

GUIDELINES FOR PROMOTION REVIEWS FOR RESEARCH RANKS AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY-BLOOMINGTON

OFFICE OF THE VICE PROVOST FOR FACULTY & ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

October 24, 2024

PREAMBLE

Promotion reviews stand at a vital intersection, where the professional careers of individual scholars, scientists, artists, teachers, and librarians meet the ambition of Indiana University Bloomington to remain a world-class research and teaching university. No decision we make is more consequential for the future of the institution than providing career advancement of our faculty.

It is essential that we ground these reviews in the enduring principles and collegial values of the academy: procedures and expectations must be consistently applied and transparent to candidates, to faculty involved in the process, and to external referees; decisions must be fair and well justified by the merits of each case. This document follows the principle from university policy that reviews of research-rank faculty generally use the same procedures as are used for promotion and tenure of tenure-track/tenure-line faculty.

SCOPE

The following ranks are promoted based on performance in these areas (relevant University or Bloomington policies for both: ([ACA-20](#), [BL-ACA-A1](#), [BL-ACA-A5](#)))

- Research Scientists/Scholars (Assistant Scientist/Scholar; Associate Scientist/Scholar; Senior Scientist/Scholar): Evaluated on Research/Creative Activity
- Research Professors (Assistant Research Professor; Associate Research Professor; Research Professor): Evaluated on Research/Creative Activity

This document covers processes used for promotion within these ranks/appointments, which do not necessarily coincide with a decision to extend or renew a long-term contract. Moves between appointment types (e.g., tenure track to non-tenure track) are first considered at the level of school/College procedures and criteria, and then forwarded to the Vice Provost for Faculty & Academic Affairs (VPFAA) for approval.

PROCEDURES

Sequential Stages of Review

Decisions about promotion are reached through the comprehensive and rigorous peer review of achievements, contributions, impact, and promise. The review process begins in the candidate's home unit (i.e., department, center, institute) or school (for non-departmentalized units). Each case moves through a multilevel sequence of reviews: from the local unit to the administrative

home (e.g., school/College, Research) to the campus. Each level includes both faculty committee and administrator review, with each writing a substantive report and offering a recommendation. At each stage, a faculty review committee votes for a recommendation and writes a substantive report evaluating the candidate's performance in the applicable performance area(s) for their rank: Research/Creative Activity and/or Service/Engagement (using the evaluative categories listed below and in accordance with unit criteria). Similarly, at each level, the appropriate administrator (e.g., chair, dean, vice provost) provides a separate substantive evaluation and recommendation. The VPFAA prepares the final substantive evaluation and recommendation for the Executive level (i.e., Provost, President) who in turn makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. If a candidate has appointments in multiple units, one unit is designated the "home" for promotion reviews (this is usually identified in a memorandum of understanding or initial offer letter). The home unit will identify consistent and appropriate avenues of participation for units that share the appointment. These units will share reports with the chair/dean following consistent practices.

Faculty Review Committees

The faculty review of a dossier begins at the home unit (e.g., department, institute, center) or administrative home level (e.g., school/College, IU Research) and includes the votes of the relevant administrators (e.g., chair, director, dean). It ends with a recommendation by the relevant campus promotion advisory committee to the VPFAA and Executive level. At the initial level of review, all rank-eligible faculty (as defined by each school, college, or unit policies) participate, although only a subset of them may be charged with writing the evaluative report. At subsequent levels, a small but broadly representative committee of eligible faculty votes on a recommendation and writes a report. When possible, internal review committees will include faculty of the same appointment category as the candidate.

The campus promotion advisory committees operate under the same principles as the Tenure Advisory Committee (see [BL-ACA-E20](#) and [BL-ACA-A5](#)). The Research Promotion Advisory Committee (RPAC) reviews research-rank promotions as well as tenure-track promotions to full professor. The RPAC is constituted of ten rank-appropriate faculty, of whom two are senior faculty from the research ranks (i.e., Senior Research Scientists/Scholars or Research Professors).

Committee reports should capture the range of opinions expressed during the deliberations (minority reports are not allowed), while providing an evidence-based rationale for the chosen recommendation. Independent evaluations by individual faculty members in the home unit who are eligible to vote must not be included in promotion dossiers except as comments on collaborative projects or co-leadership of programs. All internal reviewers must have access to all dossier materials added at prior levels, including promotion criteria, external review letters, and recommendations from prior levels. All deliberations by review committees are strictly confidential.

