

August 7, 2007

Dear Dr. Henning,

Please accept this letter as my application to serve the College of Education as Associate Dean. My thirty-five years as an educator in the public schools and at the University of Northern Iowa have provided me with experiences that prepared me for the responsibilities of this position. Teaching in the Educational Leadership program since 2000 has enriched my understanding of the theory and practice of leadership. My administrative philosophy and qualifying experiences are briefly described in the body of this letter.

Effective administration requires a balance between management and leadership. Leadership is the process of influencing constituents in order to accomplish the common vision, mission and purpose of the organization. Management is the behind the scenes coordination of operations that provide the constituents time and resources to carry out the vision, mission and purpose of the organization. Administrators must apply the same attributes and skills in both roles. These include communication, problem solving, collaboration and a strong sense of purpose. Effective communication requires visibility, crucial conversations, astute listening and commitment to share information. Problem solving requires asking the right questions, analyzing compiled data and building the support to implement solutions. Collaboration requires embracing the different strengths of constituents and working on a common cause or goal. Lastly, administrators must display a strong, genuine sense of purpose and passion as role models, mentors, and creators of climate and culture.

The foundation of all of the attributes and skills for effective administration is the knowledge of self. Administrators must continually reflect on who they are, what they believe, and how they can advance learning for the benefit of the organization. According to the Gallup Strengths Finder, five of my strengths include activating, achieving, learning, maximizing, and communicating. These strengths have led me to identify myself as a connector. I connect people to people, people to opportunities, people to ideas, and people to themselves.

My past experiences have shaped my administrative philosophy and also expanded my knowledge and skills that qualify me to serve as Associate Dean. My vita outlines a strong service and scholarship record. My teaching evaluations have been excellent and I would be happy to share these with the committee. My references will no doubt indicate that I have a strong work ethic and work well with others. Evidence of my communication skills is revealed in the numerous invited presentations and keynote speeches as seen on my vita. My teaching assignments have included undergraduate and graduate level courses. I currently serve on sixteen doctoral committees and chair seven. My vita also shows collaboration and partnership experiences. Two very successful partnerships included working with the Waterloo Community Schools to develop the Teacher Leader Program and also the five-year Renaissance grant partnership that

resulted in the implementation of the Teacher Work Samples at the University of Northern Iowa.

Since arriving at UNI in 1991, I have learned much about how universities operate and also retained my knowledge of public school education. My international experiences (the Middle East and Chile) have broadened my world-view perspectives and allowed me to contribute to other country's education systems. Much of my own professional development has focused on the professional development of educators and this is one of many areas where I could make positive contributions.

Thank you for reviewing my materials and considering my application. I am proud to be part of the University of Northern Iowa's College of Education and possess a strong desire to contribute to the success of our college, our faculty and our graduates.

Sincerely,

Victoria L. Robinson
Associate Professor
Educational Leadership