

CONFIDENTIAL

February 15, 2019

TO: Paul van der Veur, Ph.D., Chair, Communication and Media Studies Department

FROM: Communication and Media Studies Department Personnel Committee

RE: Continuing Appointment Application for Samuel Avery

The Communication and Media Studies Department Personnel Committee (hereafter CMSDPC) has carefully reviewed materials submitted for continuing appointment by Samuel Avery, MFA. We used the criteria set forth by the Communication and Media Studies Department in our "Personnel Policies and Procedures" guidelines, section 230 of the *SUNY Cortland College Handbook*, and Article XII of the *State University of New York Policies of the Board of Trustees* when reviewing Mr. Avery's application. The CMSDPC also consulted the University Film and Video Association Policy Statement on "Evaluation of Creative Activities for Tenure and/or Promotion" as recommended on page 7 of the department Policies and Procedures document.

The CMSDPC voted after 24 hours of deliberation. The vote is reported below.

Very Highly Recommend	<u> 3 </u>
Highly Recommend	<u> 0 </u>
Recommend	<u> 0 </u>
Do Not Recommend	<u> 0 </u>

Mastery

Samuel Avery earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in Media Arts Production – the appropriate terminal degree for his field – from SUNY Buffalo in 2013. He successfully earned reappointment at the rank of Assistant Professor three times at SUNY Cortland, in 2014, 2016, and 2018. And he has won honors in his field.

Teaching Effectiveness

Mr. Avery began teaching in the Communication and Media Studies Department in Fall 2013. He has taught nine different courses: Introduction to Film Analysis, Video Production I (field), Mass Media and Society, Intermediate Writing for Media, Game of Thrones: Story and Character, Video Production II (studio), Multimedia Production, Advanced Documentary, and Advanced Filmmaking. These courses represent both upper and lower level program offerings,

core requirements, concentration requirements, and electives, demonstrating the extent to which Mr. Avery contributes to the health of the department's programs. Additionally, Mr. Avery developed two of these vital courses: Advanced Documentary (COM445) and Advanced Filmmaking (COM446).

The CMSDPC notes that Mr. Avery's CTE scores are consistently positive as are peer-observations of his teaching. Tyler Bradway, from the English Department, observed Mr. Avery's Video Production II class in November 2018 and remarked that Mr. Avery's "pedagogical work in this course session was multifaceted" and that the students exhibited a "genuinely supportive ethos." Larissa True, from Kinesiology, similarly commented on the Advanced Filmmaking class she witnessed in November 2018 that Mr. Avery has a "good working relationship with students." Student comments in CTEs echo these sentiments, finding him to be an interactive and supportive instructor with challenging classes. Perhaps the most oft-repeated phrase in student comments is "I learned a lot."

Mr. Avery's course materials are clear and detailed. Course schedules, for example, demonstrate much careful planning. The CMSDPC was particularly impressed by the design and visually clarity of the materials. In the past, there were concerns expressed by students and, in turn, the department's Personnel Committee about ambiguity surrounding the grading breakdown/criteria/policies of Mr. Avery's class, and so the CMSDPC is especially pleased to see that Mr. Avery's most recent syllabi have well delineated grading information. Additionally, samples of his students' film work demonstrate the depth of experience his courses provide.

Creative and Scholarly Ability

As indicated by the external review letters Mr. Avery chose to include with his materials, he is well known throughout the state and region as an "exceptional" filmmaker. Since his last personnel review in February 2018, he has written, directed, and edited five short films. Two have already been recognized as an "Official Selection" for festivals, and one of those – DEADEYE – received the Grand Prize award for Best Short Film at the 2019 Snowtown Film Festival in Watertown, NY. In addition to these five newest films, three films from the previous year are still on the festival circuit. In total, Mr. Avery has presented creative and/or scholarly work at twelve film festivals and three academic conferences, and has published one book chapter credits in Palgrave's 2017 *Documentary and Disability* volume. He also has two films in progress. The CMSDPC finds this to sufficiently meet the requirements for continuing appointment. That said, the committee would also like to echo the suggestion made by the Department Personnel Committee in 2018 that Mr. Avery include letters from other contributors on film projects acknowledging his specific input, or provide more narrative. That said, the CMSDPC recognizes the guidelines offered by the UFVA that "the collaborative nature of film

production is complex and synergistic, and one role or area is not necessarily more important than another.”

