Example Department Chair Letter

Third Year and Final Tenure Review

These letters are adapted from two real letters from a recent, successful, tenure + promotion to associate professor on excellence-in-research case. The original author is Davide Bolchini, Chair of the Department of Human Centered Computing, School of Informatics and Computing. For privacy, the candidate’s name is changed, but they gave permission for this use.

Again, for privacy, I use “companion animals” as a fake research area and Dr. Xerlis as the candidate name. Apologies to anybody actually doing this research, or whose name is Xerlis.

Why are these good examples?

* They are neither too long nor too short.
  + Not too short: They address all areas of the faculty member’s responsibilities, giving important details about field-specific indicators.
  + Not too long: These are a little on the long side, but not too long. Critical things to watch out for
    - If the candidate statement is not detailed enough, have the candidate revise it.
    - Avoid spending time on your own role in mentoring or other chair history—everything should be oriented around the candidate.
* They call out distinctively valuable aspects of the candidate’s research.
* It states the obvious (e.g. the normal course load), clarifying things for other levels.
* It is specific and visually clear about what the criteria are and how the candidate met them. (The use of bold, italics, and boxing are original to Davide Bolchini’s version.).
* At the third year review it confirms the candidate’s efforts so far and lays out encouragement and rigor for next steps for success.

Some tweaks (see also a few footnotes in blue)

* In the original **third year review**, the candidate prepared a mini-dossier and 3 external letters were obtained. OAA discourages this, although it is important to remind the candidate that assertions in the candidate statement WILL need documentation. I have *omitted* all mention of external letters in the third year review.
* I have removed some mentions of “in two years” and other specific dated timelines. In this actual case, COVID interfered, in many other cases, other issues may happen.
* I removed mentions of comparative teaching evaluation averages.

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## Third year review

To: Darth Vader, Dean, School of Agriculture and Computing

From: Obi Kenobi, Chair, Department of Companion Computing (DCC)

Re: MP Xerlis, Assistant Professor

Third-Year Review, Department Chair’s letter

**Introduction**

Professor Xerlis joined the School of Agriculture and Computing at IUPUI, Department of Companion Computing, in August 2016 as a tenure-track Assistant Professor. Before joining IUPUI, she obtained a Ph.D. in Engaged Computing from the Minnesota Institute of Technology and completed a two-year postdoctoral fellowship funded by the National Institute of Agriculture at the University of Central North Dakota.

Professor Xerlis’s declared area of excellence is *research.* By University standards, by the time she applies for promotion and tenure, Dr. Xerlis is expected to have achieved *excellence* in research and be at least *satisfactory* in teaching and service. Research excellence is demonstrated by independent, impactful, and innovative research accomplishments in rank documented by leadership over a substantive body of original peer-reviewed publications in a focused area and significant external funding[[1]](#footnote-1) as PI. Collectively, a strong research record at the time of tenure review is expected to show an emerging national reputation in the field that makes the candidate ripe to achieve even greater accomplishments and take on greater responsibilities.

This letter constitutes the Department Chair’s feedback on Prof. Xerlis’ three-year review progress and offers the candidate a formative assessment and recommendations to assist him on presenting a strong dossier for promotion and tenure. Given the nature of the three-year review, it must be emphasized that this report cannot be taken in any sense as a promise or commitment by the Chair of the Department. I have carefully reviewed the candidate statement and the CV presented by Prof. Xerlis and the primary committee report. As I do with all pre-tenure faculty, I have met with Dr. Xerlis every month since the beginning of her appointment at IUPUI in one-on-one meetings to discuss progress and provide guidance on all aspects of academic work, as well as encouraging her to connect with mentors outside the School. Based on this, this formative evaluation largely documents prior discussions held with Prof. Xerlis and assessments from their annual reviews.

