



PRIOR TO EXTENDING AN OFFER:

Institutional Reference - Tenure Track:

In March 2024, the University of Michigan launched a program of institutional reference checks (IRC) for candidates selected for Associate Professor and Professor, with tenure, positions. These steps help to ensure that the University of Michigan can make an informed hiring decision while adhering to privacy and legal guidelines. **This IRC process is managed by Academic Human Resources.**

Detailed information about the two-year pilot program and process steps can be found on the AHR website: [Institutional Reference Checks Guide](#).

AAU Waiver (Tenure Track):

Requests for AAU waivers will be sent to the candidate's current institution from the provost's office, not from the hiring units. The requesting U-M unit should prepare a draft letter of request using **the template provided** which will then be sent from the provost. It is recommended for any casebook not submitted by April 1/August 1, that the unit begin the process of obtaining the AAU waiver. **This applies to all tenure-track, 9-month appointments, regardless of rank, and regardless of whether the candidate's home institution is an AAU member. Clinical, research, and 12-month appointments are not required to make the waiver request.**

All requests should be emailed to Provost.Fac.Acad.Affairs.Admins@umich.edu. The unit's dean will be copied on the communication sent to the institution to be notified once a response is received. The casebook should still be submitted to Academic and Faculty Affairs as soon as it is ready to begin the review process and ensure timely disposition. Final approval will be pending receipt of the AAU waiver from the faculty candidate's institution.

The university recognizes the guidelines set forth by the AAU, the Big Ten Academic Alliance, and the AAUP concerning recruitment of instructional faculty:

- Firm offers of appointments for the Fall Term should not be made after April 30, or the fourth month preceding the beginning of any other academic term (August 30 for the Winter Term) **without the AAU waiver response/agreement received from the candidate's home institution.** (Formal announcements of the new faculty appointment must wait until after approval from the Board of Regents.)
- An exception may be considered provided that the requesting unit at U-M has come to an agreement with the home institution on a new appointment effective date.

GENERAL NOTES:

Updates to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations require public universities to deliver digital content and applications in formats that meet recognized accessibility standards. As such, we expect that all items submitted to our office will adhere to [U-M Guidance on Compliance Requirements](#). It is the responsibility of the units to ensure that all items submitted, including promotion recommendations and casebooks, meet these accessibility requirements.

All senior hires require an Authorizations to Extend an Offer (AEO) for Instructional Tenure track, Research track, Clinical Instructional track, and must be approved by the provost* and president prior to an offer being extended to the candidate:

- **Instructional / Tenure Track**
 - a. Professor (with or without tenure)
 - b. Associate Professor (with or without tenure)
- **Clinical Instructional Track**
 - a. Clinical Professor (Professor of Practice)
 - b. Clinical Associate Professor (Associate Professor of Practice)
- **Research Track (co-reviewed and approved by OVPR)**
 - a. Research Professor
 - b. Research Associate Professor
- **Joint appointments**
 - a. Refer to the [Joint Academic Appointment Instructions](#) for the detailed process.
 - b. Dry, without effort, for current faculty or recruitments (*approved by the vice provosts and president*).
 - c. Joint, with effort, on the tenure track, requires the MOU (or draft) submitted with the casebook

All AEOs are reviewed by the vice provosts:

Once reviewed the AEO proceeds to the provost for their review and approval. If approved, the AEO is then sent to the president for final approval. The Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs (EVPM) should endorse all Medical School requests.

All requests for research professor and research associate professor require review and approval by the Office of the Vice President for Research:

- Address the dean's/director's letter to both the provost and the vice president for research.
- For research professors and research associate professors only, the provost's office also obtains a review by the vice president for research.

Once the AEO is approved, a pdf of the signed approval form is emailed to the submitting unit contacts.

For Instructional Tenure track appointments (both with and without tenure) the school/college contacts the candidate and makes the offer.

- Once the final offer has been accepted, the school/college prepares a Regents Communication (RC) and sends it to Academic Human Resources (trendell@umich.edu) for review.
- The approved final signed RC is uploaded to the unit's "Regents Communication" Dropbox folder.

