

October 25, 2010

Patricia Dolan Mullen, DrPH
Professor, Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences
Chair, Faculty Tenure & Promotion Committee
The University of Texas School of Public Health
7000 Fannin, UCT Suite 2522
Houston, TX 77030

RE: Tenure consideration for Alanna Morrison, PhD

Dear Dr. Mullen:

I am offering my opinion about Dr. Alanna Morrison's tenure decision based on the guidelines and documentation mailed to me.

I am a professor of epidemiology and a cardiovascular epidemiologist for 30 years. I have mentored and evaluated many junior faculty.

I have known Dr. Morrison for perhaps 10 years through the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) Study. She and I have been on several ARIC manuscript writing teams. Most of our interaction has been via the Internet, but we have met and interacted at a few meetings.

Scholarship

Dr. Morrison is an excellent genetic epidemiologist. She has 39 peer-reviewed publications, particularly in the area of hypertension and stroke. Most of these are in very good clinical or genetic journals. The most notable and creative of these are her papers on a cardiovascular genetic risk score, on sodium-lithium counter-transport, and on genome-wide association findings for hypertension and heart failure. Her overall publication record is high quality and sustained. Dr. Morrison also has an impressive record of obtaining funding for her research. She has been a member of grant review groups and is consistently invited to review manuscripts for journals. Therefore, she clearly has attained a national reputation and has achieved significant scholarly accomplishment.

Teaching & Service

Dr. Morrison is leading two graduate level courses at your institution. This is a reasonable contribution to teaching as an Associate Professor. She has had a number of master's students and has served on PhD committees. I would have expected an Associate Professor, like Dr. Morrison, to have graduated her own PhD student. Perhaps this was not possible while Dr. Morrison was in a non-tenure track position previously. Dr. Morrison's service record seems

satisfactory. Thus, I would say Dr. Morrison has displayed excellent institutional citizenship and added value to your University's core mission. I expect you are happy to have her on your faculty.

Conclusion

Compared to her peers at top universities, I would rate Dr. Morrison to be above average in grant-getting and near the middle in most other aspects. This record would undoubtedly qualify for tenure at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. I therefore support your decision to award Dr. Morrison tenure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Aaron Folsom". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Aaron R. Folsom, MD
Professor

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