# Effective October 1, 2024

# REVISED LETTER TO EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

**Promotion/Appointment to Associate Professor**

**(and—with appropriate modifications—for promotion/appointment to Professor)**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

1st ¶ for promotions:

Professor\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, who is currently an (Assistant/Associate Professor) at this University, is being considered for promotion to the rank of (Associate Professor with tenure/Professor). We would very much appreciate your help in evaluating this candidate's scholarly achievements.

## OR

1st ¶ for new appointments:

Professor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, is being considered for appointment to the rank of (Associate Professor with tenure/Professor). We would very much appreciate your help in evaluating this candidate's scholarly achievements.

The University expects that those ***promoted/appointed*** to the rank of (Associate Professor/Professor) will be excellent teachers and mature scholars whose achievements have won exceptional recognitionboth by scholars outside the University and by the candidate's faculty colleagues and whose presence on the faculty enhances the prestige of the University. **Promotion/Appointment** to this rank is not a recognition of length of service, but rather of outstanding scholarship and excellent teaching. In making your evaluation, which should focus on the achievements of the candidate *(since being promoted to tenured rank*), it would be helpful if you would:

1. evaluate the impact and trajectory of the candidate's scholarly achievements and their importance within the general discipline;

2. comment on the candidate's most distinctive contributions to their discipline;

3. evaluate the candidate's likelihood of achieving a similar faculty position and rank at the leading institutions in this discipline with which you are familiar;

4. provide any information or insight that you have on the candidate’s skill and effectiveness as a teacher, mentor, and communicator;

5. provide any additional insights that may be helpful in determining whether or not to recommend **promotion/appointment** to (Associate Professor/Professor), including intellectual and leadership contributions through professional service.

We are including Professor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 's curriculum vitae and [***insert additional material as appropriate, e.g., statement on research and teaching, manuscript, pandemic impact statement***].

[FEBRUARY 2021 ADDITION]

¶ if pandemic impact statement is included:

The University added a pandemic impact statement to its review process in spring 2021. When making your evaluation, the University asks that you consider the short- and long-term impact of the pandemic on working conditions, productivity, and career trajectory, as documented in Professor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s pandemic impact statement. Consistent with the University’s definition of excellence, please focus on identifying the quality of scholarly contributions more than the quantity.

[NOVEMBER 2020 ADDITION]

¶ for promotion of those with a COVID-19 extension:

                In recognition of the implications of COVID-19 for faculty life and work, the University in fall 2020 automatically extended the probationary period by one year for all faculty who are assistant professors and associate professors without tenure in the tenure, clinician-educator, and research tracks, including Professor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It is important to note that we evaluate the productivity of each candidate who has been granted an extension as if they had been in probationary status for the normal duration.

¶ for promotion of those with a COVID-19 extension and another extension:

                In recognition of the implications of COVID-19 for faculty life and work, the University in fall 2020 automatically extended the probationary period by one year for all faculty who are assistant professors and associate professors without tenure in the tenure, clinician-educator, and research tracks, including Professor. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Professor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was also granted an additional extension to the mandatory review period in keeping with the University’s policies. It is important to note that we evaluate the productivity of each candidate who has been granted an extension as if they had been in probationary status for the normal duration.

¶ for promotion of those with only a non-COVID extension:

                Professor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has been granted an extension to the mandatory review period in keeping with the University’s policies. It is important to note that we evaluate the productivity of each candidate who has been granted an extension as if they had been in probationary status for the normal duration.

It is the policy of the University of Pennsylvania that external letters be held in confidence. However, in the event of litigation or a governmental investigation, the candidate or others may gain access to the information contained in these letters.

We would appreciate receiving your evaluation by \_\_\_***date***\_\_\_, since the review process requires all materials to be in hand as early as possible in the academic year. We are very grateful for your time and your insight.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Chair

**NOTE**: It is important that the letter sent to the approved list of reviewers be the same for each reviewer and include the above six points. The exact wording may be modified for different disciplines. A copy of the letter that is actually used must be included with the dossier submitted to the Dean.

\* Departments that previously provided honoraria for external reviewers should add: “Changes in the law make it impossible for us to promise this level of confidentiality if we provide honoraria or other payment for completing the review. We have therefore been required to discontinue our previous policy of providing modest honoraria.”