

*The following letter of introduction was written by Professor Nathalie Bailey and distributed to students in an ESL course for incoming freshmen.*

Dear student in ESL 104,

I am very happy to be your teacher at the start of your college career. In my experience, ESL students are among the most motivated and hard-working students at Lehman College. I hope that will be true of you. I will need to get to know you well in order to make a difference in your learning and, therefore, your life. For that reason I am writing you this letter and requesting that you write a letter to me.

I would like you to tell me as much as possible in order for me to help you. Tell me as fully and specifically as possible about who you are as a person and a student, with your college and future career in mind. Are you ready for this important new direction in your life? **What is your background? What are your other responsibilities? What are your academic strengths, weaknesses and goals? And what might you want to change in your life in order to meet your college and career goals?** Answer these questions and tell me anything else in your letter whatever that you think I should know or might like to know about you.

As for me, I have a Ph.D. in linguistics, the study of language, with a specialization in second language acquisition. I have taught ESL, linguistics, literature, and composition courses to undergraduate students; and linguistics, ESL and bilingual education, grammar, literature, and the teaching of writing, to graduate students.

I grew up in Maine and Massachusetts in New England and went to schools there and to colleges in Ohio and New York City. For two years I was a Peace Corps Volunteer in El Salvador, Central America where I learned to speak Spanish fluently. I have been very involved with peace groups protesting wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua. I traveled to Nicaragua twice during the contra war as a Witness for Peace.

My other interests include my family and friends. I have one daughter named Gabrielle who is thirty-three years old and a job coach for disabled adults. She lives in New Jersey. My husband and I live in South Orange, N.J. in an 1870's house that has a large garden. Both the house and garden require lots of work and keep us busy. My community activities include Quaker meetings and a book club which meets every six weeks to discuss a book we are reading together. I enjoy walking and swimming as exercise. I love to read, go to movies, and travel. Most recently I have traveled to India and Oregon.

My teaching is very important to me since it is a creative and rewarding application of my knowledge and energy. I love to create and teach courses. I hope you will share with me lots about who you are in your response to this letter.

Sincerely,

Prof. Bailey