FOM Referee Solicitation Letter for Professoriate Stream

Blend of Traditional Scholarship & Professional Contributions or Traditional Scholarship & Scholarship of Teaching

***In the case where a Head has been a co-author or received research funds with the candidate, an Acting Head should be put in place for the entire review process including soliciting the referee letters.***

*It is recommended that Heads contact potential referees to determine whether the referee is willing to provide a letter of assessment and if so, to do so by the deadline provided, using* ***Template A****. They should also confirm at this time that they do not have a conflict of interest and are at arm’s length from the candidate. If they are or have been a collaborator and declare that they are nonetheless at arm’s length, it is imperative to know the reasons why they consider themselves at arm’s length. Managing a conflict at this step will prevent future delays to the file.*

*If the potential referee is willing to provide a letter of assessment by the deadline, then* ***Template B*** *can be used. The referees are to receive a copy of the candidate’s CV, two or three samples of scholarly work, such as publication reprints, unless the referee has alternate access to them, relevant criteria from the Collective Agreement and SAC Guide. The Teaching Dossier is not sent to referees except in the case of Educational Leadership Stream reviews (please use Referee Solicitation Letter template specifically for the Review of Teaching and Educational Leadership).*

*Note that cases can be based on one or a combination of three forms of scholarly activity (traditional scholarship, scholarship of teaching and professional contributions), but the form of scholarly activity must be determined in advance in discussion between the Head and the candidate so that the appropriate referees are chosen and appropriate criteria are applied at all stages of the review. The Referee Solicitation Letter templates in this document are* ***specifically for the Review of Blended cases****.*

*One sample of a letter of solicitation* ***(Template B)*** *is to be included in the file that moves forward to the President.*

*For New Hires at the rank of Assistant Professor, letters of reference from the candidate’s application package can be used, however, a follow-up letter is often required to obtain an explicit recommendation regarding the appointment rank and tenure. This letter can be adapted to the criteria for Assistant Professors as necessary.*

**TEMPLATE A:**

[Date]

Dear [referee name]:

RE: [candidate name]

### The University of British Columbia is considering [candidate name] for [decision option] in the Department/School of [XX]. On behalf of [candidate name], I am writing to ask if you are willing to provide an arm’s length assessment of [candidate name]’s scholarly and professional activity with particular emphasis on the quality and significance of these contributions in their field.

Referees are not normally expected to include relatives, close personal friends, clients, current or former colleagues, former thesis advisors, research supervisors, grant co-holders, or co-authors. If you should feel that your relationship to the candidate is such that it might affect your ability to evaluate them impartially, please decline writing an assessment. However, if you are or have been a grant co-holder or co-author with the candidate and feel that your relationship to the candidate is such that it will not affect your ability to evaluate them impartially, we would be grateful if you would explain briefly in what context you do consider yourself arm’s length.

We rely heavily on outside letters in making decisions of this nature. I realize that the effort required to write such letters is significant. I would therefore like to emphasize our deep gratitude for your assistance in this important task.

Please advise within the next week whether you are willing and able to provide us with this assessment and if yes, whether you can do so by [deadline]. If so, I will forward [candidate name]’s curriculum vitae, and selected publications to you as soon as possible. You can contact me at [email].

**If I do not hear from you by [next week deadline] I will assume that you are unable to provide a reference and will remove your name from the referee list.**

Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

xxxx

[Professor and Head/School Director]

**TEMPLATE B:**

[**Date**]

Dear [**referee name**]:

RE: [**candidate name**]

The University of British Columbia is considering [candidate name] for [decision option] in the Department/School of [XX]. I am writing to ask you to provide an arm’s length assessment of [candidate name]’s scholarly and professional activity with particular emphasis on the quality and significance of their scholarly and professional work in this field. [Select phrase options for Assistant or Associate rank depending on year of decision]. Please indicate in your letter whether you know the candidate, and if so, in what capacity.

This file is being considered on the basis of a blend of [traditional scholarship and professional contributions OR scholarship of teaching]. I would ask that you please make an **explicit recommendation** concerning [decision option] in the context of the UBC Collective Agreement, and based on the evidence made available to you. At UBC, it is understood that evidence of scholarly activity varies among disciplines and, as such, consideration is given to different pathways to academic and scholarly excellence. For the purpose of this promotion review, the candidate’s [professional contributions OR scholarship of teaching contributions] are to be considered equal in importance to their traditional scholarly contributions. I have enclosed an excerpt from the Collective Agreement that discusses the criteria for appointment, reappointment, tenure, and promotion at UBC.

We would be grateful for your candid and specific comments about all aspects of the candidate’s scholarly and professional achievements as set out below. We have provided questions concerning the type of information we would find helpful, but we hope you will also refer to any other matters you believe will assist in evaluating the candidate.

**PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS:**

***The nature of professional contributions can vary considerably. Evidence should be examined with the following considerations in mind: creativity or innovation, exemplary practice (if applicable), and the impact of the professional contributions to advancements in the field or discipline, the practice of health care or public health.***

1. To what degree are the candidate's professional contributions original, creative or innovative?
2. Does the candidate hold rare expertise in their field or stature that extends beyond their day-to-day clinical or professional practice (as applicable)?