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| IMPORTANT NOTE: Prof. Xerlis’ USDA CRSS $174K PI grant proposal has been officially *recommended for funding* on March 12, therefore *after* the department (primary) committee report was received. |

**Summary**

In regards to Prof. Xerlis’ *research,* the record of peer-reviewed publications in rank has started off well, with a mix of full-paper conference proceedings in highly selective venues (e.g. the national Conclave on Agricultural Computing), one XILA Distinguished Paper Award, refereed extended abstracts/short papers, and one journal article in a top-tier computing journal. These are important publications. I expect that the record will grow with *increased acceleration,* with an appropriate balance of quality and quantity, and with an increased concentration on *full papers as lead author. Prof. Xerlis has just received notification from the USDA that her CRSS $174K PI grant on computer-aided social connections in companion animal husbandry has been recommended for funding.* This news typically means, if all goes well, that the award will be official within the next few weeks. If awarded, the CRSS grant demonstrates the cohesive scientific focus of Dr. Xerlis’ ideas, with encouraging peer endorsement of their novel ideas, and an excellent foundation that she is expected to use *very quickly* as a “stepping stone” for larger, future funding in rank. If performance in publications and external grants grows on this *positive trajectory*, Dr. Xerlis is on a clear path to achieve excellence in research by the time she will present her promotion and tenure dossier.

**Research (Area of Excellence)**

Prof. Xerlis’ research agenda in Companion Animal Computing sits at the intersection of social and collaborative computing, family agriculture, and participatory design. Their current research seeks to identify the fundamental principles that govern collaborative-computing and use of interactive systems for companion support. Key research thrusts include: (1) measurement of psycho-social ‘value added’ to an existing companion-animal relationship by social dimensional computing; and (2) interaction of the computing-companion-animal aspect with other daily-computing-activities. Her work uses theories from social computing, ecological psychology, and network interrogation and utilizes mixed-methods including quantitative and qualitative human subjects as well as transaction-analysis/data science complementary to the human-reported activity.

In rank, Dr. Xerlis has generated six full conference papers, including *three* at the premier and highly-selective general-human-computing conference, MAC (acceptance rates 19-25%), two full papers at a more specialized and also highly-competitive Animal Computing Conference, as well as one journal full paper and eight peer-reviewed short conference abstracts or papers and peer-reviewed venues. One of the short conference abstracts won a distinguished abstract award, provided to only the top 10% of conference abstracts. Her papers are innovative, well-designed, and well-executed. The conference papers are the type of scholarly dissemination that add to our department’s collective nationally impactful research, in the same league as larger programs at Georgia Tech, University of Michigan, and Minnesota Tech.

Prof. Xerlis’ is a highly-collaborative researcher who works prolifically and well with other senior or junior faculty inside and outside IU while also maintaining increasing focus on her own research agenda. So far, in this collaborative mode she has published well in rank, generating a consistent upward trajectory of citations (an h-index of 13 in this area at this point is good), establishing fruitful collaboration with Low Park Animal Health, and faculty at the Purdue School of Veterinary Studies, and maintaining research threads with colleagues from her postdoc years. More recently, she has begun publishing with her own student advisees as lead author.

To increase leadership, independence, and impact by the time of tenure review, I expect that productivity of full papers as lead author with student advisees accelerates soon, with a balance of journals and full paper conference proceedings in important venues.

I applaud Prof. Xerlis for obtaining funding recommendation for her 2-year USDA grant secured in rank as PI ($174K). This is an important achievement. The USDA Animal Research Initiation Initiative (ARII) is designed for “encouraging research independent immediately upon obtaining one’s first academic position after receipt of the Ph.D.” (USDA-ARII Program Solicitation). The award is highly competitive, with FY2017 funding rates at 14%. Prof. Xerlis’ grant, recommended for funding by the Cyber Human Animal System Program Board, seeks to inform the fundamental dynamics of human-animal computer-assisted support. This positive review represents an encouraging peer endorsement of Prof. Xerlis’ original research ideas and in-rank contributions to the growing field of human-animal-network studies.

