

# Memo

**To:** Dean Brent Chrite

**From:** Appointment, Promotion and Tenure Committee

**CC:** Associate Dean Paul Olk, Professor Dennis Wittmer, Associate Professor Cheri Young

**Date:** January 22, 2016

**Re:** Four-Year Tenure Review of Associate Professor Cheri Young

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In December 2015 and January 2016, the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure (APT) Committee of the Daniels College of Business, University of Denver, studied the materials submitted by Associate Professor Cheri Young for her two-year review. Through online conversations among Committee members Drs. Sorensen (chair), Bacon, Holcomb, Keeling, and Mueller, the following evaluation was created and approved.

Dr. Young chose the new-category (Teaching, Research, and Service) scholarship document for her portfolio and the Committee analyzed her submission based upon these dimensions. The Committee used the standard major categories in its evaluation: ***Excellent, Acceptable, Needs Improvement, and Unacceptable.***

## **Teaching**

The Committee rated Dr. Young's scholarship of teaching as ***Acceptable Plus.*** While the Committee rated her teaching as ***Acceptable*** two years ago, it is impressed with Dr. Young's laudable accomplishments since then in building a community-based service learning partnership with the African Community Center, which has facilitated refugee resettlement in Denver. Even though quantitative evaluation of that effort does not parallel

the normal student evaluation process, the anecdotal evidence of its effectiveness seems positive. The teaching-related awards she has received also duly impress the Committee.

The Committee has two other concerns, however. First, as both the outside Chair's evaluation and the Departmental review committee note, Dr. Young's student evaluations have regressed over the past year. From the fall of 2014 through the spring of 2015, her composite student evaluations have fallen below the 90 percent level in the top three boxes, the minimal requirement for a rating of **Excellent**. As Dr. Young's report mentions, in one case the level fell to about 85.7 percent, and in another period of time fell to about 88.2 percent. In its two-year review, the APT Committee recommended that Dr. Young sustain her high teaching evaluations at that time, so the decline in the most recent year is notable. Second, while Dr. Young has taught at the undergraduate and graduate levels, her sole activity at the graduate level was in earlier team-teaching of *Essence of Enterprise*, which was the course that received the lowest evaluations.

### **Research**

The Committee rated Dr. Young's scholarship of Research as **Needs Improvement**. The Committee notes that is the same evaluation it offered two years ago of her research scholarship, and is the same rating now given by the outside chair's report and by the Departmental review committee. The APT Committee recognizes that Dr. Young has now published one of the two earlier case-related submissions in a premier journal, and the other one is still under review. The Committee also recognizes the large number of works in progress (thirteen), including two that have reached the manuscript stage, while others have not advanced to the stage of data analysis. While Dr. Young's scholarship statement defines relevant streams of research for all of her current projects, she seems to be pursuing too many while failing to bring a sufficient number to closure. The Committee concurs with the following observation made by the Departmental review committee in its own evaluation:

“The fact that her list of work-in-progress does not include any journal submissions raises concerns for the committee. In addition, the absence of conference presentations (only two over four years) indicates a lack of an ongoing active research stream. The committee is concerned that this may signal of insufficient refereed research pipeline towards her tenure. ... The change of research stream may explain slowing down in research publications but it is difficult to grasp the absence of referred publications between the years 2010 and 2014. ...The unexpected drop in research productivity since joining the University of Denver in 2011 is a surprise and a disappointment to the current committee. We are of the opinion that this obvious concern should have been addressed strongly in annual reviews with the candidate by the Department Chair and also during the mentoring process.”

In the final section of this evaluation, the Committee recommends specific steps that Professor Young should take to address the deficiencies in her publications output.

### **Service**

Assistant Professors at the Daniels College of Business are not expected to have high involvement in the area of service. The APT Committee rates Dr. Young’s scholarship of service as **Excellent**. This is an area where she does not need to have an **Excellent** rating in order to gain tenure, which may indicate that she and her department have not as yet properly allocated her priorities.

As the APT Committee noted in its two-year review, it applauds her role as associate editor of two discipline-based journals and her total efforts in professional service. Those types of contributions are more in keeping with a research focus and might have been expected to reinforce her efforts in moving forward on that front. Meanwhile, the Committee recommended at the time that she scale back her service to her department, to the College, and to the University, even though she has made important contributions at those levels.

### **Collegiality**

The Committee rates Dr. Young's performance as **Excellent**. She has made valuable contributions across a wide range of dimensions and has worked cooperatively with most other members of the faculty.

### **Summary**

Promotion and tenure require that the candidate be rated Excellent in the scholarship dimensions of teaching and research, and at least Acceptable in service and collegiality. Based on our review of Dr. Young's portfolio, she is currently not on track toward meeting those standards. On the two most critical dimensions, the Committee now rates her progress as **Acceptable Plus** on teaching, and as **Needs Improvement** on research. The Committee believes that by putting aside distractions, focusing on normal course preparation and delivery, and by teaching a good mix of undergraduate and graduate courses at a high level, Dr. Young can move her rating on teaching to **Excellent**. The larger challenge is moving the currently low rating of her research to the category of **Excellent**, which we address in the concluding section.

### **Suggestions for the Future**

Given the dire situation surrounding her scholarship of research, the APT Committee strongly recommends that Dr. Young push virtually everything else aside to focus on research over the short time remaining prior to applying for tenure. Though the Committee normally wants to see steady progress over the six-year period, that is not possible in this case, as the finish line approaches. As the Departmental committee wisely advises, Dr. Young must now promptly move forward to select for submission those three to four items closest to completion and finalize the analysis and writing process. With the guidance of her colleagues, she should also select those target journals with the greatest likelihood of a quick acceptance and short turnaround time. One would hope that some of those journals might also be of top or premier quality. Based on Dr. Young's stronger publications record prior to her arrival at the Daniels College of Business, she should have both the ability and the confidence to accomplish those goals. To allow her ample time for such progress, Dr. Young should work with her department to relieve her of all service

activities. While the Committee recommended at the two-year mark that she continue to emphasize professional service, we now recommend that she divest herself of all service activities until she applies for tenure and promotion. She should even attempt to go on inactive status as associate editor of the two journals, perhaps asking colleagues at other institutions to temporarily replace her efforts as she focuses on her own research and writing.

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