

Guidance on Chair/Academic Associate Dean Recommendation Letter

Most support letters/memos are just a page long, but there are some necessary ingredients for campus review that should be covered in a sentence or two. Generally NOT necessary is a summary of the applicant's credentials or research plan from their application form. However, in your letters, please do answer the following:

- Have you consulted with the Dean/Associate Dean regarding alternate course scheduling? How will you cover the absence? Examples:
 - “The department will arrange for another faculty member to cover the courses.”
 - “The courses Professor X teaches are electives that can be cancelled for one semester.”
 - “The courses are required but can be moved to another semester and Professor X will teach them upon return from sabbatical.”

- Alternatively, please explain if you have any concerns about course coverage during the sabbatical. Examples:
 - “We have several graduating students who absolutely need Professor X's course.”
 - “We have nobody else qualified to teach this course.”
 - “Professor X is among three applicants in our department this year, and my assessment of our teaching capacity is that we can only schedule two sabbaticals.”

- Can you explain (brief and succinct is fine) the value of the proposed sabbatical project for the applicant's career path? Example: “This project will help to produce the research necessary for Professor X's promotion application to Full Professor”.

- Can you confirm your independent judgement that the sabbatical plan as proposed meets the campus criteria (focused on research/creative activity rather than teaching/service; the applicant will return to FT teaching in the following year, etc.)?

- Finally, please add any additional information that describes other concerns about the sabbatical, or that you think will help to explain the reason for any unusual plans, such as a split sabbatical, a sabbatical coordinated with an unpaid leave of absence, etc.