Dear Dr YYYYYYY:

Dr. ZZZZZZZZZ is being considered for promotion to the rank of XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX with tenure/without tenure at the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

An important contribution to this review process is made by the highly qualified, external evaluators who provide independent letters of assessment of the candidate’s research, scholarship, and professional/clinical service.

I am writing with the hope that you will agree to provide such an evaluation to help us better assess the strengths of Dr. X. These letters become a part of the dossier that is reviewed by the appointments, promotions, and tenure committees of the Department and School.

Independent, external reviewer must meet the following requirements:
- Must not have not served as a mentor to the candidate or a collaborator on scholarly work.
- Must not be a current or former colleague who interacted with, or continues to interact with, the candidate in a significant way.
- Currently holds an academic rank equal to, or higher, than the rank being sought by the candidate.

If you are willing to write an external evaluation by DATE, please respond by filling out the enclosed/attached reviewer form return it to me. I will then provide you with Dr. XXX's dossier along with information about our promotion process to assist you in writing your letter.

Thank you for considering this request. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Chair, Department of XXXXXXXX
Instructions for Completing Letter of Evaluation for Promotion/Tenure Candidates

We secure external letters to obtain a thorough and complete evaluation of the candidate’s scholarly work and its impact by experts in the candidate’s field of study. External letters are considered confidential and are not shared with the candidate unless required by a legal or administrative process.

External letter writers are not expected to assess the teaching strength of the candidate. Nor should they offer an opinion as to whether the candidate should be tenured and/or promoted at GW or their own school.

Standards for promotion and tenure. A copy of our School’s Guidelines for Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure is included in this mailing.

Scholarship in our School is defined as those activities that systematically advance the teaching, research and/or practice of medicine, biomedical sciences, and/or health sciences through rigorous inquiry that:

- are significant to the profession or discipline
- lead to new knowledge or new insights or approaches to existing knowledge, and
- are disseminated for evaluation and critical review by other scholars.

In addition to traditional research, also called the scholarship of discovery, the faculty in the SMHS equally values the scholarship of integration, application, teaching, and learning.

Our School also recognizes the importance of multi-disciplinary and team science in scholarship. When scholarship pursued in this fashion results in multi-authored publications, the role in the project, rather than order of authorship is regarded as most important.

Participation in multi and interdisciplinatory collaborations is recognized not only by publication but also by providing specific expertise to address a research question and by leadership of one or more teams. The role and effort of the candidate along with the accomplishments and success of the team should be detailed by the candidate in the CV and in the scholarship narrative statement.

Scholarship is assessed by several measures, including, but not limited to, the number of publications in peer-reviewed quality journals; reviews, books, book chapters and monographs; the number and prominence of invited seminars and lectures; and service on editorial boards and grant review panels. The overall quality of publications takes precedence over their quantity. The impact of publications on the profession, number of citations, and awards or special recognition of the work by others are important. The number of grants received may provide peer-reviewed evidence of the candidate’s work and creativity.

The quality and quantity of scholarly products are expected to increase with increasing academic rank. Scholarly activities (routine teaching assignments, participation in conferences, using the literature to inform your teaching and practice, etc.) are not the same as scholarship as defined above and are not sufficient to demonstrate excellence in scholarship. As noted above, our School does equally value other types of scholarship (scholarship of integration, application, and teaching and learning) in addition to traditional discovery research.
Service. Service is a part of academic life and some level of meaningful participation is expected of all faculty at all levels. While excellence in service alone is not sufficient for promotion to any level in the tenure track, excellence in professional and/or clinical service may be a major criterion for promotion in the non-tenure track. The quality and quantity of service are expected to increase with increasing academic rank. Examples of achievements in service may include:

- Professional Service;
- Clinical Service (including recognition by peers and patients, professional contributions to patient care, and professional contributions to enhancing the profession);
- Public Service and Advocacy; and
- Institutional Service provided to the division, department, school, and university.

Establishing independence of external reviewers. University guidelines state that the external reviewers may not be:

- the candidate’s dissertation director;
- a collaborator on scholarly work with the candidate (for example, co-author), or
- a mentor, program director, or colleague from a different institution (current or former) with whom the candidate has interacted with in a significant way during their time at the institution or continues to interact with since leaving.

Our School uses an external evaluator form to establish the independence of reviewers. If you have any questions about your ability to serve as an independent reviewer, please do not hesitate to contact the Chair of the candidate’s department.