

January 31, 2009

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Dr. Sheel:

Included with this letter are my completed promotion and tenure documents. Upon reviewing these materials Coastal's P&T committee will, I believe, find evidence of significant progress in all areas. I acknowledge that I have much work to do to achieve promotion and tenure but am confident that my efforts will not only meet but exceed CCU's requirements.

As evidence of my development as a teacher and scholar I invite committee members to visit www.dyessick.com to review my course Web pages, which include syllabi and other materials from spring 2005 through the current semester. The site also provides links to my service, research, and teaching statements.

My commitment to serving the community is described in my service statement. Since 2005 I have worked with high school students to build and program a robot capable of participating in the FIRST Robotics Competition. While mentoring the robotics team is always exhausting and time consuming — requiring four to six hours per day, including weekends — it has also been an incredibly rewarding experience. Myrtle Beach now has two high school robotics programs, Marion has one, and I've helped all three. Two students from previous years' robotics teams have enrolled at Coastal as computer science majors and one of them, Ian McDougal, is assisting with the robotics program this year. Past student mentor Anant Pradhan is helping a team in Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Jim Perkins, another student mentor, is now doing robotics research at Georgia Tech. Being able to provide these excellent students a chance to explore the discipline outside the traditional classroom was a pleasure and a privilege.

Despite a lack of published articles, I am far from idle. My research projects are both diverse and robust, with several papers close to completion, and I welcome questions from you or the committee about any of these projects. Finding time to write remains a struggle, especially during the spring semester (when the robotics program is in full

swing), but as the statement demonstrates, my research is moving forward and beginning to fall into place.

The evidence provided on my course Web pages and in my teaching statement highlights my continued growth as an instructor. The statement discusses my philosophy of making students responsible for asking questions; my current course pages also reflect this, providing anonymous forums where students can ask, edit, and answer each other's questions.

There is ample evidence that students who participate actively in my classroom process find the experience uniquely beneficial. More than one alumnus has cited me as a particular strength of the department. I think these students also realize that the dialog never ends. For example, just this week recent graduate Brooks Folk sent me a question about how he might maximize io performance in a server task he is completing. His question reminded me of a conversation last summer in which I showed him how to make his quadratic algorithm linear. He was shocked to see that this allowed the program to run more than ten thousand times faster, and after that he understood asymptotic analysis. He recalled from another conversation that io operations were orders of magnitude slower than memory. His latest question reveals application and understanding in a way I had not observed in him before. He gets it. I did that, and I want to continue doing that.

Thank you,

Don Yessick