

MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY OF
PROFESSORS

PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR
WORKSHOPS
SPRING 2026

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2026-2027 PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR REVIEW TIMELINES

Dates below are approximate

(personnel action deadlines are normally published annually in late May)

Due date set in the department (often June 1 st)	Candidate submits materials through APWS for external referees to review (personal statement, CV, publications)
October 15, 2026	Candidate submits remaining materials for the basic file through APWS to the dept. chair/head
December 15, 2026	Department Personnel Committee (DPC) must advance their recommendations to the dept. chair/head through APWS
February 1, 2027	Department Chair/Head must advance their recommendations to the CPC/SPC through APWS
April 1, 2027	College/School Personnel Committee must advance their recommendations to the Dean through APWS
June 1, 2027	Deans must advance their recommendations to the Provost through APWS
July 15, 2027 or within 45 days of receipt of Dean's recommendation, whichever is later	Provost must notify candidate of the decision

Unlike promotions associated with tenure which proceed from the campus to the President's office and Board of Trustees, final decisions for promotion to full professor rest on the campus with the Provost.

If successful, you can expect your promotion and raise (currently \$16,170) to become effective September 1st following your review.

Standards, Procedures & Rights of Faculty Members
Excerpts Relevant for Promotion to Full Professor taken from the MSP Collective
Bargaining Agreement and the Academic Personnel Policy "Redbook"

STANDARDS

Article 12.1 (MSP Contract)

High professional standards must be the basis for all personnel decisions. Personnel recommendations and decisions shall be made only after a review of all the qualifications and all the contributions of the individual in the areas of teaching; of research, creative or professional activity; and of service. Where applicable (see Articles 26.2.8 and 33.3) all three areas must be considered but the relative weight to be given each may be determined in the light of the duties of the faculty member.

With regard to promotion to full, relative weight will be given to each area may also be determined in light of the duties of the faculty member when considering if the following criteria have been met:

- a) The faculty member has achieved substantial recognition on and off campus from scholars or professionals in the faculty member's field and
- b) the candidate has shown significant potential for continued professional achievement.

Final decisions are made only after giving serious consideration to all the materials in the basic file as well as to the professional judgments of the Departmental Personnel Committee, which are and ought to be given great weight.

Section 4.6 (Redbook)

Recommendations for promotion shall be based on qualifications and contributions in the areas of teaching; of research, creative, or professional activity; and of service; and on the following considerations:

- c) For promotion to Professor, the faculty member must have a record of achievement sufficient to have gained substantial recognition on and off campus from scholars or professionals in his or her field; and must show significant potential for continuing professional achievement.

PROCEDURES

Article 12.4 (MSP Contract)

In reviews for major personnel actions for faculty--reappointments through the tenure decision year, promotion to the ranks of associate professor and professor and the award of tenure--the procedures listed below shall be followed:

- (a) Notice of a personnel review for reappointment or tenure shall be sent to the faculty member no later than the end of the third calendar week of the semester before the review is to be initiated.

- (b) As provided in Articles 24.4 and 24.5, a basic file shall be created for each major personnel action. This file shall be supplemented and reviewed at the departmental level and supplemented and reviewed at each successive level of recommendation or decision. The file shall contain the materials listed in Article 12.5.
- (c) No later than May 1st of the semester before a tenure review is to begin, the faculty member shall submit to the Department/Program Chair/Head any and all materials for inclusion in the basic file that the faculty member believes will be essential for external referees to review for adequate consideration of the case. Departments may establish a later date with the approval of their Dean. No later than the first week of the semester in which the review is to begin, the faculty member shall submit to the Department/Program Chair/Head any remaining materials for inclusion in the basic file that they believe will be essential for adequate consideration of the case. Failure to submit the basic tenure file by September 15th of the tenure review year without good cause shall, in cases involving review for tenure, result in issuance of a notice of non-reappointment and no review will be conducted.

In the promotion review process to Full Professor, the Department shall set the deadline for submission of all materials essential for external referees to allow adequate consideration of the case. Because a 4.2 (mini-tenure) review does not require external letters, the Department shall set an appropriate deadline for submission of the file.

- (d) For appointment at or promotion to the rank of associate professor and professor and for all tenure recommendations, the Chair/Head shall solicit outside letters of reference drawn from a list of scholars and/or professionals. If appropriate, the Chair/Head may also solicit internal (on-campus) letters from faculty colleagues. The list of both external and internal letter writers shall include those suggested by the faculty member but the list is not limited to those the faculty member suggests. The candidate has the right to waive access to internal and/or external letters. The confidentiality of such letters shall be governed by the University's Fair Information Practices Regulations, Trustee document T77-059 (see Appendix B). Prior to any solicitation of letters, the candidate shall be provided with a copy of the solicitation letter and the list(s) of proposed referees and shall be given an opportunity to comment on the appropriateness of both. External referees shall be provided with the candidate's CV, personal statement(s), and any other materials that the candidate wishes to include.
- (e) At any time subsequent to the recommendation of the Department Personnel Committee, the materials in the basic file, with the exception of letters of recommendation to which the faculty member has voluntarily waived access, shall be accessible to the faculty member upon request.

What Happens at the Departmental Level Section 6.4 (Redbook)

At the departmental level, the faculty, ... initiates the personnel action by a recommendation of the departmental personnel committee based on the evidence set forth in the basic file. The

Department Chairperson/Head reviews the department personnel committee recommendation and a) may endorse it; or b) after consultation, may formulate a contrary recommendation.

What's In the File When Forwarded from the Department Level

Article 12.5(a) -- MSP Contract

- (1) a table of contents
- (2) a current curriculum vitae (including a bibliography and/or comparable list of professional accomplishments)
- (3) copies and reviews of published works and/or evidence of other professional accomplishments
- (4) evidence of teaching effectiveness per Article 33
- (5) letters of reference solicited by the Chairperson/Head and a description of the professional standing of the writers of letters of reference from outside the University and a statement of any relationship the writer may have had to the faculty member
- (6) evaluations of service
- (7) the candidate's five most recent Annual Faculty Report and Evaluation (AFR) forms, including any contemporaneous comments by Personnel Committees, academic administrators and any responses from the candidate; if the candidate has been employed too recently to have undergone five annual reviews, the file should contain the number of AFRs that have been prepared, if any. AFR's will be added to the file by the Department Chair.
- (8) any and all materials submitted by the candidate
- (9) the recommendation and the numerical vote at the departmental level
- (10) the recommendation of the Chairperson/Head

What's Added to the File at Subsequent Levels

Article 12.5(b) -- MSP Contract

- (1) the recommendation and numerical vote of the Faculty, School or College Personnel Committee;
- (2) the recommendation(s) and decision of academic administrative officials;
- (3) other materials solicited, submitted or received during the review process, including, by way of example, additional materials submitted by the faculty member, additional letters of reference, responses to recommendations and/or additional information received in response to the invitations issued under Articles 12.12-12.15. When material is added to the basic file, the Departmental Personnel Committee (or other appropriate mechanism) and the Chair/Head shall have opportunity to respond as to its substance and appropriateness; unless it is protected by waiver, the faculty member shall also have this opportunity. If a faculty member has responded to a recommendation added to the file by the DPC, Chair, CPC, etc., no rejoinder to that response shall be permitted unless requested by a subsequent review step.
- (4) A copy of the table of contents and the recommendation from the Personnel Committee shall be available to the faculty member when the basic file is forwarded to the

Department Chair/Head.

- (5) A copy of the updated table of contents and the recommendation from the Department Chair/Head shall be available to the faculty member when the basic file is forwarded to the School or College Personnel Committee.
- (6) A copy of the updated table of contents and the recommendation of the School or College Personnel Committee shall be available to the faculty member and to the department when the basic file is forwarded to the Dean.
- (7) A copy of the updated table of contents and the recommendation of the Dean shall be available to the faculty member, the Chair of the School or College Personnel Committee and the department when the basic file is forwarded to the Provost or the Chancellor.
- (8) A copy of the updated table of contents and the decision of the Chancellor and/or the Provost shall be available to the faculty member, the Dean, the Chair of the School or College Personnel Committee and the department at the time the decision is made.

Contrary Recommendations

Article 12.13-12.15 – MSP Contract

- Prior to making a recommendation that may be contrary to either of the recommendations forwarded from the departmental level, the School or College Personnel Committee shall consult in writing with the department, and they may also ask the candidate to clarify an issue if necessary. Any response to such consultation must be in writing and must be added to the file.
- Prior to making a recommendation that may be contrary to either of the recommendations forwarded from the departmental level, the Dean shall in writing invite the department to provide additional information for the basic file or clarification of the recommendation, and they may also ask the candidate to clarify an issue if necessary. Any response to such invitation must be in writing and must be added to the file.
- Prior to making a recommendation or decision that may be contrary to either of the recommendations forwarded from the school or college level, the Chancellor or Provost shall in writing invite the Dean to provide additional information for the basic file or clarification of the recommendation, and they may also ask the candidate to clarify an issue if necessary. Any response to such invitation must be in writing and must be added to the file.

Decision Timeline

Article 12.17 – MSP Contract

A campus academic administrative official shall make their recommendation or decision within forty-five (45) calendar days of receipt or the deadline for receipt (whichever is later) of both the basic file, including all relevant Personnel Committee recommendations, and all additional information or clarifications subsequently requested by the academic administrative official from the department or college.

RIGHTS OF FACULTY MEMBERS IN PERSONNEL MATTERS

Section 5.1 (Redbook)

- a) For personnel, reviews, recommendations and decisions, the right and the responsibility to present all materials which he or she believes will be essential to an adequate consideration of the case, and the opportunity to supplement the original presentation with additional relevant information in the event that a review indicates shortcomings in the presentation.
- b) The right to have access to information on the current needs and long-range plans of the department, college or school, campus and University.
- c) The right to have extra-departmental service contributions considered at the department level as well as at other levels of review, recommendation and decision.
- d) The right to equitable treatment in personnel matters so as to ensure generally consistent recognition to departmental faculty members whose chosen field, overall professional development, period of service on the campus, and quality of contributions, all taken as a whole, are judged to be approximately equal.
- e) The right to discuss his or her professional progress and any personnel matter of concern with his or her Department Chairperson/Head; and, if such discussions prove unsatisfactory, with the Dean; and, if still unsatisfied, with the Provost.
- f) The right to be informed of the personnel recommendation made at the department, college or school, and campus level.
- g) The right to discuss reasons for a negative personnel decision at all appropriate administrative levels as specified in Section 6.10.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: When do I have the right to ask to be considered for promotion to full professor?

A: Technically, any time after tenure you think you are ready. Unlike promotion to associate professor, the timing for this review is flexible. Although some understand that the customary practice is to apply for consideration six years post tenure, there is no prescribed schedule. Readiness is key.

Former Provost Michael Malone wrote on this topic in his annual promotion and tenure memo saying that "it is a good practice for DPCs and heads/chairs to informally review all associate professors annually for their readiness for promotion to (full) professor. This review may lead to a decision, in consultation with the candidate, to proceed with the promotion case. If not, it provides an opportunity to mentor the candidate about the path toward promotion."

To be clear, there is no specified minimum time between tenure and promotion to (full) professor, and the decision to go forward is ultimately the candidate's. If you're being dissuaded from submitting your application based on timing and you feel your record deserves promotion, please come to the MSP office for confidential advice about how to move forward successfully.

Q: What are the standards and criteria for this review?

A: Standards and criteria can be found in the Academic Personnel Policy (aka "Redbook") in Sections 4 and 6, specific language of which is included elsewhere in this packet. Basically, they state that high standards must be the basis for all personnel reviews and that recommendations are to be made only after a full review of the candidate's contributions in the three areas of teaching, research and service.

The Redbook goes on to say that while all three areas must be considered, the relevant weight to be given to each may be determined in light of the duties of the faculty member. Please read Provost Emeritus McCarthy's comments on this in the annual memo on tenure and promotion (included in this packet). While it has been the norm on our campus to place the greatest emphasis on research/creative activity, the Redbook does allow more flexibility in assigning weight in light of the duties of the individual. Former Provost Malone joined Provost Emeritus McCarthy in urging faculty to consider a more expansive view of the accomplishments that would qualify an individual for elevation to this rank and the MSP and administration solidified this notion in negotiating contract language that states:

"With regard to promotion to full, relative weight given to each area may also be determined in light of the duties of the faculty member when considering if the following criteria have been met:

- a) The faculty member has achieved substantial recognition on and off campus from scholars or professionals in the faculty member's field and
- b) the candidate has shown significant potential for continued professional achievement."

Q: When should I have a conversation about coming up for promotion to full professor?

A: The Provost says it's good practice for DPCs and department chairs/heads to informally review all associate professors annually for their readiness for promotion to (full) professor starting in the fourth year after the award of tenure. Not all departments engage in this practice and promotions to full professor have been approved as early as a year or two after the award of tenure, so we suggest having conversations with your chair and trusted colleagues on a regular basis after you are tenured to check in on your progress. It's also a good idea to get elected to your PC during a year when you know a promotion to full case will be going forward. This allows you to see first-hand how your department evaluates a candidate for this promotion. Once you feel you are ready to come up, talk to your chair and ask others to look at your CV as well. Should you decide to go forward, you should talk about the process with your chair well in advance of your department's deadline for submitting materials for your external referees to review.

Q: What if I don't get the "green light" from my chair/colleagues but I still feel that I am ready to come up for promotion?