Service

Mr. Avery has a long record of significant service contributions to the department, college, and community. He has served the Department’s Personnel Committee continuously since Fall 2013 and stepped up as chair in Fall 2018 and co-chair in Spring 2019. He served the Department’s Curriculum Committee from Fall 2013 to Spring 2018, serving as chair from Fall 2015 to Spring 2017. He has served on five search committees overseeing seven successful searches, and he chaired four of those five committees. Mr. Avery also serves as the faculty advisor to CSTV, a role he has held since Fall 2015 and which serves not only the larger college community but arguably the larger Cortland community, as well. He has produced promotional videos for the college and SUNY system, and produced a Halftime Show with CSTV for the 2018 Cortaca game.

In April 2016, Mr. Avery created the Blackbird Film Festival, an international film and video festival that has grown to attract over 120 films from around the world, engage 30 student interns annually, and involved the Cortland County Convention and Visitor Bureau and an assortment of local businesses. As a student-run festival, Blackbird offers students a unique opportunity to get field experience in event planning, social media campaigning, and public relations, as well as festival production and judging. As a community event, Blackbird offers a unique opportunity to build and strengthen “town-gown” relationships. As an international hub, Blackbird offers wonderful visibility for the program and the college.

Clearly, Mr. Avery is providing admirable service to the Communication and Media Studies Department and to SUNY Cortland. The CMSDPC reiterates the hope expressed by the Department Personnel Committee in 2018 that Mr. Avery will also extend his contributions to the discipline.

Continued Growth

Mr. Avery continues to strengthen his professional network with filmmakers and festival organizers, as well as community liaisons. He has taken added responsibility in organizing film festival tours and television studio field trips with students. He has secured eleven grants since 2016 to fund the Blackbird Film, a 2018 “Women in Film” Screening and Panel Discussion, and a student trip the Adirondack Film Festival. In 2018 he received a Student Affairs Faculty Connection Award for his significant connections with students outside of the traditional classroom setting.

The CMSDPC suggests that as Mr. Avery extend his contribution to the discipline, through activities such as participating in the UFVA, that he will also find more related opportunities, such as workshops, short course, or symposia, for continued growth in his field

Summary

The CMSDPC concludes that Mr. Avery has achieved, and even exceeded, the requirements for continuing appointment as articulated by the Communication and Media Studies Department, SUNY Cortland, and the SUNY Board of Trustees. He continues to prove himself to be an effective teacher whose influence extends far beyond the classroom. He is an active and exceptional creative producer. And, his service has been, and continues to be, vital to the daily workings of the department and the college. Mr. Avery's record in these areas suggests that we will continue to see such exemplary contributions in the future.

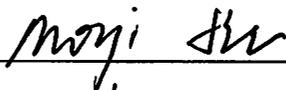
Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the committee.

Sincerely,

Christina Knopf, PhD
Co-Chair, CMSDPC



Moyi Jia, PhD
Member, CMSDPC



Sung Yoo, PhD
Member, CMSDPC



CONFIDENTIAL

February 15, 2019

TO: Paul van der Veur, Ph.D., Chair, Communication and Media Studies Department

FROM: Communication and Media Studies Department Personnel Committee

RE: Promotion Application for Samuel Avery

The Communication and Media Studies Department Personnel Committee (hereafter CMSDPC) has carefully reviewed materials submitted for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor by Samuel Avery, MFA. We used the criteria set forth by the Communication and Media Studies Department in our "Personnel Policies and Procedures" guidelines, section 230 of the *SUNY Cortland College Handbook*, and Article XII of the *State University of New York Policies of the Board of Trustees* when reviewing Mr. Avery's application. The CMSDPC also consulted the University Film and Video Association Policy Statement on "Evaluation of Creative Activities for Tenure and/or Promotion" as recommended on page 7 of the department Policies and Procedures document.

The CMSDPC voted after 24 hours of deliberation. The vote is reported below.

Very Highly Recommend	<u> 1 </u>
Highly Recommend	<u> 2 </u>
Recommend	<u> 0 </u>
Do Not Recommend	<u> 0 </u>

Mastery

Samuel Avery earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in Media Arts Production – the appropriate terminal degree for his field – from SUNY Buffalo in 2013. He successfully earned reappointment at the rank of Assistant Professor three times at SUNY Cortland, in 2014, 2016, and 2018. He has won honors in his field and has attended six regional film festivals in the past year as an invited filmmaker and to participate in Q&A panels. He has also served as an external program reviewer for Cayuga Community College.

Teaching Effectiveness

Mr. Avery began teaching in the Communication and Media Studies Department in Fall 2013. He has taught nine different courses: Introduction to Film Analysis, Video Production I

(field), Mass Media and Society, Intermediate Writing for Media, Game of Thrones: Story and Character, Video Production II (studio), Multimedia Production, Advanced Documentary, and Advanced Filmmaking. These courses represent both upper and lower level program offerings, core requirements, concentration requirements, and electives, demonstrating the extent to which Mr. Avery contributes to the health of the department's programs.

