

**WESTBROOK COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS**  
**REAPPOINTMENT, PROMOTION AND TENURE**  
**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**(Revised May 2025)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Westbrook College of Health Professions (WCHP) has established the following reappointment, promotion, and tenure standards. When a new faculty member is employed, the department chair/program director will give the faculty member the most recent Board of Trustees-approved version of the University of New England Faculty Handbook. The chair/director will meet with the new faculty member to discuss these standards and protocols and specifically advise the new faculty member on the explicit criteria for promotion within the department. Expectations in teaching, service, and/or scholarship should be outlined in the Letter of Hire and/or Annual Review documents, which will be used to standardize the review process. Every faculty member will receive a written annual review conducted by the chair/director according to the defined policies of the University Faculty Handbook. Percent effort allocation in teaching, service, and/or scholarship will be reviewed and re-documented in writing during the annual review process. The candidate's self-evaluative statement will operationalize percent effort for the period under review, and the details of percent effort should match the allocations documented in the annual performance evaluations. It is ultimately the responsibility of the individual faculty member to be aware of the criteria and standards for promotion.

WCHP faculty have a wide range of academic backgrounds and responsibilities and no single list of criteria for advancement could accommodate all. All levels of RPT must, therefore, be flexible within the parameters provided in the University Faculty Handbook in its comparison of the performance of an individual faculty member with the standards summarized below. Particular criteria will have varying degrees of relevance for different positions within the academic divisions of the College.

## **I. CLASSIFICATIONS AND RANKS**

At the time of hire the Westbrook College of Health Professions may hire a faculty member into any rank, tenure or non-tenure, as defined by the University Faculty Handbook.

**A. Tenure-track** faculty will be evaluated by criteria in teaching, scholarship and service over the course of the review period. Tenure-track faculty must demonstrate excellence in all

**B. Non-tenure teaching or clinical-track faculty** will primarily be evaluated by their teaching and service. If scholarship is evaluated on this track, then effort in scholarship should be negotiated and documented with the chair/director and Dean in the initial appointment letter as well as during annual reviews. Reappointment and promotion will be based on demonstrated excellence in teaching and service, and productivity in scholarship consistent with percent effort.

**C. Non-tenure track research faculty** should negotiate their effort in teaching, service, and scholarship with their chair/director and Dean to include any requirements applying to review and promotion. Productivity must be demonstrated within the negotiated allocation of effort.

## II. CRITERIA

A. The achievement of excellence in teaching and service is required of those on the teaching professor, clinical, research, and tenure tracks. Additionally, excellence in scholarship is required of both the research and tenure tracks. Those on the clinical track also require proper credentialing. Faculty may use the [Teaching Effectiveness Framework](#) to guide their teaching and self-assessment. Excellence in teaching, service, and scholarship within WCHP are defined below:

1. The ability to demonstrate knowledge of content, knowledge of pedagogical theory and effective teaching methodology focusing on student learning is essential to achieving teaching excellence. Many attributes contribute to achieving student learning outcomes. All candidates must demonstrate commitment to teaching excellence based on criteria to include:
  - Official WCHP student course evaluations;
  - Course syllabi;
  - Sub-college observations of teaching (if applicable)

Additional material may include:

- Reference to self-evaluations; improvement in teaching based on critical analysis of course evaluations; readiness to evaluate and improve teaching, ability to organize and master subject material, ability to present clearly;
- Evidence of contribution to service learning;
- Evidence of interprofessional contributions through teaching;
- Reference to focus on student-centered learning; ability to help students define and pursue academic goals, ability to stimulate student interest and performance, ability to encourage active learning and critical thinking, development of new, effective methodologies;
- Reference and provide samples of examinations, student projects, and material which demonstrate the candidate's ongoing professional development of teaching strategies in connection to enhancing student learning;
- Reference departmental annual teaching reviews;
- Honors and recognitions for teaching contributions;
- Reference to invited and/or peer-reviewed presentations that describe innovative teaching or assessment strategies, and publications that reflect the scholarship of teaching;
- Evidence of student-centered and effective academic advising as defined by the department (in some departments this may be considered in the service aspect not teaching)
- Evidence of mentoring or advising on student projects (research, honors thesis, independent study);
- Reference to additional evidence or documentation of relevance to the candidate.

