

DATE

To: The Committee on Faculty
Copies to: Joan Crimson
Dr. Struth, Vice President for Academic Affairs

From: The [Majority¹] Report From the Department of Polychromaticism.

Re: The Tenure and Promotion of Joan Crimson (hereafter JC)

Note 1 In AY 00-00, JC was appointed to DePauw University (hereafter DPU) as an Assistant Professor of Polychromaticism. She received her terminal degree in her field, Applied Polychromaticism, from the University of Chartreuse. Because she has served five full years at her present rank her promotion review will be linked with the tenure review.

Note 2 The Department Personnel Committee (hereafter PC) was composed of all full time continuing members of the department, except for Teal who is on leave and chose not to serve.²

Note 3 The PC met in the spring to decide what procedures to follow. We chose the following from options listed in the Academic Handbook. We requested from the Office of Academic Affairs fifty randomly selected names of recent graduates taught by JC.³ We sent requests to each one. We also chose to conduct interviews with ten majors who were randomly selected. (We placed the names of all majors who had JC as a teacher on folded cards in a box and picked blindly ten names.) The letters received and summaries of the interviews were placed in the decision file before the closing date.

The committee also believed that it was not necessary to consult an outside Appraiser of JC's profession accomplishments, since Green, Lavender, and Plum are competent judges of JC's field.

¹ Note that if the PC report is unanimous (especially on the overall recommendation and on the use of the key adjectives on each section), the word "Majority" should be deleted throughout the report.

² Colleagues either in their first or last year of appointment may not serve on PCs. Any colleague who has probationary status need not serve on the PC.

³ PC's have the option of requesting letters for the candidate. If a candidate requests that the PC collect letters from students however, the PC is obliged to honor that request.

Note 4 The entire committee examined the complete decision file, but we appointed Green, Lavender, and Plum as a special subcommittee to analyze particularly JC's professional development files, since not all members of the committee are competent in her area.

Note 5 The PC met on several occasions between August 29th and September 15th to discuss the evidence in the file. After our second meeting the committee concluded that we could not reach a consensus.⁴ A majority of five PC members, Professors Green, Lavender, Magenta, Blue, and Purple, met on two separate occasions to write the majority report, and on 00/00 voted in favor for tenure and promotion of JC. Our signatures may be found on the conclusion of this report. The signatures attest that each one has read and approved the final copy of the majority report. Professors Plum and Scarlet met separately after the PC could not reach consensus. Their separate minority report is attached to the end of this document. The subgroups shared with each other their draft reports as the process proceeded.

[For the minority report, imagine that there is a letter detailing the objections to tenure and promotion. The minority report does not need to re-address all of the criteria for review just those criteria where we are not in agreement.]

Note 6 JC has submitted annual reports as required, and the chair responded to each. Copies of these reports and responses are in her file. Class observations were made for the prescribed number of JC's classes and are included (with her responses in some cases) in the file.

⁴ PCs must meet to discuss the evidence in the file before beginning the writing of the report. This helps to prevent premature judgments of the candidate's qualifications by individuals on the PC.

Teaching

Summary: A majority of the PC (five of seven members) concluded that JC’s teaching has been “*good*” and worthy of tenure. Her particular strengths include innovative course design, strong performance in upper level courses, and clearly effective help given to students outside of class. Although the PC had a few concerns about her teaching of the introductory course (rigor and organization), a particular area of responsibility according to the Appendix B in her job description, the majority concluded that her teaching in this course was on balance good.

The PC evaluated JC’s teaching in the three areas specified by the handbook: content and rigor, teaching methods, and effectiveness. Although the discussions overlap to some extent, we will use these separate rubrics to organize our report.⁵

I. Content and Rigor

In the upper level courses that JC regularly teaches—PC 200 and 350—evidence in the file clearly indicates that her courses meet scholarly standards and are offered at an appropriate level of difficulty. The PC looked carefully at all three syllabi as well as other course materials (exams, projects, and explanatory handouts) and judged them to be clear, thorough, and up-to-date. The materials in 200 and 300, the courses closest to JC’s doctoral areas, are particularly impressive in this regard. In a letter submitted by an outside expert, Dr. Tan of Brown University says that her “presentation of key topics in PC 200 is well-informed and sophisticated without being unsuitable for an undergraduate course.” Another letter comes from a former student, Mustard, now in graduate school at North Orange University: “Professor Crimson’s courses in PC 200 and 300 prepared me so well that I had a much easier first semester of graduate school than most of my peers.”

JC’s grades for PC 200 and 350 have been fairly consistent through her five years at DPU and come in near the departmental average for upper level courses. After examining the teaching materials and grading policies we feel that JC’s rigor in evaluation of student work is appropriate.