For Research Professor track and Clinical Instructional track appointments only:

- Once the AEO is approved the school/college/research unit/academic units may proceed with the HR appointment process.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Upload a bookmarked PDF file of the following for each AEO to the Dropbox folder for your unit. Once uploaded to Dropbox, email our office at Provost.FAC.Acad.Affairs.Admins@umich.edu with the following information:

1. Candidate's name and degree suffix (MD, PhD, etc)
2. Department/Program
3. Any Administrative appointment (ex: Director, named professorship)
4. Requested Title (with/without tenure for Instructional track)
5. For tenure track, whether or not they have tenure (first time requires two reviewers)
6. Effective Date

It is also helpful to let us know if there are additional or extenuating circumstances (timeliness). Please communicate such concerns directly to our office as soon as possible. Metadata documents are not required for these requests. Feel free to contact the Academic and Faculty Affairs Office with any questions about the process at 763-4367 or email Provost.Fac.Acad.Affairs.Admins@umich.edu

A. Authorization to Extend Offer - Signature page

This is the approval sheet that becomes the cover of the final casebook for the Academic Human Resources record, and should document all aspects of the appointment. **This should be prepared by the requesting unit and included as the first page of the casebook.** There are different versions of this form on our [Recruitment, Hiring & Retention](#) webpage for research and for joint appointments.

1. Candidate Name, Degree Suffix
2. School/College
3. Proposed Title
4. Effective Date

B. Cover letter from dean/director

The cover letter should be written from an evaluative, not an advocacy, perspective and should present a balanced summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the case.

1. Effective date of the appointment.
2. Candidate's current title(s) and whether tenured or not.
3. Description of the candidate's experience and quality of teaching.
4. Description of the appointment in the context of the field and the specific needs of the school, college, and/or department. Also describe the relevance to the vision and mission of your unit and the university.
5. A clear description of the search process and the long-term hiring plans leading to the candidate's selection (including the nature of the search – e.g., open or targeted; composition of pool; information about candidates at each stage of the search).
6. Substantive description of the candidate's work and significant contributions to the field – this should be more than a listing of titles.
 - a. For Clinical track appointments coming from industry and not higher education (ex: professor of practice), in lieu of teaching experience, have the dean's memo include a brief statement on how the school/college/department will **monitor teaching effectiveness** and support the candidate in developing teaching and mentorship skills over the appointment year.

7. Summary of the evaluative comments of each unit's executive committee including the final vote tally without names, such as 4-2-0 (i.e., # of positive votes-# of negative votes-# of abstentions/recusals) of all faculty groups (search committee, departmental votes and/or executive committees) that voted on the requested potential hire according to your unit's hiring policies.
 - a. **For any abstentions, the reason must be given if known (ex: departmental affiliation, lack of knowledge) especially if there is a concern (state concern) or if unknown (ex: anonymous voting - reasons unknown).**
8. Do not identify reviewers by name or institution when quoting from an external reviewer, identify as Reviewer A, B, or C, etc. This also applies to identifiers for bookmarks.
9. If the regular (*not adjunct*) Instructional Tenure track, Research Professor track, or Clinical Instructional track appointment is offered in more than one unit, it should be handled simultaneously by all units. The cover letter requires the signatures of the deans/directors from all schools/colleges/research units/academic units where the individual will hold the Instructional Tenure track, Research Professor track, or Clinical Instructional track appointments, even if those are "dry" (0% fraction) appointments. Please indicate the fraction of effort for each title.
10. For appointments of a candidate as a tenured associate or full professor include a detailed justification of the recommendation to appoint with tenure at the relevant rank.
11. **The cover letter should address any concerns raised by reviewers and summarize committee discussion surrounding those issues.**

C. Chair's letter (if applicable)

Please provide any letters or reports from department or division chairs to the dean/director recommending the candidate's appointment. This letter should be similar to the deans/directors cover letter in scope and include substantive description of the hiring process within the department as well as any departmental votes. Please elaborate on any nuances of the specific case.

D. Candidate's current curriculum vitae

Check the accuracy and completeness of the information in the curriculum vitae (i.e., current title and academic standing), or any recent changes since the original CV was submitted as part of the application.

E. Evidence of experience and quality of teaching

1. Provide an explanation of the teaching evaluation system and where the candidate ranks in the system (quantitative evaluations on teaching).
2. Teaching evaluations should be summarized in this section. Please do not include individual student feedback, though we reserve the right to request individual evaluations by students, if needed.
3. Include a teaching statement from the candidate.
4. For an appointment on the research track: if the candidate has not taught formal classes and teaching evaluations are unavailable, provide 3-5 letters from mentees not currently under the candidate's supervision (e.g., former post-doc students) who can provide feedback on teaching and mentoring.
5. **For clinical track appointees without a record of relevant teaching experience (ex: professor of practice), include in the dean's memo a brief statement on how the school/college/unit will monitor teaching effectiveness and support the candidate's development of teaching and/or mentorship skills.**

[Additional Guidance on the Teaching/Mentoring Criteria for the Research Professor Track](#)

6. Supporting Elements of the AEO Casebook

- a. Include a research statement or statement about creative work from the candidate (if appropriate).
- b. Include a service statement (if appropriate).
- c. For AEOs for clinical track faculty from the health science schools and colleges, provide an estimated professional effort (%) dedicated to clinical care.
- d. If there are negative teaching evaluations and/or comments, we expect the candidate's teaching statement to indicate how they have reflected on the feedback received and adjusted their teaching methods accordingly.
- e. If teaching evaluation concerns are noted, chair and/or dean letters should summarize any steps taken to **monitor teaching** and support faculty in their teaching and any ongoing work, as appropriate.