The *SUNY Cortland College Handbook* indicates that criteria for the rank of associate professor include “a demonstrated and continuing ability to develop areas of instruction” and lists curriculum development as one type of evidence for the ability. Of the courses mentioned above, Mr. Avery developed two of them as new, and now instrumental, courses to the program: Advanced Documentary (COM445) and Advanced Filmmaking (COM446). Teaching observations of these courses (referenced below) affirm his success with them. Additionally, Mr. Avery worked with Dr. Caroline Kaltefleiter and yourself (Dr. Paul van der Veur) as a member of the Communication and Media Studies Curriculum Committee to develop a new BS program in Media Production as a “restructured version of the BA in New Communication Media that included a scaffold of media production courses meant to provide students with the structure, organization, and rigor they need to succeed in the field of media production.” Also of note to evidence of Mr. Avery's development in instruction is the number of experiential education opportunities he provides for students – which also speaks to the college's desire for evidence of student engagement. Not only does Mr. Avery oversee 30 internships annually with the Blackbird Film Festival (discussed further under Service), but has also organized a television studio tour of News Channel 9 for his Fall 2018 Video Production II (Studio) class in which the Executive Producer of *Bridge Street* gave students a firsthand look at how the 4pm news broadcast is created and offered early-career advice. He also developed a film festival tour for students for the 2018 Adirondack Film Festival and 2018 Great Western Catskills International Film Festival.

The CMSDPC notes that Mr. Avery's CTE scores are consistently positive, with a career range of 4.41 to a 4.93 mean of all CTE items. Likewise, peer-observations of his teaching are complimentary. Tyler Bradway, from the English Department, observed Mr. Avery's Video Production II class in November 2018 and remarked that Mr. Avery's “pedagogical work in this course session was multifaceted” and that the students exhibited a “genuinely supportive ethos.” Larissa True, from Kinesiology, similarly commented on the Advanced Filmmaking class she witnessed in November 2018 that Mr. Avery has a “good working relationship with students.” This is a strength Mr. Avery has exhibited throughout his career. A September 2014 observation by John Hartsock in Communication & Media Studies also remarked that “Professor Avery has excellent rapport with his class.” Student comments in CTEs echo these sentiments, finding him to be an interactive and supportive instructor with challenging classes. Perhaps the most oft-repeated phrase in student comments is “I learned a lot.”

Mr. Avery's course materials are clear and detailed. Course schedules, for example, demonstrate much careful planning. The CMSDPC was particularly impressed by the design and visually clarity of the materials. In the past, there were concerns expressed by students and, in turn, the department's Personnel Committee about ambiguity surrounding the grading breakdown/criteria/policies of Mr. Avery's class, and so the CMSDPC is especially pleased to see that Mr. Avery's most recent syllabi have well delineated grading information. Additionally, samples of his students' film work demonstrate the depth of experience his courses provide.

Creative and Scholarly Ability

As indicated by the external review letters Mr. Avery chose to include with his materials, he is well known throughout the state and region as an "exceptional" filmmaker. Since his last personnel review in February 2018, he has written, directed, and edited five short films. Two have already been recognized as an "Official Selection" for festivals, and one of those – *DEADEYE* – received the Grand Prize award for Best Short Film at the 2019 Snowtown Film Festival in Watertown, NY. In addition to these five newest films, three films from the previous year are still on the festival circuit. In total, Mr. Avery has presented creative and/or scholarly work at twelve film festivals and three academic conferences, and has published one book chapter credits in Palgrave's 2017 *Documentary and Disability* volume. He also has two films in progress.

His IMDB.com profile, which was linked in his digital portfolio, lists a total of 13 directing credits, 7 writing credits, 1 acting credit, 12 editing credits, 8 cinematography credits, and 3 producer credits, proving that he is active and skilled in multiple facets of his field. The UFVA notes, "the collaborative nature of film production is complex and synergistic, and one role or area is not necessarily more important than another." This speaks not only to the value of Mr. Avery's assorted filmmaking roles – especially when he often hold multiple roles on a single production, such as writer, director, and editor on *DEADEYE* – but also to the effectiveness of his teaching in promoting student scholarship, because a number of his recent projects have engaged student production teams. The CMSDPC does, however, suggest that Mr. Avery might want to include either letters of contribution from his collaborators, as recommended by the Department Personnel Committee in 2018 or/and a brief narrative that would help reviewers to better understand not only his workload in filmmaking but also his philosophical approach or artistic vision of those projects.

