



OFFICE OF THE PROVOST & VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Date: April 15, 2021

To: Dr. Mahmoud Al-Odeh

From: Dr. Allen J. Bedford, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Proposed Recommendation Relative to Promotion Application

Thank you for submitting your packet and supporting documents. I have carefully reviewed these materials as well as the recommendations from your department and dean. My proposed recommendation to President Hensrud, which accompanies this memorandum, is presented to you in accordance with Articles 21, 22, and 25 of the Agreement between the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and the Inter-Faculty Organization as well as policies, procedures, and timelines established at Bemidji State University.

I would be pleased to meet with you to discuss any elements of my recommendation on or before April 23. I also call to your attention that, as stipulated in Article 25 of the Agreement, you are entitled to attach comments to my recommendation on or before May 1.

Best wishes.

Attachment



OFFICE OF THE PROVOST & VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

[Draft VP Response Letter to Mahmoud Al-Odeh's
Application for Promotion to Professor]

Date: April 15, 2021

To: Dr. Faith Hensrud, President

From: Dr. Allen J. Bedford, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Re: Recommendation for Promotion for Dr. Mahmoud Al-Odeh

Dr. Mahmoud Al-Odeh has applied for promotion to full professor. Dr. Al-Odeh joined Bemidji State University full-time in 2012, serving as Assistant Professor of Operations and Technology Management in the School of Technology, Art, and Design. He was tenured and promoted to Associate Professor in 2016. Dr. Al-Odeh has completed the length of service in rank and the number of evaluations necessary to meet eligibility for promotion consideration, in accordance with Article 25, Section D of the Master Agreement between Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and the Inter-Faculty Organization.

Dr. Al-Odeh's department colleagues reviewed his application and on January 27, 2021 the chair, Dr. Higgins, reported that the majority of department faculty members voted in support of promoting Dr. Al-Odeh. In her letter of recommendation the chair commended Dr. Al-Odeh "as an excellent teacher, a dedicated researcher, and a highly respected colleague." She cites student pass rates of 96% on the national Lean Six Sigma certification exam, his published resource manual, *Economics and Cost Analysis for Operations and Project Managers*, and his strong work ethic and collaborative practices as evidence of his value to the department and the university.

Other department colleagues wrote letters of support affirming Dr. Al-Odeh's contributions in teaching, scholarship, support for students, accreditation work, and service through departmental outreach. One of Dr. Al-Odeh's TADT colleagues expressed, "Over the course of my career, I have had the opportunity to work with many excellent professionals; I will affirm here, without any reservation, that Dr. Al-Odeh has proven himself to be one of the very best of these. In my view, [he] exemplifies not only the mission but also the vision of Bemidji State University; I base my

statement not only on what he says, but, more importantly, on what he does." His application is well supported by his department.

Dean Seig conducted her own thorough review of Dr. Al-Odeh's application materials and has also recommended that Dr. Al-Odeh be promoted. She summed up her review this way, "[Dr. Al-Odeh's] application is thorough, organized, and overwhelmingly convincing. [His] influence on his professional field, as well as on the pedagogy within his field, makes him an excellent candidate for this promotion. His commitment to continual improvement makes our program, our university, and our community better."

Independently, I examined the materials Dr. Al-Odeh submitted with his application for promotion. I have taken into consideration the recommendations from the department faculty, department chair, and the dean. My evaluation adheres to the provisions of Articles 21, 22, and 25 of the Master Agreement between Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and the Inter-Faculty Organization, as well as policies, procedures, and timelines established by Bemidji State University.

The recommendation for promotion is based on my determination of whether Dr. Al-Odeh has demonstrated "a cumulative record of professional performance and high achievement appropriate to the relevant rank." The evaluation is based on all the criteria outlined in Article 22 of the Agreement.

Upon completing this detailed review and evaluation, I concur with the department, department chair, and dean in recommending Dr. Al-Odeh for promotion to the rank of full Professor.

I summarize my reasoning for making this recommendation below, referencing the five Criteria, as defined by Article 22:

1. Demonstrated ability to teach effectively and/or perform effectively in other current assignments.
2. Scholarly or creative achievement or research.
3. Evidence of continuing preparation and study.
4. Contribution to student growth and development.
5. Service to the university and community.

Criterion 1: Teaching Effectiveness

Dr. Al-Odeh's narrative and evidence show his teaching effectiveness to be exceptional. His course preparation and design are thorough and attuned to student needs and standards in the discipline. His course evaluation results are consistently high, and he is attentive to student participation, satisfaction, and performance levels, making whatever adjustments are prudent to optimize their learning experience. His students' grade distributions favor the A-range, but those high grades appear to represent true command of the subject. For example, in 2020 96% of the BSU TAD students passed the Lean Six Sigma National Exam.