A: Come to MSP and talk with us about this! We have counseled many faculty members on this very topic. The advice you are receiving from your department may in fact be appropriate given your progress, but the reality is sometimes a faculty member may not have support for reasons that have nothing to do with whether or not they are ready. It's important to talk with us when you feel this may be the case and to realize that you can move ahead with the review even if your department is urging you to wait.

Q: How is this review different from tenure?

A: The standards are different (see Section 4.6 of the Redbook) and there is no requirement that you show convincing evidence of excellence in at least two, and strength in the third, in the three areas of teaching, research and service. Also, while recommendations are based on contributions in each of the three areas, there's no need for PCs to take a vote on each of them as is the case with tenure reviews. Furthermore, only tenure cases go to the Board of Trustees for approval. In promotion to full, the final decision is made on campus and resides with the Provost. Finally, and perhaps most important, this is not an up-or-out review. If you are not successful the first time you come up for promotion to full professor, you can be reviewed again.

Q: Must external letters writers be full professors? Are there requirements about the makeup of letter writers?

A: There is no requirement about the makeup of letter writers. What's important is that you choose individuals whose standing in the field/discipline is such that their assessment of your work will be given weight by the internal reviewers (DPC, Dept. Chair/Head, etc.). While rank is an indicator of the standing of a particular referee, it is not the only one and you may have good reason for choosing an individual at a lower rank or a professional in the field. Other indicators include the reviewer's accomplishments and recognition in the particular discipline or in the department or institution where they are employed. It is important for you to work with your department chair/head to be sure the descriptions

concerning the standing of the external reviewers are clear to those outside the department so they can understand the weight those individuals should be given in the assessment of your work.

It's also important to mention that there is absolutely no requirement to have international letter writers; this is an urban legend on this campus that in order to be promoted to full professor you must have an international reputation. The standards make clear that this is not the case. If you have done a lot of international work, then you may want to include them in your list, but we would want candidates to exercise caution given these reviewers tend to critique work and achievements more stringently than their American counterparts.

Q: What do you do if you receive a recommendation letter that is negative or includes misinformation or items you disagree with?

A: The first thing you do is call MSP (545-2206, mSP@umass.edu). We will be happy to look over any recommendation letter and talk with you about an appropriate response (if warranted). You do have the absolute right to respond to any recommendation letter concerning your review and have it added to your file going forward. APWS builds in 5 days for you to upload a response should you wish to do so. MSP is happy to not only advise about and help construct your response, but we can also request that the process be delayed if necessary to allow time for your comments to be added before the next level begins its review.

Q: What other rights do I have with regard to this review?

A: In addition to the rights articulated in Section 5.1 of the Redbook, you also have the right to:

- make the choice whether or not to waive access to internal and/or external letters of evaluation solicited in connection with your review. It's important to note that this waiver applies only to letters directly and individually solicited, and not to letters submitted in response to a general announcement that you are undergoing a personnel review.

Beware of clever maneuvers to bypass this rule. MSP has become aware of some administrators who send out announcements to groups of people instructing them that if they wish to send a letter for the candidate's review that they must first respond to the general call so the letter can then be "individually solicited". They go on to say that the MSP contract will not consider the letter confidential unless they follow this process. **THIS IS A VIOLATION OF THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT** and if you encounter something like this, please be in touch with us.

- be provided with a copy of the letter to be sent to outside reviewers BEFORE it goes out along with the list of proposed referees in order to have the ability to comment on the appropriateness of both. This is your opportunity to discuss any name you feel is problematic with your department chair and to let them know why you feel the person is not appropriate to be asked to write for you. You do not have veto power regarding the names your chair/head puts on the list but often times, a discussion beforehand can result in the removal of that person from the list before

the letter goes out. If the chair insists on soliciting from the problematic referee, be sure to document your objections in written form.

- have access to all materials in your basic file upon request at any point following the DPC recommendation (with the exception of letters you may have waived your right to see).
- see and receive a copy of all materials added to your file when they are added so you may have the opportunity to comment on their substance and appropriateness.
- receive a decision from the Provost within 45 calendar days of receipt or the deadline for receipt (whichever is later) of both the basic file with all relevant recommendation letters and all additional information or clarifications requested.

WHAT MSP CAN DO FOR YOU

Attending a workshop on the promotion process is a great way to get information and begin taking charge of your promotion! But there is a lot more that MSP Faculty Advocates and staff can do for you. Here are a few of the most commonly sought services:

- 1) Consult on any issue concerning timing of the promotion review.
- 2) Look over/provide feedback on personal statements before promotion packet submission.
- 3) Discuss the choice of external reviewers by both the candidate and the department.
- 4) Review the solicitation letter to external reviewers that the department chair intends to send.
- 5) Read and evaluate promotion review recommendation letters at each stage and advise about appropriate responses (if any).
- 6) Seek and secure additional time in which to respond to any level of promotion review when warranted.
- 7) Help to construct and revise a response to any letter containing a negative recommendation or inaccurate information.
- 8) Provide information concerning promotion review practices in your department or college .
- 9) Troubleshoot and/or intervene (if necessary) when the promotion process is in question.
- 10) Speak to the department chair, or to the administration, on your behalf.
- 11) Seek and negotiate settlements when appropriate.
- 12) Provide a confidential sounding board and an objective perspective for any concerns you may have regarding the promotion review process.

GENERAL ADVICE FOR CANDIDATES WHEN CRAFTING A RESPONSE FOR THE PROMOTION FILE

1. Seek assistance from MSP. We can help you think through whether it is a good idea to add a response, depending on your specific case. We are always happy to look over a draft response and offer suggested edits. It's not easy to be your own advocate. Tone is important; you don't want to sound defensive or angry, just straightforward and confident.
2. Keep it short and concise; normally one page will suffice. There is already so much in a promotion file to read and you want to make it easy for your colleagues and administrative reviewers to take in your points.
3. No need to repeat things already in the file; do not quote yourself.
4. Don't be defensive in your response, especially when the votes are positive and you are responding merely to clear up a few errors or inaccuracies.
5. Never accentuate the negative. Don't repeat others' quotes that don't help your case. The last thing you want to do is to draw attention to those points so that they are at the top of your reviewers' minds. Summarize the problems as quickly as possible and move on to your points about what's good in your record.
6. Think about who your audience is. For instance, if you are responding to a problematic recommendation letter from your CPC, then your audience is the Dean and the Provost. It's easy to fall into the trap of addressing the CPC – but they already wrote their letter, and your response won't change it. So, you are writing to the Dean, and then the Provost – giving them some context and giving them a way to think about the problems with the CPC letter (without dwelling on the negative). Remember they'll be reading your response after reading probably 100 pages of documents, including your statement, publications, external and internal letters, the reviews of all prior levels...which gets back to point #2 about being brief! MSP is here to help.

