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Department of Education

May 26, 2015

Provost William Franz
Randolph-Macon College
Ashland, VA 23005

Dear Provost Franz:

I commend Professor Amber Peacock for her outstanding accomplishments during the academic year of 2014-2015. She exceeded all expectations in her role as a second year visiting professor of Education at Randolph-Macon College. She excelled as an instructor, service to the department and college, and in her professional work.

During the academic year, Professor Peacock taught two sections of Education 233, Survey of Exceptional Child, a mandatory course for all education minors. She also developed and taught three new courses for the special education endorsement (SPED) within the education minor. These courses were components of the SPED proposal Professor Peacock wrote and submitted to Virginia Department of Education to request review and approval for an addition to licensure options offered by Randolph-Macon College's Education Department. VDOE granted approval and commented on the quality of the endorsement proposal.

Student evaluations in Education 233 and in the new SPED courses said Professor Peacock's instruction and the courses were both extremely to very effective. Students commented on the clarity of expectations, class organization, her respect and care for her students and for students' knowledge of content. Others said, "... is passionate about learning,... great teacher, ... helpful, and awesome teacher..."

However, student comments which seemed especially powerful were "... helps us make connections about what we learn; ... provides means for us to discover connections between field work and class content. These are indicative of Professor Peacock's implicit and explicit understanding of liberal arts and teacher preparation. If future teachers are able to analyze and synthesize what is needed to promote k-12 student growth, they are more likely to help students achieve their learning potential.

In addition to teaching, Professor Peacock continued to expand and to improve field work placement options for all courses in the education minor. She coordinated field placements for eleven courses with a total of 92 placements for fall and spring terms. She met with Education classes to review expectations, procedures, and gather individual student data to use in making fieldwork requests to school systems.

Professor Peacock is to be commended for establishing a new fieldwork partnership for the college with Caroline County schools. This new partnership helps the college fulfill one of the

national accreditation requirements (CAEP) for varied field experiences in diverse settings. It will serve as evidence for commitment to ongoing improvement.

As part of field experiences for SPED, Professor Peacock collaborated with special education coordinator at Chickahominy Middle School in Hanover County to create a new and unique fieldwork opportunity. R-MC students in the SPED licensure program completed an intensive semester-long field work rotation with seven different teachers. The R-MC students assisted and taught in classrooms for students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities.

Professor Peacock contributed greatly to the work of the Education Department. She was an active participant in department meetings, alumni activities, and in suggesting and implementing processes to improve the department. Based on alumni feedback, Professor Peacock developed a classroom management seminar to be included in all ED 233, Survey of Exceptional Child, sections beginning in 2015-2016.

She also created and presented a professional seminar to all education students on "*What Not To Wear*". The seminar was given each semester to prepare students to present themselves as professional pre-service educators in schools and the community during fieldwork and internship placements.

Professor Peacock continues to lead efforts to improve the quality of fieldwork and reflective practices for future teachers. She designed a new log where students list hours, but more importantly record how/what they contributed during weekly visits to their field placement sites. These notes formed the basis for a variety of reflective and content based summative reports or presentations (depending on the Education professors' requirements). Her doctoral research is focused on fieldwork and results should inform future enhancements.

Professor Peacock accompanied Professor Yesbeck to a meeting in Washington, D.C. in March 2015 to meet with CAEP administration. Professor Peacock had developed a spreadsheet presentation listing CAEP standards for accreditation and a listing of what data/evidence R-MC had to demonstrate its compliance as well as what other data may be needed. The vice-president of CAEP was so impressed with this model's clarity and rich information, she requested Professor Peacock present this model at the next CAEP national conference.

Professor Peacock also serves on the Teacher Preparation Committee. She participated in the Education Department's presentation for Admissions during February 2015 and met with potential students interested in the new SPED program.

Professor Peacock was active in the larger college community. She was selected to be a Service Fellow. One of her templates to promote reflective thinking was adopted by some of the members of the group for use in their courses. Professor Lily Zhang requested her to review and to provide feedback on the Learning Management system the college is planning to use in 2015-2016. Professor Peacock also collaborated with Professor Zhang in the feasibility of other technologies for the college and its students.

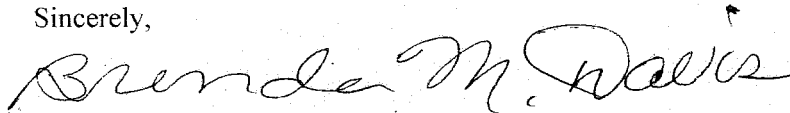
Professor Peacock was invited to collaborate and to participate in a grant, "Development and Implementation of STEM Curriculum at the Science Museum of Virginia". Professors Marchetti and Parker requested her participation. Also, Professor Peacock collaborated and contributed to the new VDOE grant, "Mentor Cooperating Teacher" awarded to the Education Department by VDOE.

Professor Peacock continues to make exceptional progress toward completion of her Ph.D. in Education – Curriculum, Culture, and Change. She passed the comprehensive examinations, received approval of her dissertation proposal, and continues to work on this. She anticipates defending the dissertation in August 2015.

In addition to her doctoral studies and research, Professor Peacock attended an array of professional workshops to promote best practices for college instruction. She gathered new content knowledge for special education and preparation of future teachers in other sessions. She proposed and presented at the spring conference of the Virginia Association of Teacher Educators on “Collaborating with Stakeholders to Improve Early Field Experiences” based on some of her research for her dissertation.

Professor Peacock is outstanding. She is intelligent, creative, collegial, and understands the unique aspects of teacher education within the liberal arts environment. She is an effective collaborator, but also an independent thinker. She is able to express her ideas without being confrontational. Professor Peacock is a fine instructor, faculty colleague, and friend.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda M. Davis". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Brenda M. Davis, Ph.D.
Chair of Education

cc: Professor Amber Peacock