I want to highlight *two key recommendations* that are critical for Prof. Xerlis to prepare a strong promotion and tenure dossier:

1. *Quickly leverage the ARII grant to secure additional and larger external funding in rank.* By the time of tenure review, very likely all review levels would expect additional evidence of funding as PI beyond the ARII. For each highly-competitive proposal, I recommend that Prof. Xerlis articulate a bold, forward-looking vision of how the innovative, conceptual contributions proposed will significantly advance the frontier of the human-computing field, and illustrate how this vision can be achieved by building on strong preliminary work. This work will also help Prof. Xerlis to deepen even more the intricacies and urgencies of the fundamental human-computer-network research problems under investigation. Prof. Xerlis should apply for the prestigious and very competitive early career USDA-NAL funding, and in parallel apply for funding through other relevant agencies and opportunities. While some industry funding may be applicable, she should take care that the funding process is peer-reviewed, respective, and competitive. She has several external grants currently submitted, which attests to the persistence and very good effort in seeking external funding. Given the two year time horizon of ARII, this effort should continue.

2. *Accelerate the production of full-paper peer-reviewed publications as lead/PI author with student advisees around a focused research agenda.* Because tenure review expects demonstrated *research leadership in one’s own research program*, it is critical to clarify the candidate’s specific role in all collaborative publications with other faculty. This can be handled easily through various conventions and annotations, in the CV, in the candidate statement, and with substantiation in the dossier. Make sure to follow the IUPUI CV format for the general ordering of the sections (e.g. Publications at the end.)[[2]](#footnote-2). The future candidate statement should concentrate on the key area with the most significant contributions as research leader.

*If Prof. Xerlis’ performance in generating full-paper peer-reviewed publications as lead author and acquisition of external grants as PI continues to improve along this positive trajectory, she is on a clear path to achieve excellence in research at the time of presenting her promotion and tenure dossier.*

**Teaching**

Prof. Xerlis, as with all pre-tenure faculty in this department, carries a reduced 1+1 teaching load until the end of her fifth year. This substantial teaching release is designed to give her ample time to grow an externally-funded research agenda in rank. She teaches the graduate courses HART-X501 Fundamentals of Human-Computer Systems (a core course for the MS program), and HART-G515 Introduction to Research with Humans and Systems (taken by graduate students from three different programs.). These align well with her skills and allow her to identify promising students for further work.

I am very satisfied with Dr. Xerlis’ teaching progress to date and this performance should be sustained. Overall, the transition from Post-Doctoral Fellow to faculty position with teaching responsibilities has worked well. She substantially re-developed and iteratively refined the G515 methodology course to update the content with a broader variety of research methods and techniques, and to cater to disciplinary-diverse student populations. In her second spring semester, she agreed to accommodate an extra ‘arranged’ section of G515 to meet the needs of four students who needed that class at that time. Every semester, she uses student feedback to enhance engagement, amplify breadth and depth as necessary, and improve content and project assignments and pedagogy to stabilize a consistent high-quality instruction. She also solicited and used a CTL peer evaluation, and obtained two peer evaluations from a senior lecturer in another department for the Fundamentals class.

Prof. Xerlis’ student advising is solid. She supported to graduation as dissertation chair one Human Computer Ph.D. student. I am positively impressed by her fruitful research advising of this student, who is now working at the [national] Agricultural Reseach Lab. Dr. Xerlis’ also serves as co-advisor of three other Ph.D. students and I expect her to accelerate her leadership in funding and directing Ph.D. students. Prof. Xerlis serves on two other dissertation committees, mentors approximately six MS students per year in their thesis or capstone, and one undergraduate MURI student. Dr. Xerlis is also a member of the curriculum committees for the MS and Ph.D. programs.

As a *key recommendation,* I expect that Dr. Xerlis will sustain and continue to improve her level of teaching improvement through (1) continued CTL and peer reviews of teaching and use of student feedback for continued self-reflection and fine tuning of courses; (2) continued mentoring Ph.D. students and MS students including work to increase productivity of advised Ph.D. students to assist with the PI’s core research agenda (publications and grants); and (3) continued course development in the Human Computer program. In the CV, separate research advising from other types of student advising[[3]](#footnote-3).