CONTACT US AT:

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Eve Weinbaum, MSP Grievance Officer
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Email: lreardon@umass.edu

To: Deans, Directors, Department Heads and Chairs, Department and School/College
Personnel Committee Chairs
From: Fouad Abd-El-Khalick, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Date: April 2025
Subject: **Promotion and Tenure Recommendations for Tenure-Stream Faculty**

Faculty make central contributions to the advancement of our mission. The evaluation of faculty contributions in research, scholarly and creative activity, teaching, and outreach and engagement is, therefore, among our most important administrative processes and a significant responsibility that ensures the continued excellence of our institution. This memorandum reinforces the criteria and procedures mandated by the UMass-MSP Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and by the Board of Trustees' Academic Personnel Policy (the "Redbook") for all recommendations of tenure and promotion. The expectations for tenure and promotion should be transparent to the candidate in the years leading up to the review. Such transparency should be achieved through proactive guidance in Annual Faculty Reviews, the reappointment review (4.2), the Periodic Multi-Year Reviews (PMYR), and through formal and on-going mentorship.

Non-trivial revisions since last year's memo (April 2024) are highlighted in green.

Tenure and Promotion processes, dates and deadlines are provided on the Academic Human Resources website and are no longer included in this memorandum.

Standards & Criteria: Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

The Redbook notes the special responsibility that the faculty and the university's leadership bear for personnel decisions based on "high professional standards" (Section 4.1) and "clear and convincing evidence," (Section 3.1):

High professional standards must be the basis for all personnel decisions. Personnel recommendations and decisions shall be made only after a review of all the qualifications and all the contributions of the individual in the areas of teaching; of research, creative or professional activity; and of service. All three areas must be considered, but the relative weight to be given to each may be determined in light of the duties of the faculty member. [Section 4.1]

The faculty has the obligation to present a clear, complete and convincing case for the recommendation so as to assure the faculty member of a complete presentation of his or

her qualifications and achievements, and so as to provide the basis both for full reviews of the recommendation, and for the decision. [Section 3.1]

In applying these standards to the criteria for tenure, the Redbook describes in broad terms the importance of excellence:

The award of tenure can be made only by the President with the concurrence of the Board of Trustees. Consideration of a candidate for tenure shall be based on the following:

- 1. Convincing evidence of excellence in at least two, and strength in the third, of the areas of teaching; of research, creative or professional activity; and of service, such as to demonstrate the possession of qualities appropriate to a member of the faculty occupying a permanent position.*
- 2. Reasonable assurance of continuing development and achievement leading to further contributions to the University. [Section 4.9]*

Most tenure cases also involve an assessment of suitability for promotion to Associate Professor. In these cases, Section 4.6(a) also applies and should be addressed at each level of review:

For promotion to Associate Professor, the faculty member must have a record of achievement sufficient to have gained recognition on and off campus among scholars or professionals in his or her field; and must show promise of continuing professional development and achievement.

The “continuing development and achievement” criterion is often overlooked in the presentation of tenure cases. It is important to consider it and address it at each level of review (e.g., by discussing evidence of work in progress).

The Redbook also requires that positive tenure recommendations relate the proposed award of tenure to the academic and strategic plans of the department, college, campus, and university and to the department’s affirmative action goals.

Standards & Criteria: Promotion to Professor

The standards for promotions are further defined in Section 4.6 (b). In their evaluations, reviewers at all levels should explicitly cite these standards and criteria, and articulate whether and how the candidate’s record conforms to them:

For promotion to Professor, the faculty member must have a record of achievement sufficient to have gained substantial recognition on and off campus from scholars or professionals in his or her field; and must show significant potential for continuing professional achievement.

Three Areas of Evaluation

The Redbook outlines three domains in which candidates for tenure and promotion must be assessed. In each domain, the assessment should refer directly to the evidence in the dossier and “high professional standards” to justify its conclusion.

For the award of tenure, the candidate must demonstrate excellence in two of these domains and, at least, strength in the third. For promotion to (full) Professor, assessment in all three domains is required, but there is no mandate to reach a conclusion about whether each domain is excellent, strong, or not strong. In drawing these conclusions, I strongly encourage evaluations at all levels to take an inclusive view of the activities contributed by the candidate, moving beyond traditional measures to include modern reflections of these domains that also contribute to excellence and the advancement of our mission. UMass-Amherst recognizes the value of scholarship, teaching, and outreach activities that have public and societal impacts. The work of our faculty in tackling real-world problems in partnership with external stakeholders should be valued and credited in personnel actions. To that end, this memorandum includes discussions within each section on research and creative activity, teaching, and service about how to recognize public impact contributions.

Rigorous evaluations require an integration of the evidence presented in the dossier, and it is not uncommon for individuals to emphasize different aspects of the dossier in their evaluations. For this reason, it is crucial to communicate the basis of evaluation transparently and clearly in the memoranda prepared at each level of review; a simple listing of activities and a vote provide little guidance to the subsequent levels of review, especially where different conclusions are reached.

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted the inclusion of Impact Statements in the Annual Faculty Review process where faculty members may describe disruptions to their research/creative and professional activity, teaching, and service due to external factors beyond the control of the faculty member. At the faculty member's discretion, these statements, or a summary of them, may be included as a separate addendum to the faculty member's personal statement. The faculty member should indicate whether any Impact Statement(s) should be shared with external evaluators or be for internal use only. Internal evaluators (DPC, chair/head, CPC, and Dean) should assess the faculty member's work in light of any COVID-19 or similar broad-scale impacts reported in the dossier and are strongly encouraged to explicitly and transparently explain this context in their memoranda to inform subsequent levels of review. For example, this academic year, the Impact Statement could be used by faculty to describe impacts on their research activities due to federal actions regarding sponsored research that have transpired during the Spring 2025 semester – such as interruptions and rescissions of funds for current federal grants – and continue to unfold as we disseminate this memorandum.

Research/Creative/Professional Activity

The assessment of a tenure candidate's accomplishments in research/creative/professional activity should consider whether the candidate demonstrates high professional standards. These standards vary across disciplines. The judgment of disciplinary specialists at the department level is crucial in fleshing out these standards; so too are the views of college-level personnel committees and deans. The reference letters are also very important in this regard. It is essential, then, not only to review a candidate's accomplishments, but to contextualize them in ways that enable subsequent levels of review to understand the criteria that are most important in the specific field of study.

A Note on “Cultural Standards”: Recognizing the breadth of promotion and tenure standards articulated by the CBA and the Redbook, some departments have developed documents that express the “cultural standards” of their disciplines. These documents are valuable expressions of the expectations of professional communities, but they must not be used to formally evaluate a candidate’s research, teaching, and service since they have not been bargained with the MSP. Accordingly, departmental reviewers must not rely on or refer to such documents in making their recommendations, and department chairs/heads must not send these documents to external reviewers.

