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October 25, 2013

University Awards Committee
Board of Governors Excellence in Teaching Award
Appalachian State University
Boone, NC 28608

Dear University Awards Committee members,

I am writing to support Dr. Cameron Lippard's nomination for the Board of Governor's Excellence in Teaching Award. I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Dr. Lippard for over a decade. As the Director of Instruction in the Department of Sociology at Georgia State University, I have observed many teachers. I could not be prouder of my former student.

As a graduate student, Dr. Lippard was well trained in the art and technique of instruction at Georgia State University. He completed my two graduate course teaching sequence; the first class is on pedagogy and the second is a teaching internship. He was a wonderful self-reflective student in these graduate classes, continually contributing to the discussions and working hard on his sample teaching presentations. He liked to push students' buttons, to really get them to think critically about their role in perpetuating social inequality of all kinds. As a novice instructor he was always very reflective. When a "button-pushing" activity once upset a student, we spent a lot of time talking about pedagogy. We discussed whether it is worth upsetting one student to powerfully enlighten the others and whether the social location of the upset student mattered, etc.). Dr. Lippard could certainly have justified retaining the assignment, but chose instead to demonstrate his points in another way. Our pedagogical discussions and they ways he justified his decisions illustrated his passion for teaching.

As part of his graduate teacher training, Dr. Lippard was observed numerous times and received feedback on his teaching from his peers, our Teaching Associate, and several faculty members. In addition, Dr. Lippard participated in Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) during the Teaching Internship where I essentially interviewed all of his students to develop an understanding of his strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. The sum of these observations and feedback sessions is a consistent message: Dr. Lippard is an outstanding teacher.

Since leaving Georgia State University, Dr. Lippard continues to impress. In seven years he has prepared eight classes and four study abroad programs, all while maintaining exceptionally high student evaluations. He maintains these excellent student evaluations in a variety of types of teaching, from controversial and sensitive subjects like racism to drier (for some students)

writing intensive courses such as research methods. This is an impressive breadth of preparation and coverage. Students who studied abroad with Dr. Lippard found the experience to be “life changing.” He has taken over 75 students abroad in a relatively short period of time.

Dr. Lippard uses myriad techniques (discussion, lecture, group activities, demonstrations, experiential learning, service learning, activist learning, media clips, and more) to engage students and to invite them to dive into controversial subjects, expanding their thoughts on a variety of topics. He is excited about teaching, constantly thinking of new ways to teach effectively, new topics to teach, and new ways to get students engaged. He is most at home in the classroom, always seeking to up his game and improve his teaching.

Dr. Lippard’s excellence has already been recognized, as he was the recipient of the College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teaching Award in 2010. His colleagues, students and awards committee members agree that Dr. Lippard is an outstanding teacher.

We at Georgia State University were already proud of the teacher Dr. Lippard was in the early stages of his career; we are even prouder to see his achievements today. His enthusiasm, engagement with students, passion for teaching (no matter the subject), willingness to dive headfirst into some of the most controversial subjects (immigration, racism, domestic violence, war, and more) all combine to create a tour de force of teaching.

We would love to see him honored with the Board of Governors Excellence in Teaching Award. He is most deserving.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mindy Stompler', written in a cursive style.

Mindy Stompler, Ph.D.
Director of Instruction
Senior Lecturer