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August 28, 2014

Dear Dean Williams and the University of Denver Search Committee,

I am exceptionally pleased to submit my application for consideration as a new Assistant Professor at the University of Denver in 2015. Now entering my fourth year of doctoral studies at the University of Texas at Arlington, I am in the final stages of data collection for my dissertation, *The Adoption of Restorative Justice Legislation as a State Policy Response to Criminal Justice Concerns: A Mixed Methods Inquiry*, and will graduate in May 2015. My dissertation uses statutory analysis, ordinal probit regression of national datasets, and two in-depth legislative case studies to shed light on a recent wave of policy adoptions providing statutory support for the use of restorative justice in state corrections. Colorado leads the nation in this innovative justice policy and has provided an exciting target for my case study research. In recent weeks, I have worked with Colorado legislators, district attorneys, and policy advocates to map out the legislative process which has facilitated the adoption of restorative justice policy in the state. During this time, I was delighted to observe the abundant opportunity in Colorado to further study the impacts of restorative justice policy, enhanced by a legislative mandate to collect data on the effectiveness of four groundbreaking pilot programs across the state.

The determinants and impacts of innovative justice policies like restorative justice form an important component of my broader research agenda. National discontent with the criminal justice system is now yielding increased opportunities to study justice alternatives with funding from the National Institute of Justice and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Decades of punitive justice policies have resulted in the highest incarceration rate in the world, and the systemic race and class disparities therein represent one of the most critical civil rights issues of the modern age. Social work has an historic and important role in the development of criminal justice policy and practice which serves victims, offenders, and the community with a commitment to social justice and respect for the worth of all lives. Throughout my coursework, I have studied under Dr. Marilyn Armour at the Institute for Restorative Justice and Restorative Dialogue of the University of Texas at Austin, and I look forward to presenting our most current work with her at the CSWE APM in Tampa. In addition, the two single-authored published articles which I have included my application reflect my concern for these issues and their implications for social work practice.

As you will see from my vitae, I am also engaged with research and teaching related to community and administrative practice. This work is grounded in nine years of practice experience as a community organizer, grant writer (federal, state, and private), and program director, and it is intricately connected with policy analysis and development. As a community organizer and nonprofit administrator, I was often called upon to be a policy advocate and to establish internal and external systems which would best facilitate success for communities and clients. My research with Dr. Rick Hoefler at UTA has explored the enhancement of human services organizations through leadership development, change management, and the use of social enterprise. I am eager to apply these concepts to the management of innovations in court and correctional systems.

My practice experience not only supports my research agenda; it creates connections in the classroom. I love finding inventive evidence-based strategies to teach community, administrative, and policy practice and to inspire students with a passion for effecting change at these levels. In 2014, I was honored with UTA's Graduate Instructor of the Year Award for outstanding student reviews of my courses, including Macro Practice, Advanced Administration, Social Welfare Policy, and Oppressed Groups and Social Justice. Integral to my teaching philosophy is the belief is that all students can succeed under differentiated evidence-based instruction and constructive feedback loops.

I am excited about the opportunity to teach courses in DU's Organizational Leadership and Policy Practice Track and am already well-equipped to teach a large array of courses in this concentration, including but certainly not limited to the following:

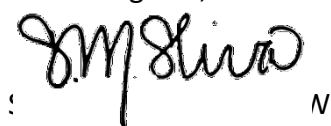
- Community and Organizational Change: Theory for Practice (SOWK 4370)
- Community Organizing and Empowerment Practice (SOWK 4435)
- Administration and Management Practice and Skills (SOWK 4525)
- Planning and Program Development (SOWK 4535)
- Social Policy Advocacy (SOWK 4660)
- Policy Analysis and Development (SOWK 4670)
- Methods for Evaluating Practice/Programs (SOWK 4900)
- Disrupting Privilege and Anti-Oppressive Practice (SOWK 4732)
- Disproportionality and Disparity Across Systems (SOWK 4235)

I am also enthusiastic about teaching foundational courses to new social work students, including macro practice, research methods, theory, and policy. One of the many things that energizes me about teaching at DU is the school's nationally-recognized tradition of quality teaching through a social justice lens. I believe that our commitment to seeking social justice distinguishes social work from other helping professions, and I feel the importance of passing on this commitment – and effectively teaching *all* social work skills – to students in the classroom. My ideal position would allow me to expand this commitment by mentoring MSW and PhD students, working with them to broaden their impact on the profession.

Finally, I would like to impress upon the search committee my genuine enthusiasm for relocating to Denver. During the past month, I spent several days in the area collecting data for my dissertation, hiking in the Flatirons, and admiring the historic DU campus. Beyond my enjoyment of the city and the campus, the connections that I made with local policymakers, advocates, and practitioners are ones that I intend to be long-lasting in my work with novel justice policies. It is easy to imagine Denver as home to both my research and my family.

Thank you for your time in considering my application, and please let me know if I can provide additional information. I sincerely look forward to the chance to talk to you further about the possibility of a place for me at the University of Denver.

Warm Regards,



University of Denver Applicant