
From: Bernadine Chuck Fong <fongbernadine@fhda.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 1, 2022 11:58 PM
To: foothill
Cc: centralservices
Subject: An Open Letter to our Tenure Review Committees and a student's testimonial

An Open Letter to our Tenure Review Committees:

You are involved in the very important tenure review process and I want to especially thank you for your service and dedication in assuring the Foothill faculty are of the highest quality. As I review this year's submission of tenure files, I want to share my expectations that Foothill's process is a rigorous one which emphasizes the commitment of the individual to be a *fully functioning faculty member* who is devoted to students and brings a wide range of skills and abilities to the classroom and makes contributions in their academic and professional areas outside of the classroom. All faculty members are expected to participate in college-wide activities and committees which strengthen the college's programs and continually improves our responsiveness to students. There are basically three types of faculty members, based on their major duties and responsibilities: teachers, librarians, and counselors. However, it is recognized that librarians and counselors can also have some teaching responsibilities. In addition, some faculty members may have program coordination duties.

Tenure candidates also need to be screened with the same rigor used when they were hired. It is also critical to evaluate the *whole* faculty member and the range of contributions which can be made to the department or the college. *Tenure candidates should be reviewed on the basis of whether you would still want to employ the individual.* It is important to maintain the same standards for tenure as for employment, and even a higher standard for tenure should prevail.

If you or the committee needs to justify or rationalize any part of a tenure candidate's behavior then the committee needs to note those reservations very clearly in its recommendation for re-employment. *You should be specific and include timelines when you expect changes or improvement and be clear on how you will be assessing them.* Language like "the candidate should consider" or "the committee suggests" should be avoided because it is an ambiguous message to the candidate if you really want to see change occur. You should also be sure that the candidate has heard the committee's comments in the self-evaluation. We are beginning with the assumption that no one is perfect and that there is always room for improvement. Therefore, criticisms or comments for changes in performance should be perfectly normal and not, in themselves, constitute a negative evaluation. In fact, it's how the candidate constructively responds to criticism and critique that will be important.

Your recommendation for re-employment for any year, should be enthusiastic and with no reservations whatsoever as the college is making a lifetime investment in your candidate.

Thank you for your service in this very important activity to assure the legacy of Foothill.

Coincidentally and serendipitously, the following is a totally unsolicited email I just received and it is a testimony to our search, selection and retention process and to the rich learning environment the college

provided. I have the student's permission to publish this letter and thank you to the faculty and staff who impacted this student's life, though sadly, some are no longer with us.

February 1, 2022

President Fong,

Happy Chinese New Year!

My name is Kaia Wang, and I graduated from Foothill with an AA in Japanese and Communications in 2015. I reflected a lot on my Foothill experience as I'm applying for a full-time math teaching job these days. Being part of the Foothill community truly changed my life and helped me find my career passion. I can't help but write to you to express my gratitude as an alumna.

I took my first job in a tech startup before coming to Foothill College. I felt that my shyness hindered my workplace relationships. Moreover, I didn't find purpose and happiness in what I did. Although I had studied at several colleges before, it was at Foothill that I experienced belonging for the first time. I remember that Professor Preston Ni (Communications Instructor) taught me how to stand up for myself in relationships, and that Andrew Lee (academic counselor) helped me clarify my personal values and encouraged me to explore my passion in teaching. It was at Foothill that I took a psychological counseling course for the first time. And my instructor, Ernie Schmidt, taught us so many cognitive behavioral strategies that enabled me to take control of my emotions. My Japanese instructor, Kazuko Iida, and English instructor, Natalia Menendez, instilled in me confidence and professionalism in speaking and writing. Finally, I have so many thanks for the professors in the Mathematics Department (Ion Georgiou, Phong Pham, etc.) and April Henderson from the EOPS program. They patiently helped me get started with tutoring math students, which laid the foundation for me to pursue a full-time teaching position.

When I walked on the empty campus during COVID-19, I realized how precious it was to have all the face-to-face opportunities with these teachers and tutor students in teams. That was the best part of my learning experience! I truly hope that the Foothill community will thrive again and empower more students to take control of their lives. Thank you so much!

-Kaia

Best regards,

Bernadine

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