MLA Recommendations on Extramural Evaluations

EXTRAMURAL evaluations may not be appropriate to the mission of every institution. Many institutions do not currently require them. The following recommendations are addressed to potential reviewers and to those institutions using extramural evaluations in their review processes.

1. Extramural evaluations should be requested only for granting of tenure or appointment to full or named professorships. Extramural evaluations are not appropriate and should not be sought for pre-tenure reviews.
2. A maximum of six outside letters should be required.
3. Candidates should have the opportunity to suggest some reviewers for any extramural evaluation.
4. Reviewers should be given at least three months to prepare an evaluation.
5. Prospective reviewers should respond to requests promptly and in the case of a favorable response should adhere to the agreed-on timetable.
6. Material sent to reviewers should be carefully selected in consultation with the candidate.
7. Materials should be selected to limit the demand on reviewers' time. Reviewers should be given the option of requesting specific materials.
8. Reviewers should be informed about the outcome of the case.
9. The work of reviewers should be compensated by the requesting institution as a form of consultation.
10. The work of reviewers should be recognized by reviewers' home institutions as a scholarly activity that is a service to the profession at large.

These recommendations were adopted as a statement of association policy by the MLA Delegate Assembly at its December 1994 meeting. The MLA Executive Council, at its February 1995 meeting, endorsed the assembly's action.

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