

Guidelines for Arms-Length and/or Fresh Status of External Referees

The following qualifications and criteria serve as general guidelines for arm's-length and/or fresh status. Chairs are encouraged to discuss with the SEAS Dean's Office the application of these guidelines to specific cases.

Qualifications

- In general, to qualify as **arm's length**, a referee must not have been the candidate's teacher, mentor, advisor, or collaborator, and must not have a close personal relationship with the candidate.
- In general, to qualify as **fresh**, a referee must not have written a letter for the candidate for a prior appointment or promotion at Yale.

Criteria

In general, persons with the following relationships would not have arm's-length status:

1. Co-author of an article, book chapter, or book*
2. Co-presenter of a conference paper or poster
3. Co-editor of a book
4. Advisor/PI or dissertation committee member (in either direction)
5. Instructor, co-instructor, student
6. Chair of a department where the candidate was appointed as junior faculty or promoted (because a mentoring relationship would be assumed)
7. Co-PI or grant research collaborator (being paid from the same grant/working on the same project)
8. Close personal relationship

In general, the following relationships would not on their own disqualify someone from having arm's-length status:

1. Editor of a book in which the candidate has published a chapter
2. Co-member of an editorial board or a professional society committee
3. Peer reviewer of the candidate's book manuscript, journal article, or grant
4. Participant in the candidate's book/manuscript colloquium
5. Co-participant in a conference panel
6. Reviewer of the candidate's work (or vice versa) or author of a blurb for the candidate's book
7. The candidate's teacher in a short seminar/workshop (not for credit)

In the event that a candidate has co-authored a publication with a large number of co-authors, this large collaboration may be considered arm's length at the discretion of the SEAS Dean.

For initial appointments/promotions to tenure only: In rare cases, there will be an acute trade-off between the requirement that referees be arm's-length and the need for referees who are among the foremost experts in the relevant areas. In these cases, the SEAS Dean may adopt a modified interpretation of arm's-length and/or grant that up to 4 letters may be non-fresh.