

SAMPLE SOLICITATION LETTER FOR EXTERNAL REFEREES (initial contact)

Professor X is being considered for tenure [and/or promotion to associate professor/professor] in the Department of Y at Indiana University Bloomington. As part of our review procedures, we customarily write to experts in the candidate's field to ask them for an independent judgment of the candidate's scholarly contributions.

[*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 his/her contributions to teaching and service/engagement, we would also value your evaluation of those activities.

[*Teaching*: Your frank appraisal of the quality and impact of Professor X's contributions to teaching would be greatly appreciated. If you have knowledge of his/her contributions to research/creative activity and service/engagement, we would also value your evaluation of those activities.] [*Service/Engagement*: Your frank appraisal of the quality and impact of Professor X's professional service to academic and non-academic communities would be greatly appreciated. If you have knowledge of his/her contributions to research/creative activity and teaching, we would also value your evaluation of those activities.] [*Balanced Case*: Professor X is being considered for tenure/promotion on the basis of balanced strengths in research/creative activity, teaching and service/engagement, and we would appreciate your evaluation of the quality and impact of his/her performance in all three areas.]

Professor X's curriculum vitae is enclosed for your consideration. [*For tenure cases*:] Does the candidate's research/creative activity [or other performance area(s)] represent the work of a person who has the potential to achieve a position of leadership in a substantial field of scholarly endeavor? Would Professor X be granted tenure at your university?

[*For promotion to full*:] Does the candidate's research/creative activity [or other performance area(s)] represent the work of a person who has achieved a position of leadership in a substantial field of scholarly endeavor? Would Professor X be promoted to full professor at your university?

At Indiana University Bloomington, the criteria for promotion and tenure are the same for all faculty regardless of length of service during the probationary period. Time in rank beyond six years should not be considered as additional time nor should it be considered as relevant when evaluating candidates for promotion and tenure. Recognizing the disruption to faculty scholarly, instructional, and service activities from the COVID-19 pandemic, Indiana University Bloomington allowed all candidates for tenure the option to extend their tenure clock by one year. In addition, candidates for tenure may have received additional extensions of the tenure clock because of other types of interruption to their work.

[Required in all letters]: This link explains the changes in access to campus resources candidates may have experienced during the pandemic:

<https://vpfaa.indiana.edu/doc/institutional-fact-sheet.pdf>

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

[*This paragraph is obligatory!*] Your letter will be seen by faculty members serving in a tenure [and/or promotion] advisory capacity. The candidate may request access to the entire dossier at any time, and the University is legally compelled to comply.

We value highly your frank and detailed judgments. If you agree to prepare an evaluation of Professor X, we shall send you his/her materials and our criteria and expectations for tenure [and/or 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.