

June 20\_\_

Dear Carleton {Student or Graduate}:

Professor \_\_\_\_\_ in the Department of \_\_\_\_\_ is a candidate for tenure at the College, and I write to ask you to fill out a questionnaire evaluating their teaching. You have been chosen to participate in this review by a process described in [this excerpt from the Carleton Faculty Handbook](#).

Student evaluations are a very important part of the review process. Along with the appraisal of a candidate's performance by both our own faculty and outside scholarly reviewers and the observation of a candidate's classroom teaching by faculty colleagues in their department, student feedback provides primary evidence upon which the decision is made. If tenured, a faculty member becomes a permanent member of the Carleton faculty, barring extraordinary misconduct or incapacity, until retirement.

In answering these questions, please consider the full range of contexts in which you knew Professor \_\_\_\_\_. Please comment on how they helped you develop various skills (writing, speaking, lab skills, etc.) as well as content knowledge.

*Survey link to questionnaire inserted here.*

Under the guidelines adopted by the faculty and the Board of Trustees, student evaluations will be read by the candidate under review **after your name and address have been removed**. They are then made available to the tenured members of the candidate's department and to the members of the Faculty Personnel Committee, a faculty group that deliberates with the President and the Provost, about the tenure decision. **Only the Provost of the College and the President will see your name attached to your response.**

The thoroughness of our tenure reviews is vitally important to the future health of the College and to the effectiveness of the teaching here. For this reason, we depend upon you to respond fully and candidly to the questionnaire. Please rely for your answers on your own experience of Professor \_\_\_\_\_, and not on hearsay from other students. Because different students find different faculty or teaching techniques to be effective, we value every opinion; we need your response to ensure as fair and accurate a judgment as possible.

**To be certain that it will be included in our evaluations, we must receive your response by DATE.**

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Becky Krogh, Academic Project Specialist [by email](#) or at 507-222-4311.

Thank you on behalf of the College and Professor \_\_\_\_\_ for taking the time to respond thoughtfully to this request.

Sincerely,

### **Excerpt from Carleton College *Faculty Handbook***

The College encourages the involvement of students in its faculty and curricular decisions. Students take part in the hiring process within departments and in the review and evaluation of courses, programs, and departments through the departmental curriculum committees, the Education and Curriculum Committee, departmental reviews, and other departmental and College-wide committees. All instructors have the right, and are encouraged, to secure student evaluations of their own courses.

In formal reviews for tenure or reappointment, student involvement comes through the use of special student evaluation forms distributed and processed by the provost. For this evaluation, a list of twenty to thirty names of current and recently graduated students is solicited from the faculty member concerned. A second list of names is obtained by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment through a random sample, with appropriate mechanisms to make the sample broadly representative of the diversity of students who have taken the faculty member's courses. (Any student who has been the subject of a judicial proceeding involving the faculty member being evaluated will be barred from participating in this review at the latter's request.) After showing the covering letter and the evaluation form to the faculty member being evaluated, the provost writes to each student whose name appears on the lists, requesting the student's evaluation of the faculty member. Evaluations from current students are normally sought when students are away from the campus.

After the evaluations have been received, the provost prepares a copy of the letters, deleting the student's name and address and other material in the letter that is not appropriate to the review. The concerned faculty member is then given the opportunity to read the edited letters in a manner approved by the provost's office. At a later date, the faculty member meets with the provost to discuss the letters. The edited letters are also made available to the tenured members of the department and to the Faculty Personnel Committee. Only the provost and the president see the full letter from each student.

Student evaluations provide evidence to assist all participants in the process in making their decision. Used with sensitivity, they ought also to provide valuable assistance to the faculty member in evaluating his or her own teaching.