

doc. RNDr. Martin Kubala, Ph.D., Dean  
Faculty of Science, Palacký University  
17. listopadu 12  
779 00 Olomouc, Czech Republic

September 9, 2024

Dear Professor M. Kubala,

This letter was requested by Prof. Radovan Herchel in support of his application for promotion to Full Professor. I have never met Dr. Herchel in person, but we are having a productive collaboration since 2007, which has resulted in nine co-authored papers, to date.

I received my Ph.D. in Inorganic Chemistry from Texas A&M University (1988) and carried out postdoctoral work in the Research School of Chemistry, Australian National University. I started my independent career as an Assistant Professor in the University of Crete, Greece (1993-1997), and continued in the University of Puerto Rico-Rio Piedras (1998-2013), where I rose through the ranks to Full Professor in 2004. I have been a Full Professor in Florida International University (FIU) since 2013. I have published over 150 papers and have directed the research of 18 doctoral students, who have gone on to careers in academia, government and chemical industry. I currently direct a group of seven graduate students and one postdoctoral fellow. In my capacity as Professor, I serve regularly as external member in tenure and promotion committees in the USA and Europe.

Typically, candidates for promotion are judged on the basis of their scientific output, teaching, mentoring and service to their Department, Institution and the broader scientific community. In the present case, I can only offer my opinion on Prof. Herchel's scientific output, as I have no knowledge of his performance in other areas.

Prof. Herchel is a magnetochemist, focusing on the collection and interpretation of magnetic data of transition metal and lanthanide complexes. He has a wide network of collaborators, coupling his results with those of other spectroscopic techniques (e.g.  $^{57}\text{Fe}$ -Mössbauer spectroscopy) and spreading his work over practically every important journal in the fields of Inorganic and Materials Chemistry. His work is of high quality, well presented in his publications and impactful, as reflected in the high number of citations (>300 per year in the past few years) received

by his papers. His expertise in the niche area analysis of magnetic susceptibility data of polynuclear complexes is appreciated by synthetic inorganic chemists, like myself, as it provides a deep understanding of the electronic structure and properties of the materials we prepare. Spin-crossover compounds and compounds exhibiting slow spin relaxation – both of which are subjects of Prof. Herchel's investigations -- constitute the basis of technologically advanced devices, such as sensors and memory storage media.

In conclusion, I find both the volume and quality of Prof. Herchel's independent and collaborative research work appropriate for a candidate for promotion to Full Professor. His scientific output would have been sufficient for promotion in our Chemistry & Biochemistry Department at FIU and, I believe, also in other similarly ranked Universities in the USA.

I hope my comments will be useful to your deliberations.

Sincerely,

Raphael G. Raptis, Ph.D.  
Professor, Inorganic Chemistry