In addition to the Grand Prize for *DEADEYE*, Mr. Avery also earned a Certificate of Merit for Cinematography in 2018 on his *The Marksman* (2017) at the Rochester International Film Festival, and the North Country Filmmaker Award for *The Marksman* at the Snowtown Film Festival.

Service

Mr. Avery has a long record of significant service contributions to the department, college, and community. He has served the Department's Personnel Committee continuously since Fall 2013 and stepped up as chair in Fall 2018 and co-chair in Spring 2019. He served the Department's Curriculum Committee from Fall 2013 to Spring 2018, serving as chair from Fall 2015 to Spring 2017. He has served on five search committees overseeing seven successful searches, and he chaired four of those five committees. Mr. Avery also serves as the faculty advisor to CSTV, a role he has held since Fall 2015 and which serves not only the larger college community but arguably the larger Cortland community, as well. He has produced promotional videos for the college and SUNY system – including one for #YouAreWelcomeHere – a scholarship program designed to welcome international students to U.S. institutions of higher education.

In April 2016, Mr. Avery created the Blackbird Film Festival, an international film and video festival that has grown to attract over 120 films from around the world, engage 30 student interns annually, and involved the Cortland County Convention and Visitor Bureau and an assortment of local businesses. As a student-run festival, Blackbird offers students a unique opportunity to get field experience in event planning, social media campaigning, and public relations, as well as festival production and judging. As a community event, Blackbird offers a unique opportunity to build and strengthen “town-gown” relationships. As an international hub, Blackbird offers wonderful visibility for the program, the college, and the university.

Clearly, Mr. Avery is providing admirable service to the Communication and Media Studies Department and to SUNY Cortland. The CMSDPC reiterates the hope expressed by the Department Personnel Committee in 2018 that Mr. Avery will also extend his contributions to the discipline and field.

Continued Growth

Mr. Avery continues to strengthen his professional network with filmmakers and festival organizers, as well as community liaisons. He has taken added responsibility in organizing film festival tours and television studio field trips with students. He has secured eleven grants since 2016 to fund the Blackbird Film, a 2018 “Women in Film” Screening and Panel Discussion, and a student trip the Adirondack Film Festival. In 2018 he received a Student Affairs Faculty Connection Award for his significant connections with students outside of the traditional classroom setting. As noted by the UFVA, a “critical component of evaluation for creative production work is funding” and securing funding for creative projects, such as film festivals,

“can be a labor intensive process, as it requires clear articulation of creative goals and methods, [and] detailed budgetary information.”

The CMSDPC suggests that as Mr. Avery extend his contribution to the discipline, through activities such as participating in the UFVA, that he will also find more related opportunities, such as workshops, short course, or symposia, for continued growth in his field

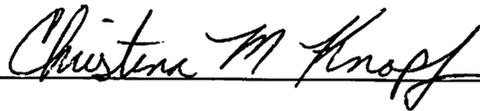
Summary

The CMSDPC concludes that Mr. Avery has, pursuant to section 230 of the *SUNY Cortland College Handbook*, demonstrated “individual merit” that “strengthens individual departments, the College, and the University.” He has a record of teaching effectiveness, supported by positive student evaluations and colleague observations, with evidence of independent student work, curriculum development, contribution to departmental change, honors for teaching, work with student organizations, course development, and careful course materials and plans. His scholarly and creative achievements are exemplary and ongoing, and include not only a book chapter and conference presentations, but also artistic achievements, and a professional reputation as evidenced by films earning “Choice Selection” and winning awards. His service to the department, college, and university has included administrative work as the chair to multiple committees, work with the community, and integration of service, creative, and pedagogy through Blackbird.

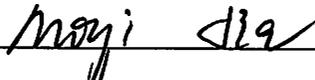
Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the committee.

Sincerely,

Christina Knopf, PhD
Co-Chair, CMSDPC



Moyi Jia, PhD
Member, CMSDPC



Sung Yoo, PhD
Member, CMSDPC



February 27, 2019

Fine Arts and Humanities Subdivision Personnel Committee
School of Arts and Sciences
SUNY Cortland

Dear Subdivision Personnel Committee Members,

I have reviewed the materials submitted by Sam Avery and am pleased to recommend his continuing appointment to the Communication and Media Studies Department. This positive recommendation is consistent with that of the Department Personnel Committee. The Committee's options were to very highly recommend (3), highly recommend (2), recommend (1), and not recommend (0).

Mastery of Subject Matter/Continuing Growth

Mr. Avery completed his Master of Fine Arts in Media Arts Production at the State University of New York University at Buffalo in 2013. In addition, Avery works to improve his skills through participation in events such as the Tribeca Talks Industry Master Classes (2014) and annual attendance at regional technology and film related events.

