

Professional Assessment Statement
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INTRODUCTION

In this statement, I will address my career as a scholar, teacher, and community member since my arrival at Rollins. According to the Anthropology Department criteria for tenure and promotion, I will attempt to show that I have fulfilled these criteria in all areas.

Rollins emphasizes professors' strengths in three interrelated areas: teaching, service, and scholarship, and I have made every effort to integrate these areas rather than treating them as separate entities. My past research, which has appeared in several peer-reviewed academic journals and a book, aims to show the nuances and complexities of the lives of Moroccan women, and I bring this knowledge into the classroom as the only Rollins professor with expertise in the Muslim world. My commitment to a "public anthropology" that encourages scholars to think of their research as part of a public conversation about ideals, values, and tolerance, is something I impart to my students by

assigning collaborative community engagement projects that give students the chance to conduct fieldwork in the local community. In the classroom, I employ a discussion-based format accompanied by interspersed lectures on background issues that students will need to understand and interpret course material. Finally, my vision of service involves my participation not only in standing committees but also in interdisciplinary projects that put student interests at the heart of service. These include the Honors Program, team-taught interdisciplinary courses, RCC, individual and student organization advising, a faculty development trip to Morocco, and a Morocco field study for students.

PART I: SCHOLARSHIP

Anthropology Department criteria require that the candidate for tenure and promotion demonstrate a “record of significant ongoing professional commitment” to the field and membership in a community of scholars. At least once a year, the candidate must do one of the following: publish an article, present a paper at an academic conference, receive grant funding, or write book reviews. Two peer-reviewed publications are required before tenure, as well as one presentation at a professional meeting. I have presented at professional meetings every year, published four peer-reviewed articles and a book, and also written many book reviews.

Research Publications

My past research has focused on women’s changing roles in Moroccan society. Most recently, my book, *Singing to So Many Audiences: Gender, Identity, and Social Change in Urban Morocco*, was published in December 2008 by University of Pennsylvania Press. This ethnography is based on eighteen months of fieldwork in Morocco, conducted in part under a Fulbright Fellowship from 2001-02, and with Cornell grant funding in the summer of 2005. Based on my research with nongovernmental organizations, women in nontraditional professions, and in new urban spaces in the city of Fes, my book demonstrates how changing gender roles are linked with struggles to determine local, religious, and national identity. I examine how women manipulate, resist, or transform various ideologies such as human rights, Islam, patriarchy, modernity, and authoritarianism as they craft new forms of identity.

Since I came to Rollins in 2004, I have written three peer reviewed journal articles, including the enclosed essay on Moroccan women and new forms of urban space that appeared in the December 2006 *City & Society*, a leading journal of urban anthropology published by the University of California at Berkeley. My other two published journal articles have been in *Journal of North African Studies* and in *Anthropology in the Middle East*. I have an article on Moroccan women’s activism appearing next year in an edited volume on women and activism in the Middle East and North Africa, which will be published by Greenwood Press. I have written numerous book reviews for journals including *American Anthropologist* and *American Ethnologist*, as well as Middle East Studies-related periodicals including *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* and the *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*. In addition, I have also written encyclopedia

articles, book reviews, and a few columns for *Anthropology News*, a monthly newsletter with a circulation of 20,000.

Fiction, Non-fiction and Poetry

I am also a writer with an MA from Johns Hopkins' Writing Seminars program, and I have published fiction, poetry, and non-fiction essays. My concerns as a writer overlap with the issues that interest me as an anthropologist, and I am constantly thinking about the possibilities and limits of different genres for the expression of anthropological concerns. In Spring 2006, I taught *Anthropology, Fiction, and Literature*, which explored these issues with students. In 2004, I won the Society for Humanistic Anthropology's ethnographic fiction contest, and my winning story, *Gifts*, appeared in the peer reviewed *Anthropology and Humanism* in June 2005. Other nonacademic publications are listed on my CV, including a culinary essay about Morocco in *The World Is a Kitchen*, published by Traveler's Tales.

