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Dr. John Smith
Department of Anthropology
Research University
123 Main Street
Anytown, USA

[today's date]

See the corresponding
CV on pg. 66

Dear Dr. Smith:

I am writing in application to the advertised Assistant Professor position in the Anthropology department at Research University. I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Linguistics at UC Santa Barbara, and my subfield is Sociocultural Linguistics, an interdisciplinary field that combines linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics. I specialize in the study of language, identity, and social justice as well as digital anthropology, and my research investigates the intersections of sexuality and religion in American contexts using ethnographic and discourse-analytic methods. I have earned four interdisciplinary emphases, including one in Feminist Studies, and I am on track to defend and file my dissertation in June 2017.

My dissertation is an investigation of discourse spaces at a 2012 Baptist conference on sexuality and covenant held in the southeastern United States. I provide a comprehensive ethnographic account of this event and complicate traditional understandings of interaction by examining the digital and non-digital discourse spaces that emerged from the conference. Following preliminary chapters on theory and methodology, the third dissertation chapter analyzes media coverage of the conference in order to show how organizers both enabled and constrained certain types of discourse through their framing of the conference as a conversation. In Chapter 4, I trace the threads of intertextuality as plenary speakers present their own and others' voices in the construction of a covenant model of sexuality. In Chapter 5, I examine the alternative discourse spaces created through attendees' live-tweeting of the conference. This project theorizes the complexity of discourse spaces and expands anthropological scholarship by showing how religious individuals construct ideologies in non-ritualized interaction.

I have published a total of six peer-reviewed articles – including articles in journals with strong anthropological orientations such as *Gender and Language*, *Pragmatics*, and *Language Policy* – and I have presented 16 conference papers. In 2015, I co-organized two conference panels for the American Anthropological Association's annual meeting that explored the ways in which agency is both enabled and constrained through discourse practices. My research has been funded through three research grants from UCSB that recognized the breadth and impact of my work, and I was selected as an alternate for the American Association of University Women's American Dissertation Fellowship.

I am an active researcher in the field of linguistic anthropology, as evidenced by my ongoing scholarly activities. The journal *Communication and Language* has accepted my proposal for a co-edited special issue on "Agency in Context," for which I will co-author the introductory theoretical chapter as well as contribute an article on the topic of constrained agency among Baptist women discussing their feelings toward erotic media. Additionally, I am preparing a manuscript based on Chapter 5 of my dissertation, which I plan to submit to *American Ethnologist*. The next steps for my research involve two projects that build on parts of my dissertation. First, I will expand my digital anthropological research to examine the role of new media in social justice movements within progressive faith communities, such as LGBTQ inclusion in churches and comprehensive faith-based sex education. Second, I recently launched an online survey to assess current discussions about and practices of sexuality in U.S. faith communities, and I plan to seek funding from a variety of sources – including the AAUW Community Action Grant, the ACLS Digital Extension Grant,

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and the NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication – in order to publicize the results of the survey and develop pedagogical materials that promote evidence-based discourses about sexual ethics.

My approach to teaching resonates with many of the tenets of my research, and I regularly invite undergraduates into my research process as mentees. In the classroom, I foster a collaborative environment where critical thinking, alternative epistemologies, and community-engaged work are valued. I achieve these aims through three main pedagogical techniques. First, I use inquiry-based learning strategies in order to encourage problem solving and help students view themselves as researchers and producers of knowledge. Second, I facilitate community building – both in class through in-person and online discussion forums and beyond the classroom through community action projects – in order to support diversity and promote a sense of shared responsibility among community members. Finally, I design my lessons using multimedia and pop-culture material as much as possible in order to allow for multiple points of entry into scholarly material – from the analytic to the experiential and emotional.

In my time at UCSB, I have taught a total of 10 different courses, ranging from large lower-division courses (e.g. Introduction to Linguistics, Language in Society) to small upper-division courses (e.g. Language, Gender, & Sexuality; Language, Race, & Ethnicity), and I have twice served as an Instructor of Record. My pedagogical expertise has been recognized by both my department, which appointed me to lead our Teaching Assistant Training Seminar, and the university, which will issue me a Certificate in College and University Teaching at the conclusion of my graduate program. In course evaluations, students regularly commend the strength of my teaching: 98% of students rate me an effective teacher, 99% describe me as well-organized, and 96% see me as able to build a strong rapport with students. In your department, I would be eager to teach both general courses (such as Language & Culture and Foundations in Linguistics) and upper-division courses (such as Language, Gender, & Sexuality and Women, Religion, & Ethnography), as well as develop new courses based on my research expertise (such as Anthropology & Social Justice and Language & Ethnography).

Throughout my graduate studies, I have sought out numerous leadership and service opportunities. In my first four years at UCSB, I served as a curriculum developer and program coordinator for School Kids Investigating Language in Life and Society (SKILLS), an interdisciplinary research and academic outreach program that works to empower low-income Latina/o youth through learning about language and culture. Additionally, for the past 3 years, I have worked as the Professional Development Program Coordinator at UCSB's Graduate Division, providing workshops and advising to help graduate students prepare for a variety of career options. These experiences – along with my service in departmental committees and conference organizing – prepare me well to contribute to the service needs of your department.

Your department's longstanding commitment to holistic and interdisciplinary anthropological research as well as its strong focus on social justice make this position particularly appealing to me. I would look forward to contributing to several of your department's areas of specialization – including Gender & Sexuality and Politics & Representation – as well as becoming involved in your interdisciplinary laboratories. I can envision collaborating with Jane Johnson on projects related to language and discourse, media and politics, and public anthropology and with Susan Scott on work related to gender/sexuality, politics, and religion. Moreover, your department's strong interdisciplinary connections would allow me to foster collaborations with associated faculty such as Evan Evanston and Mary Murphy.

Please see my accompanying application documents. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,
[e-signature image file]
Shawn Warner-Garcia