



26 November, 2012

**Topic: Teaching Observation**  
**Graduate Student: Daniel (Danny) Maffia**

To Whom It May Concern:

As a faculty member of the American Sign Language and Interpreter Education (ASLIE) department here at NTID I have had the pleasure of knowing graduate student Danny Maffia for approximately 2 years. I first met Danny as a student in our degree program (although I never had the opportunity to instruct this fine young man). His reputation as an interpreter (working for RIT's Department of Access Services) became quite pronounced. When I heard he was commencing graduate studies in the discipline of interpreter education, I was thrilled. It has been a pleasure to watch this young man continue to develop both in the areas of interpretation as well as in the pedagogy of interpretation..

Danny was assigned, for his practicum and practice teaching experience, the task of instructing ASLIE's course: 00-0875-316, Consecutive Interpretation, A-E, I. As a more senior member of our faculty, I had the pleasure of being Danny's supervising teacher.

Danny demonstrates many qualities of a 'master' teacher. He has good boundaries. He is open to comments and criticisms from his students. He is a listener. During his supervision, he took responsibility for course preparation. If a component of the instructional materials/methods was unclear, he would seek clarification. What was striking to me was his ability to \*not\* be needy. He was confident in his abilities, but not in an egotistical or naïve manner. Again, if he deemed guidance was needed, he sought support.

In observing Danny's teaching, it was evident that he held his learners in high regard. What was also evident and impressive (due to Danny's young age) was the fact that the students looked to him as their teacher/coach, and not a 'peer.' Danny is to be complemented for being able to maintain this fine-line distinction.

Danny has a keen command of the content delivered during this course. As he was a not-so-long-ago learner in the classroom in which he is now teaching, Danny brought to his instruction a keen sensitivity of his own learning path, and facilitated his students' growth. His students were also keenly aware of his vantage-point and teaching/thinking approach and, together, they formed a strong teaching/learning community.

In addition, Danny's teaching is clear and concise. He is articulate and comprehensible. His pace of instruction is good, and his expectations are clear.

One area (which is a typical challenge for all new educators) is helping the students to stay on task. This is NOT a glaring area of need for Danny. His students were provided an excellent learning opportunity. The challenge (for all of us in the classroom) is keeping classroom comments relevant and focused/tied-to the content being instructed.

It has been a pleasure working with Daniel Maffia. Honestly, I am a tad jealous of the opportunities he has been afforded (as I wish I had had them during my developmental years). To see where this young man is, currently, as an educator, excites me about his future career. His students, and the communities in which they will serve, will benefit from Danny's instruction and approach to instruction.

Feel free to contact me with any further questions or comments. Again, it has been a pleasure to be associated with Danny and he represents your program well.

With kind regards,

*Kevin. T. Williams*

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