**\*\*\*\*THIS IS A SAMPLE LETTER, PLEASE EDIT AS NECESSARY. MAKE SURE YOU REVIEW FACULTY OFFER LETTERS TO ENSURE THE MESSAGE AND CRITERIA ALIGN WITH THEIR APPOINTMENT. EXTERNAL REVIEWS MUST CONDUCT A REVIEW BASED ON THE APPROPRIATE INFORMATION. \*\*\*\***

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Sample Letter to Send to External Reviewers:

September 9, 20XX

Dear Dr. [name],

Dr. [name], an Associate Professor (Assistant Professor) of [department] at West Virginia University is being considered for promotion to the rank of [Professor or is being considered for tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor] in the [track]. As part of our procedure for assessing the quality of Dr.[name]’s scholarly activity, we seek the judgment of scholars in his/her area of specialization. We are asking that you provide an objective evaluation of his/her contributions to the field and their ability as a researcher.

To achieve promotion and/or tenure faculty members are expected to demonstrate significant contributions in research. According to university guidelines, the term “significant contributions” in research means “performance in research which meets or exceeds that of peers recently achieving similar promotion and/or tenure who are respected for their contributions in research at peer research universities.” The standard to be used in assessing Dr. [name]’s work is the quality of the work and the impact or potential impact on the field. In addition, I ask that you comment on whether the quality of work is comparable to or better than that of persons recently promoted and tenured at your university or at other peer universities.

**(The following two paragraphs are to be included in letters for promotion to professor):**

According to the guidelines for faculty evaluation and promotion in the School of Medicine at West Virginia University, “The primary consideration for promotion to professor is national/international recognition of the candidate” … “Examples of activities that provide evidence of such national/international recognition include but are not limited to serving on editorial boards, grant study sections, specialty boards, national advisory committees, election to office in national or international professional academic organizations and invitations to present seminars at other institutions.”

For promotion to professor, we place special weight on work completed in the most recent five or six year period. A long-term Associate Professor will not be penalized for years of modest productivity, as long as more recent productivity has been achieved and maintained for a reasonable period of time. It is not uncommon for an external reviewer to consider one’s total career for promotion to the highest rank. However, while not discounting work done since the last promotion, we also consider whether the candidate has demonstrated a “continuous program” of scholarship, normally as demonstrated by their publication record.

If Dr. [name] requests, he/she will be shown a copy of the substance of your evaluation, with all information identifying you, as the evaluator, removed. To facilitate this process, we ask that this evaluation be provided on plain paper (not letterhead) with only your signature on the last page, much as you might provide a review of a grant proposal or journal publication. Your full review letter and evaluation will be shared with the committees and individuals involved in the review process. Following the conclusion of the review, all copies of your letter will be kept in a sealed file in the dean’s office and will not be used again.

Enclosed is a sample of Dr.[name]’s scholarly work and his/her curriculum vitae. Also enclosed is a brochure describing the University and School of Medicine guidelines and procedures for external review in the faculty evaluation, promotion and tenure process.

Please email your evaluation to Chancellor and Executive, Clay B. Marsh, MD, c/o SOMFacultyEvaluation@hsc.wvu.edu by November 1, 2022. If you are unable to provide an evaluation of Dr. XXXXXX work, please contact me immediately at (304) 293-XXXX.

We recognize that writing recommendations of this type can be extremely time consuming, and therefore, we are most grateful for your assistance. Your comments will be an important component of our evaluation process.

Sincerely,

Chair, Department of XXXXXXXXXX

Cc: Dean, School of Medicine

Enclosures

Criteria table (when applicable - from the SOM P&T Guidelines)

CV

Publications

Teaching evaluations