



MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

School of Arts and Sciences

May 22, 2019



Dear [REDACTED] and Members of the Search Committee,

I write to apply for the position of Lecturer in English as advertised on your website. My field is comparative literature, and my research and teaching focus on writing and reading as ways of participating in community. I am currently a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Literature and Languages at Marymount University where I teach first-year composition and seminar courses, world literature surveys (ancient to modern), and upper-division writing-intensive courses on issues of identity in both popular and literary texts.

Over my decade of teaching college-level courses, I've worked with student writers in developmental ESL courses (prerequisite to enrolling in regular coursework), in first-year composition courses, and in upper-level writing intensive literature courses. I want my students to leave each of these different kinds of classes adept at interacting with a variety of texts, a skill that will transfer to the various work environments they enter in this increasingly globalized world. To that end, I focus on reading and writing as processes made up of skills that can first be practiced and learned, and then be generalized for use in any number of interpretive situations beyond the classroom. This approach allows me to differentiate content for learners at different levels of proficiency and experience.

I have noticed that students often view writing as a monolithic task that is intimidating. In my composition courses, students spend much of our face-to-face class time actively engaged in the writing process, which we break down into discrete sets of steps that students can remember and apply to new situations. One typical class meeting includes guided revision that checks every paragraph for coherence and checks each pair of paragraphs for a logical transition. This activity is outlined in "Teaching Writing: Revision Strategies," a post on my website *Narrative and Community*, hosted by Humanities Commons.

Further, many students enter my academic writing classroom lacking confidence in their own voices, especially those students whose spoken English is a non-prestige variety or an interlanguage and who have frequently encountered previous English teachers who emphasize prescriptivist correctness. I use a reflective activity to help students become aware of the code switching and code mixing that they engage in throughout their daily lives. Once they notice that the variety of language they use with their grandparents is different from the variety they use with friends and that both of these varieties are valid, rule-based ways of communicating, they are more ready to view academic written English as a new variety they are adding to their repertoire rather than the one correct way they should be using the English language. The Strong Response assignment currently on my Composition syllabus further builds student confidence by prompting them to respond to a published author's assertions with support from their own experiences and observations of the world. In these ways, I use my position of privilege as an authority figure in the classroom to model inclusivity by valuing students' individual language use and their ideas.

During my time at Marymount, I have participated in curriculum development in our Composition Program, led by Bess Fox. For the last two semesters, I piloted a redesign of English Composition I with a dedicated section for English Language Learners. This course was meant to support ELLs through the same curriculum as the other sections of the course with a reduced enrollment cap and an instructor who has experience working with a linguistically diverse student population. The thematic focus of my section of the course emphasizes travel and place. We start the semester reading and responding to undergraduate writing about specific places sourced from *Magnificat*, Marymount's journal of undergraduate non-fiction. These essays model a variety of generic forms including personal narrative, argumentative essay with first person evidence, and formal research paper. Students end the semester writing about their own experiences, using these essays as models for shaping their own work.

I am interested in this faculty position at [REDACTED] because I share your dedication to fostering students' writing skills with small class sizes, as well as corequisite and developmental courses. Additionally, I am committed to fostering inclusivity in the campus community by making the classroom a safe space for the exchange of ideas about race and ethnicity, gender identity and sexuality, politics, and faith. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Kate Christine Moore Koppy