

#### IV. Service

##### 1. Service Within the College:

###### A. **Counseling and advising (please describe your recent and current responsibilities for counseling and advising):**

Over the past decade I have retained some advisees, but, since I have been half-time faculty, I have only covered about half to two-thirds as many advisees as the others in the department. This year, I have taken on a few more and most of them first-year students because my current advisees are set to graduate soon.

On the other hand, in my capacity as Assistant Dean and now as Provost, one of my jobs has been to handle student problems that impact the classroom. Some of these have been medical issues. Some have been student complaints about faculty. Some of these have been faculty submitting academic violations. Throughout the years, my goal has been to hear both sides, mediate the conversation so that both sides not only feel heard, but come together to a solution that is acceptable and reasonable. I think I have contributed significantly in this regard, but I do not have an accurate count of the number of students and faculty that I have interacted in this regard. I would estimate that the numbers were around five each year while I was Assistant Dean and around ten as Associate Provost. The difference in the latter seems to be an increasing number of students with clinically treated anxiety. While these numbers are small, they don't get to the Dean's office unless they are pretty severe or sensitive. Often a parent is involved. Sometimes the President is involved. Many times there are issues that affect the student's financial aid or possibly impact whether or not the student will be lost to higher education for the foreseeable future.

One last thought that I will include here, although I don't think it falls under the original intent of the category. At least half of my job as the Director of the QEP was about serving and supporting faculty as they evaluated their classrooms. I did not think to ask for a letter of recommendation about this specific topic, but I think most of the faculty who participated in the QEP will attest, a significant fraction of "supporting the faculty" was counseling and advising the faculty, expressed through hashing out ideas and offering advice and feedback to them as individuals. This was, I think, my most significant contribution to the community from my time in the QEP.

**B. Committee responsibilities (please describe your recent and current committee responsibilities and describe any special contributions you have made in these committees):**

I have served on many committees and these are detailed on my Curriculum Vitae. Some of these are in my capacity as a faculty member. In other cases, I was either *ex officio* or guest. An extreme example of the complications not captured in the CV is the CAC. During my first year, I was there as a faculty member, then my role became the QEP representative. Once I became Assistant Dean, I was replaced with Dr. Ernst as the QEP representative. Shortly thereafter, I was put back on that committee as the representative of the Dean's office. Independent of the representation issue, I am proud of the efforts of the committee to tackle the complex issue of reconsidering the core curriculum. Because developing a curriculum is about more than selecting the appropriate courses, we began by developing the student outcomes and then set to the task of using those outcomes as a guide for selecting courses that would enable our students to reach the goals of our curriculum. While I was by no means the sole contributor to this committee, I think any of those members would agree that I carried at least my fair share of the effort in bringing these ideas forward to the faculty.

For a second example of my contributions, in my role as first Assistant Dean and now the Associate Provost, I have served as a guest in FCC and Academic Affairs where my role is to be a resource for the committee whenever they are deliberating an issue.

A third example that I would like to highlight is my effort with the book-rental programs. Working through the various issues that arose took diplomacy, a sense of calm, an ability to collaborate and problem solve, and an awareness of serving multiple, competing goals for the program. I think I contributed significantly to enabling this program to the benefit of many students and the repair of difficulties some faculty faced. This effort was significant enough that I thought it would be appropriate to ask Ms. Erin Garnick for a letter of recommendation, which she graciously agreed to do.

While there are other committees I could discuss, the committee work I am most proud of is that of the revisions to the Faculty Policy Manual. The committee is in charge of reviewing the changes made by Stephen Lazarus and comparing it to our culture at Thomas More. This committee has met during the spring and throughout the summer as well as into the fall. I have been the recorder during this time. My role has been in tracking the conversation during the meetings and then translating that into recommendations for Stephen Lazarus to consider when he edits the document.

In general, my CV also indicates the positions I held on those committees. Throughout this there have also been meetings between staff departments, such as the START committee, which bring together representatives from Student Life, the Academic Dean, Security, Financial Aid, Admissions, Athletics, Religious Life, HR, Counseling, etc. to coordinate efforts and figure out how to best support the students and the broader Thomas More Community. My strongest take away from this experience has also been the strongest driving factor in my desire to contribute in service to the institution: that we belong to an academic community that is driven to support not only each other, but the students who pass through, contribute, and are changed by their experience here. I say this to highlight the comments with which Dr. Ryle ended his recommendation. I am able to support individuals specifically because I feel the support of the broader community through this committee structure.

