

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
LA CROSSE

October 20, 2015

Dear Joint Promotion Committee Members:

The Promotion Committee for Dr. Tony Docan-Morgan voted unanimously (3-0) to recommend his promotion to Professor. Committee members included Professor Linda Dickmeyer (CST), Professor Ronda Leahy (CST) and Professor Rob Wolf (Finance). Promotion to Professor at UW-L requires a “sustained record of accomplishment in teaching, a mature program of scholarship and a leadership role in service within the university community” (*Guide to Faculty Promotion*, pp. 1-2). Dr. Docan-Morgan has accomplished all of the above and more, and we strongly endorse him for a well-deserved promotion to Professor.

TEACHING

Dr. Tony Docan-Morgan truly excels as a teacher and is among our best instructors in CST. He demonstrates great success in the classroom while providing ongoing leadership toward curriculum development. Evidence of his success in the classroom comes in multiple formats, including SEI scores that are always among the highest in the department. His excellent scores are a trend that has continued throughout all his years at UWL. As you can see by the TAI forms, Dr. Docan-Morgan’s composite SEIs are consistently 4.8 or 4.9. These scores are particularly noteworthy in consideration of student motivation scores. For example, in several sections of CST 110, the student motivation scores were 2.5 or below; those same students generated SEI scores of 4.9 despite their initial trepidation or indifference toward the class, and this can be logically linked to effective and enthusiastic teaching.

Dr. Docan-Morgan’s success in the classroom is due, in part, to his thorough and deliberate work ethic. As you can see in Teaching Appendix 7, he has reviewed all of the open-ended responses from SEIs to determine emergent themes of students’ perceptions of strengths and weaknesses. Student written feedback is overwhelmingly positive, and suggestions perceived as weaknesses tend to gravitate toward tight structure and high expectations. He clearly strikes a balance between rigor and support, and his success is indicative of his knowledge and expertise in instructional design, student-teacher interactions, and pedagogically-sound decision-making (an important part of his research and scholarship). While his review of SEIs includes representative comments for each theme, you also have access to all raw data in that same appendix.

In addition to SEI data, Dr. Docan-Morgan’s success in teaching is evidenced by multiple peer observation reports (Appendix 8). He values the comments and critiques of colleagues in the same way he values his student SEIs. While clearly a seasoned teacher, Dr. Docan-Morgan still takes time to prepare his colleagues for an observation in his own class by providing course and daily objectives and teaching materials for the day. As a result of the observation, he makes relevant changes to his content or delivery for future class sessions. Similarly, he takes great care to provide clear and substantive feedback to colleagues when he observes them, and this is most demonstrative of his commitment to quality teaching through his role as the CST 110 Basic Course Director (BCD).

Part of Dr. Docan-Morgan’s teaching load is his one-course reassignment time to direct our general education course. As noted in my evaluation and letter of support for his role as the BCD (Teaching Appendix 6), we offer 45-55 sections of CST 110 per semester, serving 2300+ students per year. We continuously work toward consistency of content in the course, and having Dr. Docan-Morgan as BCD has been critical in helping us achieve this goal. Because the BCD position is reassignment for teaching, his teaching narrative clearly talks through his work and success in the role.

As noted in Appendix B of the *Guide to Faculty Promotion*, a candidate striving for the rank of Professor should not only be an excellent teacher, but also have demonstrated “a leadership role in enhancing the curriculum in the department.” As the Basic Course Director, Dr. Docan-Morgan has worked extensively on curriculum development and content requirements for all sections of CST 110. The *Instructor Handbook* for this course is found in his Teaching Appendix 4 and provides an excellent example of course development, training, and clear guidelines for the expectations of CST 110. His work is based on extensive research on basic course content throughout the nation, attendance at a premier Basic Course Directors conference, and consultation with the CST Department. We are pleased with the moves toward a more

standardized approach in the class and department members are continuing to transition and follow the new guidelines with support and leadership from Dr. Docan-Morgan.

Dr. Docan-Morgan is committed to helping instructors understand and engage in Inclusive Excellence initiatives at UWL. He promotes and encourages CST faculty and staff to attend CATL workshops, and in particular those related to inclusivity and diversity, which he regularly attends himself. Since his role as BCD includes encouraging professional development of CST 110 instructors, he regularly alerts IAS members of grant opportunities, encourages travel, and organizes workshops relevant to the teaching of CST 110. His most recent workshop was this past fall, when he invited Dr. Deb Hoskins and Barbara Stewart to facilitate a discussion on IE, including an overview of what it is and how we can exemplify IE awareness and action in our classrooms. This followed a rich discussion from the previous year, when he invited Dr. Sara Docan-Morgan, a CST faculty member committed to IE initiatives on campus, to lead a workshop on “culture” as we might teach it in CST 110. It is important to note that these workshops, and all curriculum-based decisions he makes, are based on assessment feedback collected in our department. Dr. Docan-Morgan is an excellent example of an individual who is assessment-driven, and he is particularly good at “closing the assessment loop” regarding follow-through and change as a result of assessment outcomes. You have additional evidence of his personal assessment practices in Teaching Appendix 10.