Pandemic Impacts: During the COVID-19 pandemic period beginning in March 2020, any scholarly disruptions and decreased productivity, particularly when inconsistent with the prior or subsequent record, should not be interpreted as meaningful. Likewise, changes in areas of emphasis may have occurred as an adaptation to the pandemic and should not be viewed as problematic. In addition, scheduled conference presentations, invited talks, performances, and exhibitions that were cancelled should be weighed as if they had occurred. Virtual performances and exhibitions, along with presentations at virtual conferences and seminars, should be weighed as if they were face-to-face. In fields, such as Engineering, where doctoral completions are evaluated in tenure cases, allowance should be made for the pandemic’s effects on doctoral students’ progress toward their degrees.

Because the pandemic’s impacts have fallen more severely on certain faculty (e.g., women, persons of color, parents), internal evaluators should avoid implicit or explicit comparisons with faculty members whose personal circumstances allowed their productivity to remain undiminished during the pandemic and to cases that were successful prior to the pandemic.

Public Impact Scholarship: Faculty research and creative activities that advance the university’s mission with respect to public impact should be credited for related accomplishments. Public Impact Research and Creative Activity (PIRCA) is inclusive across the spectrum of fundamental/basic, translational/applied, community engaged/participatory, knowledge/technological transfer, extramural/extension research, and creative activity. PIRCA creditable toward tenure and promotion should be intellectual work whose significance is validated by peers and effectively communicated. In its diverse forms, PIRCA is based on a high level of professional expertise, gives evidence of originality, is documented and validated by peers, has demonstrable usage or benefit to society and/or the discipline (including future impact as appropriate). Dissemination of impactful research beyond the typical venues of peer-reviewed publications should be credited. These include:

- Increasing the public’s understanding of complex topics and the public impacts of research discoveries (e.g., research-based public presentations and workshops, op-eds, exhibitions, performances).
- Increasing the transparency, rigor, and reusability of research (e.g., shared research data); ensuring research results and creative products are made available as soon as possible (open access venues, working paper series).

- Bringing research innovations and creative products into public use (e.g., patents, copyrights, use and licensing agreements, commercialization).

Promotion to Associate Professor or Professor requires “recognition on and off campus from scholars or professionals in his or her field;” for promotion to Professor, this recognition must be “substantial.” The reference letters are, of course, an important component of the evidence for assessing whether this recognition has been achieved. Other sources of evidence may include reviews of books by the candidate, awards, citations of published work, publications in high-ranking journals or with well-regarded presses, fellowships, grants, and so on. Special attention should be given to assessing the unique contributions of the candidate to collaborative works, including the candidate’s statements, letters from collaborators, etc. As in the assessment of research/creative/professional activity, the departmental and college levels of review should contextualize the assessment of “recognition on and off campus.”

External Letters: Letters from respected scholars, scientists, or other professionals are essential to the assessment of candidates for tenure and/or promotion. Letters that provide mere summaries of the record are significantly less useful than those that provide and explain the reviewer’s assessment of the candidate’s work. Therefore, in soliciting letters, department chairs/heads should draw attention to the evaluative nature of the review so that reviewers understand what the University is asking of them. The Provost’s Office Academic Personnel website offers two templates for soliciting external reviews. (Please use the most recent versions, which incorporate language on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.)

The Redbook’s Section 6.4 requires that the file contain descriptions of the “standing” of external reviewers so that internal reviewers, particularly those outside the department, can understand the weight that should be accorded to their assessment. Indicators of standing include the reviewer’s rank, the reviewer’s accomplishments and recognition in the discipline, and the stature of the department or institution at which the reviewer is employed. A reviewer’s positive assessment is more compelling if the reviewer is at arm’s length from the candidate. An arm’s-length reviewer is one who is not the candidate’s personal friend, doctoral or post-doctoral advisor, or recent collaborator. (Recent collaboration on work that involves a large number of collaborators, such as happens in some branches of physics or astronomy, does not necessarily place a reviewer at less than arm’s length; the candidate’s and the reviewer’s specific contributions to the collaboration are relevant to the determination.)

Departments sometimes ask whether it is permissible to depart from the template solicitation letter provided in APWS. *We strongly recommend use of the template letter for consistency across the campus and to ensure compliance with the Redbook, the CBA, and agreements with the MSP about advising reviewers on the effects of the pandemic.* Moreover, the candidate has the right to review the solicitation letter and comment as to its “appropriateness.” The CBA provides in Article 12.4.4 that “Prior to the solicitation, the candidate shall be provided with a copy of the solicitation letter and the list of the proposed referees and shall be given an opportunity to comment on the appropriateness of both.” The template solicitation letter has been vetted and is, therefore, presumptively appropriate.

Solicitation letters for tenure or promotion of faculty who started work during or before Spring 2020 should remind external reviewers of the disruption that the campus experienced beginning on March 13, 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the automatic one-year delay in the tenure decision year granted to pre-tenure faculty. The template solicitation letter to external reviewers cautions them against regarding approved TDY delays as “extra” time from which greater productivity can be expected. The same caution applies to internal reviewers.

Neither the Redbook nor the CBA specifies a particular number of letters that must be collected. If the number of letters from high-standing, arm’s-length reviewers is small, however, it may be harder to make the case for a specific assessment of the candidate’s work. This is particularly true when one of a small number of letters disagrees with the others, or if a letter is too cursory to be persuasive. Departments have been asked to establish an external-letter minimum in their by-laws. Many of the departments have done so. If they have not, the number of external letters to be solicited is ultimately determined by the Chair/Head in consultation with the candidate, guided by disciplinary and school/college expectations. Continuing the current practice, six arm’s-length letters are generally sufficient for a rigorous evaluation. A larger number of letters rarely adds new information to a case and is an unnecessary burden on external colleagues.

The campus currently has a subscription to Academic Analytics, a compiler of data on faculty research activity. While useful for identifying opportunities in comparison with peer institutions, this tool does not provide comprehensive information at the level of the individual and should not be used by internal evaluators (DPC, head/chair, SPC/CPC, Dean, Provost/Chancellor) in academic personnel actions.

Teaching

In considering whether a candidate has met the Redbook’s high professional standards for teaching, faculty should be considered within the totality of their contributions to the instructional mission. This is in accordance with the CBA, which specifies that the basic file contain “evaluations of teaching effectiveness, including **but not limited** to those of students.”

Achieving such a comprehensive assessment typically involves multiple sources of evidence, not just the student perspective, including:

- Evidence of teaching effectiveness not only in the formal classroom setting but also in less formal student interactions.
- Commentary on the range of courses taught, the development and/or renewal of courses, and their importance to the curriculum. This perspective may include not only the departmental level but also the school/college level (for interdepartmental requirements) and the campus level (for general education requirements).
- Evaluation of the currency of course content as revealed in course syllabi.
- Evaluations from students, including SRTI and Forward Focus scores, SRTI and Forward Focus open-ended comments, and letters.
- Evaluations from peers, including observations of the candidate’s teaching; evaluations of the effectiveness of pedagogical innovations or improvements.