With the department’s introductory course, PC 100, the evidence about rigor is more mixed. Some members of the PC raised concerns about two matters: workload and grading. As to the first topic, the PC debated whether JC’s design of PC 100 offered a sufficiently challenging workload. It was pointed out that a student could get by with two exams (midterm and final) and only one other project (which might be shaped by the student so that he or she did a minimal amount of work). While a minority of the PC considered this workload to be significantly less demanding than the departmental norm for PC 100, the majority of the PC concluded otherwise. For one thing, student opinion forms do not point to trouble in this area: student rate JC’s workload as being moderate and challenging. Furthermore, JC offers a thoughtful defense of her structure for the 100 level class in her file commentary. She says that she deliberately reduced the number of required formal projects in order to give students “more time and creative room” for explorations that they initiate themselves. If some students take advantage of this structure and slide by with minimal work, others clearly find JC’s version of PC 100 to be challenging and rewarding. More than a few

⁵ Faculty Policy and Personnel Review (formerly COF) requires considering each area separately.

students commented that they found the course more intellectually engaging than they had expected.

The second concern has to do with JC's grades in PC 100. During her first two years at DPU, her grades were well above the departmental average for this course as well as the university average for 100 & 200 level courses.

[Imagine a table of appropriate numbers here showing her GPA.]

At interim the PC raised as a concern whether her tests at the introductory level evaluated student mastery of the course content with sufficient rigor. The department recommended that she reconsider her grading scheme. JC has indicated that she has added assignments and reformed her grading criteria since her interim. Her grades in these courses are now more in line with departmental and university norms. She has addressed the Department's earlier concerns.

While a minority of the PC still consider JC's grading in PC 100 to be too high in comparison with the other sections, and they worry that her course may be perceived as the easiest in the department, (a few student comments might suggest this perception) the majority of the PC find that the student comments on this point are not so numerous and concludes that JC's grading in PC 100 is not a serious enough problem to present an obstacle to tenure. As she explains in her statement of teaching philosophy, she works very hard to give students encouragement in the introductory course. If she sometimes errs on the side of allowing students to drop low scores, she also succeeds in bringing in some students who might have been discouraged by early penalties. (See the letter from Violet, now a junior major, who greatly appreciated JC's "patience" and "flexibility" in the introductory course.)

II. Teaching Methods

JC has brought welcome innovations to the teaching of both upper and lower level courses in the department. File evidence (especially the teaching philosophy and syllabi) shows that she has redesigned her upper level courses to allow for more individual research projects by students, more seminar-style discussion, and (in PC 200) an interesting scheme of topical organization. She has managed all this without any sacrifice of traditional coverage. Her sample exams and projects in PC 200 and 350 exhibit a nice variety of intellectual exercises.

At the lower level, JC obviously had success with the First Year Seminar (FYS) she designed a year ago, in which she employed several of the methods she uses in upper level courses. There have been a few problems in her efforts to implement similar methods in PC 100. (See below under "Effectiveness" for details.)

Several peer observations of JC's courses praise her efficient clarity of explanation (what one colleague calls her "covert mini-lectures") and her patience in managing student discussion. One observer of two class sessions in PC 100 worries that the discussions were not sufficiently focused, and that several students seemed to be losing interest as the discussion "meandered rather listlessly." However, other observers were more inclined to praise the "deft alchemy" of her

discussions and her “subtle way of nudging students toward key ideas that appear to come entirely from them.”

III. Effectiveness

Student opinion forms from JC’s three upper level offerings indicate that students find these courses to be quite effective. It appears that they are increasing in their mastery of the material and the methods of the discipline.

Comments by students are especially emphatic about her helpfulness, as they praise her willingness to make conference time available and to schedule study sessions outside the normal class hours. Comments by colleagues who observed PC 100, 200, and 300 all point to JC’s strengths in leading helpful, carefully focused discussions.

The numbers and comments from student opinion forms in JC’s sections of PC 100 are more mixed. With the exception of one unusually rough semester (the Spring 98 class, which JC herself called “a disaster, basically, because I tried to change too many things at once, at a time when I had many other things going on in my scholarship and service”), the numbers and comments for PC 100 look solid in some categories but weaker in others. The PC spent a considerable amount of time analyzing student comments.

