

February 1st, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

I had the pleasure of working with Marlen at Southern New Hampshire University College of Online and Continuing Education (SNHU COCE). Marlen is an instructor and team lead for the MA in English program, and I served as his Associate Dean from January 2015 to October 2015. As a new member of the SNHU COCE team, Marlen quickly distinguished himself as an instructor and thought leader in his first term. His teaching style in Composition Theory and Pedagogy was innovative and quite unique. Additionally, his passion for teaching and scholarship was evident in his student interactions and classroom activities. I wanted to expand Marlen's influence so he could help his peers aspire to reach his performance level. As a result, I invited him to become a team lead early in his tenure at SNHU COCE, which is not a common practice. This is a rare honor that is bestowed upon very few instructors.

As a team lead, Marlen serves as a faculty coach and mentor, and works with a cohort of approximately 25 instructors every term. He has done a remarkable job in this role. He has been an enthusiastic, motivational, and supportive mentor for both students and faculty. Feedback from students, colleagues, and his own faculty mentors always underscore his positive influence and effective leadership. For example, one of the instructors from his summer 2015 team evaluated Marlen as follows:

Marlen Harrison was an excellent team lead. He answered my questions promptly and efficiently, and he was supportive at all times. What I really liked about Marlen was his eagerness and ability to create a sense of team spirit and cooperation. His encouragement to share resources, tips, and advice strengthened my ability to respond to the needs and wants of my students on a variety of levels. Marlen was simply sensational as a team lead, and I hope to be able to work with him again in the future. Thank you, Marlen.

This feedback is representative of Marlen's work with peers and students. Instructors usually rotate through various team leads each term, but many instructors ask to continue working with Marlen, indicating that his work with them has made them better educators. Significantly, students who complete courses with Marlen also submit requests to continue working with him. Several students approached me recently, asking if they could be placed in Marlen's MA capstone course so they could continue to develop research projects with him. They have characterized him as an effective and supportive mentor who will play an instrumental role in their future academic endeavors.

Marlen is an excellent educator, coach, mentor, colleague, and team member. He is personable, accessible, and very intelligent. He makes sure he stays abreast of advancements in his field and is always willing to share information and resources. Moreover, he is leading a movement at SNHU COCE to help instructors leverage various technologies effectively, in order to provide students with more dynamic learning experiences and pathways for intellectual engagement. Finally, Marlen is committed to developing solid researchers and actually makes students excited about scholarship.

It has been a pleasure working with him and supporting his development as both an instructor and peer mentor. Your organization would be fortunate to have him as part of your team.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at 815-353-4976.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Portia Ransom". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Portia Ransom, Ph.D.