Beyond the classroom, reviewers should include assessments of the candidate's role, if any, in such areas as:

- Academic advising (unless this falls in the service category).
- Creation of open educational resources.
- Mentoring undergraduates and directing undergraduate research, including honors theses.
- Activity in graduate education beyond the classroom, including advising doctoral or master's students, chairing or serving as a member of dissertation or thesis committees, mentoring, etc.
- The largely invisible but crucially important teaching and service work of mentoring women students, students from first-gen or low-income backgrounds, students of color, and international students. This work is often undertaken by faculty who share one or more of these identities with the students they are mentoring. These contributions are frequently invisible because the faculty member may have no official connection with the students being mentored.
- Supervision of students engaged in independent study.
- Service learning and other forms of community engagement.
- The development of curricular materials, including those intended for alternative formats, such as FLEX learning.
- Innovative instructional efforts, such as creation or adaptation of courses for TBL classrooms or introduction of instructional technology. Introducing novel teaching methods may lead to a decline in student evaluations. Faculty members should not be penalized for adopting innovative pedagogy that may lead to superior learning outcomes.
- Curricular revision to better align curricula with departmental, school/college, and campus priorities.
- Contributions to maintaining educational continuity for our undergraduate and graduate students during the period of remote learning beginning in Spring 2020. Faculty success in moving courses online, developing substitutes for class labs and studios, maintaining student engagement, and providing students with a human connection to our institution should be acknowledged. Because SRTIs were not administered in Spring or Fall of 2020, reviewers should rely more heavily on faculty self-reporting of teaching accomplishments. Faculty are encouraged to be explicit about their efforts and include any evidence of successes in the realm of teaching.

Because the contributions of faculty to education beyond the classroom are sometimes unofficial, particularly in the area of graduate education, department-level reviewers should take note of any contributions that might not otherwise be apparent from the written record. Contributions to a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive educational experience should be noted in the assessment of teaching and may also be relevant to the assessment of service. Further, teaching activities with Public Impact should be credited. These may happen through facilitating internships and service-learning experiences, workshops and experiential learning in the community, and with partner associations. Examples include:

- Developing collaborative approaches with students and community partners in solving complex world problems.
- Developing and/or advising experiential learning opportunities, including facilitating internship and study abroad opportunities for students.
- Support and instruction of students in commercialization of innovative technologies and activities.
- Creating service-learning curricula with community partners.
- Providing educational and/or mentoring programs, volunteering and extension activities.

Assessment of teaching based solely on numerical student evaluation scores (SRTI and/or Forward Focus) is not permitted by the Academic Personnel Policy and the MSP labor agreement. The Office of Academic Planning and Assessment (OAPA), administers the SRTI. SRTI resources can be found [here](#); questions about the interpretation of SRTI can be directed to Associate Provost Elizabeth (Liz) Williams: williams@acad.umass.edu

Forward Focus resources can be found [here](#). Student evaluations were not administered during the Spring and Fall 2020 semesters because of the shift to remote learning. Departments were permitted to administer either SRTI or Forward Focus for the Spring 2021 semester by agreement with the MSP. Spring 2021 student evaluations, however, should not be compared to past or future student evaluations in assessing teaching effectiveness. The SRTI/Forward Focus choice has since continued.

Although not required, a teaching portfolio may be a useful way to connect teaching activity with the candidate's personal statement.

Service

The Redbook's "high professional standard" for service may mean different things at different levels of seniority. For assistant professors, service on editorial boards or in national or international scholarly societies not only contributes to the field but helps to forge professional relationships and establish a professional profile beyond the University. Service contributions within the department or university, while still important, might well be fewer than those of more senior colleagues. Senior faculty might engage in a balance of professional and local service activities, taking on more advanced leadership roles on the campus. This aspect of the dossier is particularly prone to differing opinions and care should be taken to transparently contextualize expectations specific to the discipline. Of note is the contribution that faculty make by mentoring their colleagues. Like the mentoring of students described in the teaching section above, this service activity may be invisible, and it may contribute significantly to a campus climate of diversity, equity, and inclusion. This work can fall more heavily on faculty of color and women, and I strongly encourage all levels of review to be aware of and to elevate this important work as crucial contributions to our mission through our promotion and tenure processes.

Certain types of service receive special mention in the CBA and the Redbook. For example, the CBA requires that service to the faculty union be considered, and the Redbook requires that service outside the department be considered at the department level. Service may include

contributions to governance or management (of the department, college/school, Faculty Senate, university, or profession); outreach to extend knowledge beyond the university or professional community; and community engagement that benefits both the university and off-campus communities. Some faculty members have special service obligations recorded in a Memorandum of Understanding at the time of appointment; these should be recognized and assessed in accordance with the terms of the MOU. Consideration should be given to service and engagement activities with public impact. Examples of these include:

- Engaged consulting and advisory work, such as serving as an advisory board member, expert witness, research advisor, or community board member representing one's scholarly expertise.
- Promoting a culture of innovation and entrepreneurialism at the university, within or across disciplines, and/or with community partners.

Many usual forms of service were difficult or impossible to carry out during the COVID-19 pandemic; committees did not meet, and many conferences and professional events were canceled. At the same time, some faculty made extraordinary contributions to service, and their efforts should be recognized.

Continuing Professional Development

The Redbook's tenure standard requires "reasonable assurance of continuing development and achievement leading to further contributions to the University." The promotion standards require "promise of continuing professional development and achievement" (Associate Professor) or "significant potential for continuing professional achievement" (Professor). These mandated assessments should not be overlooked at the departmental and college levels of review. Generally, evidence of potential consists of work in progress or under submission, which the dossier might include in the vita or the candidate's personal statement, as well as assessments by external reviewers. For works that are in development, evidence, such as grant summary statements, reviews from the academic press, etc., on potential impact should be prioritized.

Special Considerations for Promotion to Professor

It is a good practice for DPCs and heads/chairs to informally review all associate professors annually for their readiness for promotion to (full) professor. This review may lead to a decision, in consultation with the candidate, to proceed with the promotion case. If not, it provides an opportunity to mentor the candidate about the path toward promotion. In any case, it should never be necessary for a faculty member who is ready for promotion to have to request it. Notwithstanding the results of this informal review, any associate professor has the right to be reviewed for promotion to full at their discretion. There is no specified minimum time between tenure and promotion to professor, and the decision to seek promotion should be based solely on the merits of the case. Dissuading candidates on the basis of time or making reference to an "early" review should be avoided.

Over the course of one's career, areas of emphasis are likely to change although the expectation of continued and robust contributions to the advancement of our mission remains. Consistent with this reality, Provost McCarthy articulated a more expansive view of the requirements for promotion to professor in his December 20, 2018 memo:

I am writing to share some thoughts on the criteria for promotion to (full) professor. I ask you to consider a somewhat more expansive view of the accomplishments that would qualify an individual for elevation to this rank.

Candidates for promotion to professor are required to demonstrate "a record of achievement sufficient to have gained substantial recognition on and off campus from scholars or professionals" and "significant potential for continuing professional achievement" (Redbook). They are evaluated in all three areas of research/creative activity, teaching, and service. Generally, personnel committees and the administrative levels of review have placed the greatest emphasis on the first of these areas. At an R1 university like ours, it is appropriate to focus on accomplishments in research/creative activity in assessing the records of candidates for promotion to our highest academic rank.

While an exceptional record of accomplishments in research/creative activity is and should be the norm for promotion to professor on our campus, the Redbook language is somewhat more flexible:

Article 4, Section 4.1 High professional standards must be the basis for all personnel decisions. Personnel recommendations and decisions shall be made only after a review of all of the qualifications and all the contributions of the individual in the areas of teaching; of research; creative or professional activity; and of service. All three areas must be considered, but the relative weight to be given to each may be determined in the light of the duties of the faculty member.

As we all know, the Redbook language on tenure is much more specific, requiring demonstrated excellence in at least two of the three areas, and at least strength in the third. But the notion of "relative weight ... determined in the light of the duties of the faculty member" is potentially applicable to promotion to professor.

Consider the case of a faculty member who has maintained a modest level of activity in research/creative activity but has excelled in teaching or service. This individual may be making significant contributions to the scholarship of teaching and learning in the discipline or obtaining significant external funding to support teaching or diversity initiatives, or creating and launching new degree programs, or exercising major leadership at the department, school/college, or campus level in an administrative, MSP, or Senate role. In assessing these contributions, we should apply the same criteria as we do with faculty whose research records are the primary justification for promotion: it must be of a quality and extent "sufficient to have gained substantial recognition on and off campus from scholars or professionals," and it must be sustained over a long period sufficient to demonstrate "significant potential for continuing professional

achievement". It seems to me that the Redbook's flexibility in assigning weight allows for these possibilities.

I concur fully with this expanded view of the evaluation criteria for promotion to Professor and strongly encourage candidates and departments to bring such cases forward. Questions on the assembly and presentation of such dossiers can be directed to Senior Vice Provost Michelle Budig: budig@umass.edu

Evaluators' Duty to Mitigate Unconscious Bias

We recommend that all UMass Amherst personnel committee members, chairs/heads, and deans who review personnel files for tenure and promotion take the [STRIPE workshop](#) to increase awareness of and actions to mitigate unconscious bias in faculty evaluation. Questions about the STRIPE (*Strategies and Tactics for Retention through Inclusive Program Evaluation*) training can be directed to Senior Vice Provost Wilmore Webley: wilmore@umass.edu.

If you have questions about the procedural aspects of the promotion and tenure process, please contact Associate Provost Michael Eagen at meagen@umass.edu or (413) 545-6221.

The University of Massachusetts—from the campus to the Trustees—has expressed its commitment to high-quality scholarship, teaching, and service. Chancellor Reyes and I welcome your comments on ways in which we can improve the process, and we thank you in advance for all of your hard work while executing this critical responsibility. The thoughtful evaluations you provide strengthen the university for many decades to come.

cc: College Personnel Officers
Faculty Members
Michael Eagen, Associate Provost for Academic Human Resources
Jocelyn Tedisky, Assistant Provost & Senior Director of Academic Human Resources

EXCERPTS ADDED TO THE PROVOST'S TENURE & PROMOTION MEMO REGARDING COVID

Three Areas of Evaluation

For the award of tenure, the candidate must demonstrate excellence in two of these domains and at least strength in the third. For promotion to (full) Professor, assessment in all three domains is required, but there is no mandate to reach a conclusion about whether each domain is excellent, strong, or not strong.

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted the inclusion of Impact Statements in the Annual Faculty Review process where faculty members may describe disruptions to their research/creative and professional activity, teaching, and service due to external factors beyond the control of the faculty member. At the faculty member's discretion, these statements, or a summary of them, may be included as a separate addendum to the faculty member's personal statement. The faculty member should indicate whether any Impact Statement(s) should be shared with external evaluators or be for internal use only. Internal evaluators (DPC, chair/head, CPC, and Dean) should assess the faculty member's work in light of any COVID-19 or similar broad-scale impacts reported in the dossier and are strongly encouraged to explicitly and transparently explain this context in their memoranda to inform subsequent levels of review. For example, this academic year, the Impact Statement could be used by faculty to describe impacts on their research activities due to federal actions regarding sponsored research that have transpired during the Spring 2025 semester – such as interruptions and recissions of funds for current federal grants – and continue to unfold as we disseminate this memorandum.

Research/Creative/Professional Activity

During the COVID-19 pandemic period beginning in March 2020, any scholarly disruptions and decreased productivity, particularly when inconsistent with the prior or subsequent record, should not be interpreted as meaningful. Likewise, changes in areas of emphasis may have occurred as an adaptation to the pandemic and should not be viewed as problematic. In addition, scheduled conference presentations, invited talks, performances, and exhibitions that were cancelled should be weighed as if they had occurred. Virtual performances and exhibitions, along with presentations at virtual conferences and seminars, should be weighed as if they were face-to-face. In fields such as Engineering where doctoral completions are evaluated in tenure cases, allowance should be made for the pandemic's effects on doctoral students' progress toward their degrees.

Because the pandemic's impacts have fallen more severely on certain faculty (e.g., women, persons of color, parents), internal evaluators should avoid implicit or explicit comparisons with faculty members whose personal circumstances allowed their productivity to remain undiminished during the pandemic and to cases that were successful prior to the pandemic.

Evaluation of Teaching

Contributions to maintaining educational continuity for our undergraduate and graduate students during the period of remote learning beginning in Spring 2020. Faculty success in moving courses online, developing substitutes for class labs and studios, maintaining student engagement, and providing students with a human connection to our institution should be acknowledged. Because SRTIs were not administered in Spring or Fall of 2020, reviewers should

rely more heavily on faculty self-reporting of teaching accomplishments. Faculty are encouraged to be explicit about their efforts and include any evidence of successes in the realm of teaching.

Student evaluations were not administered during the Spring and Fall 2020 semesters because of the shift to remote learning. Departments were permitted to administer either SRTI or Forward Focus for the Spring 2021 semester by agreement with the MSP. Spring 2021 student evaluations, however, should not be compared to past or future student evaluations in assessing teaching effectiveness. The SRTI/Forward Focus choice has since continued.

Evaluation of Service

Many usual forms of service were difficult or impossible to carry out during the COVID-19 pandemic; committees did not meet, and many conferences and professional events were canceled. At the same time, some faculty made extraordinary contributions to service, and their efforts should be recognized.

Solicitation of External Letters/Evaluation of Research

Solicitation letters for tenure or promotion of faculty who started work during or before Spring 2020 should remind external reviewers of the disruption that the campus experienced beginning on March 13 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the automatic one-year delay in the tenure decision year granted to pre-tenure faculty. The template solicitation letter to external reviewers cautions them against regarding approved TDY delays as "extra" time from which greater productivity can be expected. The same caution applies to internal reviewers.