Student feedback consistently cites the high quality of Dr. Al-Odeh's course syllabi, assignments, activities, and grading. Students express appreciation for the learning they achieve in his classes. Though his course evaluations show consistently high results, Dr. Al-Odeh reviews all the feedback carefully to find ways that he can improve the learning experience for his students. His narrative includes a table listing student feedback items and reasonable adjustments he made in response (pages 25-28). He also includes an inventory of teaching techniques he applies in his courses (pages 28-29).

To give his students the best opportunities he can, he has invested tremendous effort in developing course materials and resources including authoring a textbook, *Economic and Cost Analysis for Project Managers*. He includes many real-world examples and applications in his courses, including bringing in guest speakers and taking field trips to local manufacturing businesses. As Dean Seig observes, Dr. Al-Odeh "works diligently to incorporate best-practice teaching activities into his classes." His goal is to "Make every semester better than the one before" (narrative page 43).

Dr. Al-Odeh's performance in this criterion exceeds expectations for promotion to full professor.

Criterion 2: Scholarly or Creative Achievement

Dr. Al-Odeh published 11 peer-reviewed articles from 2015-2020 in journals such as *International Journal of Advances Operations Management*, *International Journal of Management*, *Journal of the Association of Arab Universities for Research in Higher Education*, *Productivity Management*, *International Journal of Mathematical Engineering and Management Sciences*, *British Journal of Education*, and the *Journal of Business, Economics and Finance*. He has also presented 20 conference papers over the same timeframe. This remarkable output has been recognized through awards from the Online Engineering Programs Association and the Association of Technology.

Dr. Al-Odeh's performance in this criterion exceeds expectations for promotion to full professor.

Criterion 3: Continuing Preparation and Study

Dr. Al-Odeh's continuing preparation and study exceeds expectations for promotion to full professor. Since 2015 he has earned six Quality Matters certifications and passed three Six Sigma exams. He is also a regular participant at Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering (ATMAE) conferences and workshops. He attended workshops at Harvard University and with MinnState's STAR Symposium. As Dean Seig notes in her recommendation letter, Dr. Al-Odeh quickly applies what he learns through these engagements into his classes.

Criterion 4: Contribution to Student Growth and Development

"Investing in student growth and development is my favorite part of my job," Dr. Al-Odeh writes at the start of his narrative section on this criterion (page 189). His narrative and evidence make a compelling case substantiating not only that statement but also the positive impact he has on students' experience and outcomes. In addition to serving as an academic advisor, he advises the

Beaver Engineering and Design Club, prepares students for national competitions and certifications (such as Lean Six Sigma), connects students with potential employers, writes letters of recommendation, and serves on graduate committees. He is always looking for ways for students to shine. He implemented the TAD Excellence Award for outstanding TAD students, and he chaired the BSU Student Achievement Conference four times and has sponsored more than twenty student presentations at the Conference.

Dr. Al-Odeh's performance in this criterion exceeds expectations for promotion to full professor.

Criterion 5: Service to the University and Community

Dr. Al-Odeh's narrative summarizes an extensive list of contributions he has made in service to his department, the University, the IFO, his academic discipline, and the community. At the department level he serves as the coordinator for ATMAE accreditation and the Operations Management emphasis of the Applied Management program, as well as two certification programs. He is also the assessment coordinator for the department and the schedule coordinator for TADT classes. At the university level he served as the Director of the BSU Student Achievement Conference for four years (which is a huge undertaking), served three years as campus representative and coordinator for Quality Matters, judged at the 2020 MnState Shark Tank, serves as a mentor to new faculty members, and serves on a variety of committees including the BSUFA Academic Affairs Committee and several search committees. At the community level, he served as the Vice President for Education at the Bemidji Toastmasters Club (2017-2019).

His service to his discipline includes being a member of the ATMAE board, chairing the 2019 work committee of the ATMAE Management Division, participating as a visit team member for ATMAE accreditation, and serving as associate editor for two journals. In 2019 he was recognized by ATMAE with its "Strengthening Bonds to Industry Award" for his work connecting education and industry.

His contributions are sought after by colleagues at BSU and in his discipline. I have called on Dr. Al-Odeh's expertise several times over the past two years. He and another TADT colleague are supporting my office in developing a framework and integrated institutional assessment process through unit-level operational statements.

Dr. Al-Odeh's commitment to service is obvious. His work in this criterion easily meets expectations for promotion to full professor.

Overall

In her letter of recommendation Dean Seig writes of Dr. Al-Odeh that "In the past five years since his last promotion he has become a nationally recognized teacher in his field and intentionally expanded the skill set for students in TADT to help them stand out His contributions to his department, the University, the community, the region, the nation, and internationally are meaningful and engaging." I agree with her assessment. Dr. Al-Odeh's well organized and documented application package demonstrates his thoughtful accomplishments in each of the

criteria. His work is commendable and is distinguishing his department and the University. In my view, he is performing already at a level equivalent to that of a full Professor.

CC: Dr. MaryTheresa Seig, Dean of College of Arts, Education, and Humanities
Dr. Bonnie Higgins, Chair of School of Technology, Art, and Design
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Odeh
Personnel File