Comparisons with the various means in JC’s other classes suggest that students consider JC’s PC 100 to be less organized than her other courses. In some sets of student opinion forms, the comments on organization are accompanied by positive student comments on stimulation and learning. Based on the full file of evidence, the PC believes the organizational issue comes mainly from JC’s use of discussion to draw out material that many other introductory sections deliver by lecture. Many students seem to have more trouble taking notes in discussions than they do in lectures. Especially for students who come into PC 100 with low motivation (i.e., those who are simply filling a group requirement), JC’s more open-ended style may leave them with the impression that the course is drifting and not teaching them much.

[Table of numbers or a graph may be used as an illustration.]

While some concerns were noted with organization in PC 100, the majority of the PC concluded that JC’s teaching of PC 100 was on balance effective. If one keeps careful track of student comments, the list of positive remarks is longer than the list of negative remarks. (Furthermore, as one member of the PC notes in his file letter, “the complaining students often contradict themselves, as they criticize the organization but praise the spontaneity of class discussion.”) The PC majority concludes that JC’s teaching of PC 100 is currently effective, even if there is room for improvement as she continues to adapt her upper-level pedagogical strategies for the PC 100 audience.

Strengths: A good record of teaching at the 200 & 300 levels. A well-balanced 100 level course. Evidence of commitment and flexibility in her teaching. A successful First Year Seminar.

Concerns: In the 100 level course there are still some problems in organization and grading strategy. Some concern involving rigor still persists at the introductory level. We perceive no weaknesses at the 200 and 300 levels.

Professional Development

Summary: The documents in the decision file show that JC has crafted a record of significant⁶ professional development, with her strongest work coming at the national level in the past year and a half.

Since interim review, JC has published one article in a major journal in the field of Applied Polychromaticism and has two upcoming articles in the regional journal *Indiana Polychromaticism* in the fall of 20___. The PC notes that one of these papers was also presented at the regional conference South Central Polychromaticism Studies last fall. JC has also authored two book reviews for *Polychromaticism Applications and Procedures* in the past three years. She has published one and the other is in press.⁷

In addition to the conference noted above, JC has delivered papers at two conferences, one national and one regional, in the past year, and in previous years she participated in three conferences (including the Society for Advanced Studies in Polychromaticism) as a panelist and respondent.

The PC notes that JC undertook the development and maintenance of the *Midwestern Polychromaticism* website three years ago and has, in the words of Dr. Sable from the Provincial University of Northwest Terra Cotta, “created an important resource for all scholars in mono- and Polychromaticism.” The file clearly documents the development and changes made on this site over the past year and a half including the addition of graphics, links to other sites, and access to a textual base for book reviews; we note that numerous letters in the file make reference to the importance of this site to students and faculty members alike at colleges across the Midwest.

JC has attended and presented at a session on *Polychromaticism and the Liberal Arts Academy* at the GLCA Course Design and Teaching Workshop held at DPU in 200___. She has also made two presentations to her departmental colleagues on *The Epistemology of Polychromatic Debate* and *The Philosophy of Polychromatic Debate* at departmental colloquiums. JC co-authored a proposal and participated in the organization of a Mellon Reading group on *Polychromaticism in the Academy*.

⁶ At tenure, the criteria are “demonstrable achievement” or “unquestioned promise of accomplishment” in the professional development category. For promotion, “adequate” signifies enough quality accomplishments that would sustain a professional in her field. “Significant” means superior achievement and suggests that this is an area of strength. Candidates for promotion must have a “significant” record in at least one of these two areas: Professional Growth or Service. Since the JC report is crafted for both tenure and promotion, a finding of “significant” would nullify the need to state “demonstrable achievement” or “unquestioned promise of accomplishment” in the professional development category.

⁷ Professional Development may occur in various ways. Please consult the Academic Handbook for the range of possibilities. “Adequate” or even “significant” Professional Development may occur without publications. But the candidate must demonstrate at least adequate development as a scholar-teacher that is consistent with the University’s criteria. See preceding note to see how “adequate” and “significant” can be applied to this area.

Strengths: A good record of publication and participation in the field at national and regional levels. Her book shows promise, including some national recognition. A solid effort of disseminating her work to her colleagues at DePauw.

Concerns: None.⁸

Service

Summary: The documents in the decision file support a judgment of more than adequate service by JC to the department and the university.

JC currently serves on SLAAC and has made valuable contributions to that committee by her work with Student Congress in 20__.⁹ A letter from Prof. Yellow testifies to her effectiveness on the committee: “Dr. Crimson worked on one of our subcommittees, which involved the difficult issue of student parking on campus. Her work clearly signifies an active and intelligent participation in faculty governance.”¹⁰ She also served on the ad hoc search committee for a new Vice President of External Affairs. Dean Taupe comments that “her efforts are sincerely appreciated.”¹¹ JC became S-certified in 20__ and has taught two sections of *Polychromaticism* as S-courses. JC has made valuable contributions to the university through her mentoring and unwavering support of underrepresented students and student groups on campus as documented by student letters.¹²

⁸ The PC should not hold candidates to a standard higher than they apply either to themselves, to other colleagues or to the University standard. A concern should express a real deficiency related to Scholarly and Artistic Work.

