

Memo

To: Interim Dean Charles Patti
From: Appointment, Promotion and Tenure Committee
CC: Assistant Dean Paul Olk; Dennis Wittmer, Chair, Management Department; Associate Professor Cheri Young
Date: December 8, 2013
Re: Two-year review of Associate Professor Cheri Young

The Appointment, Promotion and Tenure (APT) Committee of the Daniels College of Business, University of Denver, met on November 22 to discuss Associate Professor Cheri Young's two-year review. The Committee members present were Drs. Sorensen (chair), Ebrahimi, Holcomb, and Mueller. Dr. Bacon was not able to attend the meeting, but he separately submitted his evaluation in writing. APT member Dr. Cook was on sabbatical and did not participate.

The Committee used the following categories in its evaluation: ***Excellent, Acceptable, Needs Improvement and Unacceptable***. The Committee evaluated Professor Young's work in the areas of Teaching, Research, Service, and Collegiality.

Teaching

The Committee rates Dr. Young's performance in teaching as **Acceptable**. The Committee does so based partially on her student evaluations, which were 91 percent in the top three boxes overall, but there was some variation from course to course. The numbers were lower in the first year, and looking forward, the Committee would like to see more sustained numbers. To her credit, she has taught at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. From her portfolio she had *four* preparations while teaching *eleven* classes during her first two years. Four preparations may have been excessive while trying to maintain her research productivity. Her highest student evaluations were in the course on *Managing Human Capital in Hospitality*, where she had a composite rating of 99

percent in the top three boxes, and APT agrees with the advice from her School of Hospitality that she should try to focus more on that course and limit her other preparations.

Dr. Young also encountered two difficult situations when she began teaching at the Daniels College of Business, which she and her School should have tried to avoid. First, she either volunteered or was placed in the *Essence of Enterprise* course, which was a high-risk venture for her. Dr. Young acknowledges that she did *not* have the proper background to teach the readings required in that course and was *not* given proper guidance on what the course entailed. Further, she encountered even more difficulties when her first team-taught class wound up totally in her hands after George Simon's unfortunate health situation. It was not good strategy probably to take on that course in her first year at Daniels, and someone should have advised her not to do so. Second, she ended up team teaching a course with a practitioner on *Restaurant/Food and Beverage Concept Development* without adequate coordination between the two instructors.

Beyond the student evaluations and comments submitted, along with her syllabi for each course, Dr. Young should have included also in her portfolio peer evaluations of her teaching, as well as some outside evaluation from perhaps the Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL). The use of OTL by non-tenured professors to improve teaching is now a general expectation by the APT Committee.

Research and Publications

The Committee rates Dr. Young's performance in research as **Needs Improvement**. Though she had an exemplary publications record prior to *beginning* her career at Daniels, she has not produced any publications in her first two years here. She has submitted two cases to a leading case journal, where she has received requests to revise and resubmit those cases. She also has a number of other projects in progress.

She states the major reason for her lack of productivity in her first two years has been to transition her work more in line with the Daniels mission. As her School Review Committee put it:

"Dr. Young came to us with a strong track record of research with peer-reviewed publications in various hospitality and organizational behavior journals. The committee has noted that she has spent the last two years transitioning to DU and laying the groundwork for her research agenda, which explains the lack of publications in her first two years. She is changing the direction of her research to align it more closely with the Mission of the University, the Daniels College and the Knoebel School."

The APT Committee members are concerned with that decision and explanation on three grounds. *First*, for an assistant professor with well-defined streams of research, it is not a wise strategy usually to develop new streams while striving to gain tenure, given the transaction costs in doing so. *Second*, her publications, at least going back to 2008, seem to be in line with the Daniels Mission perfectly, as they included a social or ethical dimension, so her more recent projects did not represent a real shift in focus. *Third*, of the two cases she has submitted during her first two years at Daniels, one seems much more in line with the Daniels mission than does the other. Certainly, the case on “The Road to Tortuguero” contains important social and ethical dimensions, but those dimensions are not so apparent in the case on event planning in Las Vegas.

The APT Committee finds worthwhile projects in her pipeline on diversified mentoring relationships, employee volunteer programs, leader well-being and performance, and the impact of sexually-oriented behavior on restaurant employees, although it is not clear how near those projects are to publication. Of the three new streams of research mentioned in her portfolio, “the link between CSR, employee attitudes, and financial performance” might also be a higher risk venture than her current streams of research. The literature on the link between CSR and financial performance is now quite extensive, and one seeking to enter that field might encounter challenges and entry barriers.

Service

The Committee rates Dr. Young’s service contributions as **Excellent**. Daniels does not expect significant contributions in this area for non-tenured professors, and while Dr. Young has provided service to the college and university in substantial ways, and won an award for service learning, the APT Committee advises her to allocate more of that time to her research and publications. *An excellent rating in service at this point in her Daniels career is not necessarily positive, as it indicates too much emphasis on service.* Her professional service as an article reviewer, associate editor of a journal, and membership on an editorial advisory board are more in keeping with a focus on research and helpful in accomplishing her research goals. The APT Committee encourages the latter type of service at this stage in her quest for tenure at Daniels.

Collegiality

The Committee rates Dr. Young’s efforts as **Excellent** on collegiality. Though only the School evaluation explicitly addresses her collegiality, she scores highly on this dimension. She is collaborating with others at Daniels, at the University of Denver, and at other institutions in her publications, and she has been a team player within her department and with other departments, e.g., on the *Essence of Enterprise* course, sometimes to her own disadvantage.

Overall Evaluation and Recommendations

In spite of some potentially strategic miscalculations in her teaching assignments and research focus, Dr. Young has made important contributions to Daniels. The APT Committee encourages her to limit her course preparations and focus on her teaching strengths for the next four years, since she has proven her excellence as an instructor in those strength areas. By doing that, as well as by limiting her college and university service, she should be able to focus her attention where it is most needed – on her research and publications. Though APT questions her strategy on redirecting her research focus, she now needs to bring her new projects to closure and aim her publications as much as possible at top or premier journals. She has diminished her exemplary research record since joining Daniels and needs to get it back on track, in order to elevate her evaluation from “Needs Improvement” to “Excellent” over the next four years. She does show, however, substantial promise for the future.

Current promotion and tenure guidelines from assistant professor to associate professor require the applicant to be rated as Excellent in the Teaching and Research dimensions and at least Acceptable in Service.