Eligibility and Voting

Voting eligibility is guided by the principle of rank-appropriateness and is determined by each unit. Faculty are eligible to vote only if they have been “materially engaged” in the review process, as evidenced (for example) by their familiarity with the dossier and/or attendance at meetings where the case is discussed. No proxy voting is allowed. Retired faculty members may not vote. Units may have their own requirements for minimum FTE in the unit necessary for voting eligibility. Eligible faculty may vote only at one level; members of school and campus review committees should vote with the initial home unit – e.g., the department or school, if departments do not exist – and then recuse themselves from subsequent considerations of the case.

At all stages of review, all eligible faculty must vote separately on all appropriate performance areas using the evaluative ratings listed below. Faculty also cast a vote for the overall promotion recommendation.

All eligible faculty members’ votes must be reported in the eDossier. To the extent possible, the administrator’s memorandum must explain the basis for absences, abstentions, and negative votes, if any. To the extent that concerns about the dossier were voiced in committee deliberations, those concerns and discussion should be summarized in the committee and/or administrator’s reports. Voting is by secret ballot. Ballots should not include space for individual voters’ substantive written comments. Instead, any opinions should be voiced and discussed in the faculty meeting and summarized in the administrator’s memorandum.

Vote options for promotion are “yes,” “no”, or “abstain.” “Abstentions” reflect an eligible voter’s decision not to select a “yes/no” option. In addition, “absences” (those faculty unable to attend, not materially engaged, or recused) are reported in the eDossier.

Notification of Decisions

The chair will notify candidates as soon as the departmental faculty and chair reach a decision, and the dean will notify candidates after the school reaches a decision. Campus-level recommendations (by the Promotion Advisory Committees and by the VPFAA) are shared with candidates only after the Executive level completes their review (in the late spring). The grounds and justifications for negative recommendations must be made clear to the candidate. Later committees and administrators need not restate the substance of earlier judgments and recommendations. Candidates may request a copy of internal reviews at any point in the process.

Rebuttals and Requests for Reconsideration

Upon receiving a negative promotion decision from the Executive level, candidates may request a reconsideration of that decision if they believe that there were unjustifiable judgments of performance or judgments based on erroneous information. The VPFAA supervises the request for reconsideration process. To make a request, the candidate prepares and sends a written rebuttal describing what they see as unjustifiable judgments of professional competence or judgments based on erroneous information to the VPFAA. If grounds are found for a new review, the candidate may add new materials germane to the deliberations in a new eDossier folder created for this purpose. If the candidate requests

additional external review letters, and this request is approved, they must be obtained following the same procedures used to obtain the initial set (described below). The updated eDossier is sent back to the first level of review that made a negative recommendation, and then it is reviewed again by all subsequent levels. The reconsideration process will not add time to a candidate's probationary period. The candidate must submit rebuttal materials for review within two months following notification from the VPFAA that grounds are found for a new review.

Appeal/Grievance in Lieu of or Following Reconsideration

If the above reconsideration results in a negative decision or if the candidate foregoes the reconsideration opportunity, the candidate may appeal the decision (after the Executive level decision) to the BFC Faculty Board of Review (FBR) on procedural grounds only. The Board will decide whether evidence supports the conclusion that procedural irregularities had consequences for the legitimacy of the outcome, and if so, they make suggestions for remediation to the Provost, who decides whether the review needs to be redone, in full or in part. A grievance will not in itself extend the probationary period unless the Provost grants an extension. The candidate must submit materials to the FBR chair within two months following notification of the negative decision; if the reconsideration process is engaged, the candidate must submit materials to the FBR chair within one month following the completion of the reconsideration process.

Timing of Reviews

Promotion from First Rank (Assistant Scientist/Scholar to Associate Scientist/Scholar, Assistant Research Professor to Associate Research Professor)

Research ranks do not face an up-or-out promotion decision, and promotion to associate level is normally considered after a minimum of three years ([BL-ACA-A1](#)). Generally, the time for promotion in the research ranks follows the tenure-line faculty promotion timeframe.

The timeline for reappointment reviews of research-rank faculty varies and should be specified in their appointment or reappointment letter. The local unit head or a faculty committee conducts these reappointment reviews, which culminate in a written assessment of the candidate's accomplishments and prospects for eventual promotion.

