April 30, 2021

Department of World Languages & Cultures

University of Massachusetts Lowell

Dear Search Committee Members,

I am writing to apply for the position of either Advanced Assistant or Associate Professor of French Studies in the Department of World Languages and Cultures at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. I graduated *summa Ccum laude* in May 2017 from the Ph.D. joint program in Literary Studies of the Université du Québec à Montréal and Saarland University (Universität des Saarlandes), receiving both Canadian and German qualifications. I am currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, funded by the *Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et Culture*. At the University of Michigan, I am also a lecturer of French in the Residential College (RC), a semi-independent liberal arts living-learning community within the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. Before coming to Ann Arbor in the fall of 2018, I was a visiting scholar (2017–2018) in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at Saarland University where I substituted for Professor Mechthild Gilzmer from April to September 2018.

While at the University of Michigan, I have completed my first monograph: *Les usages littéraires de Thomas Bernhard et de Peter Handke au Québec. Les modalités d’une affiliation interculturelle*, published February 3, 2021 by Éditions Nota benein Montreal. The book draws on a representative corpus of Québécois novels, short stories, and collections of poems published between 1989 and 2011. The works chosen all present substantial intertextual dialogue with the works of Austrian writers Thomas Bernhard and Peter Handke. My book presents a typology of appropriated foreign literary traditions found in contemporary Francophone literature based on the concept of “affiliation.”

My primary fields of specialization are 20th and 21st century Québec and French Literatures and Cultures. My research focuses on cross-cultural issues, including: migration narratives; theories of cross-cultural communication, intertextuality and reception; and comparative studies. Other interests include sport and leisure culture in Quebec, focusing on the 1950s and 1960s, comics and graphic novels (especially their representations of cross-cultural communication and cultural/ethnic diversity situations ), the literature of New France/the French Regime, and recent narratives that emphasize, legacy-related issues in France and Quebec, such as the “récits de filiation” (Viart, Demanze, Lapointe, etc.). I also maintain an active research agenda in German Studies, especially migration narratives, and would welcome the opportunity to contribute to your minor in German Studies.

My research has appeared in French, English and German in the following peer-reviewed journals: *Littératures*; *Voix et Images*; *Eurostudia - Transatlantic*Journal*for European Studies*; *Revue d’Allemagne et des pays de langue allemande*; *Zeitschrift für Kanada Studien (ZKS)*; *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies*, as well as in different collections in Germany, including the recent *Klassik als kulturelle Praxis. Funktional, intermedial, transkulturell* (De Gruyter)*.*

As a Canadian native speaker of French, I was educated in the French-language education system while growing up in a bilingual environment in Montreal, and am comfortable providing all levels of instruction in both French and English. I have successfully taught French language courses to non-native speakers of all levels in Germany and in the United States, advanced undergraduate cultural and literary studies courses of my own design in Germany and in the United States, and a survey course of my own design to French native speakers at the Université du Québec à Montréal’s Literary Studies B.A. program. One of the courses I taught at Saarland University, “Oral communication in French,” is similar in format to your course “Advanced French Conversation WLFR.3460.” The course served as extra training for oral comprehension and expression in French of two major topics: “*inégalités territoriales*” (territorial inequalities) and “*économie collaborative*” (the shared economy). At Saarland University, I was also affiliated with the Chair of Intercultural Communication and Romance Cultural Studies. In this context, I designed undergraduate seminars on topics such as “Migrant Writing in Québec” (“L’écriture migrante au Québec”) and “From Comics to Graphic Novels: Interculturality and Ethnicity” (“De la bande dessinée au roman graphique. Interculturalité et Ethnicité”). These advanced undergraduate literary and cultural studies courses attracted a wide range of students, including: Cultural Studies students; Intercultural Communication and Franco-German Studies majors with a particular interest in the economic aspects of France-Germany relations; future teachers of French as a foreign language in Germany; and more. I believe that my experience in developing such courses, as well as exposure to cross-cultural communication theories I was able to acquire in Saarbrücken have well prepared me to develop courses that would achieve the essential learning outcomes associated with your Core Curriculum, especially the “Diversity and Cultural Awareness” outcome and the “Social Responsibility and Ethics Essential Learning Outcome.”

This winter semester, at the University of Michigan’s Residential College, I am once again teaching a readings course I designed devoted to “Migrant Writing in Québec” that relfects the objectives of a third-year seminar in the context of an intense and semi-immersive language program in the United States. I have included the syllabus for this course in my application. Other teaching experience at the Residential College that have prepared me to teach your “French and Culture Courses Levels 1–4” is presented in detail in my CV.

In conclusion, on the basis of my training and professional experience as researcher, teacher, and colleague, I am confident that I will be able to make important contributions to the University of Massachusetts Lowell’s French program, and would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss this with you in an interview. My curriculum vitae, teaching philosophy, a research statement, a diversity statement, a summary of teaching evaluations, and the names and contact information of three references are included in my application. I would be happy to provide any additional materials. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Louise-Hélène Filion