

APPENDIX III
LETTER TO ALUMNI

Dear _____:

You are invited to participate in a formal review of the teaching capability and effectiveness of Professor _____.

Although you have left Union and gone on to other endeavors, your opinions and experiences while you were a student here remain important to us. Therefore, you have been selected as a part of a random sample of alumni invited to participate in a formal review of the teaching capability of _____, Assistant Professor of _____ in connection with his or her tenure review. Our records show that you took one or more courses with Prof. ____ during your time at Union.

Nothing is more important to the vitality of an academic institution than the maintenance of a strong and committed faculty. Therefore, the College must conduct thorough and fair evaluations of faculty performance to ensure that faculty quality remains high. The College recognizes the right of the student to participate in the evaluation process. In turn, there is a strong hope on the part of the College that current and former students will exercise this right when asked to participate and will do so in a thoughtful manner. Your views and those of your fellow students and alumni constitute the major portion of the evidence used in the teaching evaluation.

As a guide to aid you in preparing your written evaluation, the committee asks that you reflect on the questions below before you begin to write. Your letter should then address any or all of those questions that seem appropriate based on your experience. Please feel free to include additional information that you believe is pertinent to the evaluation but that is not covered in the guide questions. However we ask you not to make any comment on whether you believe that Prof. _____ should be tenured. If you were among those writing a senior thesis under Prof. _____'s direction, please make it a point to comment candidly upon that experience, emphasizing especially the quality of Prof. _____'s advice and the value of the thesis as a learning experience.

1. What did you perceive to be the major strengths and weaknesses of Prof. _____'s teaching? Did you find him/her to be sufficiently knowledgeable in the subject area? Was he/she generally prepared? Were his or her lectures and discussions adequately organized?
2. Was your academic performance adequately evaluated by Prof. _____? Did you find that his or her course(s) presented a sufficient academic challenge? Was the course taught in such a way that your ability to think critically and analytically was markedly improved?
3. Would you take another course from Prof. _____, assuming that your schedule would permit?
4. Has what you learned in your course(s) with Prof. _____ been useful to you? If so, in what sense? Can you imagine what difference it might make to you in your future endeavors that you took a course or courses with Prof. _____?
5. How would you characterize the rapport that Prof. _____ had with his or her class? Was he/she available to provide help outside of class if and when you needed it?

When answering these questions it is important that you include, wherever possible, specific reasons for your responses. These responses should be frank but devoid of cruelty and gossip.

The committee would like to thank you in advance for the time you will spend in this vitally important process. In order for this review procedure to be effective, the College must depend upon your willingness to participate and to exercise mature judgment.

Sincerely,