Per [BL-ACA-A5](#), qualified Research Associates and Postdoctoral Fellows may be eligible for appointment to the promotable research ranks. Postdoctoral Fellows could be considered eligible to apply for a position in one of the research ranks under certain conditions upon satisfactory completion of the postdoctorate term. Qualified Research Associates could be eligible to apply for openings in the three-rank system but would not be automatically eligible for conversion to the beginning rank. However, these appointment reviews do not require a campus-level process. Rather, they should follow a process internal to, and approved by, their appointing unit.

Promotion from Second Rank (Associate Scientist/Scholar to Senior Scientist/Scholar, Associate Research Professor to Research Professor)

Faculty may be reviewed for promotion in any year of appointment, at the faculty member's request or by invitation of faculty of rank in the home unit. If promotion is denied, the candidate may request another review in a later year and as many times as necessary. Home units should evaluate all faculty who have been in rank for seven years or more for possible standing for promotion to upper ranks each year during an annual meeting between the faculty member and the chair and/or dean.

Access to Dossier

All dossier materials must be shared with the candidate upon request at all stages of the review process, including internal and external review letters.

CRITERIA AND EXPECTATIONS

School and Local Unit Expectations

Criteria for promotion must respect the diversity of missions among academic units on the Bloomington campus. All local units (centers, departments) and schools/divisions must prepare documents that define with reasonable specificity the criteria/expectations for Excellence and all other evaluative categories in Research and Service/Engagement (where applicable) and make them available to all promotion candidates. These criteria must be sufficiently precise to allow candidates to gain a clear understanding of what accomplishments are expected, but sufficiently elastic to allow diverse means to satisfy those expectations and to enable reviewers to make judgments about work quality that are irreducibly subjective. If the unit's promotion criteria change during the candidacy period, faculty who are in a probationary period may choose to be evaluated under the criteria in force when they were hired; non-probationary promotion reviews are grounded in current expectations. Schools, departments, centers, or institutes must periodically (e.g., every 5 years) review and revise promotion expectations and make them available to both faculty and the VPFAA for web posting.

Campus Expectations

Evaluative Categories

For the Research Scientist/Scholar and Research Professor ranks, Research/Creative activity is the only category considered in evaluation for promotion. If Service in support of Research is included as part of the evidence for Research Excellence, the Service subfolders in the eDossier can be used to provide that evidence. The four evaluative options are Excellent, Very Good, Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory.

Area(s) of Performance/Basis for Promotion

Like promotion to tenured status, promotion from the first rank of research-rank classifications is principally a judgment about prospects for future contributions, whereas promotion from the second rank is principally based on achievement in rank.

Please note that the criteria for Excellence may be unique to each rank and appointment.

The qualifications for promotion in the research ranks should be roughly equivalent to Research qualifications for tenure-line faculty.

Research Scientist/Scholar Ranks

For promotion from Assistant Scientist/Scholar to Associate Scientist/Scholar, candidates must demonstrate Excellence in Research/Creative Activities, and they would have begun to establish a national and/or international reputation through published work. For Associate Scientist/Scholar, excellence includes responsibility for substantive contributions to projects conducted in collaboration with others or to further the work of a campus research unit. The terms of appointment should determine evaluation. For scientists with appointed service responsibilities, documented evidence for Excellence in Research may include service in support of successful research, grants, collaborative projects, and/or scholarship. Normally a person should have achieved a minimum of three years, and more typically five or six years, of successful research as reflected in work published in refereed sources before attaining or being appointed to Associate Scientist/Scholar.

For promotion to Senior Scientist/Scholar, candidates must demonstrate Excellence in Research/ Creative Activities in the previous rank. This includes continued growth in scholarship, making substantial disciplinary contributions, and the acquisition of a national and international reputation. This may be demonstrated through publication record, invited lectures, leadership in research organizations, success in securing funding, research collaborations, service to the profession, documented service in support of successful research, and/or other evidence of disciplinary impact. Some forms of research (e.g., creative and/or developmental activities) may not necessarily result in publications in scholarly journals, but nonetheless may impact future inquiry and should be included in the dossier as research contributions. For example, certain scientific or scholarly findings and technological developments might be disseminated through presentations to professional organizations and through consultations with persons engaged in similar work at other institutions. Terms of appointment should determine evaluation, which should account for appointed service responsibilities.

