

Sample Letter from Departmental Executive Officer to External Reviewer

A DEO's letter to solicit an external evaluation must:

- be neutral in tone;
- indicate the rank for which the candidate is being considered and whether the promotion includes the awarding of tenure;
- explicitly state what portion of the candidate's work the reviewer is being asked to assess;
- request that the reviewer not communicate with the candidate or with faculty other than the DEO;
- state that the reviewer's response will be protected as confidential; and
- request a brief biographical sketch if one has not been obtained through another source.

The following is a sample letter:

Dear _____:

As I mentioned to you [on the telephone/by e-mail] on [date], _____ will be considered for [tenure and] promotion to [proposed rank] in the Department of _____ during this academic year. I am grateful to you for agreeing to serve as an external evaluator.

Enclosed with this letter are Professor _____'s curriculum vitae and copies of the publications [or creative works] you have agreed to review: [list works].

Please begin with a statement of how you know the candidate and his or her work. In this context, please address any circumstances that might raise issues of impartiality as they related to your assessment of the candidate. We would like you to critique the quality of this work and, if possible, to assess its quantity and quality in comparison to the work of others in this discipline at comparable stages in their careers. We would particularly appreciate your evaluation of the contribution that the candidate's work has made to the field, viewing each published [or creative] work separately or in combination as seems appropriate. We would be interested in your judgment of the quality of the journals [or exhibits] and the importance of the conferences through which Professor _____ has communicated this work. We also would be interested, of course, in any other insights you might have about Professor _____'s scholarly [or artistic] accomplishments.

If you have any questions about Professor _____'s materials or experience, please contact me directly. In accordance with our governing procedures, we must ask you not to communicate with either the candidate whose work you are reviewing or other members of the department or college concerning your evaluation or the review process.

Your letter will be available to the tenured faculty in this department as well as to the Dean, the Collegiate Consulting Group (Promotion Advisory Committee), and the Provost's Office. Beyond that, we will regard your letter as a confidential document. Your evaluation will be made available to the candidate only upon his/her explicit request following a negative recommendation at various stages of the review process, and then only after your name and other identifying information has been removed.

{Only if it is not possible otherwise to obtain a short statement of the reviewer's qualifications, add the following paragraph:] Would you please send me a brief biographical statement when you send your letter? Although our departmental faculty know you and your work well, the Dean and the Collegiate Consulting Group would find your biographical sketch helpful when considering your letter.

Again, thank you for your willingness to help us with this important review process.

[Signature of DEO}

Candidate: _____

Reviewer: _____

Please complete and return this form along with your letter.

I. Length of time you have known the candidate: _____ years.

II. Have you had any relationship to the candidate and his/her work as a:

Yes No

 Present or past colleague (at same institution as a student, post-doctoral fellow, resident or faculty member)?

 Past mentor?

 Past mentee?

 Collaborator (worked with, or co-authored papers)?

 Any other significant relationship?

If "Yes" to any of the above, please describe briefly: _____

III. Indicate the basis for your knowledge of the candidate's work (*check all that apply*):

The *vita*, personal statement, and other contents of the promotion dossier

Publications (beyond those included in the dossier)

Presentations

Personal knowledge and discussions of his/her work

Participation with the candidate in professional activities (study sessions, advisory boards, professional society activities, etc.)

Other sources _____

Reviewer Signature

Today's Date