*Prof. Xerlis is demonstrating solid performance in teaching and I expect this performance to be sustained in the years to come. If Prof. Xerlis’ teaching continues to grow on this positive trajectory, she is on a clear path to achieve a satisfactory level of teaching performance by the time she presents her promotion and tenure dossier.*

**Service**

Prof. Xerlis’ level of service is very good. At the institutional level, she served on 13

university, school, and department committees, including the school Academic Affairs Committee, one department faculty search committee, and one year as lead faculty for the weekly Brown Bag lunches in the department (inviting and scheduling weekly speakers and activities). Externally, Prof. Xerlis is the department’s representative for the Animal Computer National Consortium. Importantly, Prof. Xerlis has been selected as a Founding Member for the USDA/NAL Future Leaders Academy. This is a selective and significant national recognition of her potential to serve and contribute to the future of research in humans, computing, and agriculture. Prof. Xerlis’ professional service for conferences has been very generous, at times over-extended, including program committee and reviewing committees (three with

a role as Associate Chair, which entails extensive coordination of other reviewers). She has participated on two national grant board panels for USDA.

This national service will be a contributor to the expected growing national reputation criterion for excellence in research, but *as a key recommendation* I expect Prof. Xerlis to sustain the good level of institutional service, but *carefully balance the commitment to external professional service* with the deep work needed for research productivity, her top priority. Two to three impactful activities per year are sufficient.

*Overall, Prof. Xerlis’ service accomplishments to date are solidly satisfactory. If service activities continue at this level, Dr. Xerlis is on a clear path to show a satisfactory level of service performance by the time she presents her promotion and tenure dossier.*

Sincerely.

Obi Kenobi, Department Chair

## Promotion and Tenure Review

**Department Chair’s Letter on the Promotion and Tenure Review of Assistant Professor MP Xerlis**

In this letter I present my review of the dossier of Dr. MP Xerlis, Assistant Professor in the Department of Companion Computing (HCC) and candidate for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Prof. Xerlis joined the School of Agriculture and Computing at IUPUI, Department of Human-Centered Computing, in August 2016 as Assistant Professor. Before joining IUPIU, she obtained a Ph.D. in Engaged Computing from the Minnesota Institute of Technology and completed a two-year postdoctoral fellowship funded by the National Library of Agriculture at the University of Central North Dakota.

The candidate’s declared area of excellence is research. I have reviewed the dossier submitted by the candidate, the nine arm’s length external letters, and the review of the Primary (Dept.) P&T Committee, resulting in a unanimous 5-0 vote in favor of promotion and tenure.

It is my assessment that, by the Department’s P&T standards and the accepted measures of research innovation, independence, and impact in the field of companion computing, Dr. Xerlis’ research accomplishments in rank merit an evaluation of *excellent*. She has accumulated a substantive record of well-cited, peer-reviewed publications in rank in highly-regarded venues in our field, including *two paper awards* at the premier conferences of agricultural computing and human-network computing, elucidating contributions that are poised to shift the field’s perspective in the area of social computing for human-animal connections. To propel her research agenda, Dr. Xerlis secured this year the highly competitive and *most prestigious grant* awarded by the National Agricultural Library (NAL) to pre-tenure faculty: the NAL NEWBIE Award for over $520,000 over five years as sole Principal Investigator (PI). Earlier she obtained a USDA animal research initiation (ARII) grant (approx. $174,000) as sole PI, and a National Institute of Health (NIH) grant as Co-PI for approx. $120,000. Regarding teaching and service, her documented accomplishments have met the bar of at least *satisfactory* performance in these areas.

**Research (Area of Excellence)**

Dr. Xerlis’ research in companion-animal studies focuses on social and collaborative computing in context of mental health and social networks. Through her empirical studies, which elegantly blend qualitative investigations and participatory design methods, she forcefully brings the perspective of user-centered design and computer-assisted social networks into our understanding of animal-human-human interactions. His work contributes to moving from a view of animal relations as instrumental and economic to a psycho-social perspective enhanced by computing. Her most impactful contributions in rank examined the perspectives of trainers, recipients, and family members of recipients of companion llamas. One of her most cited studies, for example, revealed that trainers and family members often had a disconnect in terms of the goals of companion animals, and based on this impactful early work in rank, Dr. Xerlis is contributing to a scholarly discussion of perspective and goals-setting, bringing in a valuable theoretical lens of “companion safety” applied for the first time to the context of non-human companions.[[4]](#footnote-4)

