Sample Letter to External Evaluator for Promotion to Teaching Professor

[date]

Re: Request for evaluation of non-tenure track faculty promotion

Dear [evaluator's name],

We are considering [specialized faculty member's name] for possible promotion to the rank of Teaching Professor in the [department name]. Letters of evaluation from at least three scholars or professional specialists outside the university are required for each nominee. Therefore, it would be most helpful to have your independent evaluation of [specialized faculty member's name].

At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, non-tenure system faculty position (referred to as "specialized faculty" at Illinois) included Teaching, Clinical and Research Professors (Assistant, Associate and Full). We do not require that specialized faculty members have national reputations, rather we evaluate whether they have satisfied the campus, college and unit promotion criteria and performance expectations. Specialized faculty members make substantial contributions to our research, teaching and service missions, but their scope of work is more specific than their tenure-system peers and the performance expectations are different. At the campus level, the expectation is that Teaching Professors will be making contributions to teaching and pedagogy at the college and campus levels, including making advancements in teaching and learning in the discipline that leads to innovative strategies and marked course improvement. At the level of Teaching Professor, the expectation is that the individual is making broader contributions to pedagogy, for example, by sharing creative and scholarly work at conferences and in publications, publishing textbooks in reputable presses, securing competitive internal or external grants to develop curriculum or pedagogy, and effective mentoring of instructors, lecturers, and graduate assistants. Specific performance expectations and promotion criteria are set forth in the [insert specialized faculty member's name's] job description (attached) [alternatively:"in the statement of the individual's job duties (attached)"]. The [departmental and college or departmental, school and college or school/college] promotion criteria are:

- [insert bulleted list of criteria from each applicable level]

Samples of [faculty member's name] publications and Biodata form are attached. Our policy states that the criteria for promotion of specialized faculty at Illinois are the same regardless of length of service.

The policy of the University of Illinois is to hold in confidence all letters of evaluation from persons outside the institution. Only the committees and administrative officers directly responsible for the decision of concern here will have access to your letter. It will not be provided to the person on whom you comment unless we are required specifically and legally to do so.

Because your evaluation will provide essential input in our review and because the entire review process is a lengthy one, I would appreciate receiving your comments at your earliest convenience and by [date]. If you will be unable to complete your evaluation by this date, please let me know immediately. Please email your letter to [name] at [email] and follow up with a hard copy to the following address;

[name and mailing address]

Thank you for your contribution to this important process.

Sincerely,

[department head name]

Enclosures