



Date: December 3, 1999

To: Joanne Gard Marshall, Dean

From: Personnel Committee, Subcommittee B

Subject: Re-Appointment Review of Assistant Professor Gregory Newby

Subcommittee B of the Personnel Committee has examined Dr. Greg Newby's portfolio, including review letters submitted by faculty and students. In conducting the review, the subcommittee followed the *SILS Criteria and Procedure for Faculty Appointment, Reappointments, Promotion, and Tenure (APT)* vol. 3. This document is the result of the Subcommittee's review and addresses the areas of teaching, research, and service. The concluding session provides the Subcommittee's recommendations.

### **Teaching**

Dr. Newby is a skilled teacher as determined from peer review reports and overall scores on Educational Testing Service's Student Instructional Reports. He has been identified as an "innovator" eager to incorporate new technology into the classroom, and as an instructor who brings "cutting edge" issues to his class. These characteristics are important for a school that plans to develop expertise in technology-based system design and networking instruction, in addition to other curriculum strengths. Additionally, Dr. Newby's introduction of an information security course is recognized as an important addition to the SILS curriculum and appears to have been well received by students.

Dr. Newby's teaching activities have included an extremely wide range of courses, which is viewed as both a strength and a weakness. A strength is exhibited in that Dr. Newby teaches a diversity of courses, something that demonstrates considerable knowledge and flexibility. This perceived strength, however, can equally be viewed as a weakness in that it appears to have detracted from his research publication activities. Related to this is the fact that Dr. Newby has been involved in distance education. This provides a useful opportunity for anyone teaching technology-based classes, however, distance education involves a considerable amount of time. It also raises the question

whether Dr. Newby should be exploring this option to the extent that he has at this point in his academic career, given other areas that he needs to address.

In his personal statement, Dr. Newby identifies practical, hands-on teaching as one of his teaching methods. While Dr. Newby's overall teaching evaluations are good, he seems to have lower scores in the areas of critical thinking and effective use of class time. Dr. Newby's hands-on demonstrations could be further enhanced by the inclusion of theoretical discussions. A final observation with respect to Dr. Newby's teaching agenda is that he was hired to teach in the undergraduate curriculum. Although Dr. Newby has done considerable work in planning of the IS major, it appears that he has been primarily involved in graduate level teaching. It is recommended that Dr. Newby engage more in undergraduate teaching.

## **Research**

A number of Dr. Newby's colleagues are enthusiastic about his long-term research goals to design and examine information retrieval systems that serve as human memory extensions. A colleague noted that Dr. Newby's research is "based on interesting and important questions" and that his work "ties in to many central issues in information science, document representation and presentation of results." Dr. Newby's involvement in TREC has permitted him to develop the infrastructure that he needs in order to conduct his research. Dr. Newby's work with his system *Ravi* has been disseminated through the TREC forum, which has international participation. Through participation in TREC, Dr. Newby has mentored and worked with a number of SILS doctoral students and helped them to develop research interests, while further exploring IR research opportunities. Having doctoral participation in TREC is good for SILS, and an excellent opportunity for the doctoral students. Dr. Newby's leadership role in seeking an NSF-KDI grant is further evidence of his commitment to research.

Dr. Newby has evidenced a commitment to research, but colleagues would like to see him develop a stronger research publication record. Several colleagues indicated that the wide range of research foci may have interfered with Dr. Newby's ability to effectively disseminate his research through publication. One reviewer went so far as to note that "what seems to be missing [in Dr. Newby's record] is the discipline to focus principles that ground system development and human behavior and the patience to attend to often mundane details of observing, testing, and reflecting on interactions that lead to new questions and perhaps eventually to new principles." Dr. Newby's colleagues are unanimous in their recommendation that he focus his research and that he vigorously pursue publication in refereed journals such as *JASIS* and *IP&M*.

In his personal statement, Dr. Newby notes that he needs to concentrate more on his research and publication record. He also indicates that he has tried, but been unsuccessful at publication in several peer review journals. Colleagues indicate a desire to support Dr. Newby in developing and pursuing a more intense research and publication

agenda, as this is deemed necessary for tenure and promotion. The faculty further indicate they could offer more guided support if Dr. Newby would share the nature of his publication obstacles.

### **Service**

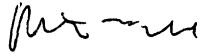
Dr. Newby's service record is quite strong, and covers curriculum development, technology planning, and conference program development and participation activities. Indeed, one colleague has indicated that Dr. Newby should win "especially high marks" in this area. Within curriculum development, Dr. Newby's has been particularly strong in developing new courses and he has been instrumental in developing the undergraduate IS minor and planning for the IS major. In terms of technology planning, Dr. Newby's has shared his insights and been active on committees both within SILS and in the larger University community. In the area of committee work and service to the profession at large, Dr. Newby's has also taken on numerous tasks by refereeing and co-chairing an ASIS conference, editing, and reviewing professional books. While involvement in service is expected, there is overall concern that these activities have detracted from his research and publication. It is strongly recommended that he reduce his efforts in the area of service to focus on research and refereed publication.

### **Other Comments**

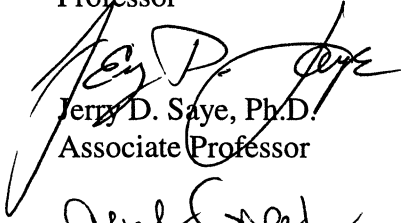
Subcommittee B believes strongly in the benefits to the school and the individual of the development of a sense of community and collegiality in the school. We recommend that Dr. Newby reevaluate his role as a team member of the SILS faculty and community. Attendance at formal and informal faculty functions could provide Dr. Newby with the opportunity to discuss his research, discover mutual interests, and learn more about his colleagues--all of which together may richly benefit his development and experience as a researcher, teacher, and faculty colleague. Dr. Newby has much to offer the school and it would benefit from his increased involvement.

### **Recommendation**

Subcommittee B of the Personnel Committee recommends that Dr. Newby be reappointed. In putting forth this recommendation, the Subcommittee is encouraging Dr. Newby to limit the activities that appear to have detracted from his progress with publishable research. In particular, the Subcommittee suggests that Dr. Newby develop a more focused research and teaching agenda, increase the coverage of theoretical issues in his courses, and limit his service activities. It is strongly recommended that Dr. Newby vigorously pursue research publication in peer review journals. The Subcommittee is very concerned that unless changes are made in the areas examined above, the future review for promotion and tenure is in jeopardy of being unsuccessful.



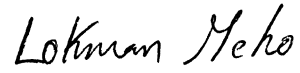
Robert M. Losee, Ph.D.  
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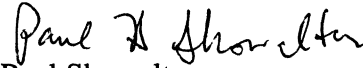
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