



Dr. David Ernst, Executive Director

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Dear Tenure and Promotion Committee,

I am pleased to write this letter of support for the tenure and promotion of Dragan Gill. I've had the pleasure of working with Dragan since 2016. At that time, Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo announced a state-wide Open Textbook Initiative, and funded Rhode Island schools to join the Open Education Network (OEN - formerly, the Open Textbook Network). Dragan served as the chair of the state-wide steering committee for the initiative, and as Executive Director of the OEN, I worked closely with her.

Since the beginning of the state-wide initiative, Dragan has been the primary Open Education leader in the state of Rhode Island. Most librarians I work with are managing an Open Education initiative at their institution. Dragan has been managing an Open Education initiative across multiple institutions in Rhode Island (in addition to her own institution). And, since the initiative is funded by the governor, she also attends to the needs of the governor's office. Among the many responsibilities of this role, Dragan coordinates and plans workshops, communications, and data collection and reporting between Rhode Island institutions, the OEN, and the governor's office. She masterfully works between all parties to make sure needs are met and progress is made.

But Dragan's role isn't just one of managing the initiative. She also shows great leadership in moving the initiative forward at the state level and at Rhode Island College (RIC). Dragan understands that making change happen involves addressing barriers from a number of perspectives. For example, Dragan has gone beyond supporting faculty adoption of open textbooks - she has also worked to advance open publishing at RIC. Dragan understands that this involves multiple pieces, including building technical infrastructure capacity (adopting Pressbooks, a publishing platform), aligning with existing campus policies (intellectual property and copyright), and working with various groups on campus to gain support.

Dragan's leadership and expertise are recognized by others in her region and nationally. This is illustrated by her invitation to be a member of the New England Board of Higher Education Open Education Regional Advisory Committee and the Northeast OER Summit Core Planning Team. In addition, each year, the OEN invites a few national leaders to present at our annual OEN Summit, and Dragan was generous enough to run a session on collecting qualitative data at our 2019 Summit.

Dragan's professional competence and commitment to service is outstanding. I fully support and recommend her tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Ernst". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Ernst, PhD

Executive Director, Open Education Network