2. Service Excellence

Four levels of meaningful service are considered: a) service to department; b) service to college; c) service to university; and d) external service to the candidate's professional and/or scientific society. The college also values service to the community. All candidates must demonstrate excellence in service by providing evidence of generosity of time in activities that contribute to the enrichment of the candidate's department, college, university, and/or profession. Service at all four levels is not a requirement for promotion or the awarding of tenure, but rather the candidate should demonstrate a balance of meaningful service activities.

Service is generally not demonstrated by activities in which the candidate is contractually or otherwise compensated (e.g. Program Director, Clinical Coordinator). However, if the candidate believes that his or her activities in these areas go above and beyond expectations, it is incumbent on the candidate to provide a rationale for the additional activity to be considered service.

Excellence in service can be demonstrated by, but not limited to the following examples:

- Evidence of active participation on committees at the department, college, and university levels;
- Evidence of active participation in curriculum development at the department or college level;
- Evidence of active participation as faculty advisor to student organizations
- Evidence of active participation in interprofessional activities;
- Evidence of facilitation of extracurricular student activities;
- Evidence of contributions to professional affiliations;
- Evidence of organization of conferences or workshops within professional field;
- Service as editor/reviewer on journals, grant proposals, or books
- Evidence of contribution to civic community<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Service outside the UNE community does not compensate for lack of service within the UNE community.

### 3. Scholarship Excellence

To be considered as scholarship, the candidate's work must be disseminated, meeting peer review standards common in the candidate's discipline. The primary criterion is the creation of a body of scholarship in one's discipline that goes beyond that required for the terminal degree, has been disseminated to one's scholarly peers, has been positively judged by those peers, and has been sustained while at the University of New England. The College values all of Boyer's categories of scholarship:

- a) **Scholarship of Discovery:** demonstrates a commitment to making particular and unique contributions to knowledge within a discipline. It involves the process of confronting the unknown, seeking understanding, looking freshly, probing new ideas, and answering the question, "What is to be known and made known?" It may be evidenced by publication, artistic

products, and other forms of professional dialogue with one's peers.

b) Scholarship of Integration: demonstrates a commitment to interpreting knowledge, making connections across disciplines, and placing knowledge in perspective. It involves illuminating, interpreting, critically analyzing data, and sharing with colleagues' answers to the question, "What do the findings of research mean?" It may be evidenced by publication, artistic production, and other forms of professional conversation with colleagues in one's own and in other disciplines.

c) Scholarship of Application: demonstrates a commitment to using knowledge responsibly to solve problems of consequence to human welfare. It may be evidenced by publication, artistic production, and other forms of professional involvement and leadership beyond the academic community.

d) Scholarship of Teaching: demonstrates a commitment to understanding and improving the process of teaching and learning. It involves critical inquiry into the development of effective approaches and methodologies to communicate one's discipline, and seeks to raise as well as answer questions. It may be evidenced by publication, artistic products, and by other forms of intellectual and professional exchange among colleagues. As with all other forms of scholarship, the demonstration of interaction with professional peers is integral to the scholarship of teaching.

e) Scholarship of Engagement: the identification, understanding and resolution of significant social, civic, or ethical problems including systematic data collection, analysis, interpretation, and impact.

Evidence of scholarly activity includes but is not limited to the following:

- Invited or competitive scholarly presentations;
- Publication in refereed journals or proceedings; publication of books or chapters in edited volumes;
- Securing competitive intramural grants to support scholarly activity
- Submission of grant proposals to extramural funding agencies; Securing extramural grant or contract awards;
- Dissemination of intellectual property (e.g., inventions and creations) that are meaningful to the candidate's field of study or the scholarship of teaching;
- Honors or recognition for scholarly achievements

**B. Non-Tenure Teaching Professor Classification: Reappointment and Promotion Policies and Procedures**

Demonstrated excellence in teaching and service is required of Associate Teaching Professors

and Teaching Professor ranks in the Westbrook College of Health Professions. Consideration for early promotion and/or tenure must be discussed with and acknowledged by the program director/chair and the dean. Written documentation of this acknowledgement must be included in the faculty member's RPT packet. Faculty should declare their intent for early consideration by the date set forth in the RPT guidelines in the Faculty Handbook (Attachment 2).

