25-June 2021

RE: Coral Sheldon-Hess Teaching Portfolio Review
https://sheldon-hess.org/coral/teaching_portfolio/

Dear Professor Sheldon-Hess and Portfolio Reviewer,

I have reviewed Professor Sheldon-Hess's portfolio and found it to contain all required elements. More importantly, Professor Sheldon-Hess has designed and implemented a truly remarkably assembly of open educational resources that, in my limited review experience, exceeds any set of corporate learning packages associated with textbooks or online subscriptions in quality, attention to student learning processes, and equity.

Additionally, Professor Sheldon-Hess has prioritized continued professional development in topics central to the courses they teach (Python, data analytics tools, etc.) and, most interestingly, in topics tangential but related such as computer security and open education resource production and distribution. Finally, I have been impressed with Professor Sheldon-Hess's commitment to building out new Data Analytics courses such as our R course and forecasting course by studying what amount to massive and complex topics personally to enable them to aptly instruct students.

Further, Professor Shelon-Hess's statement of teaching philosophy includes several elements which are mighty inspirational to me fellow faculty member: *"...I believe our role, as teachers of programming courses, isn't nearly as much to teach syntax as it is to teach programmatic thinking and problem-solving. That is the real, lasting value our courses impart. Admittedly, those skills are a lot more challenging to teach than syntax and language features, and I am continually working to improve my courses, to better meet that goal."*

Professor Shelon-Hess's sample course materials and student exercises reveals actual implementation of this philosophy in very impressive ways. For example, the sample String manipulation Jupyter Notebook lesson plan Coral shared in their portfolio is over one thousand one hundred lines long (1193) with dozens of code snippets and explanatory remarks attached to each. Most course textbooks on Python contain treatments of String processing but often with very limited code snippets, often just a single line or two; Professor Sheldon-Hess's open sourced Notebook for this module however contains far more examples and thoughtful conceptual progression than any print text I have ever reviewed. Their materials actively integrate the primary topic at hand with essential coding concepts such as looping and function-based design.

Additionally, I am impressed with Professor Shelon-Hess's implementation of exam-free programming courses which instead ask students to perform assessment tasks that are authentic to actual programming job roles--none of which that I've ever seen include completing high-stakes exams. Professor Sheldon-Hess's use of student self-evaluation and their responses to those evaluations stands as a beacon of light and hope in an educational context in which instructors are often assumed to hold all necessary information for fair grade assignment.

Finally, Professor Sheldon-Hess has documented dozens of ways in which they contribute to the larger CCAC community through presenting at Common Hours, serving on employee selection and Council Subcommittees, and mentoring students in student life clubs. Their commitment to holistic treatment of student experiences in our courses while also strengthening the larger, non-computerized aspects of our CCAC community is truly remarkable and worthy of the highest commendation.

Sincerely,

Eric C Darsow, CCAC Computer Department, North Campus