

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World

College of Business Administration

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To the Tenure and Promotion Committee:

I am pleased to have the privilege of writing a recommendation letter for Ryan Jessup, Ph.D., for consideration for tenure and promotion in the Department of Management Sciences.

When Dr. Jessup joined the COBA faculty in the fall of 2011, he immediately joined in the effort to help recruit prospective students by attending academic departmental meetings on visit days. He has always been a willing and enthusiastic partner in the recruiting efforts of future business students. To have faculty support the effort that recruiting makes to attract new students is paramount to our enrollment efforts.

Dr. Jessup has also found ways to develop relationships with current students by engaging them in research efforts, challenging their critical thinking skills, and having some fun with them in the classroom with activities like theme days such as "cheese day". I think most of his students look forward to seeing which ugly tie he will wear on "Ugly Tie Day" every week. While this may not seem like a very "academic" thing for a professor to do, it establishes a rapport with students where they become more engaged in the relationship with their professor in the classroom.

In an article titled *Creating Rapport in the Classroom* published online by Social Psychology Network, the research of William Buskist and Bryan K. Saville is referenced and discusses the importance of rapport in the classroom. The article's author uses the findings of Buskist and Saville's survey which was given to Auburn University undergraduates enrolled in an introductory level psychology class. The survey showed that a little more than half of the students reported experiencing any kind of rapport with a professor. The article goes on to say that the most common teacher behaviors contributing to the development of rapport were, in order: showing a sense of humor; availability before, after, or outside of class; encouraging class discussion; showing interest in them, knowing students' names; sharing personal insights and experiences with the class; relating course material in everyday terms and examples; and understanding that students occasionally have problems arise that inadvertently hinder their progress in their courses. Finally, the students told the researchers that the most common positive effects of rapport on their academic behavior were, in order: to increase their enjoyment of the teacher and subject matter; to motivate them to come to class more often, and to pay more attention in class. Their findings suggest that rapport seems to facilitate both student motivation for learning and their enjoyment of the course, and enhances student receptivity to what is being taught. I think it is safe to say that Dr. Jessup does his very best to build rapport in the classroom through a variety of very unique methods.

In addition to building connections with current and prospective students, Dr. Jessup has been a contributor to the COBA blog, most recently with his research on the Jessup Pope College Football Rankings. He has shared his professional findings on multiple occasions and helped create more touchpoints for COBA via social media.

Dr. Ryan Jessup displays the special qualities of a faculty member who not only cares about his students but also about the College of Business Administration and Abilene Christian University. In summary, on the basis of contributions to research, recruiting, and student involvement in and out of the classroom, I would strongly recommend Dr. Jessup for tenure and promotion. Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

M.C. Jennings
Recruiter and Marketing Manager, COBA