Effectiveness in Teaching

Since entering the Communication Studies Department, Mr. Avery has taught nine courses. Among those are two new courses that Avery created COM 445 Advanced Documentary and COM 446 Advanced Filmmaking. Both courses are now part of the revised BA program in Cinema Study and the proposed BS program in Media Production. In addition, Avery taught; CIN 208 Introduction to Film Analysis, COM 243 Video Production I, COM 301 Mass Media and Society, COM 322 Intermediate Writing for Media, COM 329 Game of Thrones: Story & Character, COM 342 Video Production II, and COM 349 Multimedia Production.

Sam Avery has performed exceptionally well in his teaching. In their evaluations, students rank Avery highly across all measures. Routine observations made over the course of the past six years have consistently corroborated student opinions. By all accounts, Avery does an exceptional job establishing rapport with students and making content accessible to them.

Scholarly Ability

Samuel Avery's scholarship is creative in nature and focuses on the development of film and video projects. In recent years he has worked as producer, director, videographer, and editor. In the period under review, this work was supplemented by the publication of a book chapter. Also, of significance is Avery's creation of an international film festival held annually on the Cortland campus.

Avery's portfolio included links to 27 films including juried creative works, commissioned pieces, and promotional videos. A number of these works have received regional, national, and international recognition. Most recently, Avery's film DEADEYE received a grand prize award at a regional festival. It should be noted that Avery actively engages students in the creative process

and thus provides students with significant supplemental instruction and hands-on learning opportunities. In addition, his promotional pieces provide service to the college while again enhancing student learning opportunities.

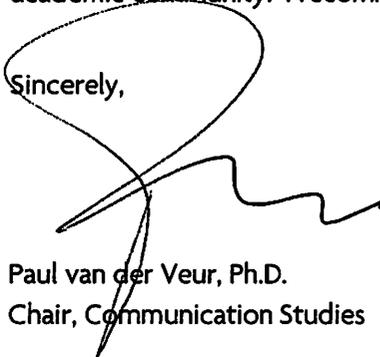
College Service

Since arriving at Cortland, Mr. Avery has provided an exception level of service to the department, the college, the community and the discipline. At the department level, Avery has consistently served on Curriculum, Personnel, and Search Committees, often agreeing to chair these committees. As noted above, he lent his expertise to enhance the college and the SUNY System through the creation of promotional videos. This service also extended to participating in an external program review for one of our sister institutions.

The most visible example of Mr. Avery's service is the creation of the Blackbird Film Festival. Avery introduced the festival in 2016 and has managed its growth since that time. In bringing this festival to fruition each year, Avery supervises a host of student interns from across campus to review the films, interact with filmmakers, create an online presence, and host the event itself. As noted in his summary of accomplishments, this festival serves the discipline, the community, the college, the department, and most significantly, the students.

In conclusion, I find that Mr. Avery has demonstrated himself to be a valuable member of this academic community. I recommend his continuing appointment.

Sincerely,



Paul van der Veur, Ph.D.
Chair, Communication Studies

cc Samuel Avery
Christina Knopf, Department Personnel Committee Co-Chair
file

February 27, 2019

Fine Arts and Humanities Subdivision Personnel Committee
School of Arts and Sciences
SUNY Cortland

Dear Subdivision Personnel Committee Members,

I have reviewed the materials submitted by Sam Avery and am pleased to recommend his promotion to the rank of Associate Professor within the Communication and Media Studies Department. This positive recommendation is consistent with that of the Department Personnel Committee. The Committee's options were to very highly recommend (1), highly recommend (2), recommend (0), and not recommend (0).

Mastery of Subject Matter/Continuing Growth

Mr. Avery completed his Master of Fine Arts in Media Arts Production at the State University of New York University at Buffalo in 2013. This is the appropriate terminal degree in his field. His creative works have garnered honors and awards at the regional and national level. In addition, Avery works to improve his skills through participation in events such as the Tribeca Talks Industry Master Classes (2014) and annual attendance at regional technology and film related events.

Effectiveness in Teaching

Since entering the Communication Studies Department, Mr. Avery has taught nine courses. Among those are two new courses that Avery created COM 445 Advanced Documentary and COM 446 Advanced Filmmaking. Both courses are now part of the revised BA program in Cinema Study and the proposed BS program in Media Production. In addition, Avery taught; CIN 208 Introduction to Film Analysis, COM 243 Video Production I, COM 301 Mass Media and Society, COM 322 Intermediate Writing for Media, COM 329 Game of Thrones: Story & Character, COM 342 Video Production II, and COM 349 Multimedia Production.

