

Provost Garriga and the Faculty Relations Committee,

I am writing in support of Dr. Joe Christensen's application for promotion to Full Professor. As a visiting assistant professor in physics for the past three semesters, I have found Joe to be an invaluable resource and a supportive colleague. He has provided resources and advice, acted as a sounding board on pedagogical issues, and at all times clearly shows how much he cares about the well-being and learning of Thomas More students.

I acted as Joe's sabbatical replacement during the fall 2017 semester, and in that capacity I was involved in his initiative to create an online lab manual to support the PHY 121L and 122L lab courses. Joe's work on this project uses techniques well-supported by physics education research, building an inquiry-based, web-accessible resource which is interactive and which students can access from a variety of devices. I have found that students find the online form of this manual to be very helpful and easy to use. Many of them access it from their phone, both during and in advance of the lab meetings. The interactive elements of the manual help with engagement and guide their thinking, without simply providing answers.

During his sabbatical, and after, Joe and I had weekly meetings to discuss how successful each lab had been, and what feedback I had (based on student experience) for the next. Joe continually revised and adjusted the manual based on this feedback, composing new questions and hints to drive student inquiry, as well as adjusting the format for clarity and usability. I feel the final product is a great success, and I have personally found the manual to be sufficiently helpful that I would strongly consider adapting some materials into this format at my next institution.

This project has also yielded additional benefits. As a resource to other faculty, Joe has conducted public talks on the code used to create these manuals. Equipment lists and setup guides have also been put into this format, as an aid to both other faculty and student workers setting up the labs. I suspect this project will be particularly helpful for any future adjuncts teaching the lab courses.

In addition to the manual work, Joe has also been an enormous help to both me and my students in many other respects. He has provided past materials and friendly advice for the algebra based courses in general, and we've had many conversations on how best to convey particular physical ideas to students in the time allotted for the course. He is well versed in policy and procedure at Thomas More, and has taken the time to provide guidance through book adoptions, classroom changes, and a variety of other situations. He also kindly offered his time to cover classes when I was ill last spring, which was an enormous help at a difficult time.

Joe's work on the manual is indicative of an overall commitment to student success, classroom innovation, and support of his fellow faculty. I strongly support his application for promotion, and would be happy to answer any further questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeremy M. Huber". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeremy" being more prominent than the last name "Huber".

Jeremy Huber, Ph. D.

Visiting Assistant Professor of Physics