Every regular faculty member on the Non-Tenure Track Teaching Professor Classification will participate in a multi-level review every third year of employment until promotion to the Associate level. Multi-level review will include the sub-college RPT committee, chair/director, college RPT committee, college dean, and if needed, provost. Once promotion to the Associate level has been achieved, this review will occur again whenever a promotion is being sought.

Non-tenure track faculty members hired at the Associate Professor rank will undergo one multi-level review in their third year of employment and whenever promotion is sought.

Non-tenure track faculty members hired at the Professor rank will undergo one multi-level review in their third year of employment.

#### 1. Third-Year Review:

Candidates standing for reappointment in the third year will demonstrate sufficient progress in teaching and service as defined by the aforementioned criteria in "Teaching Excellence" and "Service Excellence" sections. Progress will be indicative of sufficient potential providing reasonable assurance that the standards for promotion will be met at the sixth-year review. The recommendation of the College RPT Committee is critical for passage at third-year review, and only those candidates who have demonstrated promise will be allowed to progress towards sixth-year promotion.

#### 2. Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor:

Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor will be considered after six years of service at the rank of Assistant Teaching Professor. Faculty standing for promotion must demonstrate excellence in teaching and service as defined in the aforementioned criteria in "Teaching Excellence" and "Service Excellence" sections. The recommendations of the Sub-college RPT Committee are critical for promotion, and only those candidates who have demonstrated excellence in teaching and significant service will be promoted. However, candidates should bear in mind that no amount of service can compensate for inadequate teaching.

#### 4. Promotion to Teaching Professor:

Promotion to Teaching Professor typically will be considered after six years of

service at the rank of Associate Teaching Professor for those faculty who:

- Are among the most accomplished teachers; that is; those who demonstrate a record of continued excellence in teaching, including evidence of enhancement and evolution of teaching beyond that required at the rank of Associate Teaching Professor.
- Demonstrate a record of continued excellence in service, including evidence of enhancement and evolution of service beyond that required at the rank of Associate Teaching Professor.

#### C. Non-Tenure Clinical Professor Classification: Reappointment and Promotion Policies and Procedures

Demonstrated excellence in teaching, service, and appropriate credentialing is required of associate and teaching professors in the Westbrook College of Health Professions. Consideration for early promotion and/or tenure must be discussed with and acknowledged by the program director/chair and the dean. Written documentation of this acknowledgement must be included in the faculty member's RPT packet. Faculty should declare their intent for early consideration by the date set forth in the RPT guidelines in the Faculty Handbook (Attachment 2).

##### \*Credentialing:

Faculty members for whom licensure or certification is required for teaching are expected to maintain currency in their fields. The following examples may be considered as measures of such currency:

- Evidence of maintenance of unrestricted state licensure;
- Evidence of maintenance of all credentials and privileges associated with clinical practice, as appropriate to practicing responsibilities;
- Evidence of satisfactory completion of all continuing-education requirements associated with level of practice;
- Evidence of progress and success in certification and recertification with professional societies, as appropriate to discipline and practice responsibilities.

Candidates should document satisfaction of these to the extent possible.

Every regular faculty member on the Non-Tenure Track Clinical Professor Classification will participate in a multi-level review every third year of employment until promotion to the Associate level. Multi-level review will include the sub-college RPT committee, chair/director, college RPT committee, college dean, and if needed, provost. Once promotion to the Associate level has been achieved, this review will occur again whenever a promotion is being sought.

Non-tenure track faculty members hired at the Associate Professor rank will undergo one

multi-level review in their third year of employment and whenever promotion is sought.

Non-tenure track faculty members hired at the Professor rank will undergo one multi-level review in their third year of employment.

1. Third-Year Review:

Candidates standing for reappointment in the third year will demonstrate sufficient progress in teaching and service as defined by the aforementioned criteria in “Teaching Excellence” and “Service Excellence” sections. Progress will be indicative of sufficient potential providing reasonable assurance that the standards for promotion will be met at the sixth-year review. Candidates must also demonstrate evidence of appropriate credentialing as described in the previous “Credentialing” section. The recommendation of the College RPT Committee is critical for passage at third-year review, and only those candidates who have demonstrated promise will be allowed to progress towards sixth-year promotion.

