As I prepare to return to academic study, I am confident East Carolina University – and the Raleigh area, more broadly – is the ideal fit. I am eager to think and do, as a writer, a student, and an educator. As an experienced researcher in the fields of literature and sociology, my search for my next chapter naturally led me to the English Master’s program at my alma mater. In particular, the Multicultural and Transnational Literature track is a perfect intersection of my experience and interests in language and culture, and the robust course offerings on various ethnic backgrounds will offer critical insight to my research themes. I am convinced there remains more for me to accomplish in academia, and this community promises a niche matched by no other.

 I pursued my undergraduate studies with a firm goal – one that had been engrained and encouraged throughout my life by three generations of teachers – to educate. To that end, I earned my Bachelor of Science in English Education in order to help another generation of young people overcome their own obstacles through storytelling. While the last several years teaching sixth grade have been extremely rewarding, I cannot help but feel the drive to reach a broader and more sophisticated audience with more advanced and nuanced scholarly work. Further studies at Bridgewater State University and Queen’s University introduced me to graduate level theories and research methodologies. My coursework spanned various subgenres, including Transnational Race, Gender, and Sexuality with Dr. Sarita Srivastava, film and Irish studies with Dr. Kathleen Vejvoda, and masculinity in Canadian Literature with Dr. Sam McKegney. I was fascinated with the cultural exposure to the narratives of minorities, immigrants, and veterans of both domestic and foreign conflicts. Discerning the myriad cultural conceptions of gender roles in today’s political climate inspired my capstone project, “Maternity reconceived in the public and private spheres”, supervised by Dr. Rob Beamish. My only regret from my time at Queen’s is that my employer only afforded me a one-year sabbatical to complete my Master’s program, and as a consequence, I was forced to leave much unexplored.

It is the research interests I developed at my prior institutions which initially attracted me to ECU’s program, and your faculty’s work is particularly well-aligned with my own research goals. Dr. Anna Froula’s work on media studies and war narratives touches on my interest in veterans’ affairs and Dr. Andrea Kitta’s research on the intersection of health and folklore speaks to my sociological endeavors. I am seeking the opportunity to delve into these various subfields, through qualitative study and research that I’m sure will be inspired by the expertise of your diverse faculty. My aim is to bring these studies and research to classes of my own making at the university level and make my own contributions to the field with scholarly research. It is my sincerest hope that the English department will facilitate the aforementioned collaboration, so that together we may examine the crucial narratives of these and other marginalized classes.