**C. Other college service activities (please describe other activities you have recently and currently participated in – moderator of student activities, special assignments performed for the college, special department services, etc.):**

You may note from my Curriculum Vitae that I started accepting half-time administrative roles in 2010, when I threw my name in the ring for the position of Director of the QEP. When the position was offered to me, I made the commitment to serve through the fifth-year SACS-COC report, which I did. In the middle of this commitment, we hired a new president, which led to my accepting a position as Assistant Dean. While these situations will become more clear below, I should indicate that I believe that accepting each of these roles was mostly for the good of the institution and to the detriment to the department. The other faculty have had to shoulder a significant portion of the load that I neglected in taking these positions and for that I am grateful to them.

While this section is fairly long, I think it would be useful to provide some context about my experiences prior to Thomas More University. To that end, I have added a short narrative about my Administrative experiences at McMurry University that is relevant to my accepting the role of Assistant Dean.

**Director of the Quality Enhancement Plan.** I came to Thomas More in the fall of 2007 after having built up some administrative experience at my previous institution. There were aspects of that experience that I found rewarding even though I was not yet convinced that it was a role that I would strive for. When the discussion about a topic for Thomas More's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) came up, I vocally argued for critical thinking. I felt that my voice had some small sway in the polls and, when asked to throw my hat in, I decided to take the opportunity. I started my role as the Director of the QEP in 2010-2011 and kept the half-time position through the 2016-2017 academic year. Virtually all of this time was after my most recent promotion/tenure application with was due in November of 2010, resulting in my tenure being granted in the spring of 2011.

My duties as a half-time Director of the QEP included: overseeing the implementation of the QEP, managing the QEP budget, work with the Assessment Coordinator to ensure appropriate assessment is done, supervise faculty development, promote student awareness, prepare annual reports, promote faculty involvement (as "3D"-cohorts who will Discover, Develop, and Deliver), design the 3D-cohort meeting structure, facilitate the 3D-community, design and structure the 3D success and scholarship, and oversee the QEP library resources. During this time, I had extensive help from the QEP Assessment Coordinator, Dr. John Ernst, who I have asked to write a letter of recommendation. Others have also commented on my efforts in the QEP in their letters of recommendation.

The skills and knowledge required for this job were, in order of relevance, self-motivation, independent oversight of 8-10 individuals who had their own ideas of how things ought to be done and who changed every year, cajoling colleagues to participate, develop and maintain a working knowledge of both pedagogy and critical thinking techniques at a level sufficient not only to implement, but also to train the faculty who would be implementing these techniques, and to maintain a budget.

During the "zeroth" year of the QEP (2010-2011), the cohort had to literally discover and develop the critical thinking knowledge base across campus and figure out how to deliver this to the campus community, including not only the students in their class (although that was the initial focus), but also the faculty colleagues across campus in any and all disciplines. This group remained as a cohort during

the first year to implement the previous discoveries. There were then four additional cohorts, lasting through 2015-2016. During the 2016-2017 academic year, I remained the Director of the QEP as a quarter-time position to manage the transition as we investigated how to make a Center for Teaching and Learning, to maintain whatever support I could for faculty who continue to implement the critical thinking techniques, and to write the QEP section of the SACS-COC fifth-year report. This report was required to include a quantitative assessment the five years of implementation, with data, all within ten pages.

The process of this work lead to several scholarship opportunities, which I will discuss in Critical Thinking and the Classroom. These opportunities and the work I did with colleagues also influenced my teaching, which I discuss in Innovations in Teaching.

The result of this endeavor was that SACS-COC accepted the QEP Impact Report with no findings (see page 2 of that document). This is an outstanding endorsement of all of the hard work that the nearly fifty full- and part-time faculty invested in this process. I am very proud to have been a part of this activity. I believe, and have the assessment to support, that the process had a positive impact on the campus and has enhanced many faculty members' teaching implementation across campus.

**Assistant Dean.** I came to Thomas More in the fall of 2007 after having been at McMurry University for eight years. During my time at McMurry, I had built up some administrative experience during a tumultuous time there. In 2013, Thomas More hired President Armstrong, who saw his mandate as being a change-agent. For various reasons, in the spring of 2014, the previous VPAA / Dean of the College left our institution and he was replaced with Dr. Wolper. Among some other changes taking place, this caused some disruption and, in an attempt to seed peace, President Armstrong offered the faculty a new administrative position of Assistant Dean of the College which would be selected from among the faculty and recommended by the faculty. Several names were put forth and, based on my prior experience (c.f., Appendix D.2), I was chosen from among them.