Conferences

During my time at Rollins I have presented at least one scholarly paper each year at a national academic conference, in addition to serving as a panel discussant and chairing panels. Conferences in which I have participated include the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), the Society for Applied Anthropology, the Center for the Study of Islamic Societies, and the Global Justice Center (Mexico). In 2009-10, I am scheduled to give papers at the AAA meetings and the Middle East Studies Association meetings.

I also brought former Rollins student Nolan Kline to the AAA meetings in 2007 to give papers on our collaborative research with Apopka farmworkers (see below). Nolan is now a graduate student in anthropology at the University of South Florida.

Collaborative, Community-Based Research

In the summer of 2006, I conducted local, collaborative research with my student Nolan Kline, as part of the Young Scholars Collective program and Summer Scholars. Our research topic was the forgotten African-American farmworkers of Apopka, their exposure to pesticides, and their subsequent health-related issues. In our fieldwork, we collected oral histories, conducted interviews, and collaborated with the Farmworkers Association of Apopka to seek solutions to the problem of healthcare. Our work took us to sites ranging from a tin-roof shack that served as a social club to an environmental justice conference sponsored by the EPA in Jacksonville. We attempted not only to understand the structural causes of farmworkers' continued disenfranchisement and poverty but also to contribute to their solution. Outcomes so far have included a campus presentation by an activist and a former farmworker during Social Justice week, a series of health education workshops in which my ANT 451 students brought medical experts to address issues of concern to Apopka residents, our presentation of papers at a panel at the AAA meetings in November 2006, and a collaborative article that we are working on together and will have submitted by the end of Summer 2009. The Farmworker Awareness Club continues to thrive at Rollins and other professors have built on the

farmworker contacts we established. In Spring 2008, two Hamilton Holt students won the Best Picture award at Campus Movie Fest for a documentary about the farmworkers in which Nolan and I were featured.

This was my first venture into local research, and although I am returning to Morocco as my primary regional focus, the collaborative experience of working with an outstanding undergraduate on locally pressing issues was unparalleled.

Grants

I have received both research-oriented and non research-oriented grants during my time at Rollins. A Cornell grant in the summer of 2005 allowed me to conduct follow up research for my book. Another Cornell grant in Summer 2008 was used to assist in the indexing of my book. Course development grant money enabled me to plan team-taught courses with Dexter Boniface and Mario D'Amato. I have also received a President's International Initiative Grant to participate in China for the Professors.

In the next few years I would like to begin securing external funding as well. My student Nolan Kline and I received a Winter Park Health Foundation Grant for our summer research in 2006 with the Apopka Farmworkers, and I have received several grants from Florida Campus Compact related to service learning.

Future Plans

My new research, which I am beginning Summer 2009 with a Cornell Research Grant, focuses on Moroccan women's responses to infertility across social classes. While international development programs have targeted maternal mortality, prenatal care and reproductive choice in the Global South, infertility, which can be socially and economically devastating for the women who experience it, has been ignored. I am particularly interested in the role Islam plays, whether it is in the refusal of certain types of reproductive technologies on religious grounds or in the place of alternative religious expressions in the lives of women who seek unconventional cures to infertility. How women negotiate their infertility can serve as a lens into changing notions of gender, sexuality, religious identity and kinship in a modern Muslim nation state. I will present a paper on this new research at the American Anthropological Association meetings in Fall 2009, and I hope to dedicate sabbatical research to this project and to a second book.

I also hope to receive external grants for research. I will apply for a number of external grants for my sabbatical year, including the American Council of Learned Societies' Ryskamp Fellowship, a Fulbright Fellowship, and money from the American Institute for Maghrebi Studies (AIMS).

PART II: TEACHING

Teaching Philosophy

The Anthropology Department Criteria for Tenure and Promotion argues that in addition to generating positive evaluations, professors must help students “develop new perceptions and ways of thinking about their humanity and the world.” I have attempted to do this, as well as to foster good critical thinking skills and self discovery, and I have set clear expectations for my students and been available for them, all of which are also requirements of the Criteria. This statement will discuss my teaching philosophy, showing that I have developed multiple new courses, participated in interdisciplinary teaching programs across campus, created intellectually challenging assignments, and received positive feedback on my teaching in evaluations and from colleagues.

