

To: CAV Committee  
From: Mike Cottle  
Re: Dr. Luke Dahn teaching observation  
Date: 11.11.22

I am pleased to write a recommendation for reappointment based on my observation of Dr. Dahn's teaching. I observed his MUSC 6551, Graduate Tonal analysis on Wednesday, 11/9 4:10-6:40. (Note that this was an impromptu visit. Luke provided times and dates, which I had not yet chosen. I happened to be working next door, saw the class, and he was gracious enough to let me attend.)

It is clear that Dr. Dahn has all the skills necessary to teach an advance analysis course. He knows the material, was comfortable in the classroom and with the tools of teaching (projectors, playback, keyboard skills). The lecture was well prepared, well organized and the concepts were clearly communicated.

In addition, I was impressed by these details:

- An open and comfortable environment. Students spoke up regularly with serious observations but also light-hearted comments about the materials, the assignment, the instructor, and each other. It encouraged exchange and discussion.
- One comment wasn't immediately clear. So many instructors would, after a cursory attempt to understand, dismiss it, move on, or bluff, but Dr. Dahn doggedly stuck to the question, unflustered, until he clearly understood the comment and then included it in the discussion.
- Students were engaged in and eager to understand and assimilate the information. So many analysis courses are focused on delivering facts that students then memorize. This was not the case, but rather a discussion that led to better understanding and therefore better musicianship.
- The assignment presentations were all in a different format (digital, paper, computer, iPad), which were welcomed and accommodated without issue.
- After everyone had (more or less) agreed on an analysis, Dr. Dahn took the discussion one step further, posing an interesting alternate interpretation. Nearly everyone in the classroom first literally or figuratively cocked their heads, thought, then light bulbs went on.
- Finally, Dr. Dahn provided perspective. Everyone clearly understood, we were ready to move on, but Dr. Dahn invited us to step back and think what this all means, to the audience, to the musicians of that period, to us, as practicing musicians.

I am happy to recommend his reappointment.

Sincerely,  
Dr. David Cottle  
Director, Electronic Music Studios  
University of Utah