1. How has the practice of health care or public health, in Canada or internationally, been influenced or advanced as a consequence of the candidate’s professional contributions, and by what means?
2. Please specifically address the merit and impact of the candidate’s professional contributions and published works which have not been published in a refereed system. For example, letters of impact, development and/or implementation of policies, practice guidelines, regulatory or government reports, professional organization recommendations, health or government policy development, or the setting of standards, and/or the introduction and dissemination of a new technology.
3. Apart from their traditional research outputs, do you know of any contributions the candidate has made to the development of their subject in Canada or elsewhere (e.g. through activities in learned societies, organizing conferences, etc.) and how significant have these activities been?

**SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING:**

***Under the definition of “Scholarly Activity”, scholarship of teaching ranks equally with scholarly***

***research. Scholarship of teaching is not synonymous with excellent teaching, rather, scholarship***

***of teaching makes a broader contribution to the improvement of teaching and learning beyond***

***one’s own teaching responsibilities. For the scholarship of teaching, scholarly activity may be***

***evidenced by originality or innovation, demonstrable impact in a particular field or discipline, peer***

***reviews, dissemination in the public domain, or substantial and sustained use by others.***

1. How do they meet the criteria of making a broader contribution to the improvement of teaching and learning beyond their own teaching responsibilities?
2. Has the candidate effectively demonstrated, through their CV and examples of work, they are a leader and/or have outstanding stature or expertise in the scholarship of teaching?
3. How would you describe the significance and impact of their scholarship of teaching?

**TRADITIONAL SCHOLARSHIP:**

***Published work serves as the primary evidence, and should be examined with three related considerations in mind: the quality of the venues in which the candidate’s published work appears; the quantity of the candidate’s published work; and the overall impact of the candidate’s work on their field or discipline.***

1. On the basis of the information available to you, including the caliber of the respective papers you have received and the quality of venues in which their published work appears, how do you compare the quality, and originality, of the candidate’s contributions to others you know in their general field?
2. Were you aware of the candidate's publications before now? In what ways are they referred to in other literature in the field?
3. Has the candidate effectively disseminated their traditional scholarship? By what means?
4. What is the impact of the candidate’s work? While evidence of impact includes journal impact factors and citation indices; please also provide additional insights. What would you consider to be reliable indication or evidence for the impact of the candidate’s work?

**OVERALL:**

**[For promotion/appointment to Associate Professor with tenure**:**]**

1. Is the candidate an independent scholar, that is, has the candidate achieved sufficient independence from previous supervisors and current senior colleagues?
2. How does the candidate demonstrate potential and promise of continuing their professional work and traditional scholarship?

**[For appointment as Professor with tenure]**

1. Has the candidate attained distinction in their discipline? Are their scholarly activities considered outstanding?
2. How does the candidate demonstrate potential and promise of continuing their professional work and traditional scholarship?

**[For promotion to Professor:]**

1. Has the candidate attained distinction in their discipline? Are their scholarly activities considered outstanding?

**[For all:]**

1. Please include any other information that you think will be relevant in evaluating the candidate’s academic and professional contributions (e.g., direct knowledge of the candidate's teaching effectiveness, administrative performance, etc.).
2. Would you recommend the candidate for [insert decision option]?

It is the policy of the University to treat as confidential letters of reference which it receives. It can, however, be required under Freedom of Information legislation to disclose the substance of any letter of reference but only where that can be done without disclosing the identity of the writer. In addition, if in the course of consideration of a candidate a negative recommendation is made within the University, the candidate is entitled to see a summary or an edited version of letters, but again the summary or editing is done so as not to disclose the identity of the writer. To facilitate this, you may precede your evaluation with a letter of transmittal such that the evaluation itself does not identify you or your institution. The letter of transmittal will be included as part of the evaluation file but excluded from a requested summary.

Please note that the enclosed Curriculum Vitae contains personal information about the candidate. Please keep it confidential, store it in a secure location, and destroy it after you complete your assessment.

We rely heavily on outside letters in making decisions of this nature. I realize that the effort required to write such letters is significant and that the rewards are very limited. I would therefore like to emphasize our deep gratitude for your assistance.

I look forward to receiving your letter of assessment by [deadline]. **If I do not hear from you by the deadline, I will assume that you are unable to provide the reference and will remove your name from the referee list.** You can contact me at [email].

Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

xxxx

[Professor and Head/School Director]

Enclosures

1. Excerpt from the Agreement

Professor - Article 3.09

Associate Professor - Article 3.08

Assistant Professor - Article 3.07

1. Professional Contributions – Section 3.1 (iii) of the UBC Guide to Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure Procedures
2. Scholarship of Teaching Section 3.1 (ii) of the UBC Guide to Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure Procedures
3. Samples of the candidate's scholarly work (unless the referee has alternative access to this work)
4. Curriculum Vitae
5. Full excerpt from the Agreement – Part 4, Articles 3 & 4 (Optional - For further context)
6. Table of Research Stream Criteria (Optional - For further context)