Dr. Tony Docan-Morgan is clearly an exceptional teacher, evidenced by evaluations and observations, assessment, and leadership in curriculum development. In addition, you can see a detailed and typical sample of a course assignment, rubric, student work and his annotations on that work in Teaching Appendix 9. We encourage you to take the time to review his additional evidence in appendices titled *Public Speaking Center Director* and *Leadership in Curriculum Development*. The reassignment time he receives for the development of the Public Speaking Center, an important and successful addition to the Murphy Learning Center, is highlighted in Dr. Docan-Morgan’s materials and in a letter of evaluation and support from Dr. Linda Dickmeyer in Teaching Appendix 2.

Dr. Tony Docan-Morgan has received the distinction of Highly Meritorious in the Department of Communication Studies every year he has been eligible, an accomplishment that is not only impressive, but unique in that only a select few have been able to achieve this honor. He has clearly established himself as an outstanding teacher who has far exceeded the expectations both within our department and according to JPC standards for teaching to receive a promotion to Professor.

SCHOLARSHIP

An individual seeking promotion to Professor at UWL is expected to have a continuing and mature level of scholarship; Dr. Tony Docan-Morgan clearly demonstrates this level of success with twelve scholarly publications produced since his successful promotion to Associate Professor. His complete record includes 30 publications, an accomplishment many professors do not achieve during their entire academic career. By the standards of not only our department, but in the Communication Studies discipline, his quantity and quality of research is truly remarkable.

The CST Department embraces a broad definition of scholarship that includes social scientific, interpretive and critical methodologies. Further, we recognize and value research that highlights pedagogy, including work that is practical, or applied. Dr. Docan-Morgan’s research continues in his well-established area of communication and relational change, and also extends to research in the contexts of instruction and pedagogy. While these two areas are distinct, they also converge to seek new knowledge about communication and instruction while offering practical resources for enhancing student/teacher interaction.

Dr. Docan-Morgan’s earlier research on communication and relational change was housed within instructional contexts, examining how one-time communicative events change college teacher-student relationships through the lens of Turning Point Theory. He has continued to study turning points and nonverbal interactions, extending to interpersonal contexts with romantic relational partners. Dr. Docan-Morgan collaborates with Dr. Valerie Manusov, a premier nonverbal communication scholar from the University of Washington. They have published two additional works since Dr. Docan-Morgan’s promotion to Associate Professor. He served as the lead author in the 2013 publication “When a Small Thing Means so Much: Nonverbal Cues as Turning Points in Relationships,” published in *Interpersona: An International Journal of Interpersonal Communication*. This piece required both qualitative and quantitative analysis of data from over 300 participants who reported on nonverbal message cues that serve as turning points in relationships. Dr. Docan-Morgan again worked with Dr. Manusov and another colleague to examine the first time a nonverbal cue had a significant effect on partners’ relationships. Dr. Docan-Morgan developed the codebook used to analyze the data collected from 127 participants. This work is published as a book chapter in *The Social Psychology of Nonverbal Communication* (2014) and

is titled “Nonverbal Firsts: When Nonverbal Cues are the Impetus of Relational and Personal Change in Romantic Relationships.” Dr. Docan-Morgan does an excellent job of explaining his work and the impact it has made in his narrative. His collaboration with Dr. Manusov will continue to contribute to the growing body of nonverbal communication research in our discipline.

Knowing the commitment Dr. Docan-Morgan makes to his students, and a teaching philosophy that stresses effective teaching and student engagement, it is no wonder that he has such an impressive collection of work related to pedagogy. This body of work is highly regarded in the communication discipline and certainly by the CST Department. We greatly value the applied work that serves to improve and support quality teaching and learning, and Dr. Docan-Morgan’s publications fit within the broader context areas of Communication Education and Instructional Communication. A few examples of his work include a piece on engaging with students to build classroom culture (*College Teaching*, 2014), classroom activities that log participation (*Assessment Update: Progress, Trends, and Practices in Higher Education*, 2015), and an assignment designed for career exploration (*Journal of Speech and Theatre Association of Missouri*, 2014). Dr. Docan-Morgan submits to credible state, regional, national and international outlets in an attempt to share his best practices with a wide variety of audiences.

Dr. Docan-Morgan was invited to write for the *SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods* due to his reputation and contributions in nonverbal communication. Specifically, he will have two entries published related to nonverbal communication data collection—“Observational Measurement: Proxemics” and “Observational Measurement: Touch.” His original “Internet Infidelity Scale” was also published in 2014 as part of *PsycTESTS*. We highlight these examples to demonstrate the quality of his work in research, especially as it pertains to methodology.