My teaching philosophy is to show students that anthropology offers lifelong skills for becoming active citizens in a global environment, enabling them to think critically and approach cultural differences productively and with sensitivity. An anthropological education should guide students to be less ethnocentric and more critical in evaluating their own culture, while it should also prepare them to negotiate a changing world in which it is essential to understand other cultures and points of view. I believe that this can be accomplished by assignments that empower students to connect with course material, through both class participation and fieldwork projects outside class.

As a professor I try to offer my students the latest knowledge from the discipline of cultural anthropology in a participatory format that allows them to become personally engaged with anthropology, particularly through community engagement and community-based research projects. A typical assignment that would connect classroom learning with outside projects, for example, can be seen in my Cultural Anthropology (ANT 200) syllabus (page 4) in the journal entries I require after each student conducts a fieldsite visit. I use guided prompts that ask them to reflect on their service learning encounters in the context of themes and topics for the class each week. I read these journals every other week and respond substantively to what each student has written. Finally, they must synthesize their fieldwork in a final ethnography that they share in class presentations. Since I teach Cultural Anthropology every year, I have continued to refine the service learning projects to be appropriate to the course topics and closely integrated to the material. This was not always the case, since in my first years of teaching, sometimes students ended up working with community partners (Greyhound Rescue comes to mind) where their service-learning project had little or nothing to do with cultural anthropology. Choosing more appropriate community partners and tailoring journal assignments more closely to the readings has enabled a better fit between content and practice.

In the classroom, I approach my teaching as a mix of participatory discussions interspersed with lecturing to deliver important background information. I conduct class by asking specific questions about readings that then lead to a broader discussion of themes that relate to the overall content of the class. Occasionally, I have students break up into groups for guided discussion, which alters the usual format of class and encourages quieter students to participate. Films, music and video clips, and photos lend a visual dimension to topics we are reading about, so I use those wherever possible. I also employ the Socratic method to help the students uncover important points in the

reading and to analyze the meanings of what they have read. Often, great discussions evolve as students discuss cultural practices that they find unusual or ethically challenging. I try never to offer viewpoints that could be construed as taking a political stance; rather, I encourage them to grapple with issues brought up by readings and to present alternative viewpoints wherever possible.

A typical assignment would be a critical reading response to an anthropology article assigned for class. Students must identify the author's argument and discuss evidence the author uses to support that argument, as well as any points of critique the reader could make about weaknesses in the argument. To encourage class participation I enforce a strict attendance policy (more than two absences counts 1/3 of a letter grade off the final grade) and give frequent reading quizzes. Most recently I have begun randomly calling on a student to present a two-minute synopsis of the reading for the day. In my most recent (Spring 2009) evaluations, students commented that they liked this approach because it required them to always come to class prepared. I also connect what is going on in the classroom with relevant campus events and encourage students to attend speakers whose work relates to our subject matter. In many cases I have invited speakers and had students read their work ahead of time.

I have participated in teaching workshops to enhance my teaching, including Twila Papay's workshop on infusing writing into teaching, and various NITLE workshops on utilizing technology in a liberal arts education.

Community Engagement

I use community engagement projects in many of my classes as a way of getting students "into the field" to work with people they would not normally meet. In the process of conducting fieldwork, students gain firsthand experience with a local social landscape marked by issues that include gentrification, significant immigration flows, a service economy with a dearth of living wage jobs, and a homeless population approaching 7,500.

I employ this engaged pedagogy to stimulate reflection on issues such as structural inequality and public policy, which students otherwise would only read about in books. The visceral impact of fieldwork with real people can often motivate a paradigm shift, prompting students to become active participants in their society and advocates for social change. I encourage them to consider what anthropologists can contribute to their communities and to attempt to devise solutions to social problems, a stance that is often called "public anthropology." Community engagement, which is not volunteerism but rather a substantial, long-term connection with local populations through which both students and community partners benefit, fits well with the aims of public anthropology.

