

27 April 2013

**Re: Associate Professor Sarojini Nadar.
Application for promotion in 2013 cycle to rank of full professor.**

Assessment of teaching commitment and ability

Two things struck me when we appointed Dr Nadar to a permanent lecturing position in the school of Religion and Theology on the Pietermaritzburg campus. The first was her range of vocabulary and ability to articulate in a coherent manner devoid of clichéd academic jargon. The second was her knowledge of her discipline. She had served a lengthy apprenticeship – I think it was the traditional seven years – and it was clear to me that in a school top heavy with professors that here we had an energetic and bright counter balance.

I was not to be disappointed. In the remaining years of my deanship the message which came through loud and clear was that we had a rising star in the school. The then head of school was clear on the subject and spoke of the close and productive relationship Dr Nadar had with her students. The only hesitation he had was that she needed to graduate some doctoral students, a challenge now very successfully achieved.

Dr Nadar's student assessments were invariably not only positive but enthusiastic as were the examiners' reports on the modules in which she taught. But subsequently I have had firsthand experience of her teaching practice. I am a member of the College of Humanities Doctoral Cohort teaching/supervision system, both in 2012 and again in 2013. In 2013 Professor Nadar expanded this to include a separate Masters' Cohort cycle. This excellent system has been taken and adapted from that piloted by the faculty and subsequent school of Education.

It is fair to say that Professor Nadar is the driving force behind this expanded initiative. But her contribution has not only encompassed organizational and managerial expertise (the whole process runs like clockwork) but extends to the

teaching/supervision itself. She is the cohort leader in teaching as well as in organization. She is the linchpin of the plenary discussion sessions, giving short and penetrating insight to the various student presentations. She has an ability to make the students relax and overcome their inevitable defensiveness, enabling proper discussion including criticism without giving offence or alienation. Her open personality is ideal for this sort of group interchange and the College is lucky to have someone of her talent assisting with the throughput of so many of our postgraduates across the College.

Professor Nadar is NRF rated; she has expertise in editing an accredited journal; she has published widely; she has senior management administrative and leadership experience (her Postgraduate Manual is a godsend); she has published widely; she is in constant demand internationally to speak at some of the world's most reputable universities; she has national awards; and she is a steady hand in difficult times of transition. I would add that her approach and attitude to transformation is healthy, being both practical and realistic. But it should not be overlooked that this all-rounder is also an excellent communicator and an excellent teacher.

It is without hesitation that I recommend the promotion of Associate Professor Nadar.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donal McCracken". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

**Professor Donal McCracken, F.R.Hist.S.
Senior Professor**