Sam Avery has performed exceptionally well in his teaching. In their evaluations, students rank Avery highly across all measures. Routine observations made over the course of the past six years have consistently corroborated student opinions. By all accounts, Avery does an exceptional job engaging his students and making content accessible to them.

Scholarly Ability

Samuel Avery's scholarship is creative in nature and focuses on the development of film and video projects. In recent years he has worked as producer, director, videographer, and editor. In the period under review, this work was supplemented by the publication of a book chapter. Also, of significance is Avery's creation of an international film festival held annually on the Cortland campus.

A review of his work reveals a good 'eye' for visuals and a strong sense of composition. Avery's editing demonstrates a well-developed sense of timing and motivation. An increasing level of technical skill and sophistication are also evident when viewing the body of work presented.

Avery's portfolio included links to 27 films including juried creative works, commissioned pieces, and promotional videos. A number of these works have received regional, national, and international recognition. Most recently, Avery's film DEADEYE received a grand prize award at a regional festival. It should be noted that Avery actively engages students in the creative process and thus provides students with significant supplemental instruction and hands-on learning opportunities. In addition, his promotional pieces provide service to the college while again enhancing student learning opportunities.

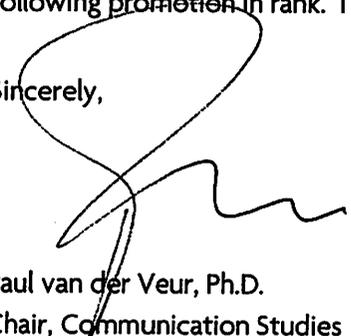
College Service

Since arriving at Cortland, Mr. Avery has provided an exemplary level of service to the department, the college, the community and the discipline. At the department level, Avery has consistently served on Curriculum, Personnel, and Search Committees, often agreeing to chair these committees. As noted above, he freely lends his expertise to enhance the college and the SUNY System through the creation of promotional videos. This service also extended to participating in an external program review for one of our sister institutions.

The most visible example of Mr. Avery's service is the creation of the Blackbird Film Festival. Avery introduced the festival in 2016 and has managed its growth since that time. In bringing this festival to fruition each year, Avery supervises a host of student interns from across campus to review the films, interact with filmmakers, create an online presence, and host the event itself. As noted in his summary of accomplishments, this festival serves the discipline, the community, the college, the department, and most significantly, the students.

In conclusion, I find that Mr. Avery has demonstrated himself to be a valuable member of this academic community. He has delivered significant and sustained contributions in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service. I have no doubt that these contributions will continue following promotion in rank. I recommend his promotion to the rank of Associate Professor.

Sincerely,



Paul van der Veur, Ph.D.
Chair, Communication Studies

cc Samuel Avery
Christina Knopf, Department Personnel Committee Co-Chair
file

To: Dr. Bruce Mattingly, Dean, Arts and Sciences
From: Dr. E. Kim Stone, Chair, Fine Arts and Humanities Sub-School Personnel Committee *EKS/SB*
Date: March 28, 2019
Re: Promotion and Continuing Appointment for Samuel Avery, Assistant Professor, Communication Studies

The Fine Arts and Humanities Sub-School Personnel Committee is pleased to recommend Samuel Avery for continuing appointment and promotion. His commitment to excellence in teaching, his productivity in scholarly pursuits, and his service to the department and the university establish him as a significant asset to the Communications and Media Studies Department and the college at large.

Samuel Avery has demonstrated excellence in teaching. Since his appointment in Fall 2013, he has taught nine courses of diverse topics such as Film Analysis, Video Production, Mass Media and Society, Writing for Media, Multimedia, Filmmaking, Documentary and special topic courses for Story and Character. His courses in the Communications and Media Studies department have received strong CTE scores. Students have commented: "this is the best class ever," "he is the best professor I had all semester," "the class is interesting and relevant," "fun+engaging course + really makes you think and learn." Students consistently praise him for being an engaging, caring professor. However, many student remarks express concern about Professor Avery's grading practices: "more transparent with grades," "please post on blackboard," "I have no idea what I have in this class," and "make grades available online." The committee strongly recommends that Professor Avery address these concerns from students to improve grading transparency in all of his classes. Class observations from colleagues further attest to his engaging and multifaceted teaching methods. One observer found Professor Avery's pedagogical style to be "incredibly effective," and also noted that his teaching style "clearly fostered more collaboration and responsibility among the students." It is apparent that Avery helps students create and produce their best work while gaining valuable experience. In addition to his classroom work, the committee also commends Professor Avery for implementing a "Beyond Classroom Learning" that encourages students to attend regional film festivals that expose them to active filmmakers and industry standards.

