Dear Members of the Search Committee,

I am writing to apply for the Assistant Professor (Tenure-Track) position in Teacher Education at the University at Albany, State University of New York. I am completing my Ph.D. in Learning Design and Technology at Purdue University (expected Summer 2026), and I am eager to contribute to UAlbany's research environment and its commitment to preparing culturally responsive educators who serve diverse and multilingual learners.

Through extensive methodological training, I am well-versed in research methodologies and have a deep commitment to advising doctoral students. My research examines how artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics, and literacy frameworks can jointly empower teachers and multilingual learners to become more self-directed, reflective, and inclusive. As the lead author, I reconceptualized self-directed learning for the generative-AI era and proposed a theoretical framework that integrates personal attributes, process, and learning context. Building upon this theoretical foundation, I led a research team and developed and validated the PA-SDA Scale (Personal Attributes for Self-Directed AI Learning), a contribution that also earned the Global Smart Education Innovation – Research Innovation Prize. Following this, I conducted structural equation modeling to map the structural relationships among these personal attributes in a sample of 699 global learners. My dissertation extends this work through a longitudinal mixed-methods study using latent profile analysis and latent transition modeling to examine how language learners' personal attributes evolve over time when engaging with generative AI tools.

Extending this agenda, I have explored how AI and online learning can make teacher preparation more culturally and linguistically responsive. I co-led a systematic review on culturally and linguistically responsive teacher learning, I analyzed how online professional development can promote equity and inclusion in diverse educational contexts. Expanding upon this, I led another systematic review of language educators' practices and professional development with generative AI, synthesizing 23 empirical studies to identify evolving teacher perceptions, competency gaps, and professional development needs across episteme, techne, and phronesis. With Intel Labs, our AECT award-winning study explored collaborative problem solving in conversational AI-mediated learning for early learners, while my subsequent review of 144 empirical studies traced global shifts in AI-supported education and identified critical gaps in K-12 and teacher preparation research.

Beyond publications, I engage deeply in collaborative grant development, including Spencer Vision Grant, Spencer Small Grant, Unity for Humanity Grant, and NSF proposals. The Spencer Small Grant (2023–2025) proposal, *"Exploring Inventions in Self-Directed Language Learning with Generative AI"*, advanced to the finalist stage, representing a core strand of my research agenda. I served as the lead writer and primary designer of the project, responsible for every stage, from conceptual framing and instrument design to budget planning, timeline development, and cross-institutional coordination. I have engaged in multiple NSF proposal

development, starting from ideation to writing, which further prepared me to lead future external grant endeavors.

I bring a strong PK–12 foundation and extensive teacher-education experience to this position. At Purdue University, I co-teach *Strategic Assessment and Evaluation*, mentoring teachers to use data for instructional improvement. At Beijing Normal University, I co-taught graduate-level teacher-education courses on digital pedagogy and research methods for pre- and in-service teachers, guiding them to integrate technology and reflective practice through culturally and linguistically responsive approaches. For two years, I held a full-time faculty appointment at Indiana University Bloomington, where I taught courses from introductory through capstone levels and coordinated instruction within large-scale language and tutoring programs. I recruited, trained, and supervised over 200 tutors, led professional-development workshops for instructional staff, and co-developed a blended "double-loop" tutoring model that continues to inform post-pandemic hybrid instruction.

Beyond teaching and research, I have a strong record of service and leadership. I contribute actively to the field as a reviewer for leading journals (*Computers & Education*, *IEEE TLT*, *JCHE, BJET*, *Learning and Instruction*, *System*). In industry, I served as Product and Curriculum Manager at HiLink LLC, leading the design and development of an all-in-one learning management system that improved instructional efficiency and learner engagement. I also designed and developed TICapp, a mobile learning application for heritage Chinese learners, applying design thinking and iterative prototyping to translate research into scalable educational technology.

I am inspired by the University at Albany's vision to promote equity, innovation, and impact through research, teaching, and community partnership. My interdisciplinary expertise in AI, literacy, and culturally responsive teacher education aligns with UAlbany's mission to prepare scholar-leaders who improve education for all learners. Thank you for considering my application.

Sincerely,

Belle Li