

Dr. Betty White
Chair, Search Committee
Delaware University

August 24, 2017

Dear Dr. White:

I am pleased to write this letter to endorse Bryan Smith's application for Assistant Professor in the Department XYZ at Delaware University. It has been a pleasure to work with Bryan during the past four years he has been a doctoral student in our program. I know him very well – I was his research adviser for the past two years and he was a student in one of my classes several years ago. He is a talented researcher in the area of health policy as well as a gregarious and enthusiastic colleague among his peers in our program.

Commented [RN1]: It is helpful to explain the relationship between you and the reference so reviewers can gauge how well the reference knows you.

Bryan's research focuses on issues of veterans with disabilities, using innovative advanced statistical analyses to generate findings that are relevant to the academic, policy, and practice communities. As his dissertation chair, I can attest that he will complete his dissertation and will graduate this May. Thus far, Bryan has received recognition from colleagues and peers for this work. He has received a student research award at our university and was selected as a junior fellow by the National Health Policy Association last year for this work. I expect that his findings will lead to a strong line of funded research. Indeed, he has already demonstrated to be a productive scholar. I have co-authored a paper of his that focused on the background of his dissertation and he has been a second author or three of my own publications. Bryan is a talented writer and is very good at time management to help get manuscripts submitted in an established time frame. He also has experience with grant writing. He had previously submitted an F31 grant to the NIH to support his dissertation work, which was scored.

Commented [RN2]: For job-related letters, giving reviewers a sense of what type of person you will be to work with is helpful.

Commented [RN3]: For job-related references, the reviewers may favor someone with a degree in-hand, rather than another who may still be ABD at the start of their appointment.

Commented [RN4]: Make sure you highlight any awards or recognitions you received.

Although I have not had the pleasure of observing Bryan's teaching, I am aware that he is a popular instructor with our undergraduate students. His teaching evaluations have consistently been positive. Bryan has also made regular appointments to meet with me to talk about ways of improving his approach to instruction, which attests to his sincere interest in teaching and his genuine care and concern for his students.

Commented [RN5]: If you are applying for a research-focused job/award, highlighting research first is important. If teaching is more of the interest of the reviewers, write about that first and then write a little less about research.

Commented [RN6]: Find ways of highlighting "almost" achievements. For instance, if you did not get a grant, but it was scored, you can say so. Or, if you were a semi-finalist in a competition.

In addition to research and teaching, Bryan has served as an officer for the university's graduate student association and regularly volunteers for university committees that require a student member. I believe that this demonstrates his potential to be a team player as well as his ability to balance research, teaching, and service, which is required for success on the tenure track.

Commented [RN7]: Here is a case where your reference might not have direct knowledge about your skills and abilities, but you can find publicly-available facts or personal experiences to fill in the gap.

It is without hesitation that I recommend Bryan Smith as a faculty member within your department. I believe he will excel at your university and be a wonderful addition to your faculty. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions.

Commented [RN8]: This goes back to the second comment made above.

Sincerely, Nicole Ruggiano