2. Promotion to Associate Clinical Professor

Promotion to Associate Clinical Professor will be considered after six years of service at the rank of Assistant Clinical Professor. Faculty standing for promotion must demonstrate excellence in teaching and service as defined in the aforementioned criteria in “Teaching Excellence” and “Service Excellence” sections. Candidates must also demonstrate ongoing and appropriate credentialing as described in the previous “Credentialing” section. The recommendations of the sub-college committee are critical for promotion, and only those candidates who have demonstrated excellence in teaching, significant service, and continued credentialing will be promoted. Candidates should bear in mind that no amount of service can compensate for inadequate teaching.

3. Promotion to Clinical Professor

Promotion to Clinical Professor typically will be considered after six years of service at the rank of Associate Clinical Professor for those faculty who:

- Demonstrate a record of continued excellence in teaching, including evidence of enhancement and evolution of teaching beyond that required at the rank of Associate Clinical Professor rank.
- Demonstrate a record of continued excellence in service, including evidence of enhancement and evolution of service beyond that required at the rank of Associate Clinical Professor rank.
- Demonstrate continued and proper credentialing.

D. Non-Tenure Research Professor Classification: Reappointment and Promotion Policies and Procedures

Demonstrated excellence in scholarship and teaching and/or service (5%) is required of Associate Research Professor and Research Professor in the Westbrook College of Health Professions. Consideration for early promotion and/or tenure must be discussed with and acknowledged by the program director/chair and the dean. Written documentation of this acknowledgement must be included in the faculty member's RPT packet. Faculty should declare their intent for early consideration by the date set forth in the RPT guidelines in the Faculty Handbook (Attachment 2).

Every regular faculty member on the Non-Tenure Track Research Professor Classification will participate in a multi-level review every third year of employment until promotion to the Associate level. Multi-level review will include the sub-college RPT committee, chair/director, college RPT committee, college dean, and if needed, provost. Once promotion to the Associate level has been achieved, this review will occur again whenever a promotion is being sought.

Non-tenure track faculty members hired at the Associate Professor rank will undergo one multi-level review in their third year of employment and whenever promotion is sought.

Non-tenure track faculty members hired at the Professor rank will undergo one multi-level review in their third year of employment.

1. Third-Year Review:

Candidates standing for reappointment in the third year will demonstrate sufficient progress in scholarship and teaching and/or service as defined by the aforementioned criteria in "Scholarship Excellence", "Teaching Excellence" and "Service Excellence" sections. Progress will be indicative of sufficient potential providing reasonable assurance that the standards for promotion will be met at the sixth-year review. The recommendation of the College RPT Committee is critical for passage at third-year review, and only those candidates who have demonstrated promise will be allowed to progress towards sixth-year promotion.

2. Promotion to Associate Research Professor:

Promotion to Associate Research Professor will be considered after six years of service at the rank of Assistant Research Professor. Faculty standing for promotion must demonstrate excellence in scholarship and teaching and/or service as defined in the aforementioned criteria in "Scholarship Excellence", "Teaching Excellence" and "Service Excellence" sections. The recommendations of the sub-college committee are critical for promotion, and only those candidates who have demonstrated excellence in teaching, significant service, and continued credentialing will be promoted.

3. Promotion to Research Professor:

Promotion to Research Professor typically will be considered after six years of



service at the rank of Associate Research Professor for those faculty who:

- Demonstrate a record of continued excellence in Scholarship, including evidence of enhancement and evolution of scholarship beyond that required of at the rank of Associate Research Professor.
- Demonstrate continued excellence in either teaching or service, including evidence of enhancement and evolution of teaching and /or service beyond that required at the rank of Associate Research Professor.

#### E. Tenure Track: Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Policies and Procedures

Excellence in teaching, service, and scholarship are required of tenure-track classification. Promotion to Associate Professor will be considered after six years of service at Assistant Professor level; promotion to Professor will typically be considered after six years of service at Associate Professor. Consideration for early promotion and/or tenure must be discussed with and acknowledged by the program director/chair and the dean. Written documentation of this acknowledgement must be included in the faculty member's RPT packet. Faculty should declare their intent for early consideration by the date set forth in the RPT guidelines in the Faculty Handbook (Attachment 2).

