

#### Application Related Information

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Application: Application Incomplete  
Grad Program Applying To: MIT

Iteration Name: 202430\_GR\_G  
Program Name: MIT

#### Recommendation Information

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Recommended By: Sandra Yannone  
Recommenders Institution: The Evergreen State College  
Waive Access to Recommendation Ltrs: I choose to waive my right to review this recommendation.  
Recommendation Form Submitted: ✓  
Received Date: 11/03/2023 03:35 PM  
Recommendation Type: General  
Recommendation Entity ID: 1024000111617035

Recommenders Title: Retired Faculty Director, Writing Center  
Contact Name: Michael Wallis  
Recommendation Waiver Choice:  
Recommendation Status: Received  
Recommender Assessment: I recommend this applicant without reservation.  
Recommender Form: Letter of Recommendation  
Recommendation Owner: Josephine Bernier

#### Recommender Form Questions

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How long have you known applicant:	Applicant ability as self-directed learner:
Time since last contact with applicant:	Applicant as productive member of group:
Relationship with Applicant:	Applicant most significant strengths:
Ability to complete rigorous grad program:	Responsibility/reliability:
Communication Skills - Oral:	Communication skills - written:
Service Orientation-sensitivity/empathy:	Ability to work independently:
Ability to handle stress:	Ability to think critically:
Ability to analyze/problem solve:	Ability to think creatively:
Openness to feedback:	Potential for leadership:
Ability to work in a team:	Personal/professional reflection:

#### Description Information

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Description: Form URL: <https://evergreenstatecollege.radius>

#### Other Information

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Created Time: 10/17/2023 05:23 PM  
Modified Time: 11/03/2023 03:35 PM

Created By: Josephine Bernier  
Modified By: Josephine Bernier



November 1, 2023

Dear Graduate Admissions Reviewers:

I am grateful for this opportunity to recommend Michael Wallis for admission to the next cohort of the Master in Teaching program at Evergreen. As a recently retired member of the faculty, I will not be mentoring any new students beyond 2023, and I now can reflect deeply on the quality of the students with whom I worked over my 22-year career. I have recommended dozens to the MiT program at this juncture, and I easily can say that Michael is the most poised, qualified, and ready to engage in the rigors of graduate study and subsequent teaching than anyone I have recommended with high praise in the past. This is quite the statement coming from me because I feel that the students I have recommended to the program are stellar. Many of them are pillars of teaching at their current institutions.

I first met Michael in the spring of 2022 when he enrolled in Cultivating Voice, the tutor training course I taught for the duration of my career. This was an online course, and Michael demonstrated a maturity in his approach to writing pedagogy and a genuine passion for supporting the development of the other students in his cohort and his practicum partner. I hired him without reservation.

Michael, however, elevated his profile with me ten-fold during his senior year. Now, in person, I was able to witness daily Michael's genuine acuity for supporting writers and have weekly, almost daily conversations with him about how he put into practice his liberatory writing pedagogy. Writers from diverse backgrounds flocked to meet with him and committed to weekly sessions with ease because of the space that Michael held for genuine reflection and curiosity. His demeanor evokes a brand of quiet rigor and strength that I rarely see in students who carry his identities. He mentored two transgendered students from Cultivating Voice during their practicum, and both credited him with helping them to transforming their writing.

As a tutor and staff member, Michael was resilient, reliable, and deeply respected by his staff and writing peers alike. He managed to complete his studies, work two jobs, and resurrect Evergreen's literary journal, *Slightly West*, all with the grandest spirit of collaboration. He embodied the mantra I try to enact: a rising tide lifts all boats. In Michael's wake, no boats capsized. Everyone found fulfillment and joy in learning and writing. I attended the end-of-the-year launch party for *Slightly West*. Michael created a literary evening of such quality that I truly felt as if I was at a literary salon in one of the literary meccas of this country. The quality of the work, the readings, the publication, the event all had one thing in common: Michael's steady hand and deft delegation that led to ownership by all. He was ever mindful of making sure voices often left out of the conversation were seen and heard.

Once I made the difficult decision to leave the Writing Center and Evergreen, I advocated that the College hire two graduating staff to support the incoming professional. Again, without hesitation, I recommended Michael serve in this staff role. I knew he and his staff partner would provide the perfect mix of stability and inspiration to our incoming staff and provide an incredible source of institutional knowledge to our new director. Both have proven to be true so far, and I'm sure that you will appreciate all that Michael has to offer your program and immediately see how he can contribute profoundly to the teaching profession in any direction he chooses.

Respectfully Yours,

Sandra L. Yannone, MFA, Ph.D.  
Faculty Director of the Writing Center, Retired