**New Tenure Process Letter from Chair to President**

Dear President XX,

It is with great reverence that I recommend Prof. Jessica Meyer for a second year contract. All tenured English/Speech faculty reviewed Prof. Meyer’s first year portfolio, and the vote indicated that her colleagues have great confidence that she is an excellent addition to the Harold Washington English, Speech and Theater Department. Prof. Meyer embodies the qualities that we as a department have identified to be important in new full time faculty members: she is committed to helping her students succeed, she demonstrates solid teaching and command of her subject matter, she is able and willing to integrate the feedback of her colleagues, and she has a clear commitment to growth and improvement.

Since Prof. Meyer was hired, she has worked tirelessly to directly address the needs of her students and to ensure that a student-centered learning environment exists within her classroom. Both the tone of her syllabus, which includes a lengthy list of ways students can receive support, and her classroom demeanor (as noted by both formal observers) indicate that Prof. Meyer is committed to helping her students succeed. Student evaluations indicate that students have taken note of Prof. Meyer’s commitment to their learning. Almost all students who completed the student course evaluation marked that they “strongly agree” that Prof. Meyer “is committed to helping [them] learn.” (The two students who did not mark “strongly agree,” marked “agree” in this area.) In addition, the students commented positively regarding Prof. Meyer’s availability outside of class. Several students commented that they found her office hours particularly helpful. I’ve informally observed that Prof. Meyer is very energetic during her office hours with her students, and goes out of her way to encourage them to attend office hours.

Overall, the Dean and Department Chair evaluations of Prof. Meyer’s classes indicate that she is a solid teacher committed to integrating feedback she receives. Both observers noted that Prof. Meyer’s classes are carefully designed to facilitate student learning and found her to be effective at organizing and delivering lessons. (Indeed, her students echo this, as almost all students marked “agree” or “strongly agree” for “I am satisfied with my learning progress in this class.”) No troubling weaknesses were noted, and on the contrary, Prof. Meyer showed particular strength (as noted in the Dean’s classroom observation) in the following areas: Learning Environment, Content and Lesson Organization, and Presentation and Delivery. Both observers noted small concerns with her syllabus (lack of a course schedule, and a slightly confusing grading structure), but Prof. Meyer has agreed to address these concerns. Prof. Meyer’s post-observation reflections show that she is carefully considering all the feedback she has received and is eager to improve on the basis of this feedback. For each of her Post-Observation Reflections, she directly addressed the feedback she received and constructed a list of “next steps” to help her improve in noted areas for growth. It is clear that Prof. Meyer is willing to accept and even solicit assistance, as her noted “next steps” utilize both her department colleagues and her mentor as sources for ongoing feedback and ideas.

The department carefully reviewed Prof. Meyer’s syllabus and assessment. Though both show room for improvement, as is to be expected from any newly hired faculty member, we were impressed by her ability to reflect on both the strengths and weaknesses of these documents. Prof. Meyer clearly thinks carefully about how she constructs her classes as well as her assessments. She also demonstrates a willingness to allow assessment data to shape her course; in this way, she works to respond directly to student needs rather than merely “covering” the material for a course. Although she found that the reading assessment she included in her portfolio did not, in fact, adequately address the intended learning outcome, she stumbled on a way to help students become more critical thinkers. Though she acknowledges that this assessment is a work in progress, her ability to recognize and willingness to carefully consider the unintended consequences of her assessments and instructional strategies indicates that she is likely to show considerable growth over the coming years.

She has attended all department meetings and otherwise fulfilled the expected duties of a first semester full-time English Department faculty member. She and I have discussed possible areas for future service to the department and college. She has expressed interest in learning more about departmental assessment, and I have advised her to work with our assessment coordinator and to begin attending the college-wide assessment committee meetings. She also plans to assist with the Developmental English Committee and has already attended a few meetings.

Overall, Prof. Meyer has demonstrated that she is a solid teacher who carefully constructs lessons to achieve stated learning outcomes and who uses assessment data to tailor her classes to her students’ needs. She is extremely committed to her students’ learning, and eager to carefully analyze the results of her teaching and work to improve. She gives every indication of being a committed and engaged department member whose effectiveness in the classroom will continue to improve over time. Without question, both the department and I find that she is deserving of a second year contract. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. I thank you, in advance, for your time and consideration regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Prof. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

English/Speech Department Chairperson

Harold Washington College