

WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY  
CLEVELAND 6, OHIO

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY SCIENCE  
11161 EAST BOULEVARD

November 21, 1958

Miss Elsie Cunningham  
Administrative Assistant  
Office of Coordinator  
Viet-Nam Project  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing, Michigan

Dear Miss Cunningham:

A succession of conferences or speaking engagements has kept me in an itinerant state and off campus almost as much as on. In each return to home base, however, my first concern has been to talk with Miss Kim-Sa and Loc, to assess their progress, solve and anticipate problems wherever possible. On my last trip of a week I encountered several people from other library schools who had received letters from you in regard to admitting the girls. I talked at length with Miss LeFevre of Western Michigan who, although willing to admit them, pointed out several disadvantages - the handicap of entering in the middle of the year, a different library and new routines to learn and most of all the lack of any such help in the English language as is afforded here.

On my return I talked with the girls and the faculty and learned several things which I think may change our decision to request that they seek a transfer. They now present two quite distinct and individual cases and must be handled independently rather than the same.

Miss Kim-Sa is making a remarkably fine adjustment both academically and socially. Her English has improved under the tutoring, she is industrious, mentally alert and challenged by the work she is doing. She sought me out to say that although she would abide by your advice if you thought it better for her to go to another school she herself would much prefer to stay at Reserve, where she feels she will gain more than she would if she were to make an adjustment to another school. She has reconciled herself to the fact that she will not receive a degree and it was primarily in the hope of receiving this that she was interested in transferring.

The faculty reported that although she still required special help her work was acceptable and she was apparently benefiting from her training.

Miss Loc, however, presents a quite different problem. She is still uncommunicative, confused and highly inarticulate. Her English is still woefully inadequate, she is unable to take notes or to follow directions on a given problem. Both Miss Focke and Miss Kaltenbach had arranged extra hours

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of individual instruction for her and both reported they couldn't even communicate with her let along help her in understanding the course work. Her complete bewilderment has resulted in homesickness, quite naturally, and I am sure she is unhappy personally and making no progress academically. When I talked with her she still insisted she would like to transfer to "an undergraduate school where she could study mostly English." However, the faculty members involved feel strongly that we would be doing both Miss Loc and any school to which we might transfer her a disservice in recommending a transfer.

As I see it the situation, therefore, does not favor continuing any effort to transfer either Miss Kim-Sa or Miss Loc. We feel Miss Kim-Sa could well continue her program as planned, including some practical experience in libraries through field work and possibly carrying a full program of library science in the spring semester if she no longer needs the tutoring in English. As for Miss Loc we will await your advice but we feel that it is unrealistic for her to remain here in a situation which is both personally unhappy for her and a waste of investment for the Project funds. Normally, of course, we would wait until all the records of the first semester were in before recommending that a student drop out. Mid-term tests are being given from now until Thanksgiving and we could be optimistic in hoping that the results of those may prove us wrong. As we see it now, however, there are probably only two alternatives: 1) to return her to Viet-Nam or 2) to allow her to stay in the United States for English language instruction and orientation to American life if that is a feasible interpretation of Project support. This latter program could probably be done just as well on your own campus in East Lansing; transferring her to another library school would not in our opinion solve her problem and would embarrass us in relations with the school involved.

Were you able to get the transcripts of their previous education which you were going to try to get? We would be interested in having Miss Kim-Sa's on file and Miss Loc's might help to document any decision we have to make.

I am not sure I quite understand the procedure as to purchase of books but assume that in the future I would send a requisition to you for any books they might need for your approval in advance of ordering them from the bookstore. Would Miss Kim-Sa then be free to purchase them and be reimbursed or would a check covering the purchase accompany your approval?

We will be interested in having your reaction to this report which I am sorry has to be a discouraging one as to Miss Loc but it is at least a much brighter one for Miss Kim-Sa.

Sincerely,

*Hannah Hunt*

Hannah Hunt  
Assistant Professor

December 12, 1958

Miss Hannah Hunt  
School of Library Science  
Western Reserve University  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Miss Hunt:

Thank you for your long letter of November 21st concerning the progress of Misses Kim Sa and Loc. I have discussed this problem with Mr. Richard Chapin, our Associate Librarian who has just recently returned from a short trip to Saigon. He will make arrangements for Miss Loc to work within the MSU library for the next several months. The question now is whether to bring her here at the beginning of our quarter, which is January 5, or at the conclusion of your fall semester. I shall try to call you on this question early in the week.

I now plan to be in Cleveland for at least a day at the end of next week for the express purpose of explaining to Miss Loc the decision that has been reached here, and if she so desires, offering her the opportunity to return to Saigon.

There is no pretension on our part that this is the kind of technical library training we were hoping both these young ladies might obtain. However, it seems unrealistic to have her continue where she is making little or no progress.

We certainly appreciate all your efforts in their behalf and do hope that Kim Sa is able to accomplish all the work she has set out for herself during Christmas vacation.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Cunningham  
Administrative Assistant

EC:kc

cc.: Sheinbaum  
Gabis  
Waltman

January 20, 1959

Miss Hannah Hunt  
School of Library Science  
Western Reserve University  
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Miss Hunt:

I have written to Miss Loc on January 8th explaining the reasons why we considered it necessary to bring her to East Lansing. I received an answer from her today agreeing to this idea.

As you indicated you intended to break the news to Miss Loc on the day I talked to you about Kim Sa's request to be transferred to Columbia, I am wondering if you have had any reaction from Miss Loc concerning this projected change.

In addition, I have just received a letter from Kim Sa requesting that she be allowed to spend the week between semesters in Washington, D. C. She indicated that she had already mentioned this to you but I thought it best to check and be sure.

