



UNIVERSITY
of Prince Edward
ISLAND

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am delighted to provide a letter of reference for George Kuku, speaking in particular to his ability as a researcher, to his critical skills, and to his creativity, and attesting to his development as a scholar and writer.

George has been my student in four courses: Research Methods in English (English 2040), Arthurian Literature through the Ages, (English 2750), Introductory Phonetics and Phonology of English (English 2850), and A Linguistic Approach to Metrical Poetry (English 3910: Special Topics in Literature). In all of these courses, he excelled, typically achieving grades in the A to A+ range. Moreover, he was an active participant in class discussions, a supportive and courteous member of the learning teams to which he was assigned, and diligent in course preparation. His achievements, notable in themselves, demonstrate his capacity to range across two distinct disciplines (Linguistics, and Literary Studies) and his ease across much of the span of English literature, and show that he brought to the various assignments and tasks a discriminating and wide-ranging intelligence.

All the courses involved research of some description, whether primarily textual (Research Methods and Arthurian Literature) or first order (Phonetics and Special Topics). His work in the course devoted to research methods – his first with me – revealed his characteristic approaches and attitudes: an attraction to broad metaphysical and ethical issues, a capacity for application and hard work, and a keen eye for productive lines of inquiry. His final project, exploring the power of speculative fiction to reflect and shape contemporary social issues, included the development of an annotated bibliography. The bibliography testified to his extensive and close reading of primary and secondary texts, many directly addressing the value of speculative popular fiction (graphic novels, television series, and films). While the central question of his project – whether a work such as *Watchmen* can provide hope or suggest possible futures for humanity – was too broad, he worked to narrow his investigations and discovered an impressive array of secondary literature.

In the course on Arthurian Literature, he brought both critical and creative skills to bear on his work, and on his term project. Like many readers encountering Arthurian literature, George struggled to understand the nature of and the relationships between the central characters – Arthur, Guenevere, and Lancelot. His term project combined critical, research, and creative work, as he devised a substantial poem as part of his comprehension of the forces leading to the fall of Camelot and the destruction of the main characters. As in other courses, George preferred to address questions which challenged his limits, and which defied easy answers. His project, which included the poem, a critical reflective essay, and a poster to be presented to the class summarizing and explaining his topic, posed important questions about the tradition, and focused on readers' moral and personal responses to the works we read together. Readers coming to this tradition with little preparation discover that the instability of the tradition poses a

profound obstacle to their understanding and appreciation of it. George's project, including his impressive and lyrical poetic work, tackled the difficulty head on, and sparked lively discussion in class.

George Kuku is clearly an asset in the classroom, a pleasure to work with, and a supportive teammate. He communicates with clarity and precision. His intellectual curiosity, his discipline, his appetite for hard work, and his fine character will allow him to flourish in any field. He has developed solid skills as a researcher and has continued to hone his critical abilities. The creativity he brings to every task supports and enhances these capacities.

I am very pleased to recommend George Kuku, and to testify to his abilities and his future promise.

Sincerely,

Anne Furlong (PhD, Linguistics: UCL 1996)