In rank, Dr. Xerlis generated 19 peer-reviewed publications, which include 6 journal articles and 13 articles in selective conference proceedings (9 peer-reviewed full papers and 4 peer-reviewed short papers)[[5]](#footnote-5). Across categories, there is a strong and substantive record of 15 full-length peer-reviewed papers. In this field, peer-reviewed full-length publications in highly selective, rigorously refereed conference proceedings are the accepted, journal-equivalent standard for research dissemination. Her publications appeared in the most selective peer-reviewed venues of the computing, network-psychology, and agricultural venues, including ADA HCA (the premier HCA publication venue). For a paper to be accepted at these conferences (which often have an acceptance rate of 25% or less), the quality of the research must be excellent. Dr. Xerlis has led and co-authored as a faculty mentor for the majority of her publications and equally contributed with colleagues. When she appears as a middle author in the selected papers, she has explained her individual contribution in the Research Documentation of the dossier. In addition to full papers, she has also published 6 workshop abstracts and poster papers at major conferences. There is clear evidence of independence in the body of her research contributions in rank. I find the quality of the empirical studies reported in the full papers exemplary in terms of rigor of the qualitative interviewing and participatory design findings.

I am impressed by Dr. Xerlis’ success in navigating the difficulties that these studies pose when recruiting participants. Because persons who have companion animals are experiencing mental or physical issues, it is very hard – especially for non-medical researchers - to identify and successfully recruit eligible participants, who are also willing to take part in in-depth interview protocols. Besides overcoming the logistical barriers, there are privacy, confidentiality and trust issues that are very much at play in these difficult personal situations. Dr. Xerlis was able to successfully overcome these barriers, thanks to the collaborations she established and nurtured over the years with therapists and trainers, and which proved essential to facilitate the execution of this impactful work.

Two of these publications have received highly selective paper awards. The first is an Honorable Mention at the Human-Computer-Animal 2019 conference, restricted to 15% of all accepted submissions. The second is a Distinguished Paper Nomination at the 2016 Animal Therapy Conference. These awards indicate that the papers are considered by peers as the “best of the best” of the accepted publications at the conference. Dr. Xerlis’s cumulative record of citations is 1,490, with an h-index of 17 (17 of her papers have at least 17 citations), which is very strong for a researcher in such a new area, and where we would expect a tenure-track faculty to be when moving to the next rank. As indicated in her candidate’s statement, the rate of *citations per year* sharply increased (doubled) since her appointment at IUPUI (from around 80-100 before rank to almost 200[[6]](#footnote-6) now). A key publication from her post-doc period continues to be highly cited[[7]](#footnote-7), showing her foundational importance but more recent ones are also being cited, evidence of a strong upward trajectory to make even broader impact in the future.

*The candidate’s record of publications in rank has met the DCC’s departmental standards and School standards of excellence with regards to independent, original and impactful peer-reviewed contributions. We expect this record to continue and increase in scope and impact as her career develops further.*

As a further testament of the excellent quality of his research vision, in 2021 Dr. Xerlis secured as sole PI the most prestigious and highly competitive NAL research grant for junior faculty: The NSF NEWBIE Award for $520,935 over five years, to study “Networking for Effect: Companion Animals, their Companions, and Their Connections.” The NEWBIE award is bestowed by the NAL specifically to identify and support innovative, creative, and extremely promising new researchers. A major grant of this stature represents a crucial peer-review endorsement of her original research ideas that have the potential to have a broader societal impact. This terrific success came after Dr. Xerlis had secured as sole PI a highly competitive USDA CRSS grant in 2019 for $174,791 to support her early research agenda. Both grants squarely fit in her focused and forward-looking research program on H-A-C. Moreover, the collaborative stance that Dr. Xerlis has developed with faculty from IUSM Dept of Psychiatry allowed him also to secure in 2020 a competitive NIH (NIDDK) R03 grant as Co-PI for $118,875 to re-design companion animal intervention tracking systems. It is highly unusual for an HCI researcher in a socio-technical field arena to secure both USDA funding and NIH funding pre-tenure, so these funding accomplishments are truly outstanding. The record of funding indicates that there is a strong promise that Dr. Xerlis will continue to submit and secure external research funding as PI in the future.

