

Dear Selection Committee:

Barbara Lloyd is an extraordinary and remarkable woman. The Center for Folklore Studies (CFS) struck gold on the day she was hired; without her, folklore studies at OSU would not be the wonderful intellectual haven it is for so many people. From the student perspective, Barbara's presence means a number of things, ranging from professional development to caring friend. Barbara is the heart of CFS--an indescribably important presence that pumps lifeblood to its various limbs. Her ability to offer practical, emotional, and intellectual support is a rare find in an academic setting and for many of us, domestic and international students alike, she represents a second home.

Walking into her office (the door of which is always open), one would be equally likely to find Barbara, with a student, copy-editing a grant application, talking through a family crisis, or interrogating the founding principles of folklore scholarship. Over the years, she has contributed to the professionalization of numerous students working for the Center for Folklore Studies, sharing her extensive experience and knowledge of the field. She has trained graduate assistants and undergraduate work-study students in projects ranging from event promotion to digital archiving:

"As an undergraduate in the folklore field, and a work-study student in the Center for Folklore Studies, working with Barbara Lloyd has been an invaluable experience. She is a wonderful and kind supervisor (which is a very rare experience for an undergraduate!) and she is always willing to spare time; whether it is for a work question, academic advice, or friendly conversation. She has made my experience in the Center for Folklore Studies very pleasant, and has encouraged me to pursue and continue my own studies in folklore."
--Rachel Paiscik (CFS work-study student)

"It is difficult to sum up the impact that Barbara has had on me in the few short months that I have worked for her. I am in awe of her generous spirit, her expansive humanity, her compassion and the care with which she attends to everyone that she encounters. She is part mother, part friend and part counselor and teacher and makes coming to work a pleasure!"--Puja Batra-Wells (Ph.D. Student, Archivist)

The broad scope of her skills is an irreplaceable asset to the Center for Folklore Studies, and to its student body in particular.

Barbara's investment in the Folklore Student Association (FSA) is unparalleled, especially considering that her time and energy in this arena are "unofficial" (like all student organizations, the FSA has a faculty advisor, though we are somewhat unique in also having an auxiliary staff mentor). She provides continuity as the student leadership shifts from year to year, institutional knowledge in terms of garnering resources and navigating bureaucracy, and a far-reaching vision that helps students imagine their role in folklore and the role of their organization beyond their tenure at the university. She is also the FSA's biggest fan, attending or assisting in events where appropriate, and always being an outspoken advocate for the group's aspirations and needs.

For the past five years the Folklore Student Association has been collaborating with the corresponding student organization at Indiana University to organize a national conference for young scholars. From the very beginning of this initiative, Barbara has aided in all stages of preparation and contributed to the current success and continuous growth of the conference, which in its most recent year had an impressive showing of domestic and international attendees. She has done this in many ways, including creating the conference poster and fliers, formatting the program, overseeing the conference budget, and giving valuable advice about communicating with faculty. Perhaps most notably, Barbara manages to play a crucial role in this student organization without marginalizing or undermining the students' ownership of the group.

Barbara recognizes the need for folklorists across the university to get together in a relaxed and social atmosphere. The Center comprises students and faculty from several different departments across the university, and it would be easy to feel disconnected from others in the same field. However, Barbara's warmth and grace has transformed what was once a loose knit group of folklorists into a vibrant community of scholars and friends. Only one example of her

generous nature and her commitment to the Center are the Final Friday Lunches that she has been hosting at the center for the past seven years, complete with delicious home-cooked food. It is often at these lunches that new students and new faculty are warmly welcomed into the fold of the OSU folklore community. As the following student reflections show, Barbara's impact is often felt in the intimacy of individual relationships:

"Last year, I was writing an abstract for the American Folklore Society annual meeting at the last minute. Additionally, I had never written a conference abstract before. I asked Barbara for help, and over the next few hours that I spent at the folklore center (and even at home, over email) I would revise my abstract. Each time, Barbara would read it and give recommendations, all the while writing her own abstract for the same conference. I don't think I could have successfully submitted without her dedication." --Wes Merkes (undergraduate student, FSA co-chair)

"The greatest contribution that Barbara has made to my own growth as a scholar and future professor is her infectious curiosity and appreciation for learning: in an environment where many of us are quick to act like we know the answers, Barbara is insistent on the value of asking questions." --Kate Parker (Ph.D. Candidate)

"She is a mentor, not only intellectually, but as a model of the kind of person we would all want to be. She provides intellectual feedback for our work, but she also dispenses the wisdom of her experiences. For many people, she is not simply a staff member, but also a friend because she cares enough to be interested in our lives. It is because of Barbara's dedication to the Center that my experience at OSU has been enriching." --Nancy Yan (Ph.D. Candidate)

It would not be an understatement to say that the Center for Folklore Studies would not be as successful without Barbara. Most importantly, she is a tireless supporter of everyone around her and the first to see the best in everyone. For Barbara, students always come first, and there is nothing more important than caring and striving for understanding: to quote the advice she has given to many of us on various occasions, "We are human beings first of all." For this and for the other innumerable lessons she has shared with us, we enthusiastically recommend Barbara Lloyd for an OSU Distinguished Staff Award.

Sincerely,

The Ohio State University Folklore Student Association


