

Shenandoah Conservatory
Faculty Evaluation Committee
Dr. David Zerull Chair

It is my pleasure to write on behalf of Adam Olson. He has proven to be an exceptional colleague who is always courteous, professional, available, and willing to give extra effort in helping out. I was happy to observe his MuPR 311 Tonmeister Class on September 16, 2015. It was not a surprise to see how engaged his students were with their projects. I had a suspicion Adam was as great a teacher as he was a colleague. The class had studied the progression of how to correctly connect all of the different components for recording, starting with a microphone, and ending with all of the equipment ready to record. There were about 30 different choices of components to connect to the next. There were also many correct and incorrect ways to complete the connections. Adam's students first demonstrated their knowledge of making correct choices by practicing with picture cards of the equipment. I'm sure this helped to protect the real components, but it also made sure the students could recognize the correct electronic equipment by sight as well as by name. The students enjoyed this process, which looked a bit like the memory game concentration. I am a big fan of making learning fun, and this looked like fun. Adam then asked the students who had demonstrated correctly with the picture cards to help other students. In this way, Adam expedited the process, and helped reinforce student knowledge. I thought this was brilliant. Finally, when all of the students had completed their picture card connections correctly, Adam let the students into the equipment area of the studio where they started making their microphone connections on real equipment. It was obvious that the students were excited to try their skills out in the studio. Adam was a multi-tasking whirlwind as he helped several students at the same time, never missing any of the mistakes, but always making the students figure out their own solutions. I found myself wanting to take the class. In my opinion, Adam Olson is an exceptional teacher that both: understands his material, and understands the best way to get students to learn. Based on what I observed, I cannot give a higher recommendation.

Sincerely,

Scott A. Nelson DMA
Professor Trumpet/Conducting Shenandoah Conservatory
Principal Trumpet Ocala Symphony Orchestra
Second Trumpet Maryland Symphony Orchestra
Author, "Breathing for Musicians" Reinhardt and Still Publishers