*The candidate’s record of significant grants has met the DCC’s departmental standards of excellence with regards to securing significant external funding as PI in rank. We expect this track record to continue and increase in scope and impact as her career develops further.*

The external letters speak of the excellent productivity and impact of Dr. Xerlis’s research at an innovative intersection of network psychology and animal care. Excerpts from the letters include: [LW1] “I can say with great certainty that Dr. Xerlis’s research has achieved excellence in the fields of companion animal care and network psychology.” [LW3] “Her outstanding research funding record of competitive and diverse funding sources”. [LW6] “I need to emphasize that the type of research she conducts requires significant investment in building trust and relationships over time and ensure that the work is not exploitative. The fact that she is able to do this while garnering research metrics that rival people doing work in more conventional areas is certainly an impressive feat.”

The papers [LW2] “establish Dr. Xerlis as an expert in the areas of companion animals and network effects.” She is considered “well above bar for productivity”. [LW4] “I find the research to be of high quality. Her vision challenges dominant views of what is normally seen and valued, and thereby uncover core relationships that are overlooked, and yet are so obviously critical once a new perspective is brought into view. This is powerful research.”[LW8] “Prof. Xerlis’ research is groundbreaking and of national importance.”[[8]](#footnote-8)

**Teaching**

As per her appointment terms, Dr. Xerlis has been teaching a 1-1 course load for the first five years, with a regular 2-2 load starting in the sixth. In rank, she has taught the graduate courses HART-X501 Fundamentals of Human-Computer Systems (a core course for the MS program), and HART-G515 Introduction to Research with Humans and Systems (taken by graduate students from three different programs.). The courses align well with her expertise in a wide variety of research methods and research design. In the sixth year, she has taught spring and fall sections of a core 300-level network-systems course, whose enrollments average 70 students. She mentors two doctoral students who assist with student support and grading.

I have observed that the pedagogies for the courses are well designed and have been refined over time based on feedback from students, peer reviews (four secured in rank, two from CTL and two from an experienced senior lecturer), and the evolving needs of the program. She has spent effort in improving the courses in terms of grading policies and engagement of students through in-class activities. Her teaching philosophy of “empowering students as they become independent thinkers and practitioners” has generated positive outcomes in student teaching and mentoring and is also seen in his ability to engage one on one with students very well. The HART-G515 course is the course where Dr. Xerlis showed the most flexibility and capacity to successfully mold the teaching to the needs of MS and Ph.D. students coming from different programs and their methodological orientations in approaching research, and this same flexibility and attention to student needs is becoming evident in the undergraduate course.

I appreciate Dr. Xerlis’ conscientiousness in preparing students for success and adapting the courses to the interests of the students while upholding rigor and learning outcomes. The student feedback reflected in the course evaluations shows student appreciation for her activities. As also indicated in the Primary Committee report[[9]](#footnote-9), the relatively small enrollment of the graduate classes assigned to Dr. Xerlis in the first years is not a reflection of her teaching performance but rather a function of the general patterns of enrollment. Overall, the teaching scores reflect consistently strong teaching in the classroom.

Dr. Xerlis is very involved in the advising of MS and Ph.D. students in our Department. In rank, she has graduated as Primary Advisor one Ph.D. student, who has successful landed a Senior Scientist position at the Agricultural Research Laboratory (ARL). She is also advising a second Ph.D. student as Primary Advisor, who is finalizing her dissertation, and co-advising two Ph.D. students with other faculty. This is significant commitment towards successfully mentoring Ph.D. students, as also shown in the publications co-authored with advisees. Her enthusiasm and openness in working with students are tangible and represent an important asset for the type of engaged learning we foster in our Department. At the MS level, Dr. Xerlis has mentored in research 9 MS students and one undergraduate student, including 7 as Research Assistants and 3 as MS Thesis advisees.

