**Sample Letter Requesting External References for**

**Promotion to Professor or Tenure as Professor**

**(Modify as Appropriate)**

(Date)

(Name)

(Department)

(University/Business)

(Street)

(City, State Zip)

Dear Dr. (Name):

Dr. (Name), currently an (Associate/Professor) of (Discipline) at Michigan Technological University, is being considered for (promotion to/tenure at the rank of) Professor. To aid us in the review process, I would be grateful if you would provide a written evaluation of Dr. (Name).

*The following paragraph should be edited to accurately reflect the faculty members’ position expectations and this statement deleted before sending:*

During their time as an associate professor at Michigan Technological University, Dr. (Name) has had, on average, a 2-course per semester teaching load and has been expected to build a body of scholarly activities that advance knowledge, theory, and/or applications. Please see the attachment for detailed expectations (*the attachment should include language from the unit charter that is relevant to the current case*).

Although teaching effectiveness is evaluated internally by colleagues of Dr. (Name) at Michigan Tech, the University’s promotion policy places significant emphasis on external reviews by leading scholars who comment on each candidate’s achievements to date and potential for future success in the areas of research and/or scholarly activity and professional service.

Evidence of scholarly activity includes publications, presentations, exhibitions, performances, success at obtaining and managing external funding, obtaining patents, submitting invention disclosures, etc. In addition to scholarship in traditional academic disciplines, Michigan Tech values interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary scholarship, innovation and commercialization, and research and scholarship that examines and furthers knowledge and understanding related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The university also values collaboration with other colleagues and with students whom the faculty member is supervising in the conduct of their scholarly work.

Evidence of professional service may be broadly defined and includes activities such as leadership in professional societies (e.g., serving as an officer of a society, serving on a society’s governing board, serving on committees, serving on review panels, organizing conferences, workshops and symposia) and contributions to the ongoing development of new knowledge and ideas (e.g., reviewing papers, editing journals, serving as an editor, etc.) and outreach in a professional capacity to society at large.

Your letter will be most useful if you are able to address each of the following points. It is in these areas that your evaluation is most desired, although any additional information pertinent to the review would also be appreciated. We do not expect that you will have first-hand knowledge of Dr. (Name)’s teaching abilities, and, therefore as stated above, do not expect any comments in this regard. You are, however, invited to comment on this aspect if you are familiar with Dr. (Name’s) mentoring of graduate students or other scholars in your broader research field.

* Nature of your own personal or professional connections with Dr. (Name), if any, and level of your familiarity with their work.
* Quality of Dr. (Name’s) research and/or scholarly achievements to date.
* Degree to which Dr. (Name’s) has achieved national and/or international recognition for their research and/or scholarly accomplishments.
* Dr. (Name’s) potential for future success in research and/or scholarly endeavors (publications, graduate education, external funding, etc.) in the future.
* Importance of Dr. (Name’s) professional service to date.
* Dr. (Name’s) contributions as a leader in their field.
* Other points that you consider relevant to our assessment of the candidate’s work.

To assist you in this process, we have included Dr. (Name’s) complete curriculum vitae as well as copies of some selected publications. Dr. (Name’s) primary professional and research/scholarly contributions have dealt with (areas of expertise) as (it/they) relate(s) to (Department[s]).

I recognize and appreciate the time you must take from your busy schedule to help us with this important task, which we wish to complete by [insert due date].

Sincerely,

(Department Chair) (Rank and Title) (Department)

Enclosures