



College of Education  
& Human Sciences

3 May 2024

Dear Senate Committee Members,

I appreciate your consideration of the well qualified nominees for this award. I am honored to have my work recognized by my colleagues.

I was lucky enough to inherit an office that has been associated with student support that rises well beyond the traditional and required duties of the office. Tammy Nelson Johnson deserves credit for carving out a place that provides a solutions first approach to the day to day business that is integral to a college's mission. I joined the academic affairs team in the College of Education in January of 2020 and had just a couple of months to learn from Tammy. We soon began remote work and all of the problem solving inherent in making sure we provided support for students in that environment.

After spending some time getting to know the team and office responsibilities, I deduced that my office has a few responsibilities that rise above the rest. The first priority that became evident was that my office is one that students and faculty turn to when they need timely, efficient problem solving. Working with transcripts, internal records, and a myriad of technology systems necessitates the ability to arrive at useful outcomes and overcome barriers in a way that aligns with the University's policy and procedure, as well as our student first ethos. Being a resource for programmatic, curricular, and regulatory knowledge is essential to allow our students and faculty to focus on the work of learning and disseminating course content.

Another responsibility that is important to our college is serving as a primary and initial contact point for our undergraduates, almost regardless of the reason. I try to promote an open door approach to student support that allows our students to embrace their agency in this process and serves as an pathway to effective solutions. This stands for our faculty as well. I am very appreciative of the ease of communication between our units. I organize our freshman summer orientation with the support of Associate Dean, Dr. Jane Jacob and several other key contributors. I believe this initial contact point is very important for many reasons, including setting a foundation for the best possible academic experience.

I was excited to introduce a digital cloud-based repository of internal curriculum records to the College. Designing a system that would allow for students and faculty advisors to access accurate, real-time information about curricular progress was an early imperative of mine. This



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system is a buoy in a technological transition such as Workday Student and it has prepared our stakeholders to better embrace this student information system change.

I value your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Gilmore

Members of the Selection Committee,

As I prepared to write this letter of support for Michael Gilmore for the Student Outreach Award — Classified, I of course looked up the criteria for the award. Soon thereafter, I started shaking my head in amazement — if the description of an award had been intentionally written to summarize my thoughts on Michael, I don't think that it would have been any more aligned with his attributes.

Michael is, among so many other things, the quintessence of student service, of working beyond his assigned role (and, often, the regular workday) to improve the experience of not only our students but also our staff, faculty, and administrators across the campus. He has done this in a variety of ways over the years, but let me provide an illustrative example that is top of mind.

Michael works in the College of Education and Human Sciences, which houses several departments. Across those departments, Michael is the *de facto* expert in all undergraduate curricula. When advisors from any of those disciplines need clarification on degree requirements, course offerings, exceptions, transfer courses, substitutions, and the like, they go to Michael. When undergraduate students want a graduation audit, an appeal, an exception, guidance — they go to Michael. So far, fairly pedestrian points; Michael generously and adroitly deploys deep knowledge of our college's curricula.

But wait — there's more! During ordinary times (e.g., when we're not rolling out a new student information system), Michael works — continuously, of his own initiative, with creativity, and effectively — to critically examine the processes that are at play at all levels of the institution, to identify ways that communication between offices can be improved, to eliminate the sources of red tape, and to build out resources (such as an electronic plan-of-study form to replace the paper forms that we had been using before, or a load-balancing process for advisee assignments to faculty). He identifies needs and pain points that often the people experiencing them have not yet recognized or put into words, and — before anyone can think to ask him to do so — he starts digging to the core of the problem, to the root cause(s), and pulls together a coalition of stakeholders across campus to develop a sustainable solution.

But wait — there's more! What happens if, instead of just having the status quo of institutional ineffectiveness, Michael has the by-the-skin-of-our-teeth deployment of Workday Student to sink his teeth into? At this point, you already know — he builds trainings, he gets ahead of misinformation, he thinks of the questions that none of the rest of us thought of, he follows students to early registration demonstrations to verify that things are working as designed.

