Sample Supervisor Letter of Support I:
Assistant to Associate

Note: This is a sample letter of support from the supervisor of someone seeking promotion from Assistant to Associate. Every AP's role and career trajectory are unique, and letters must be tailored to their circumstances. As such, the sample letter that follows shows the level of detail and kind of examples that are useful as a candidate's application is evaluated. Letters of support are optional but are strongly recommended as part of the overall promotion nomination package.

[Date]

Dear Academic Professional Peer Review Promotion Advisory Committee,

I would like to submit this letter as support for [name]'s nomination for promotion. I am [name]'s current supervisor. [Name] is currently at an "Assistant" level, and he solidly meets the criteria for the "Associate" level.

Overall Experience

[Name] has 13 years of professional customer support experience, and 5 years of professional IT experience. What has impressed me most about [name] is how he takes knowledge and experience from previous roles, and applies them in new ways. His career has progressed from first-contact help desk to managing larger scale workstations, and now he administers large scale server systems and infrastructure. Along the way, he has kept the strong customer service skills necessary for success at the help desk, applied scaling solutions learned while managing hundreds of desktop, laptop, and lab computers to higher-impact server management, and has expanded his skill set to deliver a high level of support across multiple domains instead of becoming a deep expert in a narrow focus of IT support.

Professional Service

[Name] has served on several cross-campus committees and work groups since joining the University. At the [department], he worked on an end point virtual team to deliver SCCM – a centralized configuration and deployment framework for Windows computers – to the college with the help of several different units. He carried this experience into his role at the Library, adapting practices from [department] to fit in with the needs of the Library.

He also joined an unofficial team of experts for Splunk log analysis, helping other colleges and departments setup their systems to automatically move logs to the cloud Splunk service. This work is essential for satisfying Board of Trustees security requirements, as explained at cybersecurity.illinois.edu, and it could not have been accomplished without collaboration

1Click here to enter text.

between Technology Services and academic units. [Name]'s work has helped maintain the Library's reputation as a leader in security and privacy.

Within the Library, [Name] co-leads a dev-ops discussion group between the Library's infrastructure team and the repository developers (IMS and SCaRS). Through this flexible arrangement, Library IT is able to experiment with nascent technologies and applications without substantial administrative overhead.

Professional Knowledge
Although he doesn't deal with endpoints on a daily basis, [Name] sits in on the Workstation and Network Support group's weekly meetings. He provides guidance on SCCM configurations, and has helped extend some of the Library's server infrastructure management practices to the broader field of desktop, laptop, and public workstations we support.

[Name] has earned certifications in ITILv4 Foundations and AWS Solutions Architecture, and has applied this knowledge to daily tasks. He is a subject matter expert for Terraform and Ansible, technologies that are essential to managing the Library's IT infrastructure and the applications that depend on it. He is also a co-author for a presentation on the Medusa repository architecture for Open Repositories in Hamburg in 2019 [URL].

Institutional Leadership or Contribution
Dean Wilkin once complimented [unit] by saying that we used to have unexpected outages all the time, and now those have been cleaned up. [Name] bears much of the responsibility for this. When he started at the Library, his first project was to implement Nagios monitoring on our servers. Previous efforts had failed because we were inundated with unimportant alerts and information. [Name] was able to establish and test critical alerts, and cull the regular noise to manageable levels. This created a foundation for detecting and recovering from problems before they impacted Library patrons, faculty, and staff.

With the adoption of cloud technologies, we needed to drastically alter our monitor approach to work on a virtual platform. [Name] studied the dashboard tools available from Amazon Web Services, and customized alerts and reports to give us information on not just stability, but overall resource usage. These reports are sent up to the AUL for Digital Strategies, along with recommendations for modifying our resource allocation, which has helped keep costs in check as our applications grow.

Overall, [Name]'s contributions clearly merit the rank of Associate. I am excited to see him continue his work in virtual teams, and eager to have him take on more formal leadership roles as he continues to grow.

Sincerely,

[Supervisor]