

## Opinion Template

*Recommended minimal length: three to four pages*

### OPINION

**By:** Gabriele Dillmann, Ph.D., Julian H. Robertson Jr. Endowed Associate Professor of German, Denison University, Granville, Ohio, USA

**Regarding:** The application of the following candidates for the academic position of **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR** according to the Bulgarian legislation at the American University in Bulgaria in Area of Higher Education 2. *Humanities* in Professional Field 2.1 *Philology*. The procedure has been announced in the State Gazette issue 73 dated 8 September 2017.

**Candidate:** Dr. Diana Stantcheva

I present the evaluation below in my capacity as a member of the Academic Jury for the procedure. This evaluation is based on the *Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act*, the Rules for its implementation, the internal AUBG rules, regulations, and policies, including the *Habilitation Procedure* and the advertisement on the AUBG website regarding the procedure.

### Evaluation of the Candidate

#### I. Basis for Evaluation

This evaluation is based on the following documents submitted by the candidate:

1. Cover letter
2. Summary of scholarly contributions
3. List and Abstracts of Publications
4. Copies of 18 publications
5. List of citations
6. CV
7. Teaching experience
8. Student evaluation of teaching
9. 2 peer reviews
10. Last institutional evaluation

#### II. Eligibility

*Please fill it out the enclosed **AUBG Academic Position Requirements** (Enclosure 1) and state your opinion with regard to the Candidate's eligibility.*

Dr. Diana Stantcheva is fully eligible and highly qualified for the academic position of Associate Professor according to the **AUBG Academic Position Requirements** (see Enclosure 1).

### III. Areas of Scholarly Interests of the Candidate. Evaluation of the Contributions of the Candidate.

1. *Please describe the principal areas of the Candidate's research and include a focused evaluation of the Candidate's major theoretical and applied results and contributions based on the documents and publications submitted for the procedure.*

From my vantage point as a German professor at an American university and who is currently undergoing a review herself, I consider Dr. Stantcheva a very productive, well-diversified, and highly accomplished scholar and instructor. Her publications and presentations in the areas of lexicology, phraseology, lexicography, combinations of them, and the methodology of teaching German as a foreign language, are of high quality and demonstrate profound knowledge in the various subject areas she explores. She has not only made a name for herself in phraseology and lexicography, but has also embraced the affordances and challenges of working and writing about intercultural exchanges made possible with 21<sup>st</sup> century digital tools and pedagogies.

The various theoretical approaches (corpus-based, comparative and contrastive) Dr. Stantcheva employs in her research reveal a scholarly researcher invested in high quality scholarship that does not need to rely on simply one specific theoretical framework but rather shows an intellectual mind that transcends simple answers to complex issues. Dr. Stantcheva's work on German idioms is particularly inspiring. The reputable Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences' project "Collocations in the German Language," in which during the early stages she had served as research fellow, led to three articles in 2004, two in collaboration with fellow linguists ("*Eins, einen und etwas* in deutschen VP-Idiomen" and "A corpus-based lexical resource of German idioms") as well as on her own ("Ermittlung des Komponentenbestandes von Idiomen: Versuch eines Modells"). Dr. Stantcheva continued her work independently at AUBG, which led to the 2006 publication "The Many Faces of Negation – German VP Idioms with a Negative Component" in a special issue of the prestigious International Journal of Lexicography by Oxford University Press.

A subsequent research project, "Phraseological terminology in the German Dictionary of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm," for which Dr. Stantcheva secured two research grants (2007, 2011), one from her university AUBG and another from the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, focuses on a study of phraseological terms in the German Dictionary of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm and was published in the articles (2012a, 2012b): „beiwörter, ausdrücke, redensarten sollen nun der reihe nach folgen.“ Zur Benennung von phraseologischen Phänomenen im „Deutschen Wörterbuch“ von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm" and "Angaben zu phraseologischen Phänomenen im „Deutschen Wörterbuch“ von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm. This work is an important contribution to historical linguistics.

Another research area of Dr. Stantcheva's that contributes importantly to historical linguistics, in this case lexicography in Bulgaria (Dr. Stantcheva herself describes it as a "modest" contribution), is her comparative study on Geo Milev's *German-Bulgarian dictionary*. This work compares the manuscript with the print edition and Dr. Stantcheva shows "considerable differences in the way in which the lexicographical information is organized, in the macro- and microstructure of the dictionary, in the translation of the German words as well as in the listed collocations and phraseological units."

Dr. Stantcheva's area of scholarship that I am personally best familiar with is her work in the methodology of teaching German as a foreign language. Dr. Stantcheva and I began collaborating in 2013 when the Global Liberal Arts Alliance (initiated by the Great Lakes Colleges Association, a consortium made up of 13 private, residential, liberal arts colleges in the Midwest of America) first announced its new international program, the Globally Connected Courses Project. Our collaboration has since lasted five years and during that time we have taught one connected course every semester. In fact, one of our first connected courses projects was on Dr. Stantcheva's research topic, German idioms, for which Dr. Stantcheva created a project assignment around the theme of the idiomatic expression "the ugly duckling". Many of our projects have in fact since been inspired by Dr. Stantcheva's vast knowledge from her linguistic research on idiomatic expressions. Besides developing sound pedagogy for our students, Dr. Stantcheva and I have also presented and published on our international collaborative work taking into consideration intercultural, logistical, pedagogical, and technological aspects concerning both our courses and our collaboration as academic colleagues. With Dr. Stantcheva's background as a linguist and mine as a literary scholar, I have personally benefitted significantly from my colleague's deep linguistic knowledge and expertise in writing for a more scientifically-minded audience than what we literary scholars are familiar with. We are currently working on two articles together, one for a volume that explores international collaborations with students, and another that focuses on student language development with cutting edge technology in a connected courses environment. I look forward to many productive years of collaboration and scholarship with my esteemed colleague.

2. Please fill out the enclosed **Additional Requirements** (Enclosure 2) and include your opinion as to whether the Candidate's areas of research correspond to the specific requirements of the current procedure.

Dr. Stantcheva's areas of research correspond fully to the **Additional Requirements** (Enclosure 2) of the current procedure.

#### IV. Evaluation of the Candidate's teaching

- 3. Please include short evaluation according to the Additional Indicators related to teaching, with emphasis on teaching in recognized liberal arts institutions and student-centered approach.*

As an educator in the tradition of the liberal arts, I strongly endorse Dr. Stantcheva not only as a seasoned liberal arts instructor but also as one who embodies our calling as liberal arts teachers with her integrity, passion, and mastery of both pedagogy and content. Over the years, I have not only had the pleasure to first-hand experience Dr. Stantcheva as a gifted and highly knowledgeable instructor but also as a committed colleague who embraces collaboration with a like-minded instructor for the benefit of her students. Dr. Stantcheva has provided her students with an intercultural dimension while they are learning another language and about another culture by making it her business to learn and then teach with cutting-edge technologies to make such intercultural interactions possible in the first place. Dr. Stantcheva is a model of a 21<sup>st</sup> century professor: she teaches her students how to learn and in an environment that points into the (near) future and equips them with knowledge and skills appropriate not only for a contemporary student scholar but also for their professional future. Over the years, my students and I have come to value Dr. Stantcheva as a true asset for our joint efforts in intercultural communication and global learning. Dr. Stantcheva's visit at Denison University was a true highlight for our students. I look forward to many more years of collaboration with my inspiring colleague.

- 4. Please indicate your opinion with regard to the correspondence between the overall teaching experience of the Candidate and the requirements of the current procedure.*

Dr. Stantcheva's teaching is of the highest quality and her dedication to her students is superior. Not only has she continued creating new and fresh courses over the years, but has enriched these with 21<sup>st</sup> century pedagogy making the best use of digital technologies and providing global learning. At home, she enriches her courses with extracurricular activities and an open-minded, inviting learning environment. In my opinion, the quality and quantity of her work not only correspond fully to the requirements of the current procedure, but supersede them.

#### IV. Major critical notes and recommendations

I look forward to many more years of collaboration with Dr. Stantcheva. I could have not found a more suitable, intellectual, and engaged colleague. Both her scholarly work and her teaching are of the highest quality. I have no specific critical notes or recommendations to offer.

**V. Conclusion:**

1. *Appropriateness to the specific requirements of the American University in Bulgaria*
2. *Recommendation “for” or “against” granting the academic rank.*

The American University in Bulgaria is fortunate to have Dr. Stantcheva as a seasoned and successful instructor as well as an accomplished scholar from whom there is still much to come. She is a true asset to the university and I am sure will continue to thrive in an environment that appreciates and values her accomplishments. I strongly recommend that Dr. Stantcheva be granted the academic rank of Associate Professor.

Signature and date: Gabriele Dillmann, January 19, 2018

*Gabriele Dillmann*

By signing here I also declare that writing this review does not represent conflict of interest.

**AUBG Academic Position Requirements – Associate Professor**

- X The Candidate has a Ph.D.;
- X The Candidate has served five years as Assistant Professor at a recognized, academic institution;
- X The Candidate has published a monograph or publications of equal standing in specialized journals. These should not repeat publications based on which the Ph. D. was granted;
- X The Candidate has experience from recognized academic liberal arts institution(s);
- X The Candidate has experience in student-centered teaching approach;
- X The Candidate has undergone at least one successful evaluation in teaching, research and service at a recognized academic liberal arts institution, including positive student evaluations of teaching;
- X The Candidate has experience in teaching in English at a higher educational institution with instruction in the English language.

Signature and date: Gabriele Dillmann, January 19, 2018

*Gabriele Dillmann*

**Additional Requirements**

**For Associate Professor Academic Position in Professional Field**

**2.1 Philology**

Additional specifications: **German as a foreign language, lexicology, phraseology, lexicography, terminology, language and gender.**

**Research:**

The Candidate has conducted research in the following areas:

- X Phraseology;
- X Lexicography;
- X Terminology;
- X Corpus Linguistics;
- X Methodology of teaching German as a foreign language;
- X New forms of foreign language acquisition (synchronous and asynchronous digital pedagogy);
- X Language and gender.

**Teaching:**

The Candidate has teaching experience in the following areas:

- X German as a foreign language (oral and written communication);
- X German studies;
- X Political terminology, legal terminology, business terminology, and EU terminology – German; terminology resources;
- X Comparative grammar (German-English, German-Bulgarian, German-Russian);
- X German lexicology;
- X German phraseology;
- X Lexicography (monolingual and bilingual dictionaries; monolingual German corpora of written texts and parallel corpora of written texts with German);
- X Application of contemporary information and communication technologies in foreign language teaching and new forms of foreign language acquisition (synchronous and asynchronous digital pedagogy).

Signature and date: Gabriele Dillmann. January 19, 2018

