



TO: Kevin P. Kearns, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

FROM: J. Andy Karafa, Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

SUBJ: Seventh Year Reappointment Recommendation of Dr. Angela McGowan-Kirsch, Assistant Professor, Communication effective September 1, 2022, to August 31, 2023

DATE: December 15, 2020

Dr. Angela McGowan-Kirsch is in her fifth year of service as an assistant professor, with no prior service credit. I have reviewed the memorandum from the chairperson, Prof. Kiyak, the memorandum from the Departmental Personnel Committee (DPC), and her dossier. I am pleased to note that Dr. McGowan-Kirsch has received unanimous, strong recommendations for a reappointment to year seven. I concur, without hesitation.

Teaching

As I have noted repeatedly in the past, Dr. McGowan-Kirsch is constantly attending to student feedback. Indeed, in her latest dossier, it is clear that she not only pays attention to it, she goes out of her way to invite it, including mid-semester evaluations, open discussions regarding classes, etc. For instance, based on student thoughts about blog assignments in her Communication Theory course, she reduced the number of blogs but required them to be longer.

Student perceptions of her teaching have been positive, and this latest review period is no exception. In fact, the latest reports demonstrate that student perceptions were above the departmental and university means across all survey items. In addition, mode and median scores are at the top of the respective survey scales and, indicative of her obvious desire for feedback, her response rates are very high relative to most: 68 - 76%. Finally, peer observations of a remote course and the material associated with an online course were favorable, suggesting structure, student rapport, and the usual thoughtful approach she demonstrates with face-to-face courses.

Her advising puts the student at the center in terms of both her attention and their responsibility for actively participating. Regarding the latter, she expects students to arrive at appointments with a completed "advising worksheet" which requires them to track their progress with regard to graduation requirements (e.g., Fredonia Foundations).

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Overall, it seems that she approaches advising holistically, covering academic, personal (e.g., challenges), and professional needs. In my previous memorandum, I indicated my interest in hearing about how she assesses her advising. Given her focus on instructional feedback, I suspect she has some means (formal or otherwise) of determining what has worked and what has not. I expect to see some coverage of this for her next review.

Scholarship

Dr. McGowan-Kirsch's research agenda is progressing well and she appears to be on track in this area. Specifically, during this review period, she revised and resubmitted a manuscript, has another under review, and two more are in the works. One of these latter manuscripts is being reworked to be submitted to another journal after receiving feedback. Although it does not appear that she mentored students during this period, I strongly suspect she will in the future.

Service

As noted by the DPC chair, "in addition to her commendable pedagogical and scholarly efforts, Dr. McGowan-Kirsch places a heavy emphasis on service." During the review period, she continued to chair the American Democracy Project; she joined the Council of Online Learning and the much-needed Digital Support Team; she advised the Applied Communication Association; and she led the creation of the fully online masters in Strategic Communication.

Overall, Dr. McGowan-Kirsch is devoted to and works very closely with students across a variety of settings, including research, student group advising, and advising, both academic and professional (e.g., review of cover letters). As I have noted before, she has embraced the teacher-scholar model and it is difficult to tease apart her efforts in the three traditional obligations. Indeed, the chair of the DPC notes that "Dr. McGowan-Kirsch has formed tight and mutually beneficial links between her teaching, service, and research."

Dr. McGowan-Kirsch continues to move positively toward a continuing appointment. In fact, members of the DPC are very pleased with her progress, as I believe they should be! As a result, I am pleased to recommend her reappointment for a seventh year. I offer my congratulations and look forward to following her continued contributions.

JAK:tmh

Attachments

C: Dr. Angela McGowan-Kirsch, Assistant Professor
Mr. Mark Kiyak, Chair
Ms. Jennifer Costa, Interim Director of Human Resources