

Sample letter to solicit external review (tenure, tenure and promotion, promotion to full):

Dear (Name):

Lehigh University is in the process of considering (name of faculty member) for (tenure and/or promotion). The university is committed to tenuring and promoting only those candidates whose excellence in their performance as teachers and scholars is well documented and who show clear promise of continued contributions of the highest quality and productivity. A key indicator of excellence in research and scholarship is testimony of outstanding members of the discipline. As such, I am writing to ask whether you would be willing to serve as an evaluator of the scholarly achievements of (name of faculty member).

(Paragraph including background information and accomplishments of candidate)

For your convenience, a copy of (name's) CV is enclosed. Please let us know by (date) if you will be able to provide us with your professional opinion of the scholarship of (name of faculty member). We will then mail you (his/her) recent scholarly materials; if there are publications listed on the CV that you are particularly interested in receiving, please let me know so that we can provide them to you. We would need to receive your evaluation by (date).

If you agree to provide an evaluation, we would be seeking an assessment of (name's) overall professional standing and promise relative to other individuals in the field. We request your evaluation of the impact and significance of their scholarship to date, as well as an assessment of their promise of continued contributions of the highest quality and productivity. This evaluation will be shared with the members of the department, the college tenure and promotion committee, the dean, and provost as part of the normal tenure and/or promotion review process. It is Lehigh University's general policy to maintain the confidentiality of evaluations of tenure and promotion candidates, except of course when disclosure is mandated by applicable legal requirements.

[this paragraph only for tenure cases]

At Lehigh, the regular period prior to tenure review is five years. Some faculty members receive tenure clock extensions for up to a maximum of two additional years, or potentially longer in the case of extensions due to the pandemic. According to Lehigh's policy, tenure candidates who receive extensions must be evaluated with the same tenure criteria as candidates who do not receive extensions.

Please note that Lehigh University's Rules and Procedures of the Faculty state explicitly that **“Informal or other communications with external evaluators by other means with the intention of predetermining or influencing the content of the reviews are entirely inappropriate.”** Because this applies to the candidate and all Lehigh University administrators and faculty members participating in the internal review, please allow me to be your sole point of contact on this matter. Please let me know if you have already had any communications with either the candidate or any other individual from Lehigh University about this tenure or promotion case. If you do have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the phone number or e-mail address above. You may send your evaluation on letterhead with your signature either via surface mail or electronically as an attachment to an email.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. We very much appreciate your assistance.