The committee commends Professor Avery for his substantial creative and scholarly activity. The many accolades he has received for his films suggest that he has developed a solid creative reputation in the New York State regional film industry. Since his last review in 2018, he has written, directed and edited five short films. We congratulate Professor Avery for being awarded the grand prize for Best Short Film for DEADEYE at the Snowtown Film Festival (2019) in Watertown, NY. We encourage Professor Avery to submit his work to national and International level juried film festivals in the future. We also would like to see more documented critiques of his work, which would serve as a form of peer review as well as acknowledge the value and innovation of his creative endeavors.

Professor Avery has also made substantial contributions in department service. He has served on seven successful departmental search committees, chaired three of the searches, and co-chaired one. He is currently co-chair of the Department Personnel Committee and a past Curriculum Development Committee member. The committee especially commends Professor Avery for his long-term devotion

to serving as faculty advisor for CSTV, the student-run media production club, an activity that gives students real world experience in video production and engages them in independent scholarship. The committee is also impressed with recent developments Professor Avery has initiated in the Blackbird Film Festival, a campus wide event he founded and directs. Professor Avery's decision to include panels on gender politics in film and work from six international filmmakers in the 2018 festival further broadens its scope, signals positive growth, and ensures the vibrancy of this activity.

Professor Avery's dedication, work ethic, and professionalism demonstrate the merit necessary to warrant his continuing appointment and promotion to Associate Professor. The Fine Arts and Humanities Sub-School Personnel Committee examined Professor Avery's dossier, met for discussion, and voted by secret ballot.

The committee vote was as follows:

Vote for Continuing Appointment

 5 Recommend

 0 Not Recommend

Vote for Promotion to Associate Professor

 4 Recommend

 1 Not Recommend

- CC:** Paul van der Veur, Chair, Communication Studies
Samuel Avery, Co-Chair, Department Personnel Committee
Christina Knopf, Co-Chair, Department Personnel Committee
✓ Samuel Avery, Candidate

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mark Prus, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

FROM: R. Bruce Mattingly, Dean of Arts and Sciences 

DATE: April 15, 2019

RE: Continuing Appointment and Promotion Recommendations for Samuel Avery

I am pleased to recommend Samuel Avery for continuing appointment and for promotion to the rank of associate professor. These recommendations are consistent with those of the department personnel committee, the department chair and the subschool personnel committee.

Since his arrival at Cortland in 2013, Mr. Avery has taught several courses in digital film and media production, including new courses that he created. He was instrumental in the development of the new BS in Media Production. In his teaching philosophy statement, he addresses the fact that some of his students have questioned whether a college education is necessary for a career in film production. He has responded by making his classes even more focused on experiential learning than they were in the past. As he puts it, he converted "class time" into "production time" so that students can learn by doing, in an environment that fosters collaboration and mutual support through a variety of strategies including peer teaching. The evidence indicates that his methods have been very successful. His CTE results continue to be very strong, with numerical averages almost always in the mid to high 4's. Student comments are consistently positive and frequently enthusiastic. Students enjoy his classes, find them to be challenging at times, but recognize that they are beneficial. There are occasional remarks from students who find his grading policies to be confusing. Several teaching observations from colleagues provide a faculty perspective on his teaching. The two most recent reports are from outside of the Communication and Media Studies Department. Tyler Bradway from English visited a video production course that he found to be "dynamic and engaging." He noted a high level of camaraderie among students, and observed that Avery's combination of direct guidance and student autonomy was very effective in promoting learning and responsibility. Larissa True from Kinesiology attended a couple of class meetings, including an off-campus video shoot. She found the students to be professional, attentive and fully engaged, and noted that they clearly had a high level of respect for him. Mr. Avery provides students with opportunities for learning beyond the classroom through such activities as a weekend film festival tour and a field trip to a Syracuse television station. Several of his former students have found positions in local media and in national outlets including ABC and HBO. His accomplishments in teaching satisfy the criteria for promotion to associate professor.

Since his last review, Mr. Avery has directed 5 new short films, many of which have received recognition as "Official Selections" in various film festivals. His film *Deadeye* received the Grand Prize award for Best Short Film at the 2019 Snowtown Film Festival in Watertown. Another film, *Dirty Old Man*, was named Best Comedy at the New York State International Film Festival in Albany. Some of his earlier works continue to receive recognition as they make the rounds of the film festival circuit. External reviewer Steve Keeler from Cayuga CC reports that Avery has a growing reputation as an accomplished filmmaker. His creative activities

are fully integrated with his teaching, as he involves students in many aspects of the production process. In addition to his creative work, he has published a book chapter and made a couple of conference presentations. His portfolio now includes 24 films that can be considered peer-reviewed works through their acceptance at a number of film festivals, coupled with "Official Selection" recognition and several awards. His record of achievement exceeds our expectations for promotion.

