



WESTERN
ILLINOIS
UNIVERSITY

May 27, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

It is a great pleasure to write a letter of recommendation for Michele Mussatto for a position as an executive assistant or office manager. With her qualifications, she would be perfect as well in a position as a communication specialist or graphic designer or social media manager. Michele is simply that talented! I have observed her work ethic for three years. During Michele's first two years in our department as an office manager, I was a literacy professor. As Interim Chair of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Western Illinois University since July 1, 2015, I have had the privilege to work more closely with Michele in her role as our office manager. As a member of our office staff, Michele impressed all of us with her fresh perspectives and high energy level. In fact, during my 26 years at WIU, I have worked with seven office managers. Michele Mussatto is at the top of the list because of her willingness to tackle any project, positivity and spirit, creative flair, resourcefulness, and professionalism.

Michele assisted the department chair in completing essential administrative tasks, including tasks that were critical to the accreditation of the department's programs. Michele's job description included monitoring and daily posting to department social media sites, taking photos and videos to post, looking for news to post; maintaining and updating the department website; organizing and planning department events; designing of flyers, web/electronic bulletin board graphics and videos for promoting department activities for recruitment and retention of students; maintaining department email lists and sending promotional emails to students and area educators; reviewing and editing documents written by faculty members; composing official and unofficial correspondence and reports for the chair; answering department phone calls and welcoming visitors; and preparing, recording and processing graduate applications, databases, and course projections.

Michele was a joy! She was kind, courteous, and professional—she got along with everyone. She demonstrated to all students, staff, faculty, and families respect and patience and enthusiastically helped anyone who needed it. As the office manager, Michele was often the first impression of WIU for visitors to our department. This was a purposeful placement. We recognized immediately that Michele understood intuitively the importance of maintaining a professional, friendly attitude. She was polite and

handled requests happily. She offered thoughtful, intelligent suggestions as needed. Michele worked independently with confidence. When she noticed something needed to be done, she did it without being told to complete a task.

Michele has set the bar high for all office managers that will follow her. We wanted to keep her! Michele was a capable and thoughtful decision-maker. She exhibited good judgment, maturity and creativity in her thinking processes. Specifically, her strengths also include her knowledge and experience in promoting and marketing academic departments and activities; her extensive knowledge of and appreciation for social media trends; her excellent graphic design capabilities and knowledge of the technical aspects of creating graphics, taking and editing photos, and creating videos and PowerPoint presentations; and her outstanding interpersonal skills, professionalism and social poise. She was not hesitant when it came to utilizing technology while on the job. If she was unsure of a program or technique, she researched it on her own or consulted with an instructional design expert.

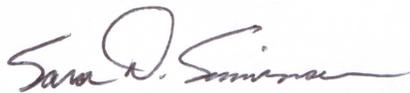
Michele also has several qualities that I valued in the area of service. First, Michele has a strong sense of responsibility to contribute, and contribute well, to her immediate and the broader community. I do not believe that Michele will ever become the sort of person who avoids or participates only minimally in service responsibilities in and beyond the institution. Second, Michele does not simply wait for others to suggest what she might do, but generates new initiatives and roles. She steps up and volunteers! Third, Michele is detail-oriented. She wants to make sure that each aspect of a project is done well, and is not one to let details fall through the cracks. She is a perfectionist!

Michele is the kind of individual who works very hard to make a difference. She has the rare ability to remain unruffled and optimistic in the face of the constant and ever changing views of learning, and I have seen her gladly accept constructive feedback from others. My formal and informal interactions with Michele have demonstrated to me that she is a self-starting, bright, committed, thoughtful, thorough, reflective, critical thinker who challenges herself to more clearly articulate her ideas. Michele is quite capable working independently and collaboratively.

In sum, I believe that Michele has a distinguished career ahead of her as an executive assistant or communication specialist or graphic designer. I hope you will give her application every consideration as you seek to fill this position. I do not believe that you

will find someone to work harder or more creatively than Michele! Please feel free to contact me should you seek additional information regarding Michele Mussatto.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sara D. Simonson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Sara D. Simonson, Ph.D.
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