

February 2, 2015

To: IUP University-wide Tenure Committee

From: Department of Communications Media Tenure Committee

RE: Evaluation and Recommendation for Dr. Luis Almeida

Introduction: Dr. Luis Almeida joined the Communications Media Faculty in 2010 with **two** years prior experience at the Assistant Professor level at another institution of higher learning. Building on his prior teaching, service, and scholarship, he has set for himself a standard of excellence which meets and exceeds the criteria for Promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. His contributions to the Department, the College of Education and to the University not only reflect prodigious efforts in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service, but they also have resulted in a mastery of teaching, collegiality, and publication which many take a career to achieve. He leads by example and willingly shares his varied expertise for the betterment of colleagues and students alike. As will be noted throughout this document, Dr. Almeida has already set a record of consistent achievement driven by his passion for teaching, his intellectual curiosity and his desire to make meaningful contributions to this University.

Teaching: Simply stated, Dr. Almeida's performance as an instructor at all levels of teaching here at IUP has been outstanding. His Evaluations are uniformly excellent, and he has taught Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral-level courses. Since arriving at IUP, Dr. Almeida has taught fourteen different courses, eight for the department's Bachelors program, two in our shared Masters program, and four in our Doctoral program. His course load has ranged from COMM 103 – Digital Instructional Technology, required for hundreds of undergraduate education majors each year, COMM 303 – Scriptwriting, a cornerstone course in our Department, COMM 900 – Culture of Cyberspace and COMM 846 – Instructional Media solutions. Necessity required an essential redesign of some of these courses. Dr. Almeida has written two books which support the undergraduate classes which he has noted in his discussion of Scholarship. In addition, he was able to use his AWE to write a \$36,000 grant to support his work in COMM 900. It should be noted that because of Departmental needs, during the Fall, 2012 and Spring, 2014 semester, Dr. Almeida taught a Master's level course as well. The quality of his instruction coupled with his versatility makes him a scion of pedagogy and classroom effectiveness in the Communications Media Department.

Student Evaluations offer a great deal of insight into an Instructor's effectiveness in the classroom. Within the "Overall" category, Dr. Almeida uniformly ranks above 90% in the Superior-Above Average, heavily weighted toward "Superior". In addition, regardless of level, he continues with the reflections of classroom excellence by having students place him over 90% in the Strongly Agree-Agree categories of the individual items. The student comments are peppered with "wonderful presentation," "available to help us," "Dr. Almeida was awesome! I have already decided I want to run my classes as he runs his." What an impact! The previous comments were chosen for inclusion here randomly. The reaction of students to Dr. Almeida's

instruction is uniformly outstanding, regardless of level. His colleagues also reflect upon his outstanding record in class room performance by observing.

Among peer observations of Dr. Almeida's prowess in the classroom was Dr. Leidman's who noted that in Fall, 2011 COMM 103, "Dr. Almeida asks the class engaging, specific questions which demand answers, and the students react." In Fall, 2012, Dr. Lenze wrote of Dr. Almeida's COMM 900—Culture of Cyberspace that, "The organization of the lesson was very clear with sound objectives that were followed." Throughout a close examination the comment offered on peer observation and student evaluations, it is clear that Dr. Almeida's skill in the classroom is not only consistent but well appreciated and recognized by all. Also, supporting the classroom experiences he offers are meticulously prepared materials which range from exercises which he has authored to excellent, specific syllabi. Dr. Almeida is an instructional designer who takes his academic training and applies it on a daily basis in all of his classes.

Scholarship: One of the facets of IUP's personality is that it has its ranks filled with individuals who are teachers as well as scholars. Rarely does a younger faculty member fit this model as well as Dr. Almeida. He has made it his own. Since joining the faculty in 2010, he has completed more scholarly activities than most because of his sincere desire to make a measurable contribution to our University. Since arriving here he has published nine peer reviewed articles, co-authored one book chapter, written (two) books solo, co-authored one and served as a contributing editor for another. In addition, he has three solo and one co-authored proceedings articles and has made 12 peer-reviewed presentations, several of which are joint ventures with IUP doctoral students as well as other colleagues. The DTC takes special pride in adding its vote of commendation to Dr. Almeida's scholarly works. They have been offered at all levels – from local (Laurel Highlands Communications Conference (2010, 2011, 2012) to State (PETE & C Conference (2010, 2011) to National (Lilly Conference on College Teaching (2010) to International (International Society for Technology in Education (2011) – both in person and online. His writings reflect and are in tandem with his teaching, especially at the undergraduate level, where his topics include teacher education and technology, gaming, and instructional design. Throughout his scholarly pursuits Dr. Almeida has continually endeavored to connect his classroom agenda and research so that they integrate fully, one supporting supports the other. He has had four books published by Pearson Learning Solutions Publishing in Boston on topics related to his classes. Pearson, a major national/international publisher, is highly selective and maintains a global reputation. Upon examination it is understandable why Dr. Almeida's books are being published. They are clear, decisive and descriptive offering students a specific approach to the subject matter. This is particularly evident in "Scriptwriting Step-by-Step" and "Writing the Phenomenological Qualitative Dissertation Step-By-Step". As the titles suggest, these writings, although based in theory, give students the specifics necessary to design and finish projects using a grounded, specific set of methods. It should also be noted that the Journals which have published Dr. Almeida's work are regional, national and international, and are discipline specific representing a cross-section of highly respected publications. He has also carefully categorized his scholarly work, avoiding useless puffery in self-assessment. The DTC agrees with and is appreciative of Dr. Almeida's evaluation of his scholarly activities and the descriptive categories which differentiate the judging criteria involved, separating invited presentations from peer reviewed, etc. In 2011 he was a recipient of the IUP Achievement in

