

## Example Letter to External Reviewer

Dear XXXX,

Dr. XXXX, an (Assistant/Associate) Professor in the Department of XXXX at Auburn University, is being considered for [tenure and] promotion to the rank of [Associate/Full] Professor. As part of our procedure for assessing the quality of Dr. XXXX's scholarly activity, we seek the judgment of scholars [individuals] like you in [his/her] area of specialization. I would thus like to request your help in providing comment on the quality and reputation of [his/her] work. I have enclosed a copy of Dr. XXXX's curriculum vitae for your review.

Auburn University's *Faculty Handbook* states: "Promotion is based on merit. A candidate for promotion should have acceptable achievements in the areas of 1) teaching and/or outreach and 2) research/creative work. He or she is further expected to demonstrate over a sustained period distinctive achievement in one of these areas or achievement in both areas comparable to that of successful candidates in the discipline in the past five years" (Section 3.6.1). To help assess the quality and reputation of the candidate's research/creative work, confidential external letters are requested from outside evaluators.

The *Faculty Handbook* further states, "These evaluators shall be people outside of Auburn University who are nationally acknowledged experts in the candidate's field and can comment on the quality and reputation of the candidate's work. If the evaluator is from an academic institution, he or she shall be of higher academic rank than the candidate. Letters from the candidate's major professor for a graduate degree, from former graduate students, and from ongoing research partners are unacceptable. Evaluators may be associated with industry, government agencies, foundations, etc." (Section 3.6.5.C.3.E).

I would appreciate notification as to whether or not you can provide the review. Please let me know by email [email address inserted here] or by telephone [phone number inserted here] at your earliest convenience. If you are able to assist, I'll send you several of Dr. XXXX's publications, information on departmental standards for tenure and promotion to [Associate/Full] Professor, and any other materials you might desire. Given university tenure and promotion committee deadlines, I will need the review no later than [date inserted here].

I know reviewing the material and writing recommendations of this type is time consuming and am thus most grateful for any assistance you can provide. Your comments will be an important component of the evaluation process. Thank you again and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Name, Ph.D.  
Professor and Chair