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To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Dr. Kenneth Schultz's application for tenure at the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT).

I currently serve as the Associate Dean for MBA and Masters Programs at the Wisconsin School of Business, and also hold the Procter & Gamble Bascom Professorship. I serve as a department editor for the Production and Operations Management Journal as well as for the Decision Sciences Journal. I have known Dr. Schultz for almost 15 years. We have co-edited a special issue at the Journal of Operations Management, and we have one co-authored published paper.

I believe that Dr. Schultz has made significant contributions in his career as a researcher. Specifically, he introduced the field of operations and supply chain management to the idea of state-dependent productivity – the speed with which people work in manufacturing or service queuing systems depends strongly on the (perceived) workload in the system. He has pursued this idea in different contexts, and has by now published thirteen papers in his career, eleven of which would classify as 'A' publications according to the influential UT Dallas Ranking (<https://jindal.utdallas.edu/som/the-utd-top-100-business-school-research-rankings/>). His research has inspired many other researchers to build on this idea; for example, a recently published paper that examines queuing policy in retail store checkout (i.e. pooled vs. separate queues across checkout counters) would have been impossible without his contributions. Similarly, researchers in healthcare operations have looked at how the workload in a hospital influences service workers and healthcare outcomes. Quite honestly, for many tenure cases that come across my desk, I have a hard time identifying their unique career contribution. Not so for Ken Schultz – I know and can define exactly what he contributed to the field. This unique career contribution, together with his overall research productivity, would likely qualify him for tenure at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

I believe that this significant contribution outlined above should also qualify him for tenure at AFIT. Studying the resumes of other tenured faculty members at AFIT, I cannot help but notice that with one exception, none of them have published in 'A' journals according to the UT Dallas list. Reading through the titles and abstracts of papers – particularly the more highly cited ones – I would also dare to say that Dr. Schultz's unique contribution to the field is certainly on par, if not stronger than the contributions of his tenured colleagues at AFIT.



Why he would be denied tenure, given his performance in comparison to the performance of his tenure colleagues, is thus incomprehensible to me.

Let me elaborate that there is a quantitative and a qualitative side to career contributions. From a quantitative side, we usually count the number of 'A' level publications that a candidate has produced. What exactly is an 'A' is a bit up to the School, but there is a rising consensus that the journals included in the UT Dallas Ranking, specifically Management Science, Operations Research, the Journal of Operations Management, Manufacturing and Service Operations Management and Production and Operations Management constitute A level journals in our field. Prof. Schultz has 11 publications in these outlets; his entire set of tenured colleagues has, I believe, 1 publication in these outlets. Note that the distinction between A and non-A journals is important; A level journals are highly selective in terms of what they publish, and make authors go through several rounds of revisions before anything is acceptable for publication. Getting an A level publication can be as much as 2-3 times as much work as getting a B or C level publication.

From a qualitative side, we generally evaluate the unique aspects of a person's work. Have the ideas that this person has generated influenced the field? In Prof. Schultz's case, this is a clear yes. As elaborated above, his work has inspired many other researchers, and he was paramount in the foundation of the field of behavioral operations – the study of operational systems from a human-centered, non-rational perspective. From a qualitative side, his work is thus at least on par with his tenured colleagues at AFIT.

I also wanted to comment on the choice of one of his reviewers for tenure – Prof. David King, now at Florida State University (formerly at Iowa State University). Prof. King works in a different area than Dr. Schultz. He is a researcher in Management & Strategy, whereas Dr. Schultz is in the area of Operations & Supply Chain Management. The academic journals, professional norms, research methods, and main conferences are quite different between these two areas. While Dr. King holds an MS degree in Supply Chain Management, this hardly qualified him to be a research active faculty member in this area. There are doubts how Prof. King would be able to value the contributions of Dr. Schultz.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

(Enno Siemsen)