Mr. Avery has contributed a high degree of service to SUNY Cortland and the professional filmmaking community. He has been an active member of the department curriculum committee, and has taken on leadership positions as chair of a search committee and the department personnel committee. He serves as the advisor for CSTV. He and his students have produced promotional films for other units on campus. Recent works include a short film on Transfer Tips for the office of Advisement and Transition, and the halftime show for Cortaca 2018. He has built relationships with local community colleges, contributing to SUNY's transfer mobility initiative. His most significant service contribution is the creation and ongoing stewardship of the Blackbird Film Festival, which will celebrate its 5th anniversary this month. External reviewer Chris Xaver reports that Blackbird is a valuable networking and professional development opportunity. Steve Keeler praised the festival's foci on collaboration and diversity. Mr. Avery is justifiably proud that this is largely a student-run event, providing them with even more experiential learning opportunities. The festival is now in the top 20 of the "100 Best Reviewed Film Festivals" and clearly brings positive recognition to SUNY Cortland. As I noted in my last review, Mr. Avery's service activities exceed the norm for most junior faculty and easily satisfy our criteria for promotion.

In conclusion, Mr. Avery is a valuable and contributing member of the Communication and Media Studies Department. He seamlessly blends his teaching, creative and service activities for the betterment of our students, the campus and our community. He is most deserving of both continuing appointment and promotion to the rank of associate professor.

Cc: Samuel Avery, Communication and Media Studies Department
Christina Knopf, Chair, Communication and Media Studies Department Personnel Committee
Paul van der Veur, Chair, Communication and Media Studies Department
Elizabeth (Kim) Stone, Chair, Fine Arts and Humanities Sub-School Personnel Committee

May 1, 2019

TO: Erik J. Bitterbaum, President
 FROM: Mark J. Prus, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
 RE: Dr. Samuel Avery, Assistant Professor
 Communication Studies Department



I have reviewed the materials submitted on Dr. Samuel Avery and am pleased to recommend him for continuing appointment in the Communication Studies Department effective September 1, 2020. I am also pleased to recommend him for promotion to Associate Professor effective September 1, 2019. These recommendations are consistent with those of the department personnel committee, the department chair, the school personnel committee, and the dean.

Dr. Avery's record of teaching, service and scholarship warrants continuing appointment and promotion. In the area of teaching, Dr. Avery has offered a variety of courses related to new communication media including video and multimedia production. Numeric scores on his CTEs are consistently in the mid to high fours and students' written comments are similarly positive. A recent peer observation report notes his preparation and content knowledge.

Dr. Avery's performance in the area of scholarship more than meets the expectations for continuing appointment and promotion. His creative activity includes 24 films that he has written, directed and produced. Many of these films have been included in juried festivals and have been recognized with awards. He has also published a book chapter and presented at national conferences.

Dr. Avery has established a strong record of service to the Department, the College and the community. He has organized the Blackbird Film Festival that not only show cases talented filmmakers, but provides applied learning opportunities for our students. He co-chairs the department personnel committee and is a member of the department curriculum committee. He is the faculty advisor to CSTV.

Dr. Avery has contributed to the Department and the College and is deserving of continuing appointment and promotion. I look forward to his continued contributions in teaching, scholarship and service.

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	<u>Cont. Apt.</u>	<u>Promotion</u>
Department Personnel Committee	X	X
Department Chair	X	X
School Personnel Committee	X	X
School Dean	X	X

NOTE: Your file in the above matter has been transferred to the President's Office for the President's review. In accordance with the UUP Agreement, Article 31.6, you have the right to examine the file during normal business hours and to respond to any item contained therein. If you wish to examine the file, please promptly call that office for an appointment.

May 15, 2019

Dr. Samuel Avery
Communication and Media Studies
Van Hoesen Hall

Dear Dr. Avery:

It is a genuine pleasure to inform you that you have been promoted in rank from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor effective September 1, 2019. This promotion will carry with it a salary increase of \$[REDACTED].

In addition, this is to advise that I have recommended you to the Chancellor for continuing appointment as Associate Professor, effective September 1, 2020. Your achievements to this point are the basis for this recommendation, and it is well-deserved. Further, we are confident that you will continue to meet high standards of excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service to the campus and the community.

Please accept my congratulations for these significant accomplishments.

Sincerely,

Erik J. Bitterbaum
President

EJB:cb

Pc: M. Prus
B. Mattingly
C. Knopf
P. van der Veur
E. Stone
F. Pierce
T. Rammacher
S. VanLiew
M. Congdon