Please note: External reviewers for RPT candidates will be selected using the process outlined in the Faculty Handbook, Section Three, IV, A.11. Tenure track candidates being reviewed for **tenure and/or promotion** must submit their scholarship materials to the Dean's Office by June 1<sup>st</sup> in order for the materials to be sent out for external review. These materials, along with a copy of Section II.A.3 of this document, will be sent to the external reviewers no later than June 15<sup>th</sup> with a deadline given to the external reviewers of August 15<sup>th</sup> to submit their letter. This letter is inserted into the candidate's portfolio according to the timeline in Section Three, IV, A.11.

##### 1. Third-Year Review:

Candidates standing for reappointment in the third year will demonstrate sufficient progress in teaching, service, and scholarship as defined by the aforementioned criteria in "Teaching Excellence", "Service Excellence", and "Scholarship Excellence" sections. Progress will be indicative of sufficient potential providing reasonable assurance that the standards for promotion will be met at the sixth-year review. The recommendation of the College RPT Committee is critical for passage at third-year review, and only those candidates who have demonstrated promise will be allowed to progress towards sixth-year promotion.

##### 2. Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor:

Faculty standing for promotion must demonstrate excellence in teaching, service, and scholarship as defined in the aforementioned criteria in "Teaching Excellence", "Service Excellence", and "Scholarship Excellence" sections. The recommendations of the sub-college committee are critical for promotion, and only those candidates who have

demonstrated excellence in teaching, service, and scholarship will be promoted.

3. Promotion to Professor:

Promotion to Professor will be granted to only those who demonstrate a record of continued excellence in teaching, including evidence of enhancement and involvement of teaching beyond that required of an Associate Professor rank. Professors are to be considered to be amongst the most accomplished teachers, and the rank of Professor will only be granted to those attaining that status. In addition, there must be a record of continued excellence in service, including evidence of enhancement and involvement of service beyond that required of Associate Professor rank. Promotion to Professor also requires continued evidence of excellence in scholarly productivity.

### **III. EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

Consistent with the University Faculty Handbook, RPT reviews in the Westbrook College of Health Professions are conducted according the principle of incremental substantive, cumulative review – in which each successive review builds upon a foundation created by all previous reviews. Refer to the University Faculty Handbook for details.

#### **Formation of Sub-College Committees**

1. The allocation of WCHP departments and schools into the sub-college committees will be determined by the Dean of WCHP in consultation with the Department Chairs/Program Directors.
2. The composition of the sub-college RPTC will be determined by the appropriate Department Chairs/Program Directors and will include, whenever possible, members from the candidate's school/department and/or discipline. The sub-college RPTC will have a minimum of three members with the total membership being an odd number as described in the UFH.
3. The sub-college RPTC should be representative of the candidates going up for review (clinical track, tenure track, etc.). Faculty members eligible to serve on the committee will (must) have, at minimum, undergone one level of RPT review at UNE. One member of the committee should hold at least an equivalent rank to what the candidate is going up for. If a candidate is going up for full/clinical professor, and no one is available within the program area, a full/clinical professor from the broader WCHP or UNE community should be identified to serve on the committee. The sub-college RPTC for tenure-track faculty must consist of at least one tenured faculty. If a candidate is going up for tenure and no one is available within the program area, a tenured faculty member from the broader WCHP or UNE community should be identified to serve on the committee.
4. The chair of the sub-college committee will be elected by the committee members, and should have previous experience serving as an RPT reviewer. Other procedures of the sub-college committee are described in the UFH.

#### A. Formation of the College-level RPT Committee

WCHP will have a college committee of at least five faculty at the associate or full professor ranks who have undergone third-year RPT review at UNE or are tenured. Three members for a 5-person committee will be recommended by vote of the full-time faculty, and the remainder will be appointed by the Dean. One faculty member should be elected from each of the sub-college areas defined for RPT review. To ensure consistency in the process, appointments should typically be for two-year terms with staggered end dates. The general committee make-up should strive to resemble the diversity of candidates being evaluated in terms of tenure/clinical track, associate/full rank, and/or candidate background/terminal degree. Both tenure and non-tenure track faculty may serve on this committee, and all members will discuss and vote upon all dossiers. Elections for the college RPT will take place in March. If the college does not have enough qualified faculty to serve on the college RPT committee, then the process described in the UFH Evaluation Procedures applies. The committee chair is elected by a majority of the committee, and should have served on the committee in a previous year.

