



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

SCHOOL OF MASS COMMUNICATION & JOURNALISM

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March 19, 2018

Dear Sir or Madam:

As the former dean of the Southern Miss Honors College, I often write recommendation letters for very talented students, but it is seldom that I write a letter as full of superlatives as I write today for Hiba Tahir. Hiba is a stellar student whose work ethic, intelligence, and service record as an undergraduate put her in a position to excel. Please give her your fullest consideration.

Four years ago Hiba won easy admission to our very competitive Honors College as she completed high school. Her record at Southern Miss demonstrates that she has gone above and beyond the performance of her peers. She has landed numerous honors and earned an excellent GPA in our rigorous journalism program. Hiba has a 3.95 GPA and is double majoring in English (with a concentration in Creative Writing) and journalism.

Hiba is a winner of the Presidential Scholarship, our most prestigious scholarship in the Honors College. She has also won the EaglesWrite Award for her blog, and she is heavily involved in several clubs and organizations on campus, including the honor societies Phi Eta Sigma, in which she serves as a member of the Social Media Committee; the Society for Collegiate Leadership and Achievement, in which she has served as President and Vice President; Gamma Beta Phi; Sigma Alpha Lambda; Golden Key International; the National Society for Collegiate Scholars; and the National Society for Leadership and Success.

Hiba is also a member of the French Club, the International Club, the Fiction Society, the Muslim Student Association and the Ladies Innovating Leadership and Change, a Theta Nu Xi Fraternity interest group. She has also served on the election commission in the Student Government Association. She won the Shannon O'Hara and Henry Mackaman English Scholarship in Poetry for the 2016-2017 school year.

In advancing her journalism career, Hiba has served as a staff writer for USM's student newspaper, The Student Printz, during her sophomore year and then continued as Entertainment and Social Media editor during her junior year. In her senior year she served as managing editor. Her article "Swipe Right: Tinder Experience of Mississippi Hijabi" was picked up by the Biloxi *Sun-Herald* and its parent company and subsequently published on the websites of 33 newspapers in the United States and one in Cuba. It resulted in a weekly column, in which Hiba writes about her experiences as a hijabi in the Bible Belt. She also freelances for the *Sun-Herald*.

In sum, Hiba stands out as an exemplary student in an Honors College known for the special abilities of many of its students. Most importantly, she's worked as hard as any student I know, and this work ethic and commitment to her goals will go far to ensure her success in your program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David R. Davies', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

David R. Davies, Ph.D.
Director, School of Mass Communication & Journalism
Former Dean, the Honors College (2007-2014)