Research Professor Ranks

For promotion from Assistant Research Professor to Associate Research Professor, candidates must demonstrate Excellence in Research/Creative Activities, and they would have begun to establish a national or international reputation through published work. For Associate Research Professor, excellence includes independent, substantive contributions to original projects as principal investigator. The terms of appointment should determine evaluation. Documented evidence for Excellence in Research may include service in support of successful research, grants, collaborative projects, and/or scholarship. Normally a person should have achieved a minimum of three years, and more typically five or six years, of successful research as reflected in work published in refereed sources before attaining or being appointed to Associate Research Professor.

For promotion to Research Professor, candidates must demonstrate Excellence in Research/ Creative Activities in the previous rank. For Research Professor, this includes independent and original contributions, continued growth in scholarship, substantial disciplinary contributions, and the acquisition of a national and international reputation. Per BL-ACA-A5, the expectation

is that Research Professors are capable of sustained extramural support. Excellence in research/creative activities may be demonstrated through publication record, invited lectures, leadership in research organizations, success in securing funding, research collaborations, service to the profession, documented service in support of successful research, and/or other evidence of disciplinary impact. Some forms of research (e.g., creative and/or developmental activities) may not necessarily result in publications in scholarly journals, but nonetheless may impact future inquiry and should be included in the dossier as research contributions. For example, certain scientific or scholarly findings and technological developments might be disseminated through presentations to professional organizations and through consultations with persons engaged in similar work at other institutions. Terms of appointment should determine evaluation, which should account for appointed service responsibilities.

DOSSIER PREPARATION

Timing and Custody: The unit administrator and the candidate share the responsibility for assembling the full promotion packet. This occurs generally in the spring/summer before a candidate's promotion review year. While candidates have discretion over most submitted material, custody of the dossier rests with administrators at each level of review, thus ensuring the integrity of its contents. The performance area for promotion must be decided prior to assembling the dossier, and clearly indicated in the candidate's statement and in communications soliciting external review letters.

Assembling the Promotion Materials (Steps 1 through 8).

External Review. Step (1): In late winter/early spring, the unit administrator will solicit names for external review from the candidate. (2) The unit administrator will solicit letters from referees (more details below). (3) The candidate prepares a representative packet of Research/ Creative Activity and (if applicable) Service/Engagement materials for external review. (4) The administrator sends this packet to referees and manages the process of uploading external review letters.

Internal (Department/School/Campus/University) Review. In the spring, the campus will also notify the candidate when eDossier is open for uploading materials for internal (department/ school/campus/university) review. (5) The candidate is fully responsible for selecting, assembling, and uploading all content to the relevant Teaching, Research/Creative Activity, and/or Service/Engagement folders. (6) It is recommended that the candidate regularly consult with the relevant administrators during this process, and that the administrator meet with the candidate to review these contents before final submission to ensure that all pertinent materials are included. (7) The "General" folder is a shared responsibility: the candidate will upload a curriculum vitae and personal statements. Units will upload promotion criteria (but may need to consult with a candidate to determine the criteria under which they choose to be evaluated should the criteria have changed during a probationary period). The administrator's representative will also upload the Department/Center/School's and Candidate's Lists of Prospective Referees. (8) When the dossier is fully assembled, both the candidate and the local administrator must electronically confirm that eDossier is complete. (9) All other eDossier materials are the responsibility of the administrator (Internal Review Letters, External Review Letters, List of Referees Contacted, Solicited Letters, and Vote Record through the Dean's level).

Mandatory Items. All materials listed in the “General” section of eDossier must be included. Units may require that other specific evidence or documentation be included in eDossier. All other materials in eDossier may be included at the candidate's discretion. Annual review and merit review reports should not be included in eDossier unless the candidate specifically requests that they be included.

Timing of Work Included in Dossier. While a curriculum vitae covering relevant details from a candidate’s full career is expected, promotion will be evaluated on the basis of work in rank. For candidates with prior academic or professional careers, the work accomplished since their most recent appointment at IUB is assumed to be a better reflection of productivity or impact than earlier work. Therefore, in both the CV and eDossier, candidates should distinguish Research and Service work carried out in their current rank and/or at IUB from earlier work.