I have wanted to write to Mr. Gardiner but since we have no Cleveland address for him I am unable to do so.

In addition, please find enclosed a copy of the letter we have received from Mrs. Verzosa of the Phillipines. This brings up another question that Kim Sa raised which was that she should be allowed to continue through the summer school. She then could have a total of 21 points. It had been my impression that under the circumstances perhaps the best utilization of her time in the United States could be made through spending the summer as a concentrated "in-service-training" program. Also I would like your opinion concerning the operation program run by Columbia University for foreign librarians during the summer. Would this be appropriate for Kim Sa?

Thank you very much for helping me to answer these many baffling questions.

Sincerely yours,

EC:ms

Elsie Cunningham  
Administrative Assistant

Enc: Thermofax copy/Verzosa letter.

WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY  
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February 3, 1959

Miss Elsie Cunningham  
Administrative Assistant  
Vietnam Project  
Office of Coordinator  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing  
Michigan

Dear Miss Cunningham:

Miss Kim-Sa, as you know, is currently in Washington and was supplied with a person to contact at the Library of Congress, well qualified to direct her observations of libraries in that area. Miss Loc and Miss Nguyet (our third Vietnamese student) are in Chicago where they were referred by letter to the A.L.A. Headquarters, to Northwestern University Library, University of Chicago Library, and The John Crerar Library. These should all be good observation experiences and my only concern is whether they will be able to cope with Chicago transportation since they have been very reluctant to venture alone here in Cleveland.

Miss Kim-Sa has finished her semester's work with creditable records, completing ten hours of library science with grades as follows:

	Hours	Grade
County and Regional Library Service	2	B
Information Sources and Services	3	B
Organization and Cataloging of Library		
Collections	3	A
Documentation	2	B

The "special studies course" under which we planned to give her practical work in libraries will continue into the next semester to give her two more credits. She did a few days of this as an experiment in nearby Case Institute and the reports from the librarian indicate that although patience and meticulous explanations on the part of the librarian are required, we can send her to others with some confidence that she will gain from the experience. Miss Kim-Sa has also carried a non-credit course in the English language in which she had a final grade of B. Her record is a good one, and her progress indicates continuing her education in librarianship.

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She will need to continue her instruction in English and, therefore, carry less than a full course next semester, but it should prove to be a profitable spring term for her.

Miss Loc will report to you on the 9th of February and I am enclosing a statement "To whom it may concern" signed by the Dean which she should have on the completion of her work to date. A more formal certificate will be prepared for her when the incomplete work is done and before she returns to Vietnam. For your own confidential files I am submitting a progress report on Miss Loc's work which I hope will clarify her status and indicate the possible relationship of her work at M.S.U. and credit at W.R.U. Miss Loc is also anxious to continue some instruction in English though this, as I told her, would depend on your assessment of how much was necessary and what resources were available.

Miss Vo Hong Loc has been enrolled in the School of Library Science of Western Reserve University for the winter semester (September - January) 1958-1959. She has demonstrated cooperativeness and some effort to adjust to a situation in which she was unfairly handicapped. A primary handicap was lack of facility in English which prevented the reading of assignments with any degree of comprehension or the taking of notes in class. This, of course, resulted in substituting intensive work in English for courses in Library Science. A further handicap was the lack of sufficient college background in general education for embarking upon graduate courses such as those given at Reserve. This has been compensated for through tutoring and extra help on the part of the faculty - often beyond the point justified. A final handicap, which other foreign students have overcome, was that, due to a late arrival, she missed the orientation program given for all students and the abridged version arranged for late entries did not prove to be an adequate substitute for Miss Loc.

Academically, her program, in addition to instruction in English (a non-credit course for which she showed more enthusiasm than any of the others), concentrated on the two areas of organization of library materials and reference work. She has completed seven semester hours - three in classification and cataloging, three in Information Sources and Services, and one in Periodicals and Serials - all with a grade of C (fair). Another hour in Periodicals and Serials (523b) was recorded as "incomplete" due to Miss Loc's inability to even submit her final examination paper. Her instructor in English (who has actually tutored these girls individually) reports that her progress was very slow and the final grade was D (passing).

Under a "Special Studies" course (580) practical field work in libraries was planned dependent upon her progress in English and familiarity with library terminology. Her progress did not seem to warrant this during the first semester so it too became an "incomplete." It is hoped that her internship at M.S.U. may be credited to this course and remove that "incomplete" in favor of a grade recommended by her supervisors at Michigan. Our

Miss Cunningham

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field work requirements for the two hours of credit for which Miss Loc is registered would consist of 80 hours of practical work, as varied as possible, a well written report from the student on this experience, and a statement of completion and degree of satisfactory accomplishment from the supervising librarian. I enclose two copies of the form our supervising librarians use, one being for your own or M.S.U. Library files. If this form does not adapt to this situation, a statement covering as many of the points as are pertinent would be satisfactory. An outline is also enclosed for Miss Loc's guidance in writing her report which can be abridged as indicated on the form but should not be in outline form, but in as acceptable English as she can write.

Miss Loc's maturity, previous experience in a U.S.I.S. library, her family background, and the fact that she had spent some time in Europe all indicated a high potential. Yet, in contrast to the other two Vietnamese students enrolled this year, who have been able to do acceptable though not outstanding work, her progress has been disappointing to us and, I am sure, to her. We feel that the internship as planned, where she can be given more individual attention than is possible within the framework of formal schooling may prove more satisfactory.

Sincerely,

*Hannah Hunt*

Hannah Hunt  
Assistant Professor

HH:blg