Scholarship Award and was honored in 2011 as the Outstanding Researcher within the COE-ET at IUP.

Service: If the most effective service is that which marries expertise and volunteerism, then Dr. Almeida has managed to scale the greatest heights. All of his various activities are, like much of his work in other areas, too numerous to mention here but certain highlights come to the fore. His background within the realm of instruction, technology and gaming has allowed him to contribute across the University. As he has documented, he has worked on technical programs and committees which impact on the growth and reputation of IUP. If we are not up-to-date then we cannot offer our present and future students a competitive education. Most recently Dr. Almeida has undertaken the responsibilities of being Department Assistant Chairperson. This job is multi-faceted and filled with drudgery. Some of his accomplishments in this role include writing reports, working on the Departmental budget, working mentoring transfer students and developed an articulation agreement with community colleges. His work with technology has helped to shape various activities, especially at the College level. Dr. Almeida's efforts with the TECC group have strengthened the electronic portfolio that is utilized by every Education major. In addition, he has and continues to work with Dr. Lloyd Onyett on the Technology Day which is offered through COE-ET each semester. His time commitment to the tech programs speaks of his dedication to helping IUP to continue its growth. He also hosted a series on WIUP-TV entitled, "What's Like Show" in which he introduces the audience to various professions. On the University-wide level, Dr. Almeida has acted as Departmental representative to the IUP Senate (2010-11), and was a liaison to the Living and Learning Committee (2011-12) as well as serving on the A.B.B.L.E Board (2012-Present).

Within a semester of his arrival, Dr. Almeida became the Director of Communication Media's Applied Media Laboratory. He has served in this capacity without any compensation. He has written grants in order to upgrade the software, again an example of how his service is supporting the primary mission of IUP. His grantsmanship has led to an infusion of funding to the Laboratory. As an advisor, not only to the Applied Media Laboratory, but within the fabric of the Department, Dr. Almeida is advising a heavy load of undergraduates numbering close to one hundred. Like all of his colleagues in the Department, this advisement load was caused by the unexpected departure of seven faculty members within a two year period and no reduction in students. As all know, advisement is a cornerstone of service and Dr. Almeida has managed his role as advisor with aplomb and many dedicated hours. As a member of the Doctoral faculty, he is chairing six dissertation committees and sitting on several more as a committee member. He is working diligently with each of his advisees to shepherd them through the undergraduate and graduate curricular labyrinth leading to graduation. Lastly, and indicative of Dr. Almeida's dedication to service is the fact in Spring, 2011, he served as the Teaching Associate mentor and taught a PhD. course for which in normal circumstances, he would have received release time for both. However, due to Departmental exigency, he filled both roles and did not receive the allotted release time for his Doctoral course. Dr. Almeida has become involved in service to the University on all levels. We have no doubts that he will continue to be a leader in the arena of service here at IUP.

Conclusion: Candidates for Tenure must display a level of achievements in order to be recognized. Coupled with Dr. Almeida's current record of successes is the fact that he received early promotion to Associate Professor last year. This was a clear indication of the esteem in which Dr. Almeida is held by colleagues and administrators across the University. His efforts during his career at IUP have displayed commitment and the achievement of excellence. All of Dr. Almeida's activities have been verified by the DTC. It is with this in mind that the Communications Media Departmental Tenure Committee Recommends Dr. Luis C. Almeida without reservation based on the quality of his work, in the classroom, within the scholarly community and in service to the IUP community. In our evaluation, he passes all measure of consistency and quality for Tenure. We commend him for his work and know that his future here at IUP will reap even more benefits from Dr. Almeida's motivation to attain excellence in all of his endeavors, now and into the future.