

Memorandum

To: Members of Allison Obourn's ARC Committee

From: Carey Schroyer, Dean, STEM Division

Date: January 10, 2023

Subject: Recommendation for Tenure for Allison Obourn

As Allison's immediate supervisor, I too would like to add my personal voice to this committee's unanimous recommendation that Allison receive tenure.

Allison is an outstanding educator and colleague who is committed to supporting and growing the number of successful computer science students at Edmonds and beyond. Before joining Edmonds College, Allison taught at the University of Arizona and the University of Washington for approximately 10 years. She began as a teaching assistant and worked her way up to senior lecture who was also responsible for managing curriculum updates for several key CS classes. Allison is not afraid to ask questions, try new things, or advocate for programs and practices that improve student success.

Allison embraces sound pedagogical practices, the diverse student body, and the importance of embedding relevant tools and technologies into the curriculum. Her recent industry work experience provides a fresh perspective that has helped the department better identify and support students through improved course offerings, better course scheduling, and innovative curriculum and program development. Allison focuses on understanding student needs and providing the support individual students need to be successful. She was one of the first instructors at the college to effectively embrace and utilize the hyflex model providing the options many students need to remain in college and successfully complete their goals. She continues to be one of the best and most effective hyflex teachers. Allison helped revamp the introductory CS class and the C++ series. She worked with an interdisciplinary group within and outside the college to develop 2 short data analytics certificates (beginner and professional) designed to support the acquisition of the data analytics skills needed by students and professionals across multiple industries. She has also been serving as the Edmonds College subject matter expert on the statewide Computer Science Bachelor of Science curriculum development team. This important work helps provide new and innovative pathways for students at the college.

Student evaluations for her classes are strong and consistent, but more telling are the comments and personal testimonies from her students regarding her excellence in the classroom and her dedication to their success and wellbeing. For example these are just a few of the comments that students provided regarding her classes:

- The material is interesting and Allison is a great teacher, who is very caring and very helpful in helping me through the process.

- I love everything about the way Allison teaches this course. I have recommend some TINY content changes/additions but other than that I really love it. I just wish I could get my brain to learn it faster before we move on to the next subject.
- I like how we have zoom meetings which allows the teacher to really show us whats going on
- I really like Professor Obourn, she is super enthusiastic about the material she teaches, is always happy and exceptionally quick to answer questions. Professor Obourn is very personable and makes everyone feel very comfortable asking questions.
- Allison answers emails and answers questions very fast.

Allison is more than an excellent instructor; she is also a team player. Before joining Edmonds college, she co-authored a Computer Science textbook titled “Building Python Programs” that is currently being used in educational institutions throughout the country. She understands what it is like to be a part-time instructor and she goes out of her way to support associate faculty. She also works with other full and part-time instructors to help support the department and the division. She provides thoughtful input into discussions and regularly volunteers for departmental committees that support initiatives she is passionate about. She is particularly focused on improving underrepresented students and creating clear pathways for students in computer science. She has worked diligently and effectively over the last two years to update both the non-majors and majors series computer science courses and share this information with others. She established partnerships with the STEM Retention Specialist and advising staff to help ensure they have the knowledge needed to better advise and support CS students. She is constantly sought out by students who want to meet with her directly to discuss their career plans and academic path.

In summary, I believe Allison’s experience, knowledge, perspective, professionalism, and dedication to student success greatly contribute to the computer science department, STEM Division, and entire campus community at Edmonds Community College. I wholeheartedly support Allison’s recommendation for tenure and feel fortunate to have such an outstanding faculty member as a colleague.

Sincerely,

Carey Schroyer

Dr. Carey Schroyer
STEM Dean
Edmonds Community College