



**Costello College of Business**

Enterprise Hall, 4400 University Drive, MS 1B1, Fairfax, Virginia 22030  
Phone: 703-993-1880; Fax: 703-993-1867

February 8, 2024

Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning  
George Mason University  
Fairfax, VA 22030

RE: Letter of Support for Prof. Lisa Prodywus for the Online Teaching Excellence Award

Dear Online Teaching Excellence Award Committee,

I am pleased to write a letter in support of Prof. Lisa Prodywus for the 2024 Online Teaching Excellence Award. Prof. Prodywus is an Adjunct Professor for the Marketing area at the Costello College of Business. She has taught a variety of marketing courses and formats for us; in the context of this award, she taught Marketing Principles (303) and Digital Marketing (315) as fully asynchronous online courses. As Chair of the Marketing Area, I greatly value Prof. Prodywus's experience with online teaching, her understanding of what is needed for excellent online teaching, and her commitment to ensuring meaningful online experiences for our students. I will elaborate on these points below.

First, Prof. Prodywus is an experienced educator committed to online education. She has been teaching online and developing online programs for over eight years. Notably, Prof. Prodywus served as a subject matter expert to develop online courses and programs in marketing at two other institutions. She has sought professional development opportunities to expand her knowledge of online teaching best practices (e.g., certificates on assessments and engaging students), her technical skills (e.g., Blackboard), and remain current in our field (e.g., customer segmentation, market analysis, digital marketing).

We have been very fortunate to have her teach for us for the past four years. She has brought a wealth of knowledge and understanding of online teaching that has benefited our program. With the increased interest of our students in online courses, Prof. Prodywus's openness toward online education and subject matter expertise has allowed us to offer additional online sections of our core and specialized courses to meet this demand, while knowing with confidence that the courses she teaches are going to be delivered exceedingly well.

Second, Prof. Prodywus structures her courses to foster meaningful engagement among online students and learners. She leverages innovative instructional strategies, interactive technologies,

and collaborative learning experiences to create a dynamic online classroom environment where students feel empowered and motivated to actively participate in their own learning journey.

Taking a closer look at her courses, from a technical perspective, they follow best practice for universal design for learning. The organization and navigation through the course material is clear and easy. There are multiple touchpoints with material, classmates, and the instructor. Course materials are presented in multiple formats – readings, lectures, games – and assessments adopt an action-oriented approach to engage with their own thoughts, with other students, and with real-world examples. Further, for the benefit of the students, she builds in connections to opportunities to expand beyond the course for market-validated certificates. From an instructor's presence perspective, Prof. Prodywus provides personalized feedback and encouragement to students throughout the course. Students receive weekly course messages and tailored feedback on course assignments and interact via discussion boards and open office hours. She develops a course experience that has an interactive and personal touch. Overall, I believe Prof. Prodywus efforts create value for students and cultivate a learning experience that promotes student success.

Third, Prof. Prodywus is an effective and impactful online educator. In our program, we routinely review multiple sources of feedback – student evaluations and peer review - to evaluate the effectiveness of our instructors. Prof. Prodywus exceeds expectations. Specifically, her students, in their evaluations of teaching, consistently evaluate Prof. Prodywus across online sections as organizing a course to support learning and creating an environment to facilitate engagement, as well as providing feedback to assist in learning and being available to meet with students (high 4's: 4.47-4.88). Within a peer review, a colleague with considerable online experience noted “each element of commonly used criteria for distance education were accomplished at a high and professional level,” and the course she created “clearly exceeds the standards for excellent delivery.”

In summary, I support Prof. Prodywus nomination for the 2024 Online Teaching Excellence Award. She exemplifies the qualities of an outstanding online educator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Hoppner', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jessica J. Hoppner, Ph.D.  
Area Chair and Associate Professor, Marketing  
Costello College of Business