

**NOMINATION OF
TIMOTHY A. FARMER
FOR THE
CHANCELLOR'S AWARD
FOR EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE**

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Table of Contents

	Page
1) Nomination Letter	3
2) Curriculum Vita	6
3) Statement of Philosophy of Service	12
4) Letters of Support	
a) Keith Womer	16
b) Mary Beth Mohrman	17
c) David Ganz	19
d) Greg Geisler	20
e) Joe Martinich	22
f) Vicki Sauter	24
g) Judith Walker DeFelix	26
h) Pat Dolan	28
i) Jeanne Zarucchi	29



April 22, 2010

UM-St. Louis Senate Committee for Faculty Teaching and Service Awards
Woods Hall

Dear Colleagues:

It is my pleasure to nominate Timothy Farmer for the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Service.

Dr. Farmer has been a member of the UM-St. Louis faculty since 1987. From the moment he arrived on campus, he began contributing to the governance of the College of Business and the campus. In his early years, he served on the CoBA Undergraduate Studies and Graduate Studies Committees, serving as chair of both. Over the years, he has served on almost every committee of the Accounting Area and the College. But Dr. Farmer's greatest contributions have been to the UM-St. Louis campus. He has been a consistent contributor to the Faculty Senate and University Assembly, culminating in his two terms as Chair during 2006-2008. In addition, he has served on committees for the Graduate Council and many other task forces and ad hoc committees. He currently serves as Director of General Education.

However, a list of the committees on which he has served does not adequately describe Dr. Farmer's contributions to UMSL, the College of Business and the Accounting Area. It is the quality of his service that sets it apart and makes him truly worthy of recognition. The supporters of Dr. Farmer's nomination include four former recipients of the Chancellors Award for Excellence in Service as well as colleagues and University administrators at many different levels. Each of the attached letters speaks to the care and quality of Tim Farmer's contributions to the University.

- Keith Womer, Dean of the College of Business Administration, writes, "I know of no faculty member on campus who performs more high quality service than Tim Farmer..... Tim does not just serve he is active and he leads discussion for many of these committees... He is a careful, thoughtful colleague who thinks first about the impact of decisions upon the University and its students."

- David Ganz, Associate Dean Emeritus and a former recipient of the Chancellor's Service Award, writes, "Tim's involvement is not in name only; his is a total commitment to do the best job possible."
- Joe Martinich, a colleague in the College of Business and another former recipient of the Chancellor's Service Award, writes, "...he has been a model University citizen and a campus leader who has worked hard to make the University of Missouri - St. Louis a better place to work and learn.... His institutional knowledge and good judgment have been absolutely essential in designing and updating the governance infrastructure of the campus... I believe that Tim Farmer's service contributions during that past 20 years place him among the top service contributors of this campus."
- Vicki Sauter, also a College of Business colleague and former recipient of the Chancellor's Service Award, writes, "Underlying all of Tim's work has been the consistent theme, what will be best for the students... He has taken his themes of improving quality and equity, while making the environment better for students to his cross-campus work as well."
- Judith Walker deFelix, Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, writes, "Although all faculty leave a legacy, very few find ways to change the campus's operations, as these examples document that Tim has done--and continues to do. That's why he is so often the go-to person for big projects that need a good thinker and hard worker."
- Pat Dolan, Assistant to the Provost, writes, "Whether Tim is chairing the committee or participating as a member on the committee, he is always on time (generally early), well prepared, treats all members with respect, avoids judgment, and works collaboratively. The leadership style Tim represents along with his commitment to the University, encourages colleagues to trust him and work for the greater good of the University."
- Jeanne Zarucchi, another former recipient of the Chancellor's Service Award who has worked with Dr. Farmer on campus service activities, writes, "Tim always stood out as a person who considered campus service as a collegial responsibility, and never as a means for personal advancement. His decisions were always fair-minded and based on sound reasoning."

Another important feature of Dr. Farmer's service to the University is his motivation. Not only does he contribute to the University, but he does so for the right reasons. He participates in service activities because he genuinely wants to make UM-St. Louis a better university, and because he sees this service as a way to act upon his personal values. The way in which he carries out his responsibilities serves as a role model for many in the UM-St. Louis community.

As Dr. Farmer writes in his philosophy of service, "Collectively, we have incredible intellectual resources, powerful professional experiences, amazing talents, and an enviable status that set us apart from other institutions. It is our responsibility to do the best we can to set the bar high for our students' intellectual development and instill in them an understanding of their social responsibility and to ensure that integrity and quality permeate everything that bears the name of the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Service allows me to contribute in my own way to these goals."

