



SULLIVAN
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
S · U · N · Y

**OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
FOR ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS**

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Dear Promotion Committee:

I've worked on our campus for 14 years, and I have never seen a candidate more deserving of her first promotion than Jessica Barkl. That is not an exaggeration. Please give her candidacy your highest consideration. I have based this letter on more than just my personal interaction with Jessica. I base it on her AF forms, her re-appointment letters, and her observations over the past three years.

Teaching Effectiveness

Jessica is, above all, an inspiring and gifted teacher who knows her subject matter well. Her SEEQ scores for overall quality of course and overall teaching effectiveness are way above the College average and well above the Division Average, which exceeds the College average. These numbers, in part, show how well students respond to her classes and how much they find her classes valuable. They show also that she clearly stimulates the interest and intellectual curiosity of her students. Her grade distribution reports are listed as well, and they are generally on par with the College and Division average. You will find she is a fair teacher who has high standards but is willing to help students to achieve her lofty goals. She pioneered our online Fundamentals of Speech class, and she makes the most use of the College's Learning Management System of anyone in the Liberal Arts Divisions. Thus, she is adept at providing a variety of approaches to learning, including both online and face-to-face. The observations of her attest to her ability to vary classroom procedures. Her desire to teach about drama and speech is infectious and I have watched her incredible ability to inspire students first-hand. Within a few short years she has created a loyal and quienthusiastic following of theater students.

Advising Ability/Student Success Projects

Jessica has worked diligently with all of her advisors and volunteered to take FP students. She makes sure that she reaches all of her advisees each semester. She doesn't passively wait for them to come to her. Furthermore, I have witnessed the positive bonds she establishes. This is apparent in those students interested in Theater Arts, but it extends to those in other majors as well. She guides them and nurtures their independence and responsibility through a "tough love" approach. She uses this also when she is working with her students who take part in the theater productions but are not her advisees. She sees advising as an extension of teaching, and she is always teaching.

Character and Personality: Professionalism, Work Ethic, and Attitude

I have never seen anyone on this campus work harder than Jessica Barkl. She takes on mammoth projects and completes them. 12 hour days are common. She works over the summer, even when she doesn't have to. She works in-between semesters. She works over breaks. This semester we brought in a part-time Theater Tech person to help with events in the theater. However, he was then moved to IT. That meant no one was available to do that job while we did a search. So, of course, Jessica did the job for months, even though working on projects like the Met Opera are no-where near her job description. She did it because the College committed to running the Met Opera in the theater, and she believes in the

College. That is her attitude: she does what is best for the students and the school, even if it may be to her own detriment. She works with all students fairly and openly, and this is clearly evidenced in her work with the theater. Please read my observation from Spring 2016. It clearly shows the myriad ways that Jessica successfully meets students on fair ground. She undeniably excels in this category.

Scholarship

Jessica puts in extraordinary work regarding continued specialization in her field. She is a dramaturg at heart. Thus, when Jessica decides to run a production, she immerses herself in the work. Again, please review my observation from Spring 2016, especially the section on History/Culture. The information in that observation applies to her other productions as well. She spends months reading up on the culture and characters in her productions to help students/actors understand the production and their characters. She makes every moment of a production a teachable one. She does this research for her classes well. Jessica was tasked with teaching Shakespeare in the Spring. Do you know what she did over the winter break? She read every play by Shakespeare. SHE READ EVERY ONE! She could have chosen five and just read those and taught the class. Nope. She poured herself into the texts, did research on the texts, and then used that to prep for the class. She does amazing independent study work, impressive creative work (as evidenced by her work with Dr. Gabe Rikard this semester on *Marshall County Line* and in other semesters by her work as an actor), and, for example, took part in conferences and workshops at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.

Specialization in Teaching and Professional Societies

Jessica has worked diligently on the craft of teaching, especially when she creates new online courses. She also takes part in myriad professional societies. Her involvement in many of these groups also augment her ability to teach and her approach to teaching. I am sure that her portfolio will show you her approaches and involvement in societies increase her specialization in the scholarship of teaching. I have not witnessed that first-hand. I have, however, seen the positive result of those efforts in the classroom and around campus.

General Education: Work Beyond Typical Job Duties and Collaborative Work

Jessica is required to put on three productions a year, and one of those can just be an outside production she brings in. However, she always does three of her own productions AND brings in outside groups. She volunteers to work on committees, like the one that reviewed our RFP for a new Learning Management System. She is seemingly always on campus (when she isn't running home to walk her dogs), working with others on projects that help the College. These include work within the theater and beyond. Her AF forms attest to the many areas where she helps the college beyond job-description. Please read those AF forms. Those forms also attest to her willingness and ability to work with others on campus. And I am conjoining these two sections of the rubric, because I believe they are so intricately linked.

Contributions to Instructional Division

Jessica took the lead on revamping the Oral Speech component of Gen Ed 10: Basic Communication. She researched rubrics and provided me with all the data I needed to move forward with our revamping our approach. That is happening this semester thanks to her efforts. She has served on the leadership of the Faculty Council for the past two years, and that is her formal committee work from the perspective of

the Division, but she is also actively involved with the Student Engagement Committee. Again, her AF form shows so much of the work that she does. Some key aspects on that list includes creating and teaching too many new courses to count and a brand new theater arts program proposal. And I will add one note: I have to only ask Jessica to do division work (or any work really) once. She adds the work to her list and then accomplishes it. She doesn't need reminders or hand-holding. She just gets it done.

Student Mentoring and Assistant Student Organizations

Jessica's work with the Theater Arts Club has been impressive. They are an active club, raising funds, attending Broadway shows, and putting on a lot (I mean a lot) of karaoke events for students on Friday nights. When was the last time you gave up a Friday night for our students and for a club? She does it pretty much every Friday, except when she can't because of other College obligations. She gives her personal time and, sometimes, money to help our students and make our campus a vibrant one.

Relationship to the Community

Take a look at all the theater groups with whom Jessica has a relationship, especially the NACL and the Forestburgh Playhouse. She has turned our campus into one of the theater centers of the county. She has also been actively involved in the annual Boys and Girls Club celebrity dinner fund-raiser in which a college team takes part each year. She fulfills the mission of the College well in this area.

I can't stress enough how much I believe in Jessica Barkl and how worthy she is of promotion.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Reifenheiser". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Paul Reifenheiser