

FACULTY EVALUATION: CHAIRPERSON'S SUMMARY

Faculty Being Reviewed: Joe Christensen

Date: May 2008

Position/Department: Physicist Associate Professor, Non-Tenured

Reviewer/Chairperson: Bob Riehemann

Time Period Beginning: Fall 2007 and Ending: Spring 2008

SUMMARY

I. Basic Evaluation:

This is the end of Joe's first year at Thomas More. He was brought in as an Associate Professor and this was clearly the correct level. Although his committee duties for the college consisted of the library committee, he did yeoman's work for the department. In particular, his work on the search committee for the astronomy hire was exceptional. He arranged the travel, set the agenda, and kept all records organized. We could not have done as well without Joe's assistance. He also participated very strongly in the dual credit work for Notre Dame and the Curriculum Map. We have discussed program revisions and he brought some good ideas to the table. His handling of the electronics course has been impressive also.

On his own initiative, Joe contacted all departmental alumni (including mathematics) and provided them with individualized newsletters of the department. He has a real sense, from his previous job of departmental chair in Texas, of effective ways to keep alumni interested. I suspect that this will be one of his most important contributions to the college.

My review of Joe's exams, discussions with students about his teaching and occasional eavesdropping in his lectures and laboratories have convinced me that Joe is an excellent and very professional instructor. His work is well-organized and thoroughly covers the topics at the appropriate level. He is knowledgeable enough to supplement the text when required and not intimidated by the task. Nor is he afraid to speak his mind in a group discussion. I believe that students benefit not only from his technical competence, but from his example of confidence and spirited inquiry.

He also gave an interesting talk to the Mathematics/Physics Club on the theory of quark-quark interaction as mediated by gluons, his area of research. *Finally*, someone got a physics student to take an interest in a theoretical topic. I was ecstatic.

Joe's first year has been an excellent one.

- II. Appraisal for promotion/tenure (if applicable); continuation (if new faculty member or adjunct).

Joe's performance is fully in keeping with the tradition of strong teaching at Thomas More College. He should be retained; if necessary, he should be chained to preclude any attempt to leave.

FEEDBACK

A. This faculty member has demonstrated strengths in the following areas (include any ideas for the further development of these strengths).

Joe's has a lot of strengths and I hope that he develops them all. Of most use to our students, with a traditional weakness in theoretical background, would be his continued emphasis on the importance of mathematical preparation and the importance of theoretical topics. He should ensure that his research is not neglected.

B. This faculty member should strive to improve in the performance of duties in the following areas (include suggestions for improvement):

No recommendations at this time.

C. The following special information and/or circumstances are pertinent to the understanding of this review:

This is Joe's first year at Thomas More College.

D. Recommendation for promotion/tenure (if applicable); continuation (if new or adjunct faculty member):

Not applicable.

Interviewee:

Date:

Interviewer:

Date:

(Signature does not imply agreement with the above contents. The interviewee can attach a rebuttal if so desired. *Based on a model from the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio.)

FACULTY EVALUATION: CHAIRPERSON'S SUMMARY

Faculty Being Reviewed: Dr. Joseph Christensen Date: 21 May 2009_____

Position/Department: Physicist and Mathematician _____

Reviewer/Chairperson: Dr. Robert Riehemann_____

Time Period Beginning: September 2008 and Ending: May 2009_____

SUMMARY

I. Basic Evaluation:

Dr. Christensen is doing an excellent job. His collegiality and team spirit were most impressive this year. In particular, he took on the task of mentoring Dr. Ryle, our new astronomer, and clearly was very important in making Dr. Ryle's first year an outstanding success, as mentioned by Dr. Ryle in his self-review. As part of this task, Dr. Christensen saw and responded to the obvious need, based on new equipment, to revise and re-organize the introductory laboratories. Interestingly, he incorporated this into the mentoring process. I have been impressed with his kind and helpful spirit.

I continue to hear good things from students about the introductory laboratories and I have had no complaints from the biology faculty or students in a course which has traditionally been the source of much disgruntlement.

He is a keen observer of his students and follows their progress closely. His comments when discussing difficulties with this year's junior class have been perceptive and focused. He has a lot of ideas and offers insights from his experience in Texas when appropriate. He interacts well with everyone in the department. In particular, Dr. Christensen had gained the respect of Mr. Wells and this has relieved some stressful situations. I see Dr. Christensen as a true mediator within the department.