These projects are a significant component in many of my courses, both introductory and advanced. For example, in my senior seminar of *Applied Anthropology* (Spring 2008), we partnered with the Farmworkers Association of Apopka, and students wrote community-based research papers dedicated to exploring how other farmworker communities had solved typical health problems farmworkers face. In addition, students were required to

utilize problem-based approaches to farmworker healthcare by interacting with this community to learn about their health issues and then creating healthcare seminars to address them, bringing local experts into the farmworker community.

Whether students decide to major in anthropology or not, I hope that their engagement with these issues will affect the role they play in the wider society upon graduating from Rollins. After taking my course *Applying Anthropology to Global Problems*, one international relations major told me that based on his experiences conducting fieldwork with a local homeless shelter, when he opened a business someday, he would make sure he provided healthcare coverage to all his employees.

Middle East/North Africa and Islam Emphasis

Currently I am the only professor on the Rollins faculty with specialization in an Islamic culture, and much of my teaching in this area aims to dispel students' stereotypes of Muslim women and give them a more nuanced understanding of the complex cultures that make up the Muslim world. Every year I teach *Women and Gender in the Middle East and North Africa*, a 200-level introductory course that fulfills the C requirement as well as the Women's Studies minor. I view this class as one of my most successful, since I have had several years to develop it, with readings appropriate for different levels of students and topics that cover as much as possible about women's diverse circumstances in the region. When I began teaching this course at the beginning of my career at Rollins, I assigned many readings that were too theoretically complex for undergraduates, and I also assumed a background knowledge of Islam that most students simply did not have. I have revised the course to offer an introductory unit to Islam and have continued to refine the reading selections so that they cover a wide range of gender-related topics but are still accessible. I also assign critical response papers to make sure that students comprehend the authors' arguments. The books and articles we read expose students to gender practices in the region over time, and the course situates women's positions firmly within specific cultural, geographical, and social class backgrounds. Students learn to separate different countries and cultures as well as political and economic factors that often contribute to what they might have previously perceived as "oppression" of women. Thus, the most important message many seem to take from the class is that Islam is not a monolithic religion and that political economic factors are more significant in dictating women's positions in the region.

In addition to my regular semester-long courses focusing on women and the contemporary Middle East and North Africa, I have taught two Intersession courses, Middle Eastern Cinema and Islam in Central Florida. The latter course won an award from the Dean of Faculty as one of the top course proposals to connect students with the local community. For that class, I brought several local Muslims into the classroom to speak with students and even had a Middle Eastern cooking night during which students learned to prepare several Middle Eastern specialties. I participate in the African and African American Studies Program, and some of my courses have this designation as well. I have also taught a semester-long course in Moroccan Culture and Society and took the same group of students to Morocco during the January 2008 Intersession for a two-week field experience with a service-learning component.

Globalization, Applied Anthropology and Other Course Offerings

Courses I have taught on a regular basis in addition to *Women and Gender in the Middle East and North Africa* include variants (300 level or senior seminar) of the anthropology of globalization and applied anthropology. I also teach our department's service course, *Cultural Anthropology*, on a regular basis. Many of my courses, such as *Cultures Without Borders: Globalization, Applied Anthropology* and *Anthropology and Global Problem Solving*, are practically aimed at giving students applicable knowledge and an anthropologist's tools of critical analysis, which they will be able to use regardless of whether they go into the field as professional anthropologists.

I have taught a number of new courses since coming to Rollins, some of which also contribute to majors and programs in International Relations, International Business, Critical Media and Cultural Studies, Women's Studies, and African and African-American studies. These courses include *Anthropology and Global Problem Solving*, *Women and Gender in the Middle East and North Africa*, *Cultures Without Borders: Globalization, Cultures and Societies of Islam*, *Giving Offense: Debates about Free Speech* (Honors RCC), *US-Middle East Foreign Relations and Culture*, *Morocco: Culture and Society*, *Sufi-Buddhist Mysticism*, *Anthropology of Reproduction* and *Anthropology, Fiction and Literature*. Some of these courses have been team-taught and interdisciplinary, including an Honors RCC that I taught with Jennifer Cavanaugh and Tom Cook, and courses with Dexter Boniface of Politics and Mario D'Amato of Religion and Philosophy. I have been on several thesis committees and served as a senior honors thesis sponsor as well. In Spring 2010, I will teach *Women and Globalization* with Margaret McLaren. The chance to learn from the disciplines and pedagogical styles of my colleagues has been a wonderful opportunity.

