**Sample Letter Requesting External References for**

**Promotion to Associate Professor w/ Tenure or Tenure**

**at Associate Professor Level**

**[modify/update information in brackets as appropriate]**

[Date]

[Name]

[Department]

[University/Business]

[Street]

[City, State Zip)]

Dear Dr. [Name]:

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

Established as a public university in 1885 to train mining engineers to better operate local copper mines, Michigan Technological University has grown to nearly 500 faculty with approximately 7,500 students from across the world and just under $110M in research expenditures. Due to this growth and exemplary work in research, Michigan Tech was recently classified as an R1 institution by Carnegie.

*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 a focus on research that equates to ~XX% of their workload with the balance committed to teaching and service activities [*attach documentation, such as specific information from charter if needed]*. 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 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.).

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, including as they relate to the areas that are valued by Michigan Tech as outlined above.
* Degree to which Dr. [Name’s] has made significant progress toward achieving national and/or international recognition for their research and scholarly accomplishments.
* Dr. [Name’s] potential for future success in research and/or scholarly endeavors (publications, graduate education, external funding, etc.).
* Importance of Dr. [Name’s] professional service to date.
* Dr. [Name’s] potential as a future leader in their field.
* Other points that you consider relevant to our assessment of the candidate’s work.

We ask that in your evaluation of the candidate’s work at Michigan Tech, you consider the complete body of work and not the time over which it was completed. At Michigan Tech, we provide faculty with flexibility regarding when they seek tenure. All faculty have the opportunity to request early tenure consideration. The University is also flexible in granting tenure clock extensions for a variety of personal and professional situations.

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]. Please send your letter and short CV to my attention at the following address.

Department/College Name

Michigan Technological University

1400 Townsend Drive

Houghton, MI 49931

Sincerely,

[Department Chair Name], [Rank and Title]

[Department]

Enclosures