When I reviewed his tests, I found them to be excellent. The traditionally high standards in mathematical physics at Thomas More have in no way been diminished. Additionally, when requested to take over a MAT 123 course that included material on linear programming, a topic unfamiliar to him, Dr. Christensen managed to get to the core geometry of the idea even though the course was strongly beleaguered by a shortage of hours through a large number of snow days and complications caused by an adjunct mathematics instructor. His ability and willingness to step in at mid-semester are highly valued.

While I am unfamiliar with the details of his research in lattice field theory, Dr. Christensen is actively pursuing it based on some informal discussion about his supercomputer calculations. He is also respected by the students and took some to an APS meeting. With the physics club, he attended the science and technology museum in Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Christensen is perceived by the students in a strongly positive way as evidenced by his nickname: Obi-Wan Kenobi.

Finally, Dr. Christensen has increased his respect among the general faculty through his committee work. He makes perceptive and appropriate comments at faculty meetings and is now responsible for teaching faculty about critical thinking.

In summary, Dr. Christensen is the strongest member of this department.

- II. Appraisal for promotion/tenure (if applicable); continuation (if a new faculty member or an adjunct faculty member.):

Dr. Christensen should be given tenure at the earliest possible time. He should be formally accepted into the college community and encouraged to stay.

FEEDBACK

- A. This faculty member has demonstrated strengths in the following areas (include any ideas for the further development of these strengths):
- Collegiality and concern for the department as a whole.
 - Technical ability. He should be encouraged to continue his research and share some of the excitement with students.
 - Mentoring.
- B. This faculty member should strive to improve in the performance of duties in the following areas (include suggestions for improvement):
- Although Dr. Christensen seems happy with his situation, I believe that he would be a little happier if he spent more time on his research.
- C. The following special information and/or circumstances are pertinent to the understanding of this review:
- Dr. Christensen is in his second year with Thomas More College.
 - Dr. Christensen is an associate professor.
- D. Recommendation for promotion/tenure (if applicable); continuation (if new or adjunct faculty member):

Dr. Christensen should be given tenure as soon as possible.

Interviewee: _____ Date: _____

Interviewer: Dr. Robert Riehemann Date: 21 May 2009

(Signature does not imply agreement with the above comments. The interviewee can attach a rebuttal if so desired.)

FACULTY EVALUATION: CHAIRPERSON'S SUMMARY

Faculty Being Reviewed: Dr. Joseph Christensen Date: 21 July 2010_____

Position/Department: Physicist and Mathematician _____

Reviewer/Chairperson: Dr. Robert Riehemann_____

Time Period Beginning: September 2009 and Ending: May 2010_____

SUMMARY

I. Basic Evaluation:

Dr. Christensen continues to do an excellent job. He has taken on more responsibility by becoming the director of the QEP program. His thoughtful participation in the hiring process for our new mathematician was highly valued. Dr. Christensen is organized and thorough. This was important to his completion of the elementary lab manual with Jack Wells. The manual was used not only by TMC students but also by Gateway students. Dr. Christensen is especially popular with upper level students.

He continues to closely monitor his students and he worked directly with me to adjust the pace of PHY 432 to accommodate a student who had performed poorly in a prerequisite course. This is an invaluable service to both the student and the college. He maintains high standards and is careful and attentive during our adjunct hiring interviews.

Dr. Christensen has become active in administrative tasks and is dropping two courses. The department supports this and we all believe that he will do a good job. However, this is increasing our dependence on adjunct faculty.

II. Appraisal for promotion/tenure (if applicable); continuation (if a new faculty member or an adjunct faculty member.):

Dr. Christensen should be given tenure at the earliest possible time. He should be formally accepted into the college community and encouraged to stay.

FEEDBACK

A. This faculty member has demonstrated strengths in the following areas (include any ideas for the further development of these strengths):

- Collegiality and concern for the department as a whole.
- Technical ability. He should be encouraged to continue his research and share some of the excitement with students.
- Mentoring.

- B. This faculty member should strive to improve in the performance of duties in the following areas (include suggestions for improvement):
- It is not quite clear if Dr. Christensen prefers administrative duties or teaching. He should consider his options over the next year.
- C. The following special information and/or circumstances are pertinent to the understanding of this review:
- Dr. Christensen is in his third year with Thomas More College.
 - Dr. Christensen is an associate professor.
- D. Recommendation for promotion/tenure (if applicable); continuation (if new or adjunct faculty member):
- Dr. Christensen should be given tenure as soon as possible.

Interviewee: _____ Date: _____

Interviewer: Dr. Robert Riehemann _____ Date: 21 July 2010 _____

(Signature does not imply agreement with the above comments. The interviewee can attach a rebuttal if so desired.)