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Subject: Letter in support of Gold Medal candidate **Graham K. MacBean**

Dear Degrees Committee,

I am writing to warmly recommend Graham K. MacBean as a recipient of the Gold Medal in the Arts. An exceptionally bright student, Graham received Great Distinction upon graduation from his Bachelor of Arts, Major in Dramatic Arts in 2015. I first taught Graham in a rigorous second-year survey of British literature and was immediately struck by his genuine and fervent enthusiasm for post-secondary studies. As the semester progressed, I appreciated his willingness to participate in an informed, intelligent, and courteous manner in class discussion. His interest in the literary works on the course was such that he almost always had further comments and questions after class, which I was more than happy to answer. In his second course with me, *The Rise of the Novel*, Graham maintained a high level of intellectual engagement. Graham is an original thinker with a sharp mind. Though he is an attentive, respectful listener, he was not in class simply to record and memorize material. His formal essays and in-class work (tests and exams) always demonstrated his ability to think critically and creatively. Though some students inevitably reproduce lecture material in their exams, Graham was able to reflect upon course material and go far beyond what he had been taught.

Serving as the dramaturge for a University of Lethbridge production of William Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (dir. Ron Chambers), I also had the pleasure of seeing Graham learn the lead role of a challenging Restoration comedy. A committed student of dramatic literature, he put a great deal of work into understanding and interpreting his lines and developing his character. I was impressed with how much he progressed from the initial read-through of the script to the opening night. He negotiated the witty dialogue with aplomb. Graham was a dedicated cast member and contributed much to the excellence of the production and the friendly atmosphere backstage. Graham seems to be universally liked and respected by his peers.

Graham MacBean is a talented, well-rounded individual and what is rarer yet, a true learner. I was delighted when I first heard that he was planning to become an educator himself. Graham is currently pursuing a B.Ed with a focus in Dramatic Arts, Minor: English Language Arts. As he is able to fluently convey his ideas and more broadly, his passion for knowledge, I have every reason to believe that he will become as superb a teacher as he is a student. In light of Graham's strengths inside and outside of the classroom, I have no reservations about supporting him as a candidate for the Gold Medal in the Arts.

Sincerely,

Dr. Heather Ladd