Candidates for promotion from first to second ranks should include all work since reception of the highest degree, even if the candidate spent time as a postdoc or at another university before coming to IUB. Pre-PhD work (e.g., scholarly or scientific publications) may be included to give additional evidence of pace, future trajectories, and continuity or change in research interests. For all other ranks and promotion levels, faculty may include any background or pre-IUB career details that they consider relevant, but again should distinguish work accomplished in rank from other work.

Adding New Materials to the Dossier. Candidates may add new material to the dossier at any time during the review process by uploading material into the “Supplemental” folder in eDossier. Candidates planning to add supplemental materials are encouraged to contact VPFAA if they have questions about that process. Notice of newly added materials will be distributed to all prior levels of review. Faculty committees and administrators have the opportunity to revise earlier evaluations and recommendations in response to newly added materials, although they are not obligated to do so. No materials may be added to the dossier during the review process without the candidate’s permission, other than recommendations from review committees and administrators. The addition of new materials to the dossier will not delay the review process. The dossier may only include accomplishments completed before the Executive-level promotion decision is made, even if a reconsideration request or appeal/grievance has been initiated.

External Review Letters.

General guidance:

The purpose of the external review is to provide an objective peer review of a candidate's claim to Excellence. Whether the reviews come from inside or outside IU, faculty serving as external referees are expected to provide a full review of the promotion packet they received, and their letters should not be confused with “colleague” or “promotion support” letters.

Letters used in the promotion process for research-rank faculty will generally follow the same procedures used for promotion reviews for tenure-line faculty.

The administrator must request and receive external review letters using the suggested

solicitation template (see below); deans or relevant unit administrators must approve referees. External referees must be sent the candidate's CV, at least a subset of materials that will be included in the eDossier documenting the candidate's performance in rank or other documents demonstrating the candidate's prominence in their field (that the candidate has chosen) and the unit's promotion criteria/expectations. All external referees receive the same materials, and schools should have standard expectations across each rank for the external review packet. All solicited letters received must be included in the dossier. Anonymous contributions to the dossier may not be considered in promotion reviews. Unsolicited letters of recommendation are of little value.

For promotion from the first rank and from the second rank, dossiers must include a minimum of six letters from external referees, at least three

from a list prepared by the candidate and at least three from a list prepared by the department (or school, center, or institute). Referees should be leaders in the candidate's field, ideally holding senior ranks (Professor; Senior Research Scientist; Research Professor), who hold an academic appointment at a peer institution or higher and who have no compromising relationships with the candidate (e.g., mentor, student, collaborator, co-author, former colleague, familial attachments, commercial ties). Some, but not all, of the external letters may be solicited from referees holding non-academic positions if they are leaders in their fields or organizations at a level comparable to senior faculty members. There may be exceptions to these rules, but any exceptions should be justified in the unit head's letter.

DOCUMENTATION OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Materials for review and their arrangement are specified in eDossier. Not all categories of documentation will apply to all candidates. The following are intended as suggestions to help faculty strengthen these areas of their dossier as appropriate. Candidates planning their careers and faculty and administrators assessing their achievements should consider the following:

Research/Creative Activity: *Considerations*

Candidate's Statement. A candidate's statement is not a restatement of their curriculum vitae, but rather a narrative overview of their research career—highlighting finished projects, current work, and future plans. Candidates should also discuss their research/creative collaborations and co-authorships, identify their specific role(s) within projects, and their contributions to grant activities. The candidate's prose should be accessible, striking a balance between communicating with experts in the field and faculty members who may not be familiar with their area of Research/Creative activity (e.g., candidates should clarify technical terms, spell out acronyms, and explain disciplinary conventions).

New Scholarly Communications. Reviewers at all levels should consider that important Research/Creative Activity may not necessarily appear in traditional disciplinary formats. Furthermore, new forms of digital scholarly communication (e-journals, moderated websites, blogs) continue to emerge. Peer reviewed publications are given greater weight than non-

peer-reviewed materials, although efforts in translational and public scholarship are also valued.

Candidates assume responsibility for providing evidence of their publication outlets' value.

Impact on Diverse Communities. In assessing the impact of Research/Creative Activity, reviewers may also want to consider the variety of diverse communities both within and beyond the academy, noting that “public scholarship” can expand the range of audiences to whom a scholar/artist may direct their research/creative activity. Candidates may want to describe how their Research/Creative Activity intersects with both scholarly and non-academic communities. Evidence of Research/Creative Activity should be targeted towards peer professional communities. However, evidence of “public scholarship” can supplement a candidate’s work.