7. Sample of Letter Sent to External Reviewers to Solicit Recommendations.

- Provide a copy of the letter template (solicitation letter) to the external reviewers asking for their evaluations. See the templates provided for the Instructional Tenure track, Clinical Instructional track, and Research Professor track for the basic required text/language to be used.
- Schools and colleges may add text to the language of the template; however, for legal reasons, they cannot delete any existing language.
 - It is the responsibility of the dean/director to ensure that department chairs, or the appropriate equivalent, follow the templates provided.
 - Also include, as an attachment with each solicitation letter, a description of the particular track(s) on which the faculty member is being hired.

8. Evaluation Letters by all External Reviewers.

1. At least five evaluation letters from “arm’s length” external reviewers are required, and more than five are highly desirable, except for faculty hired into the Clinical Instructional Track (detailed info below).
2. All external review letters received by the appointing unit(s) must be included. These letters should be from reviewers at or above the rank of the appointment being considered. If the circumstances necessitate letters from out-of-rank reviewers, those should be explained.
3. In addition to the above rank requirement, the following track requirements apply:
 - a. External reviewers who are tenured faculty can review a candidate being appointed to the Instructional Tenure track, Clinical Instructional track, and Research Professor track.
 - b. External reviewers who are Clinical Instructional track faculty can only review a candidate being appointed to the Clinical Instructional track.
 - c. External reviewers who are Research Professor track faculty can only review a candidate being appointed to the Research Professor track.

Note: If, for example, an external reviewer who is a Clinical Instructional track faculty were to review a candidate being appointed to the Instructional Tenure track, the letter from the reviewer would not be counted as one of the five required “arm’s length” letters.

4. Our goal is to achieve a balance of evaluative letters from external reviewers who have been suggested by the candidate and from reviewers who have been suggested only by the department. For the Instructional Tenure track and the Research Professor track, the five

required “arm’s length” letters must include at least two from reviewers suggested only by the school or department. This is not applicable to Clinical Instructional track appointments.

5. **Letters that do not explicitly address the track/rank for the appointment being sought will not count for the required arm’s length letters. Units are responsible for assuring they secure this specific information from external reviewers.**
6. There should be no more than two external reviewers from the same institution.
7. The external letters should be truly evaluative and at arm’s length. For candidates on the Instructional Tenure track or the Research Professor track, the arm’s length letters should be from persons who are outside the present institution of the candidate and who did not work or train with the candidate at other institutions.
8. Not at arm’s length letters provide value and can be especially helpful because the letter writers generally have a good sense of both the candidate and their work. If such letters are included, they must be in addition to the minimum requirement of five “arm’s length” letters. Ex:
 - a. Teachers, advisors, mentors, and current faculty colleagues
 - b. Co-authors and major research collaborators, or former faculty colleagues are also not “arm’s length” unless the most recent collaboration occurred over 10 years prior to the appointment.
 - c. We do not consider letters from persons who have served on a candidate’s thesis or dissertation committee to be arm’s length.
9. Please note that when both an outside reviewer and the candidate are members of the same large cooperative/research group that publishes abstracts and manuscripts with an expanded number of co-authors, the outside reviewer can be considered an arm’s length reviewer if he/she and the candidate have not personally interacted in the research effort. In these cases, we ask that the dean provide a statement noting the absence of a direct collaboration.
10. It is important that the Clinical Instructional track parallel the Instructional Tenure track and Research Professor track in that it is the regional/national impact on one’s field that should justify a senior academic rank. However, arm’s length letters from persons who may not be known to the candidate, but who have a clear sense of the significance of the candidate’s qualifications, are unlikely to tell the story insofar as teaching and clinical work are concerned. Therefore, it is allowable for Clinical Instructional track faculty AEOs only to have up to two of the five arm’s length evaluative letters from local sources. The two letters from local sources can be from the candidate’s current institution as long as the local sources are outside of the candidate’s department and have seen the clinical work and actual teaching but are not mentors or scholarly collaborators. At least three of the remaining letters would need to be arm’s length as ordinarily defined for the Instructional Tenure track and Research Professor track.
11. Non-academic reviewers (e.g., employed at the NIH or a major research institute) may be included in the five required arm’s length letters but only if it is stated that, for those individuals who do not typically hold an academic title, their rank is equivalent or higher to the academic rank for which the candidate is being considered.
12. An external letter from an emeritus/ta faculty member could be considered one of the five required arm’s length letters if it meets arm’s length criteria and if the faculty member is still academically active (e.g., still publishing) and is relatively recently retired.

