



**School of Writing, Literature,
and Film**

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October 15, 2025

To: Tim Jensen, Director, School of Writing, Literature, and Film

Re: Evaluation Letter for Dr. Marcos Norris's Promotion to Senior Instructor I

Dear Dr. Jensen,

The members of the School of Writing, Literature, and Film Promotion and Tenure Committee unanimously and enthusiastically support Dr. Marcos Norris's promotion to Senior Instructor I. Dr. Norris exceeds the expectations for professional growth and innovation within his teaching and service duties.

Dr. Norris is a true educator, dedicated to idea that a university should be a place where students are taught to think critically and balance opposing viewpoints. He sees his role in the classroom as facilitating engagement with difficult topics. He doesn't shy away from hard conversations but instead teaches students how to engage with a plurality of ideas. We see his work as essential for the health of our university and democracy. His dedication to embracing open dialogue in his classes is truly laudable. Through his work with the Heterodox society, he has built his classes carefully to focus on the sharing of ideas and has developed clear, intentional strategies for fostering constructive dialogue in a classroom space that is as welcoming as it is challenging. An important first step to creating such a space can be seen in his syllabus statement on the matter of viewpoint diversity: "I am committed to creating a classroom environment that welcomes diverse people with diverse viewpoints, an environment that equips learners with the habits of heart and mind to engage that diversity with empathy, intellectual humility, and respect. If at any point during the term, you are unsettled by the course material, my comments, or comments made by your classmates, I request that you arrange a meeting with me to discuss the matter."

Dr. Norris begins each course stressing the importance of constructive disagreement in higher education. He explains that true intellectual growth is not achieved by having your beliefs, values, or ideological commitments reinforced; it's achieved by grappling with perspectives that differ from your own. In his WR 222 class for example, he takes on topics that many educators would shy away from—listing in his class description that they will "develop critical stances on the topics of feminism and men's rights activism, racial identity and systemic racism, gender identity and gender dysphoria, transracialism, animal rights, and finally—the element that ties these seemingly disparate topics together—the role played by 'human identity' in society's construction of equal rights." It is clear from his student reviews that he is able to take on these

topics by creating an environment where students feel respected, and where, most importantly, they are challenged to think anew.

To maintain this productive classroom environment throughout the term, Dr. Norris employs inventive scaffolding techniques and student-led learning structures that have proven highly effective in engaging OSU students. In ENG104z, for example, students follow a structured, repeated sequence of interactions with course content, their own viewpoints, and the positions of their classmates, in an escalation of engagement that readies students for broader, class-wide conversations and debates. After finishing a reading, students compose a 15-minute free write, a process that allows them space to react to the content on their own terms. Then students move into five minutes of small-group discussion, during which each person is expected to speak and listen. Finally, the small groups come together and a class-wide discussion ensues. One observer of Dr. Norris's technique reported, "Students took the assignment quite seriously, which led to a stirring small-group discussion and a remarkably strong all-class discussion afterwards." The impact of Dr. Norris's teaching extends far beyond the classroom. He has cultivated deep and enduring mentoring relationships with students who trust him not only as a teacher but as a compassionate guide through academic and personal challenges. Former students regularly write to thank him for his influence on their intellectual and emotional growth. One student described his class as "an excellent experience that challenged me to think outside of my comfort zone." Many of Norris's reviewers have noted his dedication to students. As reviewer A stated, "Norris is the real thing: an educator who genuinely cares about the critical reading, writing, and thinking skills that he is teaching." Another reviewer echoed this statement by writing, "[Dr. Norris] is an educator in the classic meaning of the term: one who challenges his students with complex readings that represent a judicious selection from the course's given topic, and then asks them to employ rigorous methodologies of reflection and conclusion about what they've encountered thematically in each piece."

Dr. Norris has also made significant contributions through service, both within OSU and at the state level. In 2022, he led a major redesign of ENG 221 for Ecampus, collaborating closely with Instructional Design Specialist Lydia Shatkin to create an inclusive, multimodal course that foregrounds accessibility and cultural responsiveness. Beyond OSU, Dr. Norris has contributed to curriculum policy and innovation at the state level. As a member of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's Common Course Numbering (CCN) English Subcommittee, he has played an active role in aligning learning outcomes and credit articulation across institutions. He also collaborated with Associate Vice Provost Regan Gurung on OSU's Remote Access Modality (RAM) Pilot Project, which explored the future of remote instruction.

Although research is not a formal component of his position, this committee wishes to draw attention to Dr. Norris's impressive record of scholarly productivity. Since joining OSU, he has authored a scholarly monograph with a very respected university press (Edinburgh), co-edited two academic volumes, published six peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, and presented at six international conferences in Europe and the United States. This kind of robust publication record would be impressive for any faculty going up for promotion in any Humanities field and speaks strongly to Norris's growing reputation as an expert in modern American literature and literary theory.

We are incredibly lucky to have an instructor of Dr. Norris's caliber here at OSU. His work also mirrors the work that OSU is currently engaged in to embracing pluralism. Pluralism, in Provost Roy Haggarty's words, is "the principle that active engagement of diverse views and ideas is the best route to productive common ground and, ultimately, a healthier democracy." Dr Norris's hard work in creating classrooms where students are both heard and challenged is essential and should be a model for how to take on challenging topics for many professors here. Given his strong record of professional growth and innovation in his classrooms and in his service commitments to OSU and beyond, this committee feels strongly that Dr. Marcos Norris has earned the honor of promotion to Senior Instructor I.

With respect,

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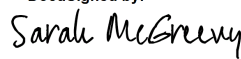
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Wayne Harrison, Senior Instructor II

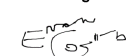
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John Larison, Senior Instructor II

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Sarah McGreevy, Senior Instructor I

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Evan Gottlieb, Professor & Promotion and Tenure Committee Chair

School of Writing, Literature, and Film

Promotion and Tenure Committee Formation

The 2025-26 School of Writing, Literature, and Film Promotion and Tenure Committee was constituted by election. The highest vote-getting associate or full professor was made chair. The rest of the members were divided into 5 subcommittees, one for each case, with members at or above the rank of the rank being sought in that particular case.