

August 25, 2013

University Tenure and Promotion Committee,

I'm writing to recommend Brandon Young for tenure and promotion. I've enjoyed working with Brandon on many projects through my roles first in the Adams Center and now in the Learning Studio and can confidently say he consistently combines insight and professionalism with positive energy and good humor even under pressing deadlines.

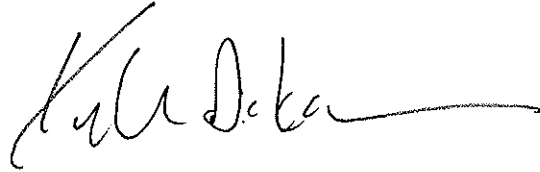
Perhaps my first extended work with Brandon was over more than a year-long process of designing the Learning Studio. In 2009 the initial design committee was a combination of librarians and faculty members with a clear idea of new services needed in the library but little experience in space planning. In the meetings that followed, Brandon contributed not only the skill of the designer and architect to give physical shape to elusive ideas but also the experience of a savvy arbiter able to listen closely to competing voices and find solutions that balance the needs of each party. Every day I come to work in the Learning Studio and see the ways the physical space serves students, faculty, and professional media producers, I can see ways Brandon's design plans bring people together into creative communities.

Since those early days, I've enjoyed working with Brandon in a range of contexts, as teachers in Cornerstone and in Core classes where he also tries to imagine ways of connecting his passion for teaching with structures still taking shape. Most recently this desire to imagine new ways of learning by doing brought us both into the Makerspace project. Under another pressing deadline, James Langford in the Adams Center sought out Brandon as someone who could combine thinking like an architect with thinking like a teacher, to ensure that new spaces and tools would best serve the many workshop and lab classes that would use them.

Brandon has looked for ways to connect student learning with campus needs. In 2010 he agreed to work with a student on a guided study that looked at wayfinding and signage in the ACU library and presented a final report with design recommendations to Mark Tucker, dean of the library.

Then more recently he worked with Monty Lynn and Kent Smith on a summer research study into ACU graduates and other groups living in intentional communities across the United States. After Brandon, Monty, and Kent recorded many hours of interview footage, they worked with Drew McConnell in the Learning Studio to edit their work down into a series of videos that would benefit emerging communities around the world. At the end of the process, it was Brandon who developed the blog that these groups would visit in order to access this remarkable resource.

Through all of these experiences, Brandon reflects the spark of creative energy and desire to experiment that mark the faculty I find myself wanting to work with again and again. I certainly understand the difficult decisions before the T&P committee in evaluating the fitness of dozens of candidates, but from my own experience with this candidate my hopes are you'll find your way to ensuring Brandon spends a long career continuing to contribute to the ACU community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle Dickson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kyle Dickson

Associate Professor of English  
Director of the Learning Studio