



April 3, 2019

To the Educational Studies Committee:

It is my pleasure to offer this letter of recommendation in support of Destiny Powell's formal review. Destiny was a very conscientious and engaged student in Curriculum and Assessment last spring and a student in my tutorial on Program Evaluation. Her energy, enthusiasm, organization, dedication to the Social Studies, and capacity for self-reflection and integration of feedback will all serve her well as she embarks on student-teaching.

Destiny is a very organized and dedicated learner, which will provide a helpful model for her future students in not only directing their own learning but also in the joy and advantages of a growth mindset. Taking the curriculum and assessment class concurrently with Secondary Methods, Destiny was able to spend numerous hours in local social studies classrooms. This planned immersion gave her a much greater familiarity with classroom norms and learner diversity of learners. In the program evaluation tutorial, she organized her time well, prepared appropriately for interviews, and was attentive to detail. These are all skills that will serve her well in communicating with colleagues and family members and managing the many demands of student-teaching.

For secondary candidates, it is essential to demonstrate enthusiasm for the subject matter. Destiny's interest in civics and government, in particular, led her to teach a week-long unit of her own design on the Bill of Rights. Through an iterative process with peer and teacher feedback, she developed an engaging scope and sequence to try to connect students' prior knowledge of current events with new knowledge about specific constitutionally protected rights. Furthermore, she took advantage of the college's many opportunities to participate and contribute to governance. Last term she served as the All College Moderator, prior to which she served on the Steering Committee.

As an articulate and expressive speaker, Destiny will more than hold her own when she has the floor. In the program evaluation course, students were expected to present their findings to an outside party. Destiny excelled in this aspect of the course, comfortable at the podium and anticipating her audience's needs.

She has already demonstrated her ability to reflect and learn from feedback. Through written reflections on fieldwork, she considered what worked and what did not, in addition to her assessing her strengths and weaknesses. Her self-assessment, reflections, and summative assessment (a moot court) demonstrated her ability to integrate feedback from others.

In the course of student-teaching, should she have the opportunity to develop any curricula of her own, Destiny will benefit from continuing to work on a few areas: Aligning her planned activities and assessments with learning objectives; deploying a variety of informal and formal assessments beyond student self-reported learning; differentiating instruction for a variety of student interests, learning preferences, and prior knowledge; and identifying credible resources with which to engage students in critical inquiry. As someone who has articulated her own difficulty with collaboration, it will be essential for her to be matched with a mentor teacher who is particularly strong in this area and can support Destiny's practice with collaboration as well as in teaching history, geography, and economics, given her stronger interest in civics and government.

For all the above reasons, I support her application to student-teach with these recommendations and would be happy to answer any questions as needed (btai@coa.edu or 207-801-5703).

Sincerely,

Bonnie Tai, Ed.D.

Director, Educational Studies

Professor, Educational and Human Studies