Dear Colleagues:

Peer review is the lifeblood of the academic personnel process, and confidentiality is essential for meaningful and credible peer review. As the university embarks on a period of intensive faculty hiring and promotion review, we are writing to remind you of your obligations to maintain confidentiality throughout the peer review process. These obligations exist at every level, including review of candidate files, submission of internal letters, participation on ad hoc and personnel committees, and discussions during faculty meetings to consider candidates for appointment and promotion. The identities of those writing external letters, serving on ad hoc committees, and speaking during faculty discussions as well as the contents of their evaluations must be kept confidential if candid assessments are to occur and the institution of tenure is to maintain its integrity. No matter how innocuous you may think a disclosure is, and no matter how significant you may believe the countervailing considerations to be, there is no excuse for violating confidentiality within the academic review process.

It is a violation of the UCLA Faculty Code of Conduct to “[b]reach … established rules governing confidentiality in personnel procedures.” This provision of the Code is subject to enforcement through the Academic Senate’s Charges process. Although sanctions are available, we believe it is more important for us to reinforce the values that we share through our institutional norms and culture. We are writing to affirm our conviction that the advancement of knowledge and public support for higher education depend upon a review process in which faculty feel free to make evaluations based on substance rather than on fear of personal or professional repercussions. Through your own adherence to confidentiality, as well as your affirmation of its importance, you will strengthen the culture of peer review. We thank you for your commitment to ensuring the quality of our hiring and promotion process at UCLA.

Sincerely,

Carole Goldberg  
Vice Chancellor, Academic Personnel

Andrew Leuchter  
Chair, Academic Senate