⁹ Many kinds of service apply. Committee service on Coordinating Committees (CAPP, MAO, Faculty Policy and Personnel Review (formerly COF), SLAAC), which meet on a regular basis, is usually more important than service on other kinds of committees, **but is not required for a positive review**. Also likely to be “significant” are contributions made when any University committee has been engaged in activity such as rewriting policies or devising new programs during the candidate’s service—some committees seldom meet or their duties are so minimal that the candidate’s membership on the committee would not count as a significant accomplishment. Sometimes people attempt to serve on committees but are not elected. In such a case, if the candidate has been nominated for a major committee but failed to gain election, it would be useful if that fact could be documented by one of the divisional officers or by a departmental colleague. Activities outside of the University committees can also be marshaled as evidence of service. In order for service to be considered “significant” there must be documentation in the decision file as to what was accomplished allowing PC’s and Faculty Policy and Personnel Review (formerly COF) to determine why it was significant. Service also includes certification in either S, W or Q competency programs and teaching such courses. The work of departmental and program chairs, especially when that work has involved several searches, departmental or program restructuring, or curriculum overhaul, may count as *part* of the evidence for significant service.

¹⁰ It would be very useful to have corroboration of contributions in the form of a supporting letter from the committee chair or an administrative representative serving on the committee.

¹¹ Other possible examples: serving on faculty search committees for other departments, making a presentation as part of Faculty Forum or the Faculty Research Colloquium.

¹² Another possible contribution in this area might consist of serving as the faculty advisor for a student club or service organization.

JC has fulfilled all of her expected duties: she has attended all regularly scheduled departmental meetings; she has served on the PC for Green's promotion and for Plum's last term review; she shares in departmental work by advising majors and organizing colloquia; she has participated in the S workshop and has offered an S course for the majors.¹³

JC has been a first-year student advisor, in conjunction with her teaching of a FYS, and she also advises a large number of majors (35 students). As she currently carries a much heavier load than other members of the department and is well above the university average, the PC would caution JC about the potential for becoming overwhelmed with major and first-year advisees. Student letters attest to the effectiveness of her academic counsel as an adviser for majors and non-majors alike.

JC has shared her expertise with the university community by making a presentation to ABG on the importance of academic leadership. JC has also attended "DePauw Day" at the Vermilion County High School. The PC appreciates her willingness to assist the Admissions Office in its recruiting efforts.¹⁴

The PC judges JC to be a competent and engaged faculty member.

Strengths: A strong commitment to the department's and University's well-being. A good contributor to the department, University governance, and the well-being of the students.

Concerns: JC needs to be cautious about the number of advisees she takes on as this may cause an undue burden on her time for other activities.¹⁵

¹³ Some possible contributions could be service on departmental committees, helping with schedule planning or with placement, organizing a symposium or conference, helping bring a speaker, writing a grant, etc. See the Faculty Policy and Personnel Review (formerly COF) list of service activities for more examples.

¹⁴ "Service" may include performance outside of DePauw's community, but it should be clearly tied to the candidate's professional role at the University. For example, if JC went to area High Schools to speak about her field of expertise or to assist in recruiting, then that would count as "service." But if she went, e.g., as an activity leader or as a parent, then that would not count as "service."

¹⁵ It *may* be appropriate for the PC to give advice on workload on service (or Professional Development), but the advice *should not* attempt to restrict the candidate's options as outlined in the Academic Handbook.

The majority of the PC finds that JC has demonstrated “good” teaching, significance in professional growth, and adequate service. The majority of the PC recommends that JC be granted tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.^{16 17 18}

Scott Blue

Laurel Green

Iris Lavender

Philip Magenta

Marissa Purple

¹⁶ Faculty Policy and Personnel Review (formerly COF) recommends that the signature page be the last page in the report so that if minor editorial changes need to be made to the report, PC members do not have to be contacted again for new signatures. This permits a more rapid turnaround of the report to the candidate should changes be necessary.

¹⁷ Plum and Scarlet signatures would be on the Minority Report.

¹⁸ Note that if the PC report is unanimous (especially on the overall recommendation and on the use of the key adjectives on each section), the word “Majority” should be deleted throughout the report. Please remember that the entire PC should have an opportunity to read both a majority and minority report.