## **Westbrook College of Health Professions**

### **RPT Checklist**

The following RPT Checklist is an annotated version of the RPT Checklist described in the University Faculty Handbook (Attachment 1). The annotations are intended to help RPT candidates assemble a complete and well-constructed electronic portfolio.

Prior to submission, candidates are strongly encouraged to seek feedback about their portfolio from a UNE faculty member who has previously been through the RPT process.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1) Cover sheet with candidate's name, department, home college, action expected of RPTC, and date

\_\_\_\_\_ 2) RPT E-Binder Annotated Table of Contents

- Annotations help the reader quickly understand the type of materials included in each section of the electronic portfolio
- Annotations may not be necessary if the materials in each section of the electronic portfolio are well organized using descriptive folder and filenames that clearly convey their contents.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3) Curriculum vitae (CV), and, as applicable, licensure documentation

- CV should be constructed so that a reviewer can easily and quickly identify all relevant teaching, service, and scholarship accomplishments described elsewhere in the portfolio
- Licensure documentation, if applicable, should reflect continuous licensure throughout the period of review
- Licensure documentation should include evidence of continuing education, especially if required for licensure

\_\_\_\_\_ 4) Self-evaluative Statement:

A narrative self-evaluation of teaching, scholarship and service contributions.

Candidates are encouraged to evaluate themselves in the context their development as a UNE faculty member and progress toward their unique professional goals. The narrative should include:

- Your teaching philosophy
- Evaluation of teaching (strengths and weaknesses)
- Response to student course evaluations
- Evaluation of Service contributions
- Explanation and evaluation of scholarship (if applicable to your classification) in the context of the candidate's clinical profession or academic discipline

\_\_\_\_\_ 5) Teaching—sections “a” and “b” listed below should be separately grouped

- a. Documentation of teaching since last review or at most past six years (please

specify) including all syllabi

- b. Written formal evaluations of teaching from students since last review or at most the past six years. A written explanation should be provided if the evaluations are not complete. Any absence of data should be addressed in the self-evaluative statement
- c. Letters of internal peer faculty observations of teaching if your department/program requires these letters
- d. Additional teaching documentation (if any)

\_\_\_\_\_ 6) Scholarly activity, documentation of scholarly activity since last review (please specify)

- Published scholarly works should be identified as peer reviewed or non-peer reviewed
- Scholarly presentations should be identified as peer reviewed or non-peer reviewed
- Grants should be identified as “submitted, funded, or not funded.”
- Descriptions of other scholarly works should help an unfamiliar reader understand the context and/or audience for which the work was intended

\_\_\_\_\_ 7) Service, documentation of service since last review (please specify)

- Documentation should reflect the candidate’s role and time commitment
- Candidates are encouraged to document their service using a letter from a person of authority who is familiar with the candidate’s contribution

\_\_\_\_\_ 8) All evaluations from prior annual evaluations and RPT reviews organized by type

- Annual Performance Reviews, Parts A and B with signatures of the candidate, supervisor, and Dean
- Sub-college RPTC review
- Chair/Director RPT review
- College RPTC review
- Dean RPT review
- University RPTC review, if applicable

\_\_\_\_\_ 9) Other information that the candidate believes to be relevant (please specify)

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The candidate's Dean will be responsible to ensure that the written evaluations from at least three external peer reviews are inserted prior to the sub-college RPTC review. These letters will be inserted in a separate tab marked "External Letters of Review" following all sections that the candidate has compiled.

If the candidate has a joint appointment in more than one college and the effort in the secondary college is 20% or more, the Dean from the primary college will request a letter from the Dean of the secondary college and this letter will be inserted by the Dean of the primary college prior to the sub-college RPTC review.

After each level of review (sub-college RPT committee, chair/director, college committee, dean), the written letter of the committee/reviewer will be inserted in the final tab of the portfolio marked "Current RPT Evaluations" for inclusion at the next level/s of review with this checklist being checked off and signed at the appropriate place below.

Written evaluations from each level of the current review inserted at the appropriate stage of review