

SPH External Reviewer Letter of Solicitation Templates

The University of Washington requires confidential external evaluations as part of all promotion and tenure cases. Academic Personnel & Faculty (APF) provides standard letter of solicitation templates for departments to use when requesting these reviews.

To better reflect the expectations, criteria, and context of the School of Public Health (SPH), the SPH Faculty Council and Chairs developed a set of solicitation letter templates as an additional resource to departments. These templates are based on the required UW guidance while incorporating SPH-specific language to help reviewers provide the most relevant and useful evaluations. Departments may choose to use these SPH templates in place of the standard APF versions when soliciting external review letters for SPH promotion and tenure cases or continue using the APF versions.

Departments that prefer the UW-wide templates or want to review the underlying guidance can refer to the APF letter of solicitation resources: [UW Academic Personnel & Faculty Letter of Solicitation guidance and templates](#).

Research, Tenure, & WOT tracks

Initial solicitation letter

TO: Reviewer

FROM: Department Chair

CC: AHR Manager

Dear [REVIEWER],

The Department of [DEPARTMENT] at the University of Washington, School of Public Health, is considering the promotion of [CANDIDATE (hyperlinked)]. [CANDIDATE] currently holds the rank of [CURRENT RANK], [TRACK] and we are considering [his/her] promotion to [RANK], [TRACK] in the coming year. We are seeking your input as an arm's length external reviewer. Thus, I am writing to ask if you could please review [CANDIDATE]'s promotion case materials and write a letter of evaluation. The opinions of outside reviewers are a necessary and valued part of the University of Washington's promotion review process. Your letter will be used in our Department, School and University review.

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If you are available to provide a review, we would like to have your evaluation letter back by **[DUE DATE]**. Please email your response to me and we will follow up with a formal request with additional instructions and provide access to the promotion materials through our promotion review system, Interfolio.

In order to identify any potential conflicts of interest, I ask that you please complete the attached External Referee Form in advance and send it back to [AHR Contact] with your emailed response.

Thank you very much for considering this request. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

[CHAIR SIGNATURE BLOCK]

Comprehensive solicitation letter emailed thorough Interfolio

Dear [REVIEWER],

I am writing to ask you to evaluate [CANDIDATE] who is being considered for promotion to the rank of [RANK], [TRACK] in the Department of [DEPARTMENT] at the University of Washington. Your letter will be used in the review process for our Department, School, and University. The opinions of outside reviewers are a necessary and valued part of the University of Washington's promotion review process. Your letter will help us to document the external evaluation of [CANDIDATE].

To assist you with this evaluation, please find enclosed [CANDIDATE]'s curriculum vitae, self-assessment, noteworthy publications, and other materials provided for your review. Promotion to the rank of [RANK] requires a record of substantial scholarly success as evidenced by accomplishments in research and teaching with national or international recognition in the candidate's discipline.

We are interested in your assessment of [CANDIDATE]'s contributions and achievements in [DEPARTMENT] in the domains of scholarship (including research), teaching, and service. Your evaluation should concentrate on the area or areas in which you feel most qualified to render an opinion, keeping in mind the relevant criteria. The more specific and evaluative your letter can be, the more helpful it will be for our deliberations. In particular, we would appreciate your assessment of the quality and importance of [CANDIDATE]'s contributions and their impact on their field, broadly defined. Your letter, which we need to have no later than _____ should contain the following information:

- How well and in which capacity you know the candidate?
- Your view of the significance, independence, influence and promise of the candidate's scholarship. Please include a description of the potential or actual impact of the candidate's scholarly contributions on the discipline and related fields.
- The degree to which the candidate has a national/international reputation.

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- Some comparison of the candidate's accomplishments with others at a similar career stage in the same or related fields.
- Any relevant observations about the candidate's teaching/mentorship, service, and leadership that you feel are useful for our deliberations.

Finally, if you need additional guidance, detailed criteria for promotion to [RANK] can be found in our School of Public Health [Academic Affairs Handbook](#). Specific expectations for promotion to Associate Professor are in the Expectations for Effectiveness table, Table 2, starting on page 43. The discussion of the overall holistic assessment approach (assessing productivity, quality, impact, sustainability) to the review is in Section 6.2: *Overall Assessment of Faculty Effectiveness in the Promotion Review*, starting on page 24.

Under the University of Washington policy, your letter, as part of the official personnel file, will be held in confidence. While not given access to it, the candidate and/or members of the public may be, upon formal request in accordance with the Washington State Public Records law, provided with excerpts of all such confidential evaluations in the candidate's file without disclosure of the identifications of the evaluators.

Interpretations by the courts of the Washington State Public Disclosure law have held that external letters of evaluation sought in the normal course of promotion reviews are exempt from disclosure. The University treats these letters as internal confidential documents and does not release them to the candidate nor others outside of faculty and administrators directly involved in the promotion decision process. We commit to retain your evaluation in such confidence, except to the extent we are required to disclose its contents by adjudication or court order, and even then, we will make every effort to protect your personal identity.

STATEMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS IN CLOCK-MANAGED RANKS ONLY: Please note that promotion and/or tenure clocks can differ for candidates for a number of reasons including, for example, family or sick leaves. Our expectations of a candidate for promotion/tenure do not change as a result, only the time it takes to achieve them. As a standard matter, all reviewers should be aware that any candidate's career trajectory may include periods during which the candidate has been approved to be off the clock in terms of expected progress towards promotion and/or tenure.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to respond to this request and for your important contribution to the University of Washington. I truly appreciate your help with this review. If you need further information about this request, please contact _____ at _____.

Sincerely,

[CHAIR SIGNATURE BLOCK]

Teaching track

Initial solicitation letter

TO: Reviewer

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SPH Human Resources*

FROM: Department Chair

CC: AHR Manager

Dear [REVIEWER],

The Department of [DEPARTMENT] at the University of Washington, School of Public Health, is considering the promotion of [CANDIDATE (hyperlinked)]. [CANDIDATE] currently holds the rank of [CURRENT RANK], [TRACK] and we are considering [his/her] promotion to [RANK], [TRACK] in the coming year. We are seeking your input as an arm's length external reviewer. Thus, I am writing to ask if you could please review [CANDIDATE]'s promotion packet and write a letter of evaluation. The opinions of outside reviewers are a necessary and valued part of the University of Washington's promotion review process. Your letter will be used in our Department, School and University review.

If you are available to provide a review, we would like to have your evaluation letter back by **[DUE DATE]**. Please email your response to me and we will follow up with a formal request with additional instructions and provide access to the promotion materials through our promotion review system, Interfolio.

INCLUDE FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWERS WHO ARE UW FACULTY: As stated on the UW Academic Human Resources [FAQ page for teaching faculty](#), external letters from UW faculty who are external to the candidate's academic unit are acceptable. I hope you are able to do this on our behalf.

In order to identify any potential conflicts of interest, I ask that you please complete the attached External Referee Form in advance and send it back to [AHR Contact] with your emailed response.

Thank you very much for considering this request. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

[CHAIR SIGNATURE BLOCK]

Comprehensive solicitation letter emailed thorough Interfolio

Dear [REVIEWER],

I am writing to ask you to evaluate [CANDIDATE] who is being considered for promotion to the rank of [RANK], [TRACK] in the Department of [DEPARTMENT] at the University of Washington. Your letter will be used in the review process for our Department, School, and University. The opinions of outside reviewers are a necessary and valued part of the University of Washington's promotion review process. Your letter will help us to document the external evaluation of [CANDIDATE].

To assist you with this evaluation, please find enclosed [CANDIDATE]'s curriculum vitae, self-assessment, and other materials provided for your review. Teaching track faculty at the University of Washington are required to engage in scholarship and may choose to demonstrate this through

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publication. However, publications and external funding are not a requirement per the Faculty Code. Rather scholarship may be evidenced through other means such as, but not limited to, introduction of new knowledge or methods into course content, development of new courses, curricula, or course materials; and pedagogical innovation or contributions to the scholarship of teaching and learning.

We are interested in your assessment of [CANDIDATE]'s contributions and achievements in [DEPARTMENT] in the domains of scholarship, teaching, and service. Your evaluation should concentrate on the area or areas in which you feel most qualified to render an opinion, keeping in mind the relevant criteria. The more specific and evaluative your letter can be, the more helpful it will be for our deliberations. Your letter, which we need to have no later than _____ should contain the following information:

- How well and in which capacity you know the candidate?
- Your view of the effectiveness of the candidate's teaching as manifested through their teaching activities and products.
- Your view of the significance and promise of the candidate's scholarship. Please keep in mind that teaching activities are weighed more heavily than scholarship in the teaching track, and the School of Public Health values scholarly activity in all three of research, practice, and pedagogy.
- Some comparison of the candidate's accomplishments with others at a similar career stage in the same or related fields.
- Any relevant observations about the candidate's service, and leadership that you feel are useful for our deliberations.
- Finally, if you need additional guidance, detailed criteria for promotion to [RANK] can be found in our School of Public Health Academic Affairs Handbook. Specific expectations for promotion to Associate Professor are in the Expectations for Effectiveness table, Table 2, starting on page 43. The discussion of the overall holistic assessment approach (assessing productivity, quality, impact, sustainability) to the review is in Section 6.2: *Overall Assessment of Faculty Effectiveness in the Promotion Review*, starting on page 24.

Because I would like to include a statement about the referees when I forward the letters to our Dean, I would appreciate it if you could return a copy of your CV along with your letter and completed External Referee form.

Under University of Washington policy your letter, as part of the official personnel file, will be held in confidence. While not given access to it, the candidate and/or members of the public may be, upon formal request in accordance with the Washington State Public Records law, provided with excerpts of all such confidential evaluations in the candidate's file without disclosure of the identifications of the evaluators.

Interpretations by the courts of the Washington State Public Disclosure law have held that external letters of evaluation sought in the normal course of promotion reviews are exempt from disclosure. The University treats these letters as internal confidential documents and does not release them to the candidate nor others outside of faculty and administrators directly involved in the promotion decision process. We commit to retain your evaluation in such confidence, except to the extent we are required

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to disclose its contents by adjudication or court order, and even then, we will make every effort to protect your personal identity.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to respond to this request and for your important contribution to the University of Washington. I truly appreciate your help with this review. If you need further information about this request, please contact _____ at _____.

Sincerely,

[CHAIR SIGNATURE BLOCK]

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