

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World



To: Tenure and Promotion Committee

From: Dr. Rusty Towell
Chair, Department of Engineering and Physics

Date: August 9, 2012

Re: Letter of support for Dr. John Ehrke

It is a real privilege for me to support Dr. John Ehrke's application for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. John is an excellent teacher, a collegial faculty member, and a blessing to the Engineering and Physics Department.

As a teacher John goes the extra mile for our students. Students in our department cannot succeed unless they have the proper math background. Differential Equations is a class that most of our students take during their sophomore year, which is also the most common time for our majors to study abroad. Since differential equations is only offered once a year and is a prerequisite for most of our upper level classes, this puts our students in a real bind. John has always been willing to help our students by offering them the opportunity to take a guided study from him while he continues to fulfill his normal teaching duties. This allows our students to take advantage of the study abroad program without falling a year behind in their studies.

As a fellow faculty member John is always very collegial. Whether we are discussing what he teaches in his math class or possible future special topics courses, he consistently seeks our input and concerns so that he can best meet the needs of our students. This spirit of collaboration led to John tailoring the content of an advanced class in Partial Differential Equations to specifically meet the needs of our students. John seems to enjoy collaboration and seeks opportunities to work with others.

I have also had the opportunity to work with John on the UGEC. Specifically he and I were part of a small group that developed the "UGEC Criteria for Natural Sciences Core." While developing these guidelines John was instrumental in researching best practices in many peer universities. His extensive research and careful documentation were instrumental in our work.

John's combination of concern for our students, collegiality to the faculty, and superior classroom instruction has proven to be a huge blessing to the Engineering and Physics Department. Without solid mathematical abilities, our students cannot succeed. Since John has joined the math department we have had nothing but praise for his instruction.

I strongly recommend that John be granted tenure and promoted.

Grace and Peace,

Rusty