

To: Dr. Kevin Spicer

From: The Rank, Promotion and Tenure Committee – Rich Vaughan (Chair, COBHA), Srimani Chakravarthi (COE), David Gordon (COBHA), Laura Honegger (CAS), and Jes Monu (member-at-large)

CC: Dr. Beth Roth, Provost; Dr. Elizabeth McDermott (CAS Dean)

Date: December 15, 2023

Re: Recommendation for promotion to Professor for Dr. Kevin Spicer

### **Vote and Recommendation**

The Rank, Promotion, and Tenure Committee reviewed the application for Dr. Kevin Spicer for promotion to the rank of Professor. The committee voted unanimously to recommend Dr. Spicer for promotion to Professor based upon his portfolio that provided evidence of his excellence in teaching, service and scholarship, and his eligibility for promotion to Professor as outlined in Policy manual, Section II, 2.14.1-2.

### **Teaching**

Dr. Spicer demonstrates a commitment to high quality teaching and course development as an instructor in higher education. Dr. Spicer has served as an associate professor of English since awarded tenure and promotion to associate professor in 2018; he joined USF as an assistant professor in 2012. Dr. Spicer is a recipient of a Distinguished Teaching Award in 2017, Dr. Spicer teaches undergraduate general education courses, courses for majors in the English department, and graduate courses he developed in collaboration with the College of Education's REAL program. In Dr. Elizabeth McDermott, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, recommendation letter she states, "Dr. Spicer is also a much sought-after mentor for USF students across the disciplines. It would be unusual to wander the halls and not see Dr. Spicer's office door ajar with a student or two in conversation about a text they just read and want to understand." Several members of the RPT committee also commented on Dr. Spicer always being visible in his office mentoring students. Dr. Lisa Hedrick describes Dr. Spicer's affinity for mentoring students who are looking for a deeper engagement with their studies at USF: "Dr. Spicer challenges these students by engaging them in discussion and argumentation. He offers alternative views. He pushes back on what the students already think or believe. He brings them into the conversation, listening to them as well as asking them to actually *think bigger*. For these students, Dr. Spicer's tutelage, engagement, mentorship is pivotal to their education." Dr. Spicer's course evaluations in both teacher and course rating are consistently amount the highest in the College of Arts and Sciences and display a commitment to his students and continually improving his courses.

### **Scholarship**

Dr. Spicer has recently collaborated on scholarship with two alumni, both of whom began their research with him as former USF students. The first essay, co-written with William Mastin and is

under review at *The Hemingway Review*. His second essay is with MaKenzie Munson and is forthcoming in *The Routledge Handbook of Crime Fiction and Ecology* due out later this month. Dr. Spicer has mentored both former students in their pursuit towards a doctorate degree. Dr. Spicer also recently published an article in *Fafnir: Nordic Journal of Science Fiction and Fantasy Research*, as well as a book review in *Cider Press Review*. Dr. Spicer's experience in the field of scholarship also pertains to his mentorship of English Department faculty. Dr. Ioanes writes, "Not only has Dr. Spicer read nearly all of the scholarship I have produced since my time at USF, but he has directly shaped my research through these conversations." Dr. Spicer and fellow faculty member Dr. Ioanes attended the South Bend Digital Humanities Research Institute in 2019. Dr. Spicer has built on that experience to teach himself how to code and apply his new knowledge into his teaching, as well as departmental workflows and mentorship of students. Dr. Spicer's commitment to lifelong learning and scholarly activity since receiving tenure in 2018, fully supports the expectations required for promotion to full professor.

### **Service**

Dr. Spicer has served as Department Chair of English and Foreign Languages between 2018-2022; he then resumed the chair position this fall semester 2023. During his time as chair has led the planning and implementation of the six graduate-level courses for teachers. He directed the development of six courses for the REAL program, which would credential high school English teachers to teach dual enrollment College Writing courses. Dr. Spicer and Dr. Ioanes also developed the Digital Humanities curriculum and ushered their work successfully through major through university governance. Dr. Spicer has also advised numerous senior capstones since receiving tenure. Dr. Spicer's service to the university since receiving tenure includes serving as a Duns Scotus Honors Society Faculty Advisor Board Member, participating in the post-tenure review for Dr. Paul Erschen, and serving on the Budget and Planning Enrollment Workgroup as CAS representative. He also has fulfilled his faculty duties on various university committees and participated in annual general education writing assessment. Dr. Spicer's commitment to service is evident throughout the many opportunities he pursues to serve our students and university mission and clearly warrants promotion to full professor.

### **Summary**

In conclusion, the Rank, Promotion and Tenure committee highly recommends Dr. Kevin Spicer for promotion to the rank of Professor based on his sustained excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service as well as his dedication to the Mission of the University. He continues to demonstrate a commitment to furthering the Mission of the University and upholds the Franciscan values held by the university. He is a vital asset to the College of Arts and Sciences and to the University of St. Francis.