Put Michael into any situation, and he improves it materially. This is the tip of the iceberg, as well — I'd be happy to write recommendations that focus on each of his intellectual curiosity, kindness, friendliness, and deep connections with those around him — heck, one on his care for the *plans* in Woodard Hall deserves a letter — but I shall limit myself to one page and one facet. If there are people more deserving of this award, I haven't met them, but I want to; I want them to meet Michael, and to see what they can accomplish together.



./Steven Toaddy, Department Head, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences



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01 May 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

As an advisor to undergraduates in Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, I have worked closely with Michael in the College of Education and Human Sciences since January 2020. As such, I would like to recommend Michael Gilmore for the *2023-2024 Student Outreach Award*. I will elaborate, but I would like to start with a student interaction that I think encapsulates Michael's deservingness of this award:

Last summer I met an incoming Freshman. She was here with a friend exploring campus, learning the layout, and getting excited for the beginning of her college career. She quickly encountered a problem in Woodard Hall: her FYE class was to be held on the second floor. As a person who uses a wheelchair, this was problematic, as Woodard lacks an elevator. She asked me what to do. I had no idea, and there were few people around to help. Fortunately, Michael happened to be in Woodard that day watering our plants. It was a day he had off, but he stopped what he was doing to help this student. Down they went to his office to get the room changed to accommodate the student. Instead of referring a novice Freshman to the litany of policies and procedures or to someone else, he walked her through what to do and how to do it in the future. While our campus is friendly, I do not know many faculty and staff that would take time, especially on their day off, to help a to-be student in need in the way that Michael did.

This interaction highlights Michael's genuineness, honesty, and commitment to our students and to LA Tech. He consistently goes above and beyond for our students, demonstrating a strong work ethic that exceeds the standards in place. Michael routinely offers assistance to students in need, often working outside of his job description to ensure students are able to successfully complete their degree- whether that entails assistance with transfer credits, access to classes in or outside of our college, or graduation procedures.

Most importantly, he prides himself on transparency of processes, which establishes trust and rapport with our students. That is, Michael will not only have a solution for a student, he will take the time to explain all of the reasons why it is *the* solution. As a faculty member, I can say that I have learned a great deal of how LA Tech operates from working with Michael to help a student with a unique class history find a path to graduation.

His is a dedication that should be modeled throughout the university and awarded accordingly.

Best,

Kacie Mennie, PhD



May 2, 2024

Dear Selection Committee:

I am writing this letter to recommend Mr. Michael Gilmore to be the recipient of the University Senate Student Outreach Award. I have worked with Michael since he was assigned to our college, and I cannot imagine anyone more deserving of this award. The name of it literally epitomizes him as he is truly working each and every day for the best interests of the students!

Mr. Gilmore's door is always open, and not only to our students. He is available to us as advisors as well. He has streamlined the advising process and has made such progress in the area of efficiency and transparency. He, with the help of Dr. Jane Jacobs, created an online repository of student records for each of our advisees. The advisors and the students have real-time access to plans of study, placement information, and advising notes. This has truly revolutionized our advising process as we can, with a few clicks, access our student records at any time. Because the students have equal access, they can keep up with updates and check their progress. Recently, he has created Workday tutorials and explicit directions with screenshots for students and advisors and has disseminated these the week before and then throughout this week of advising.

Patience, perseverance, and problem-solving are three traits that describe Michael. He is visible and available to puzzle through even the most complex obstacles. When he is working with a student or with a faculty member on a student's behalf, they have his undivided attention. It is through these interactions that he really gets to know the people with whom he works. He is a masterful communicator as his use of precise vocabulary provides clarity to any conversation. He has a warm and welcoming smile and is genuine in his interactions with both students and faculty. He is truly interested and invested in the success of our students and the faculty members who teach and advise them.

We all appreciate him so much! He goes above and beyond in his work, and our students are the beneficiaries of that!

Thank you so very much for your consideration of Mr. Gilmore for this distinguished award. He is a vital member of our College of Education and Human Sciences team!

Sincerely,



Libby Manning, Ed.D.  
Associate Professor  
Curriculum, Instruction  
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