

As a group of current and former graduate students, we are writing to attest to the value that Dr. Ersula Ore provides to Arizona State University. After the incident of May 20, 2014 many of us heard of Dr. Ore's situation via the local and Associated Press news accounts. We were immediately concerned for Dr. Ore not just because this is surely a trying time for her, but also because we are concerned that this incident could overshadow the excellence she provides ASU in terms of graduate education and mentoring.

Dr. Ore is an exceptional educator who brings intellectual rigor to the classroom and elevates the standard of the university. Dr. Ore's graduate classes are carefully planned and thoroughly demanding. She expects her students to interact with texts that challenge their theoretical perspectives, academic knowledge, and worldviews. Dr. Ore's intellectual rigor is matched by her dedication to student success. She consistently provides timely feedback on weekly assignments and regularly meets with students to continue conversations from previous classes, plan presentations, and discuss final projects. Additionally, she provides the kind of extensive feedback on final papers and suggestions for pursuing future research that is all too uncommon.

Not only is Dr. Ore a strong educator, but an active mentor as well. She encourages her students to professionalize by presenting their work to the academic community. She actively assists students in revising work for presentation at professional conferences and helps students network in order to put together panels for conferences. In this way, Dr. Ore helps her students in the process of professionalization and works to showcase the exceptional work produced by Arizona State University's graduate community. Her intellectual excellence and strength in mentorship is evidenced by the high number of students who have presented the work created in her classes at national conferences. Many students have also pursued publication of articles or book chapters under her mentorship.

As a committee member or committee chair Dr. Ore provides the guidance and commitment to her students. Not only does she contribute in-depth and thoughtful commentary that helps refine and professionalize student work, but she maintains a level of accessibility that is unmatched. She is consistently available to her mentees for editing, questions, and advice. A testament to her strength as a mentor, she currently serves on several dissertation committees and has guided a multitude of students through the thesis and dissertation process.

Outside of formal mentorship roles, Dr. Ore has also cultivated an informal discussion group with female graduate students. The group meets regularly throughout the school year to discuss intellectual projects as well as issues graduate students deal with such as committee selection, communication with the department, teaching, and work/life balance. Dr. Ore's willingness to discuss her successful journey from graduate school to landing a tenure track position at an acclaimed research institution and her advice on how to navigate academia is an absolutely

invaluable resource for graduate students. She regularly gives advice and guidance to students seeking admission into doctoral programs.

Dr. Ore's excellence as a mentor and educator at ASU is matched only by her contribution to its intellectual standard. She was awarded a 2013-2014 IHR fellowship for her work, "Lynching and the Making of a National Community: A Rhetoric of Civic Belonging." She regularly presents her research at ASU and at national conferences; has been involved in training seminars for Graduate Teaching Associates; commonly attends graduate groups and clubs as a guest speaker or supportive faculty member; and actively encourages the growth of a strong, supportive academic community at ASU. For example, Dr. Ore has been one of the strongest supporters and most frequent participants of the Americanist Reading Group and the Rhetoric Society@ASU's Burkean Parlor events, both of which are graduate student and faculty groups within the English Department. She also participated in a two day seminar helping new Graduate Teaching Associates navigate through difficult issues in the classroom.

The graduate students in the English Department at ASU are proud to have Dr. Ore as a faculty member and mentor. She provides expertise and support for graduate students and is essential in their success in graduate school and as productive members of the academic community. Her research and service contributes to the prestige of the University and should be celebrated and protected.

Signed,

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