



Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

October 21, 2021

To the hiring manager:

It is my pleasure and privilege to write on behalf of Dr. Timothy McGee, who is seeking opportunities to teach courses in any of a range of communication fields, including first-year, advanced, and workplace writing; rhetoric; and public speaking. He is a superb, highly experienced, and versatile instructor who would be a notable asset to any college campus.

I first came to know Tim in the fall of 2007, when, in his role as Academic Director of Rider's Teaching and Learning Center, he provided crucial expertise to me as I undertook an assessment project focused on the writing of first-year students in our Baccalaureate Honors Program (BHP). Tim's deep knowledge of authentic assessment strategies was invaluable. He showed me how to construct effective rubrics (distinguishing between Aristotelian and Platonic approaches), code writing samples, develop faculty training sessions, and translate results into documents useful for guiding future practice.

Later, I participated in a campus-wide training session designed by Tim to help assess the writing of graduating seniors. This two-day workshop—designed and executed with a perfect balance of instruction, coaching, and hands-on practice, using student work samples selected by each instructor--was among the best I have attended on any topic. It is worth adding that Tim's terrific sense of humor and talent at relating pertinent anecdotes kept all of us participants engaged and on task. As the director of the BHP at the time, I was able to take away from this experience a rubric that faculty advisers of honors capstones could use to help their mentees plan and pursue their projects to successful completion. Since evaluating capstone work can be a critical guide to curricular directions in higher education, this work was valued and impactful.

Tim also taught me how to support students in constructing e-portfolios representing not only their work in a particular class but creative connections they had made among multiple courses across their undergraduate experience. Because some of the resulting projects were so outstanding, we were able to showcase this work and the methodology behind it at an AAC&U meeting focused on qualitative longitudinal assessment of student achievement. Our session, Cultivating Cognitive Complexity: Incorporating E-Portfolios into Assessment of a Cross-Disciplinary Program was especially well received because it demonstrated the potential of e-portfolios as strategies for integrative learning. Moreover, Tim's familiarity with multi-media platforms enabled the smooth incorporation of sound and video into the portfolios of arts-and-performance students.

I can also speak attest confidently to Tim's impressiveness as a classroom teacher. Over the last decade, I have co-taught with Tim multiple sections of our interdisciplinary first-year writing-intensive courses for students in the BHP. These courses, Great Ideas 100 and 150, include classical, modern, and contemporary texts from a wide range of disciplines. Typical assignments ask students to analyze and synthesize their knowledge in the service of effective exposition and argumentation. Because Tim is a

brilliant individual who is also a kind and generous team player, these teaching experiences have been among the best of my career.

Tim's ability to speak knowledgeably and succinctly on a vast range of subjects—astronomy, biology, ecology, political science, et al. – is remarkable, and students truly appreciate this breadth. Never dismissive of questions, he is always prepared to add context and nuance to essential information. His feedback to students on their writing, whatever the matter at hand, is thorough, sensitive, and crafted to prompt conceptual understanding, not solely to address errors--though he is deeply versed in grammar, syntax, usage, mechanics, and the like.

In an advanced BHP course we designed and taught, *Language and Power: Rhetoric in Theory and Practice*, Tim helped students unpack and interrogate the layered discourse of texts as various as Plato's *Gorgias* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* while demonstrating how classical rhetorical principles can illuminate modern modes and genres of communication. Also essential to this course was a public-speaking assignment whereby students demonstrated their understanding of the principles of effective oral communication. While the need to speak in public is commonly dreaded, Tim's approach enabled every student to feel that they had succeeded at least reasonably well. Important factors included a clear and appealing assignment design, the inclusion of formative support, an authentic qualitative rubric, and an openness to a range of styles and topics—all reflections of Tim's experience, good judgment, and expertise. Another excellent strategy was his own delivery of a (very funny) speech that students then had the opportunity to candidly assess, with Tim being his own most rigorous critic.

Tim is a terrific role-model for students because he is a life-long learner who is the opposite of a pedant. He engages students because he is always fully engaged, and his enthusiasm draws them in. Witty, conscientious, and infinitely generous of spirit, he challenges students to be the best version of themselves. Oriented as a visual as well as a verbal learner, he can naturally accommodate different learning styles. Conversant with both the limitations and the affordances of technology in education, he knows how to accommodate the former while making the most of the latter. It is not at all surprising that students write glowingly, as they regularly do, about their experiences in his classes.

For all of these reasons, I am happy to endorse Tim McGee's qualifications with the greatest enthusiasm and in complete confidence that he will meet any future teaching challenges with the distinction and dedication that have marked his career to date. I am certain that any students fortunate enough to have him as their instructor will leave his classroom enlightened and encouraged to continue the progress they will have made.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Arlene Wilner".

Arlene Wilner

Professor Emerita of English

Adjunct Professor, Baccalaureate Honors

Fellow, Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning