



SAN DIEGO STATE  
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*College of Health and Human Services*

*Doctor of Physical Therapy Program*

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Dear CHHS Personnel Committee Members:

I thank the College Committee again for their time and efforts in evaluating my application for promotion to Professor, but I respectfully disagree with their conclusions and request promotion.

Based on the CHHS Committee's review of my materials it was stated: "*The Committee, however, does not see evidence of other extramural funding, interdisciplinary collaborations, or the development of an international presence in pelvic health rehabilitation. Given these limitations, the Committee cannot recommend you for promotion to Professor in Professional Growth and suggests that you seek further interdisciplinary collaborations and global influence as you move towards advancing as a leader in this field of research.*" I would like to address each of the points raised by the Committee with more information about my accomplishments and consistency with the CHHS policy file.

First, like the Committee, I value interdisciplinary collaboration, but perhaps did not clearly articulate my current interdisciplinary collaborations as explicitly as I could have in my application. Interdisciplinary collaborations are an integral component of my profile. My research program, particularly my R01, is interdisciplinary. My collaborators on this NIH funded project have training in Gastroenterology (Dr. Ravi Mittal, Dr. David Kunkel), Engineering (Dr. Ali Zifan), and Bioinformatics (Dr. Ali Zifan, Dr. Chii-Dean Lin). So, while my work is appropriately rehabilitation focused as I am the Principal Investigator, I have cultivated interdisciplinary partners. Moreover, as the committee acknowledged, my publications appear in interdisciplinary journals, which will certainly expand my interdisciplinary reputation and potential future collaborations. I am also collaborating with faculty in Exercise Science and Public Health at both SDSU and UCSD in the research integral to my role as primary mentor for 2 students in the Joint Doctoral Program in Public Health, Health Behavior (faculty members include Dr. Susan Levy, Dr. Mitchell Rauh, Dr. Sheri Hartman, and Dr. Erik Groessl). The School of Public Health approached me due to my expertise in pelvic health to support graduate

students applying to the JDP program. I also collaborate with faculty in the School of Nursing (Mary Beth Parr) in developing a simulation experience for the Doctor of Physical Therapy students as part of my class (DPT 875). Of note, the CHHS policy file does not include interdisciplinary collaboration as a criterion for promotion; the word “interdisciplinary” surprisingly does not appear in the policy file.

Second, my leadership on an international level was also not clearly articulated based on the Committee’s review. I am a nationally recognized expert in the field of pelvic health rehabilitation. Evidence to support this includes my role as a reviewer for both the National Institutes of Health and the Veteran’s Administration. This national recognition led to an invitation to serve on the Editorial Board for the leading international journal for research in physical therapy and related fields, the Physical Therapy Journal. Included in my CV are invited presentations at Washington University in St. Louis, which then also directly resulted in my inclusion in a dissertation committee that required an expert in pelvic health research. Also noted in my CV is an invitation to speak at the International Pelvic Pain Society Meeting, which occurred prior to tenure. Based on this evidence, I believe that I have addressed the CHHS policy file (Policy 7.4): *“Candidates for promotion to Professor should also provide evidence of a strong and coherent program of continuous professional growth that demonstrates their expertise in a particular field or area and impact of their work upon the body of knowledge. A higher level of service and participation in shared governance is expected and more weight shall be given to them for promotion to the rank of Professor. In addition, it is desirable to have national or international stature.”*

Third, the suggestion that other extramural funding (in addition to the \$2.5 million R01 grant that I received as PI, with full F&A) is necessary for promotion is in direct contradiction to the policy file, which explicitly states that grant funding is *not* a requirement for promotion. Per the policy file (Policy File 3.1.3): *“Evidence for evaluating professional growth shall comprise: externally reviewed professional growth activities including, as a primary and necessary element, refereed publications of merit. In appropriate disciplines, extramural grant funding may be valuable to support research, but grant funding is not in and of itself sufficient nor necessarily a requirement.”* In fact, based on the policy file, I have exceeded this expectation. I am currently the only faculty member in the school of ENS to have ever received an individual R01 that was awarded fully to SDSU (not transferred from a prior institution).

Finally, because evaluating applications with the breadth of experiences that exist across the different schools in the College of Health and Human Services is a challenge, the CHHS Policy file indicates that the school is responsible for determining whether a candidate has met the requirements for promotion. Per the CHHS policy file (Policy File 1.5): *“The personnel committee and director of a candidate’s school have primary responsibility for evaluating and explicitly describing the manner and extent to which the candidate’s achievements in each area meet the criteria for excellence in his/her professional discipline and corresponding professional rank.”* Both the ENS Personnel Committee and the ENS Director evaluated my portfolio and determined that I have met the criteria in Teaching, Service, and Professional Growth and recommended that I be promoted to Professor beginning in Fall 2021. Because it is difficult to assess the expectations and accomplishments outside of your own school, the CHHS Policy file directs the College Committee to consider the findings of the school and school director. It is

unclear why the findings of the CHHS Committee were in conflict with the findings of the ENS Committee and Director. Additionally, based on my prior letters from the Dean, College Committee, ENS Director, and School Committee, I have achieved and exceeded the recommendations that were provided to me of what would be expected for promotion to Professor.

I thank the CHHS Committee again for their time and efforts in evaluating my application for promotion to Professor, but I respectfully request that the Committee change their recommendation to indicate that I have met all criteria for promotion to Professor, including in the area of Professional Growth. Based on the standards outlined in the CHHS policy file, I clearly have met the expectation for promotion to Professor. Thank you for your consideration in this manner.

Sincerely,

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