Teaching Evaluations

My teaching evaluations have been consistently strong, and where there have been weaknesses I have altered my courses accordingly. Repeated themes in student comments include the desire to become an anthropology major as a result of having had a particular course, a sense that the course encouraged them to learn about a topic they had very little knowledge of that subsequently altered their worldview, and my ability to convey passion for the subject matter. Students have commented that I am helpful, compassionate and available while also maintaining clear and demanding expectations for their work.

I have also encountered helpful criticism from my evaluations. For example, responses for a senior seminar I taught in Spring 2008 indicated to me that students felt I was relying too much on their responses in class discussions and that they needed more background information from me to help them understand the material. I have subsequently addressed this and have adjusted the balance of discussion and lecturing to make sure I am offering my own expertise to help students comprehend the material. Complaints about the textbook I have used in *Cultural Anthropology* has led to an overhaul of the course: in the fall semester I plan to use ethnographies and articles now rather than using what students have perceived to be an overly expensive and dull text.

This will also allow me to tailor this important department service course more to the types of engaged learning and current scholarship I believe to be important, both for majors and non-majors alike.

Another issue I encountered was in the field study I led to Morocco. Although eleven out of the fifteen students who participated spoke highly of their experiences and have continued to mention this trip to me as life-changing, a few of the students were difficult to manage. The culture did not meet their expectations, and they seemed overwhelmed with the poverty and intensity of their first trip to a developing country, despite the fact that we had spent a semester discussing Morocco in class. From this same group of four students I also received intense criticism and challenges to my authority. In the future, I will restructure trips so that my expectations of the students are clearly laid out in a field study syllabus, including penalties for those who do not participate fully in scheduled activities. I will take a smaller group, or I will bring another professor along to help with managing such a large group, many of whom are away from home for the first time.

Future Plans

I am looking forward to the adoption of a new general education curriculum and the possibility of teaching in different Rollins Plans, including the Citizenship and Community Plan that I helped devise. In terms of collaborative team teaching, I plan to teach a course on Women & Globalization with Margaret McLaren in Spring 2010, and I hope to continue to teach in the Honors Program.

I will continue to teach courses in my areas of emphasis, particularly gender, Islam, and globalization. I hope to take students to Morocco again in the future once my daughter is a little older, and I may even be able to bring one or two students to conduct collaborative research, if I find majors who speak French or Arabic. My new research will also feed into my teaching, and I will begin teaching the Anthropology of Reproduction in Fall 2009.

PART III: SERVICE

Community engagement and internationalization are the areas of campus service in which I am most involved, in addition to my role on the Finance and Services Committee. The Anthropology Department asks that candidates for tenure contribute to the department and college by participating in a reasonable amount of committee work and special campus programs as well as effectively advising students within the department.

Committee Work

I have participated in numerous committees, both standing and unofficial. From 2006-08 I was on the Finance and Service Committee, and for my first year on this committee I participated in the Budget & Planning Committee that oversees the university budget as one of the two faculty representatives on this committee.

I have been on job search committees for the Director of International Programs (two times), the Alfond Chair in Creative Writing, the CIO of Information Technology, and a department search for a tenure-track anthropologist. Informal committees have included a committee to advise former Dean of Students Steve Neilson, an IT advisory committee, and the African and African American Studies Advisory Committee.

The two non-standing committees to which I have dedicated the most time are the Faculty Fellows of the Office of Community Engagement and the International Studies Center Committee. As a Faculty Fellow working with the Office of Community Engagement, I have promoted community-based learning across disciplines. Our work has centered on demonstrating to faculty how service-learning projects can enhance course content and pedagogy as well as students' engagement with the course material. We assist in the organization of annual colloquies on transformative education, and we have met biweekly to strategize about issues such as the place of community engagement in curricular reform. In 2008-09 we submitted a Rollins Plan that, though it was not accepted, we hope to implement in the future. During 2006-07, Marvin Newman and I successfully applied for and received a \$16,000 grant from Florida Campus Compact to create a sustained partnership between Rollins College and area organizations that work with local elder populations. Our goals were to establish new relationships with area nonprofits that focus on elder issues and to increase the number of classes at Rollins that connect students with seniors in academically meaningful ways.