- I wrote in my letter about his service to the Accounting Area, “His motivation comes from a deep and abiding belief in UM-St. Louis and its mission. Through his service work, he has furthered his values of academic rigor, integrity and quality.”
- Pat Dolan writes of Dr. Farmer, “Dr. Farmer always thinks of the University first. Tim’s agenda is what is best for the University. He doesn’t have a Tim agenda; he manages committees or participates on committees with the intent to make the University better... He is a tremendous consensus builder and those working with him on committees want to contribute to the solution or project, because he always places the University’s needs first. He is a remarkable team builder when you work with him. Whether Tim is chairing the committee or participating as a member on the committee, he is always on time (generally early), well prepared, treats all members with respect, avoids judgment, and works collaboratively. The leadership style Tim represents along with his commitment to the University, encourages colleagues to trust him and work for the greater good of the University.”
- Jeanne Zarucchi writes, “...he serves as a model of an individual whose leadership is always carried out with personal integrity. He is frequently called upon for service because not only is he very capable and efficient in dealing with almost any task, but he is trustworthy and will not exaggerate the truth for anyone’s benefit. Tim is also a person who demonstrates old-school courtesy and respect for others. I consider him not only a valued colleague, but a personal role model.”

Tim Farmer has worked tirelessly for over twenty years to improve UM-St. Louis. Our university is a better place as a result of his efforts. However, his significant contributions have never been openly recognized. It would be most appropriate to do so at this time by recommending him for the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Service.

If I can provide any additional information that will help the committee in its deliberations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Mary Beth Mohrman
Associate Professor of Accounting
Area Coordinator for Accounting

Statement of Personal Philosophy – Service

Timothy A. Farmer

April 2010

As a first term freshman taking a Principles of Microeconomics course, I was introduced to the concept of comparative advantage. The example used to illustrate the concept was that of a small town's only lawyer who was also the town's best typist. The principle held that even though the lawyer was the best typist in town, she should not do her own typing because there were other good typists available; the lawyer should spend her time doing the things that nobody else could do. As an 18 year old, I didn't know how that applied to me, but it stuck in my mind and has been one of the guiding principles in my career. We all have strengths. Some people have more strengths than others, but even if we're good at several things, there is something that sets us apart from others.

When we prepare for careers in the academy we're indoctrinated early on with the notion that a professor's role is a combination of teaching, research, and service. At a research institution, the order gets juggled around a bit – research, teaching, and service – at least for the tenure and promotion dossier. For me that was a challenge. I figured out early on that my comparative advantage was not in research. Thankfully, my research record was adequate and my colleagues wanted me around for what I could contribute to the operations of my department and college, so I was tenured even though I wasn't a research star. It was the principle of comparative advantage at work.

Sometime much later, when I was lamenting a significant personal loss, my oldest brother shook me out of my self-centeredness by using this quotation from the Bible: *“To whom much is given, much will be required.”* [Luke 12:48] He was telling me that those of us who have an abundance of resources -- whether it's intellect, talent, personal and professional support, or wealth -- need to get off our butts and do important things for others. Though I'm not a religious person, the quote carried a significant truth for me. I thought about how to make a difference that mattered. At the time, it wasn't clear that being an accounting professor fulfilled that goal. For about 10 years I volunteered one day a week as a nurse's aide in a hospital emergency department. It was the experience of being accepted as a valued part of a healthcare team -- far afield from my professional training -- that gave me the confidence to accept the fact that my comparative advantage -- service -- might also be valuable to the university. Though I wasn't "trained" for service, it was my ability and interest in service that I needed to put to the best use.

Much has been given to the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Collectively, we have incredible intellectual resources, powerful professional experiences, amazing talents, and an enviable status that set us apart from other institutions. It is our responsibility to do the best we can to set the bar high for our students' intellectual development and instill in them an understanding of their social responsibility and to ensure that integrity and quality permeate everything that bears the name of the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Service allows me to contribute in my own way to these goals.

Combining a willingness to say “yes,” a desire to foster change, and outstanding colleagues to support my efforts, I have been able to participate in important academic endeavors such as shared governance, accreditation, and curriculum development. Taking a broad organizational view of my university role is interesting and rewarding to me personally. While I enjoy being able to help prepare my classroom students for entry into the accounting profession, university service enables me to help our university provide opportunities for a diverse spectrum of students to find their own comparative advantage.