The CST Department at UWL encourages collaboration and co-authored work, and Dr. Docan-Morgan enthusiastically invites colleagues to write and publish with him. This spirit is indicative of his leadership in both teaching and scholarship. Two of his recent publications included colleagues in CST and contribute to their record of work as well (e.g., Docan-Morgan, Huisman, and Docan-Morgan, 2014 and Docan-Morgan and Nelson, 2015). In addition to the six co-authored publications in his file, he also has six sole-authored works. All of his work is relevant, credible, and important. We urge you to read the letter from Dr. Gordon Nakagawa, presented in Scholarship Appendix 1. His words provide a consistent message about the value of Dr. Docan-Morgan’s work while offering an important perspective from an external reviewer. Dr. Nakagawa, emeriti professor from California State University-Northridge, was the reviewer for our recent APR visit and is a highly regarded communication scholar and consultant in the areas of intercultural communication, diversity, and strategic planning.

In sum, Dr. Tony Docan-Morgan’s scholarship is well-established, mature, and demonstrates a clear teacher-scholar model. His work far exceeds our departmental and university expectations for a candidate seeking promotion to Professor.

SERVICE

The Guide to Faculty Promotion at UWL suggests that a candidate seeking a promotion from Associate Professor to Professor should provide strong leadership in department service and be well respected at the school or college level for university and professional service. Dr. Docan-Morgan contributes outstanding service at all levels. We will focus on his work at the university level first and foremost.

Dr. Docan-Morgan has been a member of the Committee on Academic Policies (CAPS) since 2013 and is currently serving his third year. Last year he served as the Chair of this committee, which happened to have a particularly busy year in the way of special charges. CAPS not only did their assigned work of hearing student appeals (22 last year), but they also had multiple charges that involved time-intensive research and consultation with a variety of constituents on campus. For example, CAPS worked with Records and Registration to develop a formalized method of reviewing existing mass final exam needs and granting new mass final exam time requests. They considered restrictions on the enrollment of incoming freshmen in online courses and also considered requiring students who are on probation to have a registration restriction (negative service indicator) placed on them. Finally, they examined summer session drop rates and whether students are taking overloads in the summer. Service Appendix 1 shows the final report from CAPS and is indicative of the thoroughness and detail Dr. Docan-Morgan puts into all his work. While the work of CAPS is a collaborative endeavor, colleagues from a variety of areas provide letters of support for Dr. Docan-Morgan that attest to his outstanding leadership as Chair (Service Appendix 2).

Another unique contribution to university service is Dr. Docan Morgan's advocacy and promotions for the Public Speaking Center. He receives one-course reassignment from teaching to recruit, train and supervise the undergraduate peer tutors and to promote and maintain the Center. It is his work far *beyond* this time that is extraordinary in the way of service to our campus. His Directorship has led to a wide range of instructors from all three colleges to solicit his expertise in the form of speaking workshops in their courses. As of this fall, Dr. Docan-Morgan has enthusiastically and professionally prepared and presented 31 workshops for more than 670 students. His effectiveness with this work is documented in Service Appendix 3, where you again see his dedication to assessment and excellence. Dr. Docan-Morgan has taken the feedback from all these sessions and analyzed them for strengths and weaknesses. In turn, he uses this feedback to inform and adapt future workshops. You can also see letters of support in Service Appendix 4 from four different individuals that he has worked with in this capacity; they clearly speak to his success and professionalism.

In addition to the service discussed above, Dr. Docan-Morgan is currently serving in his second year as a Faculty Senator and he is in his sixth year as a member of the university IRB. This is particularly important to our department, as the IRB Committee requests two CST faculty members to facilitate the large amount of proposals and protocols generated by our undergraduate research program each semester. Dr. Docan-Morgan and another CST colleague on the IRB closely evaluate protocols to provide approval for our students so we no longer require additional IRB committee work for the undergraduate research. This is a time intensive role each semester, which Dr. Docan-Morgan handles quickly, thoroughly and professionally.

We urge you to note his lengthy list of service that demonstrates ongoing success and leadership. He has not only sustained his level of quality service since his promotion to Associate Professor, but Dr. Docan-Morgan has increased his service in ways that add value to our department, college and university. He readily extends his service to mentorship opportunities for students and colleagues, including his mentorship for the College of Liberal Studies Faculty Mentoring program. He provides critical service to our discipline by reviewing for five journals and he has recently reviewed for an award committee and for the National Association of Communication Centers, all affiliated with our parent organization, the National Communication Association. This work is in addition to the excellent service he provides to our department, where he has been a member of nearly every decision-making committee we have, including serving as Chair of a Search and Screen where we hired two new faculty members from different emphasis areas. It is noteworthy that all three of the promotion committee members have experienced firsthand Dr. Docan-Morgan's remarkable leadership, organization, and preparation when it comes to service and we are equally impressed with his dedication in this regard.

IN SUM

The Promotion Committee for Dr. Tony Docan-Morgan feels he is more than deserving of a promotion to Professor. We hope the Joint Promotion Committee at UWL is equally convinced that Dr. Docan-Morgan's record of teaching, scholarship and service is impressive and gives him the recognition he deserves by promoting him to Professor. If there is anything else we can do to support his nomination, or if you have any questions, please let us know.

On behalf of the CST Promotion Committee for Dr. Tony Docan-Morgan,



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