



May 4, 2014

Dr. Mike Rogers  
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
University System of Georgia  
270 Washington Street, SW  
Atlanta, GA 30334-1450

Dear Dr. Rogers:

It is my privilege to write this letter on behalf of **Dr. Pam Marek's** nomination for the **Regents' Teaching Excellence Award**. I have known Pam since the fall 1996 semester, when we were enrolled in a teaching seminar together as graduate students at the University of Florida. My strong and enthusiastic endorsement of her professorial abilities is based on my observations of her as a classroom teacher, her work as a section editor of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology's journal called *Teaching of Psychology*, her service to the discipline of psychology, a one-on-one mentor supervising undergraduate research, and as a professional colleague and collaborator on research projects.

Pam completed her Ph.D. in cognitive psychology at the University of Florida in August 1998, immediately after which she joined the faculty at St. Michael's College, a four-year liberal arts college, as a visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology. At St. Michael's, Pam taught introductory psychology, a year-long research methods/statistics course, cognitive psychology, social psychology, and a seminar focused on thinking and reasoning. When that line was discontinued, Pam applied for and received a tenure-track position at Anderson College. At Anderson, she continued to teach in these same areas, and expanded her teaching experience into the areas of physiological psychology and an interdisciplinary honor's seminar on the psychological aspects of terrorism. At Kennesaw, she has continued teaching primarily in the areas of introductory psychology research methods, statistics, social psychology and cognitive psychology. Thus, she has taught at all levels of the psychology curriculum. In addition, Pam has expanded her teaching skills by teaching an online class during the Summer 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 semesters. Although my formal observations of her teaching are limited to her as a graduate student at Florida, even then I noticed that students were quick to pick-up on her love of learning. In the classroom, she conveys both an enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, the subject matter that leads to a great deal of classroom interaction with and between students. Her class sessions combine a mix of lecture, discussion, and student activities that make it possible for students to learn and think about information in different ways. When I once asked her why she enjoyed college teaching, she responded that it gave her the opportunity to do two things she loved to do, to engage in the learning process and to share it with other people.

This love of teaching probably explains why she agreed to become the editor for the Methods and Techniques section of the journal I edit titled *Teaching of Psychology*. In her role, Pam receives, sends out for review, and then communicates her editorial decisions on approximately 40-50 manuscripts each calendar year. The process involved in being a journal editor requires many of the same skills as teaching classes. There is a great deal of organizational ability that must be displayed, as Pam must coordinate reports from reviewers on submitted manuscripts to reach a decision about the publication-quality on these submissions. Furthermore, given the philosophy of the journal and its parent organization, the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (Division 2 of the American Psychological Association), we attempt to be educators over and above being editors. We want the manuscript submission process to be as educational as possible for both authors and reviewers. I have had several of her authors and reviewers tell me she does precisely this in her role. Finally, I often rely on her when I need help making decisions on manuscripts for which I am responsible. Indeed, Pam is my right-hand person when it comes to running this journal.

In addition to doing yeomen's work for *Teaching of Psychology*, Pam has been active in other professional service. For instance, she has been a reader for the Advanced Placement (AP) exam since 2006. That she has been invited to serve in this capacity for now going on seven years is a testament to the respect the Educational Testing Service and her colleagues involved with the reading have for Pam's work. Indeed, I have worked with her at AP, and she is clearly evolving into a leader in her work here. She is quick to help new readers learn the ropes of the reading, and other readers seek her out when they have questions about their own work. Just like she is with her students, Pam is really a teacher at the AP Reading, and she makes the place better with her contributions.

Of course, Pam's love of teaching is evident beyond her classroom and editorial duties and involves collaborating with students in her scholarship. I have been fortunate to be a part of several of these projects. Pam and I, in conjunction with one of her students at Anderson College, Kansie Drummond, had a paper published in *Personality and Individual Differences*, the journal of the International Society for the Study of Individual Differences. This project examined the relationship between materialistic behaviors and self-presentational tendencies. Pam has collaborated on me with several other research projects that have resulted in publications and conference presentations with undergraduate students. Last academic year, she has helped two of my students at Albion, Brian Weiss and Ori Shewach, collect data that examines the relationship between personality and creativity. Furthermore, Pam has collaborated with students continuously at KSU via supervision of numerous directed research and honors projects, resulting in multiple student presentations at each annual Georgia Undergraduate Research in Psychology (GURP) conference and in presentations at KSU's Annual Symposium of Student Scholars. I do not need to spell them all out here, though she made multiple such presentations at GURP the past several years. I am sure you felt as tired as I did after reading all these citations on her vita. KSU students are lucky to have such a wonderful mentor as Pam Marek. Furthermore, she continues to work with her students after they graduate. For example, she collaborated with Terry Jorgensen, now in a PhD program at

the University of Kansas, to prepare and revise a manuscript about testing the effectiveness of writing workshops, which was published in 2013.

As a professional colleague and collaborator, Pam is a priceless asset. She sets the highest standards for quality, timely completion of tasks, and appropriate follow through. This past fall, in collaboration with one my former undergrads, Pam and I authored a chapter titled "Becoming a better writer about psychology" in which we provided counsel to novice writers in our discipline. This chapter appeared in the Oxford Handbook of Psychology Education. Additionally, we have collaborated on numerous presentations at the National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology. As admirable as these characteristics are, she is every bit as admirable on an interpersonal level. She is one of the nicest persons with whom I have ever worked. Even though there are tremendous demands on her time, she always seems to have time for other people, whether they are students or colleagues. She can always be counted on to do the work she promises to do, to do it on time, and to produce a product that is of the utmost quality. I am not sure how she accomplishes as much as she does as well as she does, but somehow, such is always the case.

If you have any questions about this letter or about Pam, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at (517) 629-0740 or (517) 630-8344. My email address is [achristopher@albion.edu](mailto:achristopher@albion.edu). Thank you for the time and energy you invested in reading this letter and the other materials supporting Pam's nomination for this award.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Andrew N. Christopher", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Andrew N. Christopher, Ph.D.  
Professor of Psychological Science  
Department Co-Chair  
Editor, *Teaching of Psychology*

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