Graduate & Professional Student Association
Executive Board – Declaration of Candidacy
May 2016 – May 2017

Name: Kirk Askia Talib-deen
Department/School: Teaching & Learning

Select one: ☐ President ☐ Vice President ☐ Treasurer ☐ Secretary

Please list any relevant experience/qualifications for the position:
(GPSA experience, student government, extracurricular activities, or other interests)
I served as GPSA Secretary previously.

Please explain why you are interested in serving in this position:
I enjoy working with the GPSA Executive Board; the position creates an opportunity
to network with peers, professors, and faculty; and most important, it gives its
members a chance to contribute to the development of the university culture and
the current initiatives at UNLV.

Please attach letter of support from your faculty member / advisor to the application.
March 27, 2016

Ms. Rebecca “Becky” Boulton
Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) Manager
Graduate College/Graduate Student Commons
FDH 352/Lied Library Building (LLB), Room #2141
Box 451017
4505 S. Maryland Parkway,
Las Vegas, NV 89154-1017
rebecca.boulton@unlv.edu

Dear Ms. Boulton:

I am writing to you to recommend Mr. Kirk Askia Talib-deen (formerly Walker) to you as an outstanding graduate student representative for the GPSA. I understand that as a Master’s student he used to serve as the GPSA secretary and, as a newly admitted doctoral student, is eager to get re-involved with the GPSA.

As alluded to above, Mr. Talib-deen was recently admitted to the doctoral program in Curriculum and Instruction, in the Cultural Studies, International Education, and Multicultural Education (CSIEME) emphasis, in the Department of Teaching and Learning. I have known Mr. Talib-deen for about four years now and in every regard—personally, professionally, and academically—I find him to be outstanding.

I first came to know Mr. Talib-deen when he was a Master’s student in the English department, beginning to explore options for advanced graduate study. He had been referred to me by another student, because he was looking for an academic community in which he would find a sense of welcome and support for pursuing his research interests at the doctoral level, broadly related to equity, diversity, inclusion, multicultural education, and literacy. As these are research interests of mine, Mr. Talib-deen and I hit it off from the moment we met. Because of his interests in literacy, I also referred him to a departmental colleague who coordinate our doctoral emphasis program in that content area. As Mr. Talib-deen moved through his Master’s program, we remained in periodic contact, often seeing each other at campus events. Upon completion of his Master’s degree in the Summer of 2015, Mr. Talib-deen decided to enroll as a non-degree student so that he could take a course with me to see how it went. Accordingly, he enrolled in CIG 661 Special Topics in Multicultural Education focusing on the School-to-Prison Pipeline. He requested a copy of the syllabus prior to the start of the semester (in June), and came to another student’s dissertation defense in July already reading one of the course texts—in fact, the most academically challenging of the course texts—and he was enraptured in it. Not surprisingly, Mr. Talib-deen’s subsequent performance in that course was exemplary—his contributions were unparalleled and invaluable to me and to the other students in the course. Toward the end of the course, Mr. Talib-deen determined that the CSIEME emphasis area was for him, and I enthusiastically supported his application for admission to our Ph.D. program in that area.

I am particularly enthusiastic about Mr. Talib-deen’s future trajectory as a scholar. He is uniquely intellectually suited to the professoriate, dedicated to critical inquiry and analysis, as well as to the practical application of scholarship in the public interest. He will undoubtedly become an astute public intellectual and use research to improve the conditions of existence for those who are most at risk in our schools and society.
For all of these reasons and many more, I unequivocally recommend Mr. Talib-deen to you as an outstanding graduate student representative for the GPSA—he is in excellent academic standing with the College of Education and the Department of Teaching and Learning.

Thank you for your time and attention. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance to you on Mr. Talib-deen's behalf.

Sincerely,

Christine Clark, Ed.D.
Professor and Senior Scholar in Multicultural Education
Founding Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion