

March 24, 2015

Dear Maria,

On behalf of your sitting committee, I am pleased to inform you that we are recommending to the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences that you receive a **Letter of Progress** for the academic year 2014-2015. It can be easily said that you are a highly dedicated, professional, and productive member of the faculty. Classroom observations and a review of your course material make it obvious that you are indeed a master teacher. Your pace of your classes, the integration of materials, and the framing of the entire enterprise clearly designed with students at the center of the learning objectives. Your patience with your students, along with the task and support systems built into each session, give students confidence to take the risks necessary to learn. You have high expectations of them. However, those expectations are conveyed through your poise, clear-eyed confidence, and, most importantly, your respect for the willingness and the capacity of your students to learn. One thing that makes your teaching particularly impressive is its structure. However, that structure never becomes in any way routinized or oppressive. On the contrary, one assumes that students experience it as support for their learning and their long term goals. Overall, to characterize your teaching is to describe not only what one observes in the moment. It is to appreciate your grasp of curriculum in the larger sense, which is to understand the pedagogical knowledge that undergirds how you are with students and the activities in which they are engaged. It is to see that, for example, your teaching reveals your desire to have students develop higher order thinking skills, among other things. Further, your interest in hybrid e-learning, reading apprenticeship, and integrated reading and writing underscore your ongoing creative investment in your work, and signal why your department should invest in you.

The committee also acknowledges your professional activity within NADE and SWADE, emphasis on *activity*, as in your insistence on developing and presenting your scholarship and the knowledge gained from research and teaching itself. We urge you to continue along this path and find ways to branch out in the ways that your respect for knowledge and future direction in the department might take you. What is most apparent about your service is how closely tied it is to your professional development and your teaching. Your devotion to the refugee students and the refugee community at large is itself exemplary. While this commitment must make considerable demand on your time, you nevertheless manage earnestly to serve the college, most notably, as a participating member of the General Education Committee, the Integrated Reading and Writing Committee, and the English Faculty Search Committee.

The English Department thanks you for your commitment to education in the fullest sense and looks forward to your future contributions to the mission of SLCC.

Sincerely,



Stephen Ruffus

Cc: Dean Huber  
Cris Longhurst