

TEMPLATE FOR REQUESTS FOR EXTERNAL LETTERS
PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR WITHOUT TENURE

Dear xx,

I am writing to seek your advice as the Department of XXX considers the promotion of XX, currently Assistant Professor, to the position of Associate Professor without tenure.

A successful promotion to Associate Professor without Tenure is an intermediate stage on a potential path to tenure, and requires that a candidate is making satisfactory progress developing his or her research, and shows promise of meeting the standards of tenure. The review process accompanying this promotion is designed to provide a clear view of the progress XXX has made while Assistant Professor, and to provide them with feedback on their path to and prospects for tenure¹.

In particular, we would greatly appreciate your answers to the following questions:

- What are Prof. xxx's major research accomplishments? Please give specific examples.
- What is your assessment of future directions and potential impacts of their program?
- How do their scientific achievements compare with leaders of the field at similar career stages? Who are the leaders in their subfield? Are they one of them? [*This question varies by department. Some include a list of comparisons.*]
- What opinion, if any, do you have of their accomplishments as a communicator, teacher, and mentor?
- Do you recommend this promotion?

To assist in your evaluation, their curriculum vitae, list of publications and seminars, information on teaching, mentorship and service, summary of research accomplishments, and reprints of five scientific papers are attached to this e-mail. If you prefer hard copies, please let us know and we will deliver them to you. As described in the enclosed statement, MIT treats these assessments with the highest degree of confidentiality.

I realize that the request for this evaluation will impose on your busy schedule, but we very much rely on distinguished scientists for our promotion assessments. Because of MIT's annual promotion schedule, I need your letter by XXX. I thank you in advance for your help.

Thank you for your efforts on our behalf and best wishes,

¹ At MIT the standard for tenure is research accomplishments that establish them as a leader in the field, both nationally and internationally, along with excellence in teaching, mentorship, and service.

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PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR WITH TENURE

Dear xx,

I am writing to seek your advice as the Department of XXX considers the promotion of XX to the position of Associate Professor with tenure.

Promotion to Associate Professor with tenure requires that XXX's research accomplishments must establish them as a leader in the field, both nationally and internationally, along with excellence in teaching, mentorship, and service. We would be grateful for your candid assessment of the quality and cumulative importance of their research. The consensus opinion of distinguished members of the candidate's discipline strongly influences the decisions of the Department and MIT.

Thus, I would very much appreciate your perspective on the following:

- What are Prof. xxx's major research accomplishments, and what has been the influence of their research on the field? Please give specific examples.
- What is your assessment of future directions and potential impacts of their program?
- How do their scientific achievements compare with leaders of the field at a similar stage of their careers? Who are the leaders in their field? Are they one of them? *[This question varies by department. Some include a list of comparisons.]*
- What opinion, if any, do you have of their accomplishments as a communicator, teacher, and mentor?
- Do you recommend this promotion?

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