

SOLICITATION LETTER TO BE USED FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

Dear *Dr. X*

I am writing to enlist your appraisal in our efforts to promote *Dr. Y* to the level of *Associate Professor* in the Department of *Philosophic Medicine* at the University of Michigan Medical School. *His/her* area of scholarly focus is *vector physiology* and *his/her* clinical arena is that of *neurological orthopaedics*.

We would appreciate your appraisal of *Dr. Y*.

- 1) How do you know *Dr. Y*? (In what capacity and for how long?)
- 2) Has *Dr. Y's* scholarship impacted his/her field or resulted in seminal advance?
- 3) How would you describe *Dr. Y's* scholarly and professional niche and how would you rank *Dr. Y* in terms of peers?
- 4) Is *he/she* involved in significant national peer organizational service—and how would you characterize these activities on committees, as reviewer, editor, etc.?
- 5) We would appreciate your comments on educational skills, interdisciplinary achievements, unusual commitment to diversity, and national/international volunteerism.
- 6) Would this individual be likely to achieve equivalent promotional rank at your institution at this time?

To help you in this assessment we are enclosing the following items. a) Our Medical School's specific criteria for promotion to the *Associate Professor* rank. b) Five papers selected by *Dr. Y*. c) Highlights by the author on those five papers (bibliographic notes). d) The curriculum vitae of *Dr. Y*. Any additional comments you would like to make would be welcome as well. Thank you so much for your efforts.

Questions sometimes arise about the confidentiality of external review letters. Your letter will be reviewed by senior faculty at the University of Michigan. We do not, as a general practice, provide candidates with access to promotion files without specific written request. In that event, by redacting and reordering the paragraphs from the entire set of external letters (removing all names, institutional affiliations and other identifying information) we attempt to protect confidentiality. Legal considerations have threatened even this degree of confidentiality in the event of investigation of alleged discrimination by a federal or state agency or a lawsuit by an unsuccessful candidate. Under such circumstances, a candidate may be able to obtain access to his/her own promotion files, as well as the files of other candidates, successful or unsuccessful. We can assure you that we will not release your letter unless required to do so by law or court order.

We request that you return your review to us by *[date]*. I recognize this is labor intensive work, but unbiased external peer evaluation guarantees the excellence that society relies upon in academic medicine.

Best wishes and many thanks.