Public Engagement Research Option (PERO) External Evaluators Outside of Academia

## Sample Letters and Evaluation Form for Promotion to Associate Professor

In this attachment we offer **two options** for letters from which you can choose to generate a personalized invitation to experts outside of academia to conduct an evaluation of the faculty candidate’s dossier. Please choose the sample letter that best suits the experience and background of the external evaluator from outside academia whom you identified to conduct a review of the faculty candidate’s dossier:

1. Option 1 is written for experts outside of academia who may have limited experience with conducting external evaluation of faculty dossiers for promotion and tenure. An evaluation form accompanies the cover letter to provide potential evaluators with a more structured format to assist them in crafting and organizing their review. Option 1 may be more useful to evaluators who are unfamiliar with the expectations and processes for conducting external evaluations in higher education.
2. Option 2 is written for experts outside of academia who may have background and experience conducting external evaluations for the purpose of promotion and tenure in higher education. The letter includes guiding questions to assist evaluators with their review.

While the guiding questions provided in the evaluation form (Option 1) and letter (Option 2) are applicable to most candidates choosing PERO, units may modify the questions, as necessary. Please consult with your School Director, Dean, or Office of the Provost for assistance in adapting these guiding questions.

To individualize the invitation to external evaluators, please fill in the items that are [CAPITALIZED and HIGHLIGHTED] within the sample letters (Option 1 [Part A] or Option 2) and evaluation form (Option 1 [Part b]).

### Option 1 [Part A]. Public Engagement Research Option (PERO): Sample Letter for External Evaluators Outside of Academia (Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor)

[DATE]

Dear [EVALUATOR’S NAME],

We are considering [CANDIDATE] for a promotion to the rank of Associate Professor with indefinite tenure at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. This type of promotion requires evaluation by people outside the University who can comment on the significance of [CANDIDATE’S] research. Because of your expertise in [AREA], we would greatly value your participation in this process. This entails reviewing selected materials and completing the attached **evaluation form**. We anticipate that your participation in this process will take two to four hours of your time in total, including reviewing of materials and writing the letter.

If you do not feel you can be objective about [CANDIDATE] (e.g., because you have a personal relationship with them and/or they have provided assistance from which you personally have benefitted), please recuse yourself from writing an assessment. If you are unsure if the nature of your relationship with [CANDIDATE] poses a potential conflict, please contact me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your concerns.

Because your evaluation will provide essential input in our review and because the entire review process is a lengthy one, we would ask for your evaluation at your earliest convenience and no later than [DATE]. Please let me know at [EMAIL ADDRESS OR PREFERRED CONTACT] if you are interested in participating in this critical process and whether you will be able to complete an evaluation by [DATE]. We are appreciative of your consideration of this request as your perspective on [CANDIDATE’S] work would be invaluable to our overall assessment.

The policy of the University of Illinois is to hold in confidence all letters of evaluation from persons outside the University. Only the committees and administrative officers directly responsible for the decision of concern here will have access to your letter. It will not be provided to the person on whom you comment unless we are required specifically and legally to do so.

Please submit your completed evaluation form to [NAME] at [EMAIL].

Thank you for your contribution to this important process. If you have questions about this request or the review process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

[UNIT EXECUTIVE OFFICER NAME]

Enclosures:

* [CANDIDATE’S] Dossier – list all materials included.

### Option 1[Part B]. Public Engagement Research Option (PERO): Sample Evaluation Form for External Evaluators Outside of Academia (Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor)

#### University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

#### Public Engagement Research Option Evaluation Form

We request that you review [CANDIDATE’S] materials, which include [enumerate what is included in the dossier; this might contain the candidate’s CV, research statement, and selected publications, but is more likely to include other documents or products that demonstrate the candidate’s work; what is included should be decided in collaboration between the unit and candidate] and provide the information requested below in this evaluation form to the extent your expertise permits. Details and elaboration in your responses to the questions below will provide important assistance in evaluating [CANDIDATE] for promotion.

While your responses to the prompts in this evaluation form may be of any length, completed forms that are approximately three to four pages using single spacing with 12-point font, are generally most helpful. The boxes provided have no word limit so use each to the extent that it allows you to provide a concrete and detailed evaluation. Given our concern with the societal impact of [CANDIDATE’S] work on [TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.], **it is most constructive if you focus on the specific contribution of their work rather than their personal attributes.**

