

## Application Related Information

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Application: Application Incomplete  
Grad Program Applying To: MPA

Iteration Name: 202410\_GR\_G  
Program Name: MPA

## Recommendation Information

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Recommended By: Anne Taufen  
Recommenders Institution: University of Washington-Tacoma  
Waive Access to Recommendation Ltrs: I choose to waive my right to review this recommendation.  
Recommendation Form Submitted: ✓

Recommenders Title: Professor  
Contact Name: Modou Nyang

Recommendation Waiver Choice: I choose to waive my right to review this recommendation.

Recommendation Status: Received

Received Date: 06/13/2023 12:09 PM

Recommender Assessment: I recommend this applicant without reservation.

Recommendation Type: General

Recommender Form: MPA Letter of Recommendation/Form

Recommendation Entity ID: 1024000109811167

Recommendation Owner: Josephine Bernier

## Recommender Form Questions

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How long have you known applicant:  
3 years

Applicant ability as self-directed learner: excellent. Moe is motivated and focused, and takes great care with his work.

Time since last contact with applicant:  
current

Applicant as productive member of group: also excellent. Moe is service oriented, caring and empathetic. He sees things clearly, advocates for those who need it, and follows through on his commitments.

Relationship with Applicant:  
professor and former chair

Applicant most significant strengths: Moe is a flexible thinker, and brings a pragmatic, thoughtful approach to his work. He juggles multiple priorities beautifully, he has a strong global perspective and experiential base, and he works well with a variety of different people and community perspectives.

Ability to complete rigorous grad program: Outstanding

Responsibility/reliability: Outstanding

Communication Skills - Oral: Excellent

Communication skills - written: Outstanding

Service Orientation-sensitivity/empathy: Outstanding

Ability to work independently: Outstanding

Ability to handle stress: Outstanding

Ability to think critically: Outstanding

Ability to analyze/problem solve: Outstanding

Ability to think creatively: Outstanding

Openness to feedback: Outstanding

Potential for leadership: Excellent

Ability to work in a team: Excellent

Personal/professional  
reflection: Outstanding

#### Description Information

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Description:

Form URL: <https://evergreenstatecollege.radiu>

#### Other Information

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Created Time: 05/12/2023 11:35 AM

Created By: Josephine Bernier

Modified Time: 06/13/2023 12:09 PM

Modified By: Josephine Bernier

Evergreen State College  
Olympia, WA

RE: *MPA Applicant* **Modou Nyang**

June 12, 2023

Dear Admissions Committee:

I am writing in unreserved support of Modou Nyang's application to the MPA program at Evergreen State College. Modou Nyang ("Moe") is an outstanding student, an accomplished community organizer and policy analyst, and an excellent applied researcher. He is extraordinarily well suited for additional graduate work, and will bring needed global perspective and a commitment to social justice to his work in policy and planning.

I have known Moe for approximately one and a half years, during which time I have taught him in two courses in the MA in Community Planning at the University of Washington, Tacoma: TCMP 572 Planning for Equity, and TCMP 546 Strategic Influence. Until June 2022 I was also the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) for this program, and met all new students as they accepted offers of admission and joined an enrolling cohort; and in the last several months I have worked with Moe on the development of an original manuscript based on his research for TCMP 546, "Engagement Model to Grow Communication, Empowerment, Social Integration." That paper, "Urban-Rural Co-development by the people and for the people- towards UN SDG 11," was invited for a special issue on Sustainable Urbanization through Urban-Rural Co-Development. In the last several months I have again taught Moe in the course, TCMP 573 Power and Decentralization; where he developed an original, practical, creative proposal for recreational facility development to serve access and equity issues and grow economic development on the Tacoma Tideflats. Moe is a committed and determined public professional and will be a wonderful asset to your program.

Moe's abilities include 1) incisive and original habits of thought and expression; 2) a clear and perceptive understanding of practical challenges and opportunities in equitable policy implementation; and 3) an outstanding work ethic and commitment to outcomes, scholarly and otherwise. These abilities will enable Moe to thrive and succeed as a doctoral student and scholar.

Moe's incisive, original contributions to class sessions and his ambitious, well-executed written assignments have been a hallmark of his presence in the MA Program in Community Planning at UW Tacoma. From the first course of the program, TCMP 572 Planning for Equity, in Autumn 2021, Moe established his deep engagement with assigned course material through carefully articulated, thoughtfully framed comments during class sessions, and well-structured reading responses throughout the term. This led to outstanding mid-term (October 2021) and final (December 2021) writing assignments on the definition of equity in community planning

practice, the tools for its implementation and pursuit, and an analysis of economic opportunity in a nearby gentrifying neighborhood using John A. Powell's "Targeted Universalism" framework. Two things stand out about Moe's performance in this course, in the first term of a two-year course of study in community planning theory and practical skill development. First, he listened and engaged with his classmates in discussing the readings each week, generally before offering his markedly well-developed and often, constructively critical perspective; and second, his appreciation for the mechanisms of planning and policy implementation do not temper his commitment to inclusion, community voice, and building power for marginalized people, which can be an unusual and important tension to sustain in the field of equitable development.

This perceptive understanding of practical challenges and opportunities in equitable policy implementation is likely related to Moe's professional role and experience in community development settings, which he mobilizes in his academic work. For instance, in TCMP 546 Strategic Influence (Spring 2022), Moe began with a well-known participatory framework in urban planning from the fall quarter class (Sherry Arnstein's "Ladder of Citizen Participation"), and coupled with his own work in youth education and homelessness services in the region, conducted a focused literature review to identify alternatives for deep community engagement in building responsive, co-produced policy interventions with high-risk, vulnerable populations. The project he developed over the course of the Spring term, an original model of community engagement that updates and expands Arnstein's longstanding framework, shows appreciation and respect for existing scholarship and practice, while strengthening justice ideals that are at the core of community engagement rationales. Moe did this in the context of a real-world class project in partnership with the local library system and their consultants, as they considered possibilities for branch expansion in the City of Tacoma, and situated this original project – literature review, proposed model, research paper, and focused presentation for policy leaders and decision makers – in relationship to existing peer-reviewed scholarship, current challenges based in evidence and conditions in our city, and his own work in the broader region. The learning outcomes for the course focus on sensemaking and communication in complex policy environments, and Moe's commitment to retaining the theoretical questions in a highly practical, local policy and planning challenge are testament to the scholarly sensibility that will enable him to thrive as a research and teaching professional.

The work ethic and commitment to outcomes that Moe brings to his work is clearly evidenced by his CV, work experience, and stated plans. His focus on barriers to access and implementation of housing and sustainability policy is informed by his perceptive faculties and professional experience, however it is given heft and will gain staying power from his perseverance and spirit of dedicated, ambitious, informed service. Moe is the first person in his family to attend college, and has lived and worked in settings around the world. His first-person knowledge of structural barriers and lived impediments to resources and opportunities is something that he references only rarely, and he uses this perspective to motivate and inform the commitment to conduct challenging work, to pursue further education, and to support greater knowledge and understanding within community planning and global policy settings.

Moe is both independent and collaborative, and plans well to meet and execute his goals, all of which bode well for his success and contributions as a planning and policy professional.

It has been my pleasure and honor to get to know Moe Nyang as a student in the community planning program at UW Tacoma, and I have no doubt that he will enjoy continued success as an accomplished and committed expert in urban and regional planning.

Please contact me via e-mail ([atw5@uw.edu](mailto:atw5@uw.edu)) if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,



Anne Taufen, PhD, MGA  
Professor, Urban Studies  
University of Washington, Tacoma

