

SAMPLE SOLICITATION LETTER FOR OUTSIDE REFEREES (tenured and tenure-track) *(This letter may be tailored to the circumstances of the individual departments and college/ schools. Referees, however, must be informed that we cannot ensure the confidentiality of outside letters of reference under Texas law.)*

Dear :

The Department of _____ is considering Felix J. Attebury for tenure and advancement in rank to the position of Associate Professor at The University of Texas at Austin. We would appreciate your candid assessment of his scholarly contributions to assist our decision-making process. Excellent teaching is an important criterion for promotion, but our evaluation of teaching is being carried out separately, and we are asking you only for information about his scholarly distinction. A copy of the candidate's curriculum vitae is enclosed.

Under separate cover, we are sending you a package of Professor Attebury's recent publications. We would like your assessment of these works and your answers to these specific questions:

1. Do you know Professor Attebury, and if so, for how long and under what circumstances?
2. How would you assess the contribution to your discipline made by Professor Attebury's publications? Which publications would you judge to be the most significant, and why?
3. How would you assess Professor Attebury's development as scholar/researcher compared with others in your field who are at a similar state of development?
4. Would Professor Attebury be competitive for tenure and promotion in your department?
5. Would Professor Attebury's promotion to a tenured position have the effect of strengthening the department greatly, or somewhat; maintaining the standards of the department; or weakening the standards of the department somewhat, or significantly?

We would be grateful for any additional comments you might have.

Under the laws of the State of Texas, Professor Attebury has the right to request to see any materials in his personnel file, including your letter. Members of our faculty and internal review committees who see your letter as part of the promotion process will hold the comments you make in confidence, however.

For your comments to receive full consideration, we will need to have a letter from you no later than September 1, 2008. A facsimile by that date is acceptable if followed by an original letter with your signature within a few days. Please enclose a copy of a short version of your curriculum vitae or résumé (preferably no longer than one page) or the URL for your Web site where we may obtain this information. If you have questions, please call me at the number given on the letterhead.

We thank you for your time and assistance with this important matter. As faculty members, we realize that the amount of time required to do a thoughtful review is considerable.

Very truly yours,

B. Jordan Griffith
Professor and Chair

Enclosure