

To: Dr. [REDACTED], Interim Provost

From: Dr. [REDACTED], Interim Department Chair, English and Modern Languages

RE: Professor Julie Moore's Non-Tenure Professional Review

Date: 10/27/21

Dear Dr. [REDACTED],

The Department of English met on Tuesday, October 26, 2021 to discuss Professor Julie Moore's Non-Tenure Professional Review Portfolio. All English department members were present (in person or via Zoom), and we were joined by Dr. [REDACTED]. What follows is a summary of our conversation with Professor Moore as well as a description of the department's collective affirmation of Professor Moore's role here at Taylor.

One member of the department opened the discussion by asking Professor Moore to describe how the Writing Center (which Professor Moore directs) supports the mission of the university. Professor Moore answered that she and her WC tutors place Christ at the center of their work, that they treat those who come to the Writing Center as whole people made in the image of God. She reported that she trains her student tutor to focus on the writing *experience*, rather than the perceived writing *ability*, of those who come for help and in that way are able to reflect Christ by offering safety and encouragement to those who come to the Center. Professor Moore sees the Writing Center as an important place of outreach to students in need, which thus supports the university's mission.

Another member asked Professor Moore to talk about the learning environment she creates in her Compositions classes. Professor Moore explained that because writing inherently involves risk and vulnerability, she's intentional about establishing and building systems of trust and honesty in her classroom. She emphasizes the rhetorical moment of writing, the needs of the audience, and the value of context as students craft their papers. She strives, she said, to be both encouraging and gracious as she pushes them to write outside themselves and to speak to a broader audience. She reminds them that their individual voices matter as she encourages them to participate in civil discourse.

A third member asked Professor Moore to describe how her commitment to civil discourse might intersect with what some perceive to be the political texture of the material she covers in her Composition class, as well as the political stances she appears to take on social media. This member also asked Professor Moore if there is room in her Composition class for political disagreement, or if students might be penalized if they take a political stance that differs from Professor Moore's. This was the most contentious part of our discussion together. Professor Moore noted with some vehemence that she is a Christian first and does not affiliate with any political party or political stance. She said that students who make thoughtful and well-supported arguments will receive good grades, regardless of whether or not she as the professor might agree or disagree with the student's position. And she argued with passion that her focus on

issues of racial reconciliation and justice is not the result of her political leanings but rather derives from her understanding of Scripture; she says that she teaches from a Gospel position, and that she continually studies the Scriptures and reflects upon her classroom materials and practices to be sure of theological alignment. The member who posed the question commended Professor Moore for her empathy and her responsiveness to questions both in this meeting and outside of it, and noted that the question was raised in order for Professor Moore to be able to provide the department with some reassurance that her teaching motives were Gospel-motivated rather than politically-motivated. Professor Moore reiterated her stance that she works from a Scriptural perspective and that as she explores racial matters she looks ahead at the vision from Revelation 7:9 of a multitude from every nation and language standing before the throne of Christ.

A member then asked Professor Moore to share what she believes her strengths are as a classroom instructor. The member noted that Professor Moore's student evaluations show consistently high scores in preparation and organization, and in useful and timely feedback on assignments. Professor Moore shared that she spends a lot of time preparing her classes and building her curriculum, that she endeavors (according to best practices as described in current Composition scholarship) to pass back work before the next assignment is due, and that generally she devotes much of her teaching time to providing a classroom experience and atmosphere conducive to student improvement. She noted again that her interest is not in politics, but in the whole-person growth and engagement of her students.

Finally, a member asked Professor Moore to speculate about what her next five years at Taylor might look like, or to share any dreams she has for her position. Professor Moore noted that she is working with the Director of the Library on an idea to combine research tutoring with the work of the Writing Center, which she says is an exciting possibility. She also mentioned that she would love to develop a course to be offered each spring semester in which she could train tutors to begin their work in the fall semester. She explained that many writing centers across the country have such a support class, and that those directors who don't have such a class uniformly wish that they did. It is awkward, she said, to train tutors in the fall while they're already working in the Writing Center; the inevitable result of this arrangement is that the tutors are only partially-trained as they help students early in the semester. She also mentioned that carrels would be a welcome addition to the Writing Center so that students and tutors could have a modicum of privacy as they work together, an addition that would make students who come to the Writing Center more comfortable.

The department thanked Professor Moore for her file materials and for answering these questions, after which she left the meeting. Upon her departure, members of the department praised Professor Moore's organizational ability (as seen both in her classroom and in the Blackboard file itself); her incredibly high-level work as Writing Center director; her thoughtful and well-articulated scriptural grounding for all she does in her job; her admirable scholarly participation on two fronts, both her Writing Center research/engagement and her prodigious output of writing and her considerable publishing success in poetry; and in general her

empathetic, encouraging presence in the department and her prompt responsiveness to concerns from students and colleagues alike.

After a suggestion from Dr. [REDACTED], I proposed to the department that we hold a yes-or-no vote on whether or not to affirm Professor Moore in her role in our department. As time was short, I asked for votes via email, as well as any comments that members cared to share about Professor Moore's work here. The vote was unanimous in affirming Professor Moore as a highly-valued colleague and member of the department. And if I may offer a summative statement of the comments I received, it would be that Julie belongs here in the English Department at Taylor and that she adds great value to the service and ministry we offer our students.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. [REDACTED]
Interim Chair, Department of English and Modern Languages