*The candidate’s record of teaching in rank has met the HCC Department’s expectations of satisfactory performance in this area. We expect this record to continue and increase in scope and impact as he moves to the next stage of his career.*

**Service**

A most notable national accomplishment in Dr. Xerlis’ record of professional service is the fact that, in 2017, she was inducted into the prestigious USDA/NAL Future Leaders Academy as a founding member. This academy gathers a selected group of individuals to enable “young researchers, practitioners, educators, and entrepreneurs of computing to develop a strong and influential voice towards addressing challenging issues facing agriculture and networking.” As part of her role, and as the only representative from any unit of Indiana University, Dr. Xerlis has participated in an interdisciplinary research task force and has launched and led a public podcast interviewing national leaders in the field of agricultural computing. This is a highly impactful service at the national level. Besides serving as an USDA review panelist three times in rank, Dr. Xerlis has provided ample and consistent reviewing services to major and specialized conferences as Associate Chair, a role with the responsibilities of coordinating the work of other reviewers and serving as meta-reviewer for the submissions. For the quality of her reviewing services to the Computing-Network Mega-Conclave, the premier venue for social computing, Dr. Xerlis has received a Recognition of Service Award.

At the institutional level, Dr. Xerlis has served for all her years in rank as the IUPUI and Department liaison on the prestigious Animal-Computer Interaction Consortium (ACIC), a selected group of influential ACI “thought leaders” from top-tier institutions nationwide (U Michigan, Stanford, Northwestern, Carnegie Mellon University, Minnesota Tech, and others) as well as industry partners (including Google, Microsoft, Tableau) that gathers yearly a research “think tank” to share the latest research ideas and discuss the future directions of the field of HCI. As part of her role, Dr. Xerlis has coordinated the participation of DCC faculty and Ph.D. students in this event.

Dr. Xerlis has also served in five campus-level service activities, a quite high level of involvement for a pre-tenure faculty, including serving as Faculty Advisor for the ANSI mentoring program and member of the campus qualitative research task force. At the School level and Department level, she has served on several committees, including as Committee Chair of the Colloquia Committee, Coordinator of the Department Brown Bag Series for all her years in rank, member of a BHI Department Search Committee, and member of the school Academic Affairs and Budgetary Affairs committees. She also provided sustained contributions to the regular curriculum enhancement activities of the MS and Ph.D. program, including carrying the normal share of service in the review of MS and Ph.D. candidates and contributing to the review of Ph.D. students and plans of study.

*The candidate’s record of service in rank has met the DCC’s expectations of satisfactory performance in this area. We expect this record to continue and increase in scope and impact as he moves to the next stage of his career.*

In sum, my evaluation of the dossier is that Dr. Xerlis has achieved excellence in research and at least satisfactory performance in teaching and service. Her accomplishments in rank show that she is on a strong upward trajectory with an emerging national reputation, ready to make an even greater impact in the future and take on even greater responsibilities. I enthusiastically recommend that she receive the award of tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.

Sincerely.

Obi Kenobi, Department Chair

1. External funding is not a university requirement, but can be a school, department, or field-specific requirement. Chairs are obliged to comment on grant trajectory when it is applicable to a candidate’s case. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This sentence was in the original. *STRONGLY recommend that if a candidate submits a CV to the third year review in an incorrect format, they re-do it properly before proceeding, or immediately after review.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Advising and mentorship can go into either ‘teaching’ or ‘research’ (or ‘service’) depending on the main thrust of the activity and the candidate’s area of excellence. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Yes, this is highly implausible. Think about how you (and your candidate) can summarize their key work—what it contributes, advances, is innovative, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Numerical summaries are not required although they can be useful—check to ensure there is consistency with candidate, CV, and primary committee wording. Always precede a numerical summary with an indication of the topical area (as was done here). An alternative is to spotlight key accomplishments. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Citation numbers vary dramatically from field to field, and from (traditional) topic to (newly emerging) topic. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Pre-rank items can contribute to *reputation*. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The original gave more quotes. Please note, no *names* of external reviewers should be used. All reviewers can see the original letters. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The chair has the best ability to explain the context and reasoning for course assignments. Committee members may draw incorrect conclusions from enrollment patterns. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)