

September 27, 2021

Promotion Committee;

Aaron Fried has a greater commitment to student success than almost anyone else I've ever had the opportunity to work with, as both a professor and change agent at the college. Over the past few years I have had the pleasure of serving on the Guided Pathways Steering Council, General Studies and Exploratory Student Workgroups, and in multiple book clubs with Aaron, in addition to partnering informally to further the career success of our students. It is my pleasure to recommend him for promotion in recognition of the significant contribution he has made to the college and the success of our students over his career.

One of the greatest impacts I believe Aaron has made is how he has modeled and encouraged all of us to approach problem solving and improvement. He is intellectually curious and a dedicated learner, which is how he has approached understanding the student experience and potential development. Early in our Guided Pathways work and as a part of his Curriculum Committee leadership Aaron sought information from advisors and other student affairs professionals about the challenges students face and where there are opportunities for improvement. It takes humility to seek the insight of colleagues and I don't think it's overstating things to say it was revolutionary in changing the course of MVCC progress. He modeled how crucial it is to seek all sources, especially valuing the knowledge and experience of colleagues from other divisions. Aaron also models this humility and commitment to learning on a personal level, leading book clubs and classes about equity in grading and syllabi creation.

That paired with his commitment to data-driven decisions is remarkable as it has proven that it can be the common ground between faculty and student affairs professionals. We can all have our opinions based on our view on students but when we're brought together in a conversation that looks at data on completion, equity, career outcomes, and more, we have a shared understanding of the problems before us. Aaron has used tactics including storytelling, experiential activities, and smartly-designed interactive charts to help us understand what exactly the problems and opportunities are within the student experience, and also the impact of our ongoing improvements.

For example, I co-chaired the Intake and Onboarding Workgroup for Guided Pathways and after we had started implementing those recommendations Aaron and I worked on an Institute presentation about the progress. Aaron developed student profiles of the average student in a particular program and then we walked the attendees through the updated intake process. Rather than focusing on one accounting student you knew six years ago who had a problem with financial aid staff, we were looking at students created by data that helped us overcome preconceived ideas and into great discussion about what mattered in creating systematic improvements.

Similarly, having discussions about program outcomes in terms of where our students are working after graduation is hard and somewhat new. Aaron has presented this data about career outcomes for individual programs in the context of equity which changes the mindset for both faculty and staff. Discussions about what students enroll in programs that lead to family-sustaining wages upon graduation, and the success rates of different groups of students is exactly what we need to be doing. Aaron's understanding of the data but also his skill as a teacher is evident when he masterfully facilitates these conversations.

He's been a great champion for the career success of our students by tying curriculum to career outcomes and welcoming staff and faculty into conversations together about academic programs and embedding necessary student supports. I can't imagine the college making the progress it has in our Guided Pathways work without Aaron's hard work and leadership. Aaron is a tireless advocate for students and has had a significant impact on the culture of how we

approach our work. I am incredibly grateful to continue to have the opportunity to work with and learn from him. I am excited about what I think we can accomplish, especially for the career development of our students, through intentional program design with Aaron as a partner.

Aaron is an asset to our institution and I highly support his application for promotion.

Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lizabeth Doherty". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L'.

Lizabeth Doherty