in the journal itself; or
     2. a letter from the editor describing the peer-review process to which your work was subjected; or
     3. the comments of reviewers to whom your work was submitted by the editor of the journal or book.

1. You may further demonstrate your contributions with evidence of professional recognition of their contributions to the discipline. Evidence may include book or article prizes; non-refereed invited papers, exhibits, and performances; comments and replies; book reviews; and citations of the faculty member’s published work (from the Social Science, Science, or Humanities and Arts Citation Index.).
2. For scholarly and creative work in progress, please provide documentation of such progress. This documentation may include abstracts of papers presented at professional meetings, papers currently being reviewed for publication, etc.

Contributions to the University and Community

1. Note that “Contributions to the University and community refer to those contributions normally expected from all members of the faculty. Such contributions include active membership on committees at the Department, College, or University level, student advisement, and such other responsibilities, including community service, undertaken to advance the goals of the University” (*Section 632.5.2*).

2.  This section of your PIF should document your contributions to the university and community, including such things as work on committees, participation in department, college or university activities, or development of special events.  Evaluation is based on the quality of service, not quantity, and your summary narrative should explain clearly how your service work contributes to the university and committee.

3.  In documenting your service, do not include minutes of all meetings attended or flyers for all talks attended.  Instead, be sparing with your supporting documentation, while explaining the work that you performed in the section’s supporting narrative.  For example, as a department member, you will likely participate on several department committees.  The supporting documentation for this may be as simple as the handout that shows all of the department’s committee membership.  It does not need to include the minutes for the many meetings that the multiple committees will hold throughout the year.  As another example, if you were a member of the university Graduate Studies Committee, you can include the official document that welcomes you to the committee or thanks you for your service on it.  If you were the chair of the committee, you can include the official document that congratulates you on your election.  In your supporting narrative, you can briefly discuss the work that you performed on that committee over the course of the year.   For a third example, if you organized a speaker’s event, include the flyer from the event and in the supporting narrative, explain your participation.

Overall, develop your PIF in a way that establishes how you have balanced multiple duties and responsibilities across the three main areas of evaluation. In the end, you should create an overall picture of your career that demonstrates how you “show definite promise of being a valuable addition to the University in terms of discharge of professional responsibilities” (*Section 632.6.1*).

1. For faculty in their last review for either tenure or promotion the major part of the PIF should fit in one 3-inch binder. They may submit additional information in an appendix (a companion binder), if necessary. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)