1. To put the information you provide in context, please indicate, the nature of any relationship you have with the candidate, as well as whether you have any conflicts that may compromise an objective assessment of the candidate’s work.
   1. If you do not feel you can be objective (e.g., because you have a personal relationship with [CANDIDATE] and/or they have provided assistance from which you personally have benefitted), please contact us as soon as possible to let us know that you are recusing yourself from participating in this process. In this situation, you do not need to complete the rest of this form.
2. What is your assessment of the impact and significance of [CANDIDATE’S] work on [TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.; this should be tailored to the candidate’s specific program of RESEARCH; be clear that you are referring to the candidate’s scholarly work] to date? We would particularly like to see concrete information demonstrating impact of this work from your perspective, which may include, but is not limited to, data and/or statistics that demonstrate the work’s effect and/or specific examples of how the work has influenced individuals, institutions, industries, or other entities.
3. How has [CANDIDATE’S] work on [TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.] been in collaboration with partners outside the University [e.g., ADD ONE OR TWO RELEVANT EXAMPLES] for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources? Indicate how effective [CANDIDATE] has been in collaborating with community partners in building and disseminating this work.
4. What is your assessment of the future promise of [CANDIDATE’S] work on [TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.]? Please discuss:
   1. (1) the extent to which you believe [CANDIDATE’S] work to date is likely to have a lasting impact and;
   2. (2) the potential for [CANDIDATE] to build on this work to pursue new research projects of significance.
5. Are there any other factors we should consider in evaluating [CANDIDATE’S] work on [TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.]?
6. Please provide the names of two or three other experts in your area that might be consulted about [CANDIDATE’S] accomplishments.

Name

Signature

Date

Organization/Affiliation

Address

**Submit the completed PERO Evaluation Form to [name] at [email].**

### Option 2. Public Engagement Research Option (PERO): Sample Letter for External Evaluators Outside of Academia *(Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor)*

[DATE]

Dear [EVALUATOR’S NAME],

We are considering [CANDIDATE] for a promotion to the rank of Associate Professor with indefinite tenure at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. This type of promotion requires evaluation by people outside the University who can comment on the significance of [CANDIDATE’S] research. Because of your expertise in [AREA], we would greatly value your participation in this process. This entails reviewing selected materials and providing an evaluation of [CANDIDATE]. We anticipate that your participation in this process will take two to four hours of your time in total, including reviewing of materials and writing the letter.

Because your evaluation will provide essential input in our review and because the entire review process is a lengthy one, we would ask for your evaluation at your earliest convenience and no later than [DATE]. Please let me know at [EMAIL ADDRESS OR PREFERRED CONTACT] if you are interested in participating in this critical process and whether you will be able to complete an evaluation by [DATE]. We are appreciative of your consideration of this request as your perspective on [CANDIDATE’S] work would be invaluable to our overall assessment.

To put the information you provide in context, please indicate at the start of your review letter, the nature of any relationship you have with [CANDIDATE], as well as whether you have any potential conflicts that may compromise your objective assessment of their work. If you do not feel you can be objective about [CANDIDATE] (e.g., because you have a personal relationship with them and/or they have provided assistance from which you personally have benefitted), please recuse yourself from participating in this review process. If you are unsure if the nature of your relationship with [CANDIDATE] poses a potential conflict, please contact me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your concerns.

##### Details

As part of our evaluation of [CANDIDATE], we would like to understand the impact of their work on [SPECIFY TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.] for [AREA]. We request you review [CANDIDATE’S] materials, which include [enumerate what is included in the dossier; this might contain the candidate’s CV, research statement, and selected publications, but is more likely to include other documents or products that demonstrate the candidate’s work; what is included should be decided in collaboration between the unit and candidate] and answer the following questions to the extent your expertise permits:

* What is your assessment of the impact and significance of [CANDIDATE’S] work on [TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.; this should be tailored to the candidate’s specific program of RESEARCH; be clear that you are referring to the candidate’s scholarly work] to date? We would particularly like to see concrete information demonstrating impact of this work from your perspective, which may include, but is not limited to, data and/or statistics that demonstrate the work’s effect and/or specific examples of how the work has influenced individuals, institutions, industries, or other entities.
* How has [CANDIDATE’S] work on [TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.] been in collaboration with partners outside the University [e.g., ADD ONE OR TWO RELEVANT EXAMPLES] for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources? Indicate how effective [CANDIDATE] has been in collaborating with community partners in building and disseminating this work.
* What is your assessment of the future promise of [CANDIDATE’S] work on [TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.]? Please discuss:
  + (1) the extent to which you believe [CANDIDATE’S] work to date is likely to have a lasting impact and
  + (2) the potential for [CANDIDATE] to build on this work to pursue new research projects of significance.
* Are there any other factors we should consider in evaluating [CANDIDATE’S] work on [TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.]?

Details and elaboration in your responses to these questions will provide important assistance in evaluating [CANDIDATE] for promotion. While your letter of evaluation may be of any length, letters of approximately two to three pages, single spaced with 12-point font, are generally most helpful. Given our concern with the societal impact of [CANDIDATE’S] work on [TOPIC, PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE, ETC.], **it is most constructive if you focus on the specific contribution of their work rather than their personal attributes.**

In addition to your own comments about this case, please provide the names of two or three other experts in your area that might be consulted about [CANDIDATE’S] accomplishments.

The policy of the University of Illinois is to hold in confidence all letters of evaluation from persons outside the University. Only the committees and administrative officers directly responsible for the decision of concern here will have access to your letter. It will not be provided to the person on whom you comment unless we are required specifically and legally to do so.

Please submit your completed evaluation form to [NAME] at [EMAIL].

Thank you for your contribution to this important process. If you have questions about this request or the review process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

[UNIT EXECUTIVE OFFICER NAME]

Enclosures:

* [CANDIDATE’S] Dossier – list all materials included.