

Rights and Obligations of Toronto Metropolitan University Committee Members

For use by all members of all Department Hiring Committees (DHCs), Department Evaluation Committees (DECs), Faculty Tenure Committees (FTCs), Contract Lecturer Appointment Committees (CLACs), Librarian Appointments Committees (LACs), Counsellor Appointments Committees (CACs), University Search Committees, Faculty Promotion Committees (FPCs) and Library Promotion Committee (LPC).

Objectivity

All Committee members have an obligation to assess and/or hire in an objective, fair, and equitable manner based on the merits, the facts to be considered, and agreed-upon context, in accordance with existing laws and applicable collective agreements. When and where a Committee member feels that they are unable to provide this level of objectivity, they must discuss with the Committee the advisability of recusing themselves from the Committee.

The Chair of the Committee and all Committee members must ensure that the candidate is aware of the factors/criteria they are being assessed against. Also, candidates who are interviewed should be allowed to respond to any concerns the Committee expresses about their potential candidacy. Committee members should be respectful/collegial in their interactions with each other so that each member is able to fully participate in the assessment and/or hiring process.

All Committee members also have an obligation to be familiar with and adhere to Ryerson's policies and procedures pertaining to employment equity, conflict of interest, and hiring of foreign nationals, which are all available from the Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) Human Resources Website. Furthermore, in the case of Committee members who are TMU employees, these Committee members are also bound by the terms of their respective collective agreements or letters of appointment.

Equity: Ryerson's employment equity principles specify that the University shall hire and make employment and promotion decisions on the basis of qualifications and merit and that, within this context, the University shall make proactive efforts to increase the participation from the four groups designated for employment equity, namely women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities and Indigenous persons.

Conflict of Interest: Members must disclose if there is a real or perceived conflict of interest with respect to any candidate being considered by the Committee. A conflict of interest occurs when personal interests interfere with the independent judgment required by the member in order to perform their duties and responsibilities in the interest of the university. Beyond the obvious personal or financial conflicts, examples may include situations where the member has acted as an academic supervisor of the applicant or where the member has collaborated with the applicant on a research project or business venture; however, these supervisory and collaborative relationships do not automatically constitute a conflict of interest.

Confidentiality

Members of a TMU Committee with responsibility for academic personnel matters, will have access to a variety of confidential material, and must therefore be bound by the requirements of confidentiality necessary for the proper functioning of such a Committee and the protection of the interests of the candidates; in particular:

1) In the course of Committee work, Committee members may become aware of plans, opinions and employment experiences provided in confidence by individual applicants or candidates. Confidential reference comments about applicants or candidates will also be received. This information should only be shared or discussed with other members of the Committee.

2) In the course of Committee deliberations and discussions, Committee members will become aware of the perceptions, assessments and views of the other Committee members concerning candidates being assessed. These exchanges for the purpose of assessment are provided in confidence and should only be shared or discussed with other members of the Committee: all Committee members have an obligation to make every effort to respect the dignity and integrity of their colleagues and to sustain a climate in which colleagues are able to function as responsible members of the academic community.

Other discussions aimed at defining the Committee's mandate, such as the academic direction of a department, job requirements, local SRC expectations, etc. are not deemed to be confidential and are subject to external oversight.

Further details concerning responsibilities relating to confidentiality can be found in several University policies, such as the *Policy and Procedures Relating to Search Committees and Appointments in the Academic Administration*, and also in applicable collective agreements.

Consultation

At times members of Committees may wish to consult with the university administration, their union/association or the Human Resources Consultant supporting the school/department/faculty for advice on issues such as processes related to their Committee, collective agreement interpretation or policy interpretation. The individuals so consulted are governed by similar confidentiality expectations; therefore such seeking of advice from these individuals should be done in a confidential manner, but will not in itself constitute a breach of confidentiality.

If a Committee member observes inappropriate behaviour or activity that contravenes a collective agreement or policy relevant to the Committee's mandate, this member should avail themselves of the consultation process described in the paragraph above.

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read this document and understand that these are the obligations of Committee members.

I understand that I am expected to retain all Committee material in my possession, including personal notes taken during the course of this Committee's work, for one year after the completion of my term on this Committee. I also understand that I am expected to dispose of this material securely after that period unless notified otherwise by the university.

Name of Committee: _____

Name of Committee Member: _____

Signature _____

Date: _____