



22 July 2022

To the members of the Tenure and Promotion Committee:

I write this letter in support of my colleague Mac Ice's application for tenure and promotion. Mac's work in Special Collections buttresses ACU's mission by enhancing both teaching and research in unique ways; as such, Mac's career is one demonstration among many of why our librarians and library collections are such an integral part of what we are doing at ACU.

Considering, first, his support of teaching in my Department of History and Global Studies: Mac's collaboration with the Historical Methods course (HIST 353) has significantly amplified the success and effectiveness of that course, with positive results for all of our History, Public History, History teaching, and Social Studies teaching majors. Mac and I, or Mac and Tracy Shilcutt, have effectively team-taught this course every fall over the last ~7 years. His expertise and support make it possible for us to require students to complete 12-15 hours of service learning in Special Collections—an experiential learning lynchpin in those majors and in important gateway to upper level classes in our department. Mac, in collaboration with Amanda Dietz and/or Carisse Berryhill, spends time each summer carefully considering appropriate documentary collections that history students might enjoy and learn from, chats with Tracy or me about options, and then painstakingly pulls the appropriate files and prepares those for student work. For about 45% of the class time in HIST 353 each fall, students meet in Mac's space in Special Collections and complete preservation work on selected documentary collections under his guidance. He helps the students think through the processes and learn the procedures for staple removal, unfolding, re-filing in acid-free folders, and entering data in a finding aid, and he partakes of the students' delight (or boredom!) as they walk through the dirty work of preparing primary sources for long-term preservation and storage for research. The opportunity to work with Mac allows students to understand—in a way that traditional classroom instruction does not allow—how primary materials are created, preserved, and then used for research. Their understanding of history gains new layers as a result. This time with Mac in Special Collections is a key step in helping them to grow into, not just students of history, but historians—people who preserve, interpret, and create history themselves.

From a research standpoint, the work that Mac does in Special Collections is enormously important to me as a scholar of the history of Christian missions and the church, as I know it is to many of my colleagues who use the materials in Special Collections. Mac's assiduous work to acquire and preserve materials related to the history of the Stone-Campbell movement has made possible important scholarship by ACU colleagues and alumni like Doug Foster, Jamey Gorman, Monty Lynn, Lori Hunicutt, Carisse Berryhill, Jeremy Hegi, and myself. Archivists like Mac are, in many ways, the great unsung heroes of the historical discipline—without them, we would not be able to do what we do. Mac is a colleague whose organization, dedication, and personal passion for Stone-Campbell history make him the ideal person to fill his particular role. ACU is very lucky to have him. I encourage the committee to make sure that we all continue to benefit from his expertise and his commitment to good work. Please feel free to reach out if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kelly R. Elliott'.

Kelly R. Elliott
Associate Professor, Chair
Department of History and Global Studies