



Cover letter for the OTA award
Feb. 19, 2018

To the selection committee,

It is an honor to have been nominated for the Outstanding Teaching Assistant award. My name is Valentin Duquet, I am currently completing my MA in French and Francophone studies, and I will graduate in May. Through constant efforts as an educator, a colleague, a young scholar and an international graduate student in the U.S., I have dedicated my energy to making my students' experiences in learning French more enjoyable and fruitful for them.

My home department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics is specific in certain aspects. It does not include any PhD programs, and "TAs" are the primary instructors for a language section supervised by a coordinator. Since I arrived at Syracuse University with prior teaching experience as a Teaching Assistant at Kalamazoo College (Michigan) for a year, I was assigned relatively advanced language courses. I taught FRE 201 (French III) during my first year, and FRE 202 (French IV) during my second year. Each of these language courses represents 4 credits and include rigorous daily work for both the student and the teacher. I have also taught an oral-intensive 1-credit course for advanced speakers — FRE 210 — for three semesters. I was able to design and construct my own syllabus and schedule for that course.

This breadth of experiences as well as my enthusiasm for sharing with students from different cultures enabled me to be part of the Teaching Mentor team during the August orientation. Over time, my skills were further developed through my participation in the Future Professoriate Program towards the completion of the Certification in University Teaching.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the right mentorship. I want to personally thank my teaching supervisor and coordinator, Cathy Nock along with my faculty advisor Jean Jonassaint for guiding me through these years and for nominating me for this award. I also want to acknowledge my teaching supervisor during my first year at SU, Elizabeth Voss; my faculty liaison for the FPP, Gail Bulman; as well as Glenn Wright and Shawn Loner for making me a better Teaching Mentor.

As you find your way through my teaching material, there are a few things you should be aware of. My portfolio [<https://ValentinDuquet.com/Teaching-Portfolio/>]

has been integrated to a multi-purpose personal website, focusing both on my research and teaching. I have used this website to showcase my work in the ongoing season of PhD applications and admissions. Since my teaching and scholarship are inherently intertwined, I have chosen to keep it as it is during the OTA selection process, referring to my website as an “Academic Portfolio” that encompasses all aspects of my work at SU.

I believe that my scholarship and my teaching form part of a whole and therefore cannot be dissociated. They rely on similar skillsets such as public speaking, rigor of preparation, constructive use of technology, and ability to engage an audience and a body of students. My teaching of French and Francophone languages and cultures is deeply predicated and informed on my own research on Global French and postcolonial theory to promote a broad inclusive definition of French studies. Since my research and assistantship complement each other, I have chosen to feature both on the website I invite you to visit.

I am grateful for this opportunity to share the ideas, content and reflections I assembled online on my portfolio. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have or provide you with additional proofs of my commitment should you request any. It would truly be a privilege to receive this award. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Duquet', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Valentin Duquet

MA student in Francophone Literature | French Teaching Assistant

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