Examples of “public scholarship” include panel/commission and other technical reports, policy white papers, and strategic plans for community/civic groups.

Collaborative Work. Candidates are expected to establish independent roles within their overall research program or creative activity and must describe this role in their promotion statements. The chair/dean/program director must solicit letters from collaborators and co-authors, attesting to the candidate’s autonomous contributions.

Defining Quality. Evaluations of research/creative activity can never be reduced to a simple metric; judgments about the quality of work, and its utility, impact and influence cannot be fully captured by the count of publications and citations or by a journal impact factor. Furthermore, important research and creative work that support the university’s mission does not necessarily result in publications. Faculty members and administrators must fully engage the totality of the candidate’s work and reach their own judgments about its worth.

Status of Publications. The candidate’s curriculum vitae and statement should clarify whether a manuscript is published (e.g., as a journal article or book), accepted for publication (irreversible decision), under review, or in preparation. Article and book manuscripts that are published and accepted for publication are given the greatest weight. A book manuscript “under contract” will be given most weight if it is complete and if an irreversible decision to publish has been made.

Published professional reviews are of great value in assessing a book or artistic event’s impact.

Service in Support of Research: *Considerations*

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. IU is actively committed to meaningfully promoting and recognizing diversity, equity, and inclusion before, during, and after the promotion process—a commitment that demands robust engagement from all faculty. Mentoring support should take into consideration each candidate’s needs. In their personal statements, all promotion candidates are encouraged to describe how they have taken advantage of campus resources and their contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion, together with their individual, programmatic, and institutional impacts.

Advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion goals occurs primarily through interpersonal relationships, guided by informed institutional policies. Minority faculty perform often-

hidden diversity services, including serving on diversity committees, mentoring students and faculty on diversity-related projects and issues, and educating others about equity. This particular area of service may result in unbalanced service loads for candidates. These efforts should be documented so that these important contributions are recognized.

How Much Service/Engagement? The amount of time spent on service is determined by the candidate's role and specific appointment; for research-rank faculty, service in support of research can contribute to Research Excellence. Administrators must make sure that service responsibilities are distributed fairly. Candidates for promotion to second and third ranks are expected to assume greater service responsibilities by taking on tasks that are vital for sustaining the academic community, including mentoring colleagues.

Community Outreach and Partnerships. Technical competence and professional skills are indispensable for coping with the complexities of contemporary society. Faculty members are encouraged to make service contributions to diverse communities outside the academy, from local neighborhood groups to national and international advisory panels.

Note: These guidelines are grounded in University and campus academic policies – and consistent with them -- but they do not supplant those policies.

APPENDICES

(eDossier Checklist, Sample Solicitation Letter for External Referees)

SAMPLE SOLICITATION LETTER FOR EXTERNAL REFEREES (initial contact)

Professor X is being considered for promotion to [assistant, associate, full, senior] [research scientist/scholar, research professor] in the Department of Y at Indiana University Bloomington. As part of our review procedures, we write to experts in the candidate's field to ask them for an independent judgment of the candidate's performance in rank.

Professor X is a candidate for promotion on the basis of research.

Your frank appraisal of the productivity, quality and impact of Professor X's research/creative activity would be greatly appreciated. If you have knowledge of their contributions to service/engagement in service of research, we would also value your evaluation of those activities.

[Required in all letters]: Your letter will be seen by faculty members serving in a promotion advisory capacity. The candidate may request access to the entire dossier at any time, and the University is legally compelled to comply.

[Required in all letters]: This link explains the changes in access to campus resources promotion candidates may have experienced during the pandemic:
<https://vpfaa.indiana.edu/doc/institutional-fact-sheet.pdf>

Professor X's curriculum vitae is enclosed for your consideration.

We would also like to know if you are personally acquainted with the candidate in ways that might compromise the objectivity of your assessment.

We value your frank and detailed judgments. If you agree to prepare an evaluation of Professor X, we shall send you their materials and our criteria and expectations for promotion.

Please let us know by DATE if you will be able to take on this task. Your letter would be due by DATE. Many thanks for considering this request.