Internal review letters (University of Michigan) are not required however, if letters were solicited, they must be included but will be considered not at arm's length.

13. Brief description of the credentials of each external reviewer and relationship to the candidate. Please list external reviewers alphabetically by last name, identifying each in sequence as Reviewer A, B, C, etc.

In this section of the AEO, include a cover sheet that includes the following listings:

- arm's length external reviewers who provided review letters
- non-arm's length external reviewers who provided review letters
- external reviewers who were asked to write a letter but declined and the reason
- any internal U-M reviewers

For the four reviewer categories:

14. List all external reviewers alphabetically by last name, grouped by arm's length, non-arm's length, and no response/declined.

15. Identify all external reviewers in sequence as Reviewer A, B, C, D, E, etc., (including reviewers who did not respond).

16. Include a brief bio on each reviewer (**confirm rank/tenure status on tenure track**):

- An abridged version (one short paragraph) on each reviewer should indicate the reviewer's position, fields of expertise, important contributions and standing in the discipline, appropriateness of the reviewer to provide input, as well as any close professional associations with the candidate. Additionally, please insert the short paragraph of the reviewer's biography in front of each external review letter, including designation of "arm's length" or "non arm's length" and whether the reviewer was suggested by the candidate or by the department.
- Designate each reviewer in the bio paragraph as "arm's length" or "non arm's length".
- Indicate whether the reviewer was suggested by the candidate or by the department.

17. If the new appointment is to be at the rank of Associate Professor, **without tenure**, or Professor, **without tenure**, please include a copy of the draft offer letter to the candidate.

18. When appropriate, include the Waiver of Posting from Human Resource Records and Information Services (HRRIS).

****The AEO request cannot be processed without each of the above items****

Any omissions of the required elements, or ambiguity in the information provided, will result in delays in the review and final approval process. Please feel free to reach out for content advice or clarification on these instructions at any time prior to submission. We are happy to help and can meet with your team via phone call or zoom to provide guidance.

- **NEW 2026: If the Regents Communication is submitted with a different appointment effective date than what was approved in the AEO, you must also notify our office by emailing the administrative team at Provost.Fac.Acad.Affairs.Admins@umich.edu**

FAQs on the Collection and Use of Applicant & Employee Demographic Data

CHECKLIST AUTHORIZATIONS TO EXTEND AN OFFER FOR:

- ☐ Professor (with and without tenure) / Associate Professor (with and without tenure)
- ☐ Research Professor / Research Associate Professor
- ☐ Clinical Professor / Clinical Associate Professor

[Refer to the AEO Guidelines for important details](#)

Upload a bookmarked PDF file of the following materials to the unit's designated AEO Dropbox folder.

Please include the following items in the order below:

1. Endorsement letter/memo from the dean/director (if joint appointments, co-signed by both deans/directors).
2. Chair's letter (if applicable).
3. Curriculum vitae.
4. Evidence of experience and quality of teaching to include a teaching statement and documentation of teaching effectiveness. (This should be in a summary or table form. Please do not submit individual student comments.)
5. Research statement (if appropriate).
6. Service statement (if appropriate).
7. Sample of Letter Sent to External Reviewers to Solicit Recommendations.
8. Brief description of the credentials of each external reviewer and relationship to the candidate.
 - a. Please also insert the description page/paragraph in front of each external reviewer letter.
9. External reviewer letters.
10. Internal reviewer letters (if solicited).
11. Memo of Understanding (MOU) for joint appointments with effort.
12. A copy of the draft offer letter for associate and professor **without tenure** appointments only.
13. AAU Waiver, if needed.
14. Waiver of posting from Academic HR.

AAU WAIVER TEMPLATE

(Will be copied on to Provost's Office Letterhead)

Date

Provost/Chancellor Name

Title

Institution

City/State/ZIP

(provide email)

Dear (Provost/Chancellor Name) :

The University of Michigan is seriously considering (Faculty Name), currently a/an (Title/Tenured) at (University/College), for an appointment as (Title/Tenured) in our (Department/School/College), (effective date). Accordingly, I am writing to request your waiver of the Associate of American Universities deadline of (April 30/August 30).

I sincerely regret the need to make this request so late in the academic year. Thank you for any courtesy that you may be able to extend. We look forward to receipt of your reply.

Sincerely,

Laurie K. McCauley, DDS, MS, PhD

cc: Institution Admin/HR (provide email)
U-M Unit Dean
U-M Unit Admin/HR
U-M Provost Office Faculty Affairs Admin