For Promotion to Professor, Solicitation of External Reviews, Template – enclosures include CV; selected publications follow upon confirmation of reviewer participation. Do not use this template for cases of promotion to Associate Professor with tenure. A separate template is available for that purpose.

This template is a guide. You may customize it, but (1) you must cover the main points expressed in this template, (2) you may not deviate from the standards specified in the contract, and (3) you must include the section on confidentiality.

Prof. [name]

[Title]

[Department name]

[University]

[City, State, Zip]

Subject: Request for Service as an External Reviewer

Dear Professor [name]:

I am writing on behalf of the Department of [name] in the [College/School] of [name] to ask whether you could assist us in the evaluation of [name of faculty candidate], who is being considered for promotion to the rank of professor. My colleagues and I recognize that this request adds to what is no doubt a considerable workload and appreciate your willingness to consider it.

In keeping with standard practice, the faculty and administrators involved in this promotion process will have read the file carefully and will be well acquainted with the substance of the work involved. Accordingly, we do not need to trouble you with a summary description of the work you are reviewing. Our primary interest is in your professional opinion of the value of her/his work and hence the task is primarily evaluative.

There is no minimum time period between the tenure review and promotion to Full professor. UMass guidelines state that if a case merits promotion, it should be brought forward without consideration of arbitrary timelines.

Beginning in the Spring 2020 semester, faculty across the University experienced a significant disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In Spring 2020, as a result of the health crisis, all faculty moved their courses online, research facilities including labs and libraries were closed and all student evaluation of teaching was suspended. In conjunction with the disruptions experienced on-campus, many faculty were working out of their homes while simultaneously providing childcare due to closures of daycare facilities and K-12 schooling. Research disruptions, significant shifts in teaching modalities, limited childcare, and remote work persisted through the 2020-2021 academic year. We ask that you take this unprecedented event into consideration when evaluating work performed during this period.

Candidates for promotion have the options of waiving or retaining the right of access to external review letters. In this case, Professor [last name] [has or has not] waived [his/her] access to all external review letters. However, under our contract with the faculty union, we must identify all reviewers. Therefore,

while internal faculty and administrative evaluators of the file will have access to your letter, it will otherwise remain confidential (to the extent allowed by law). The candidate will know that you have provided an evaluation [but will not have / and will have] access to your letter.

The standards and criteria for promotion of tenure-system faculty at the University of Massachusetts Amherst are described in our Academic Personnel Policy (Trustee Document T76-081, also known as the "Red Book"). The following are relevant excerpts from that policy:

- **Section 4.1.** High professional standards must be the basis for all personnel decisions. Personnel recommendations and decisions shall be made only after a review of all of the qualifications and all the contributions of the individual in the areas of teaching; of research; creative or professional activity; and of service. All three areas must be considered, but the relative weight to be given to each may be determined in the light of the duties of the faculty member.
- **Section 4.6.** Recommendations for promotion shall be based on qualifications and contributions in the areas of teaching; of research, creative, or professional activity; and of service; and on the following considerations:
 - c) For promotion to Professor, the faculty member must have a record of achievement sufficient to have gained substantial recognition on and off campus among scholars or professionals in his or her field; and must show significant promise of continuing professional achievement.

At UMass Amherst, we take an expansive view of the accomplishments that would qualify an individual for elevation to this rank. Candidates for promotion to professor are required to demonstrate "a record of achievement sufficient to have gained substantial recognition on and off campus from scholars or professionals" and "significant potential for continuing professional achievement" (Redbook). They are evaluated in all three areas of research/creative activity, teaching, and service. All three areas must be considered, but the relative weight to be given to each may be determined in the light of the duties of the faculty member. As one example, consider the case of a faculty member who has maintained a modest level of activity in research/creative activity but has excelled in teaching or service. This individual may be making significant contributions to the scholarship of teaching and learning in the discipline or obtaining significant external funding to support teaching or diversity initiatives, or creating and launching new degree programs, or exercising major leadership at the department, school/college, or campus level in an administrative, MSP, or Senate role. In assessing these contributions, we apply the same criteria as we do with faculty whose research records are the primary justification for promotion: it must be of a quality and extent "sufficient to have gained substantial recognition on and off campus from scholars or professionals", and it must be sustained over a long period sufficient to demonstrate "significant potential for continuing professional achievement".

If you accept this invitation, we will appreciate receiving your candid evaluation of this candidate's contributions to the profession. Within the limits of the criteria and standards described above, we would like to receive your assessment of the originality and impact of the candidate's work. Has it contributed to new lines of research or deepened our understanding of existing debates? Has the candidate demonstrated a meaningful and independent scholarly program? Is the candidate recognized as an intellectual leader on par with, if not exceeding, the influence and noteworthy accomplishments of peers who are at the same stage of professional development? For candidates in the creative, visual, and performing arts, has she/he had an impact within the field, reflecting recognition and respect among other professionals (and, where applicable, scholars) nationally or beyond?

We expect faculty at the rank of Professor to have achieved a very high level of visibility and professional accomplishment as leading thinkers in their field, outstanding teachers, and active

Request for Service as an External Reviewer
[name of faculty candidate]

[date]

participants in their profession. While we recognize that scholarly work builds over the life of a career, we are particularly interested in your assessment of the candidate's contributions since promotion to the rank of associate professor with tenure. We expect that full Professors will continue to perform at a high level for many years to come.

Our institution values service to the profession and to the campus, as well as high quality teaching. If you are familiar with Professor [last name's] record in either domain, we would be grateful for your evaluation in these domains. In all of these respects – research, teaching and service – it would be helpful for us to understand the basis for your conclusions; what do you see in the work or record that leads you to the assessment you have provided?

For the benefit of UMass reviewers who are outside your discipline, we are required to solicit from every external reviewer their curriculum vitae, which will help identify the work for which you are known and hence the starting point of your evaluation. We also ask that you complete the attached disclosure form indicating the extent of your relationship with Professor [last name], if any. We would appreciate knowing whether you have collaborated with or had previous professional or personal interactions with the candidate. Should you believe that there is any room for misunderstanding or a potential conflict of interest in reviewing this case, please feel free to call me before you proceed.

I have attached a copy of Professor [last name]'s CV for your information. If you are able to accept this invitation, we will send you additional materials. As our evaluations proceed along an established time line, we would be most appreciative if you would, first, let me know by email [department chair's email] if you can accept this assignment within the next week and, second, provide your letter and CV by [four weeks after the date of the request]. I will forward the additional materials to you as soon as I receive your email confirmation.

Again, I respect the fact that this request imposes on your time. It is an essential part of the review process, as you know of course, and we do depend on our colleagues to help us make wise decisions.

Sincerely,

[Name of Department Chair]

[Title]