I served for one year under Dr. Wolper, who was an Interim Dean, and we worked well together, but had to figure out the details of what needed to be done since there was no previous administrator who could provide direction. My role in this was primarily to help the administration understand the culture of the faculty and help the faculty understand the goals of the administration. I believe I was able to serve both the faculty and the Administration during my time in this role. After my first year in the position, the President hired Dr. Jagger to be the permanent Dean. She was kind enough to allow me to stay on for another two years. I have included my employee evaluation from 2015 by Dr. Wolper and my employee evaluation from 2016 by Dr. Jagger. Both indicate that I have been successful in fulfilling this role.

The duties for this job are many and varied. Most of them are in service to the institution, including work on committees (mentioned above), helping people (faculty, students, and staff) who come in with a last minute problem fix the situation, helping the Dean process information, and mediating between the Administration and the faculty when necessary.

During the 2016-2017 year, I made the decision to step down from the position in part to get back to faculty, in part to allow some other faculty member gain the experience of a high-level administrator position, and in part to take a sabbatical so that I could get a little scholarship worked out. I was

replaced by Dr. Garriga and, after three years of being an Assistant Dean, I took my sabbatical and then returned to faculty-hood. Mostly, I felt comfortable stepping out of the role because we had completed the transition to a stable leadership in the Dean's Office with a person I felt I could trust. I could return to helping my Department, knowing that I had contributed in significant ways to the overall benefit of the institution. It was somebody else's turn to serve in this capacity.

**Associate Provost.** As the College restructured into a University, the Dean changed title to Provost, the Assistant Dean position became an Associate Provost position, and three College Deans were hired. Two of these Deans came from TMU faculty and one was hired externally. Then, near the end of May 2018, President Armstrong announced that he was leaving. After some consideration, the Board of Trustees decided to make Dean Jagger the Acting President. Subsequently, this moved the Assistant Dean up to the Dean/Provost position. Since the Acting President, Acting Provost, and new Deans all had limited experience with their new positions, it seemed to me that the institution would be better off if we did not also have to train a new Associate Provost. So I interviewed for the position.

The duties are very similar to what they were in the Assistant Dean position. There are two to three times as many student problems (especially with anxiety). There are about the same number of committees to serve on, but by now these staff committees have got their feet under them and are running notably smoother. There are significantly more retention efforts. This half-time job will expand to fill whatever time you give it. It was easily a three-quarter time position previously. I am now working to ensure that my students do not get neglected while I continue to serve out the 2018-2019 academic year in this role.

**Member, Thomas More University Board of Trustees.** In the spring of 2017 as I was stepping down from the Assistant Dean position, the Faculty nominated me for the role of Faculty Representative to the TMU Board of Trustees. This role lasts through June 1, 2019. The duties of this role are to participate in the full Board meetings as well as serve on one Board subcommittee. In addition, it is useful to spend some time getting up to speed on the landscape of higher education and to be prepared for the full board discussions.

## **2. Service Beyond the College/Extension of Professional Experience:**

### **A. Outreach into local community unrelated to professional expertise (please list activities such as serving on local governing boards, Boards of Educations, participating in community organizations, seminar and discussion leadership, church leadership, etc.):**

In the early years of my career, prior to earning tenure at Thomas More, I was active in areas beyond the institution. Some of these are listed on my Curriculum Vitae under "Community" and "Interests". However, once I found the need for service within our own community and that I could address it in my position as Director of the QEP and as the Assistant Dean, I gradually pulled my attention away from those efforts and towards campus activities. Consequently, this category has very few entries. Nonetheless, I can point out a few items from my CV.

First, you may note under "Presentations" that there is a section on the professional development for regional high school teachers through the TSI program. While this is a contribution within the College, it has broad impact beyond the institution. Similarly, the TSI and Adventure Camps impact the regional high school and grade school students. The items listed under "Invited Talks and Public Lectures" also allow me to use my professional expertise to (hopefully) enhance the lives and outlook of the broader community.

### **B. Outreach beyond local community unrelated to professional expertise (please list activities such as serving on local governing boards, Boards of Educations, participating in community organizations, seminar and discussion leadership, church leadership, etc.):**

Member, Thomas More University Board of Trustees, 2017-2019.