Internationalization, and the International Studies Center (ISC) Committee is another area that has been important to me. Most recently, as the Interim Director of Grants for ISC, I oversaw the grant application process for President's International Initiative, Strategic Initiative, and International Development. On this committee, formerly headed by Tom Lairson and most recently by Hoyt Edge and Barry Allen, I participate in strategic conversations concerning internationalization at Rollins, ranging from evaluations of professors' applications to lead field studies to creating a strategic plan for how Rollins could further internationalize. Our "For the Professors" trips were featured in a Chronicle of Higher Education article (in folder). I was also on the two search committees that selected Directors of International Programs Lisa Donatelli and Jennifer Campbell.

I have led two groups, professors and students, to Morocco, thus creating Rollins' first field study course in Africa and in the Muslim world. In May 2006, I participated in the China for the Professors trip. In addition, I have brought in internationally focused speakers, including a human rights activist from Zimbabwe and Moroccan author Laila Lalami, and I also served as a team leader for Salman Rushdie's participation in the March colloquium.

Advising

I have had anywhere from five to twenty student advisees, and on average about ten advisees each year. In my student advising meetings, I discuss students' career interests and try to work with them to choose classes that will help them reach their goals. I encourage them to study abroad and to pursue internships that will help them to explore

different career options. Other activities have included advising student organizations such as the Farmworkers Awareness Club, Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance (FMLA), the Bellydance Club, and the newly formed Farmworker Social Justice group. Off campus, I have taken students to volunteer at the Ripple Effect (feeding the homeless) and the Islamic Center for Peace (outreach to educate the public about Islam).

Community Involvement

In addition to my community engagement work, I have given several community lectures about Islam and women, at churches, synagogues, and assisted living facilities, and I have also led local workshops on creative writing. In January 2004, I ran the Disney marathon in honor of IT employee Sandy Bryant, who ultimately passed away from leukemia. I raised over \$2400 in contributions to benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma society.

Applying for grants to bring visiting speakers to campus is another way I have contributed to the local community, and I participated in the 2007 Colloquy as a team leader in events surrounding Salman Rushdie's appearance. Some of the speakers I secured grant funding to bring (Thomas P. Johnson funds and international development grants) include: Moroccan author Laila Lalami, Joshua Asen, director of the documentary "I Love Hip-hop in Morocco," anthropologist Naveeda Khan, Turkish Sufi musician Latif Bolat, and a persecuted scholar from Zimbabwe (who must remain anonymous due to his persecuted status. This was through NYU's Scholars at Risk program). I also attend campus lectures, plays, and concerts, particularly those sponsored by members of my department.

I have also been a consultant for Disney and procured traditional costumes for their current exhibit in the Epcot Morocco museum.

Future Plans

After sabbatical, I would like to run for another standing committee, possibly the Professional Standards Committee. I will also serve as chair of the Anthropology Department, which has a rotating chair. I plan to continue taking part in internationalization efforts and would like to see the ISC committee transformed into a standing committee. Although I believe there will no longer be a Faculty Fellows designation for community engagement, I intend to continue working on efforts to infuse teaching with community-based learning opportunities across campus, and our next plan is to seek a letter designation for community engagement classes for the course schedule.

PART IV: Conclusion

Conclusion

I can honestly say that I have enjoyed almost every aspect of my first five years at Rollins. My supportive department has allowed me to find my strengths as a teacher and exercise my creativity, and our thriving anthropology major (63 at last count) has brought me great joy. Balancing the competing demands of teaching, scholarship, and service

was a challenge at first, but I have learned a great deal from my mentors and peers. The biggest honor for me so far was winning the Cornell Distinguished Faculty Award in December 2007. I hope that I can continue to contribute to the Rollins environment in a positive way.