DATE

Name

Title

University

Address

Dear Dr. [REFEREE],

We are requesting your assistance on behalf of the [DEPARTMENT] of the Keck School of Medicine of USC in a frank evaluation of the work of [FNAME][LNAME], who is being considered for [APPOINTMENT/PROMOTION] to the rank of [ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR/PROFESSOR] OF [DEPARTMENT] with the designation of Clinical Scholar. If you are able to provide a letter of evaluation, please include a short biographical sketch about yourself, and describe any professional and personal relations you have had with the candidate.

The Clinical Scholar designation, which is not a tenure-track or tenured position, is a high honor awarded by the President of the University. The designation requires a review process as rigorous as the process used for tenure decisions, though with different criteria which are indicated by the questions we ask below. Please let me know as soon as possible whether or not you are able to assist us by reviewing the enclosed materials and submitting a letter of evaluation by [DATE] at [EMAIL].

I have enclosed a curriculum vitae, personal statement, our definition of “Clinical Scholar,” and a sample of publications. We are requesting an analytical evaluation, rather than general praise or advocacy. Please also know that we seek your evaluation at an early stage in our process and that we have not yet made a decision. We seek your frank and candid assessment of whether Dr. [LNAME] is recognized at the national or international level for leadership in important translational or clinical research?

Examples of the information we seek, as appropriate to this case:

Has [HE/SHE/THEY] provided substantial intellectual input and leadership to large collaborative research efforts or clinical trials? Has the candidate been a member of NIH study sections or advisory boards?) Are Dr. [LNAME]’s scholarly peer-reviewed publications of appropriate quality and quantity for the proposed rank, and have they had an impact on the field? Has Dr. [LNAME]’s clinical or translational research or have [HIS/HER/THEIR] clinical trials been recognized by significant funding support from appropriate sources over a period of years (e.g., pilot studies or large multicenter studies funded through peer-reviewed federal or non-federal sources)? Has [HIS/HER/THEIR] research funded by contract with companies resulted in significant publications in peer-reviewed journals? Has Dr. [LNAME] demonstrated leadership at the national or international level in improvement of clinical care (e.g., has [he/she/they] established residencies or fellowships for advanced practice, or has [HE/SHE/THEY] been a member of consensus panels, task forces, or the U.S. Public Health 50 Service to establish and publish guidelines for patient care management, diagnostic criteria for new diseases, standards for clinical testing, etc.?

*[****If the reviewer is a collaborator, the following item should be added:***

*As you have collaborated with Dr.[LNAME], please help us to understand [HIS/HER/THEIR] particular contribution(s) to the collaborative work.] Based on your knowledge of Dr. [LNAME]’s work and accomplishments, can you give examples of institutions (you may include your own) where [HE/SHE/THEY] would be judged to have met the criteria for the award of the most similar type of appointment or promotion? What aspect of Dr.[LNAME]’s work leads you to this conclusion?*

Your letter will be treated as a confidential document to the full extent allowed by law. It will be studied closely by school and University promotion committees and officials, and it is intended to be read by no one else. Please help us reach an informed decision about whether USC should offer Dr. [LNAME] this [APPOINTMENT/PROMOTION].

Sincerely,