

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.)