



12 March 2021

To whom it may concern,

It is my pleasure to recommend Dr Slávka Tomasciková for a full professorship in the field of Non-Slavic Languages and Literatures at Pavol Jozef Safárik University in Kosice. The files we have had access to contain plentiful evidence of the candidate's extraordinarily dynamic trajectory at university in her complementary roles in the fields of research, lecturing and management.

In terms of research, the candidate has been adventurous to say the least, exploring what may arguably be presented as the road less travelled by in Slovak Academia, clearly specialising in cultural and media studies, and often showing a remarkable talent for identifying the latest hotspot in the field and contributing to it, thus ensuring that the international scholarly community specialising in the wider field of English studies realise that Slovakia is an academic powerhouse to be reckoned with. Evidence of her recognition as a researcher in the field can be found in the fact that she has been a plenary speaker at many international conferences. Likewise, apart from her more recent monographs, her research appears in edited collections under the imprint of influential international publishing houses and several high-ranking journals. There is no doubt that the fields covered in her research, still relatively rare in Slovak Academia, will set a trend for other to follow in the country.

As far as lecturing is concerned, it is perfectly clear that the candidate's research interests are perfectly connected to her lecturing, and so it is safe to assume that the latter is informed by the former. Moreover, Dr Tomasciková has taught an impressive array of modules throughout the years at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, more often than not being academically responsible for them and often enough having actively contributed to their design.



This in turn relates to the candidate's involvement in research and academic projects. The number of these (two still ongoing at the moment of writing) is good evidence of Dr Tomasciková's stamina. What I find truly remarkable is that several of these projects, and probably the most relevant ones, have a direct impact on the overall quality and attractiveness of Pavol Jozef Safárik University's academic offer, as they have resulted in the design and launch of brand-new or fully revamped study programmes, as well as their internationalisation, making it possible for UPJS BA, MA and PhD students to benefit from the fact that their university has managed to set up a remarkable network involving an interesting mix of European universities. This in turn has translated as interesting Internationalisation at Home (IAH) initiatives (including regular lectures by foreign academics and an increasing number of exchange students from abroad), and perhaps most relevantly, highly interesting double Master's and PhD programmes that have greatly contributed to boost local talent.

Otherwise, the candidate's research output amply meets the criteria set up by Slovak regulations, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. The impact of this research is borne out by a considerable number of citations. More relevant than this, I would say, is the candidate's expectable impact in the mid-term, which can be seen clearly in the file entitled 'Outputs for practice'. Dr Tomasciková has been directly responsible for the introduction of a staggering seven double PhD programmes and two double MA programmes. Both initiatives have resulted in a remarkably high number of talented UPJS students obtaining double MA and PhD diplomas, who will in turn enrich this university's and Slovakia's overall academic pool. To these we should also add the very many other students whose Master's and PhD theses have so far been supervised by the candidate.



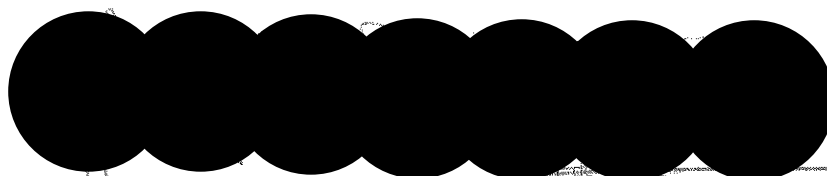
All this leads me to comment on the candidate's impressive managerial skills. From reading the files provided I have absolutely no doubt that the driving force behind Dr Tomasciková's academic career has been the improvement of the quality and the increase of the impact of the British and American Studies Department, of which she has been Head for so long now, and the whole of Pavol Jozef Safarik University. Indeed, the list of achievements in this regard is nothing short of impressive. Thus, she has led the creation of a centre for international language tests, successfully negotiated different deals making it possible for translation and interpretation students to benefit from attractive job placements, and introduced a highly successful entrepreneurial skills module now open to all Master's students at UPJS.

Not surprisingly, her own research achievements go in many ways hand in hand with her undeniable achievements in the field of internationalisation. Thus, and I will only refer to the information contained in the files made available to the reviewers, Dr Tomasciková is a member of international research groups and advisory boards in international journals, has been invited to deliver keynote addresses at international conferences on many occasions, has occupied leading positions in ESSE, successfully (co-)organised a myriad of international conferences (most importantly the 12th ESSE Conference, a huge achievement that greatly contributed to putting UPJS on the European English studies map), and helped sign dozens of bilateral agreements with foreign universities (providing UPJS students with enormously attractive internationalisation opportunities in terms of exchange and double degree programmes). What is remarkably absent from such files is the fact that, for a good many years, such remarkable achievements came through while the candidate combined her academic duties as a lecturer and a researcher with her managerial obligations as Head of UPJS's British and American Studies Department (a position she still holds) and as Vice-Rector for International Relations.



In this light, it is hardly surprising to find that she has been found worthy of international recognition and awards within the reach of very few of us, most notably an honorary doctorate from Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University (Ukraine). I am sure there are many more universities across Europe that would also like to make this recognition official, and remain confident that more such honours will arrive in the not-too-distant future.

Overall, what can be read between the lines is that the candidate not only has made herself a name in Academia. She has also shared her vision and actively contributed to making the British and American Studies Department and the whole of UPJS more competitive, striking highly strategic international alliances with carefully-selected foreign partners, aligning the aims and interests of her home institution with those of the aforementioned partners, thus ensuring that UPJS plays a leading role as an academic centre of reference in the region. For all of this, I cannot but conclude that the candidate's appointment as a full professor in the field of Non-Slavic Languages and Literatures is more than well deserved.



Dr José Igor Prieto-Arranz
Associate Professor in English
Cas Jai
University of the Balearic Islands
Crtra. de Valldemossa, Km 7.5
07122 Palma de Mallorca, SPAIN
Tel. (+34) 971 25 9785
e-mail: jose-igor.prieto@uib.eu
ResearcherID E-2276-2017
Scopus Author ID 55022874600
ORCID ID orcid.org/0000-0003-3732-292X