Having just finished my dissertation (The concept of natural law in Rousseau’s Discours sur l’Inégalité) under the direction of Prof. John Doe here at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, I am now working on revising this dissertation with a view to publishing it with Hachette. Preliminary contacts with my potential editor, Joe Blogs, have been encouraging, and I intend to submit a formal proposal within the next month. I am also pleased to report that my paper “La voix joyeuse de Jean-Jacques” has just been accepted for publication in the prestigious journal “Etudes littéraires sur Jean-Jacques Rousseau” this coming spring.

As can readily be inferred from the previous paragraph, I see myself as a specialist on Rousseau’s many contributions to the Enlightenment in 18th century France. Specifically, in addition to developing my current interest in Rousseau’s impact on political philosophy (for example, his influence on Thomas Jefferson and other prominent figures in the American Revolution, and later on the Jacobins during the French revolution), I would like to explore how his novel La Nouvelle Héloïse helped shape new ideas about education in France and elsewhere.

In both these areas of interest, I intend to elaborate on a nascent theme in my dissertation, that is, using insights from modern psychiatry (in particular, Lacan) as a methodological tool of literary criticism. While we must, of course, resist the crude temptation to psychoanalyze a person who died some 240 years ago, I believe that Lacan’s revolutionary work can nonetheless serve as a fruitful source of inspiration for my own research program. I would further like to point out that little work has been done in this area of French Literature. Thus, I look forward to developing a vibrant, and above all, original research program in this area.

Fascinated as I am by Rousseau, I understand that it is important for a faculty member to have another string to my intellectual bow. In this context, I propose to develop my interest in francophone literature in the Caribbean, using a critical, post-colonial perspective to discuss the work of X. I am currently working on writing an article on this topic, which I intend to submit to the journal “Critical literary studies.” Assuming all goes well with the review process, I believe that this paper would likely come out in approximately 6-8 month’s time. Again, as I said at the end of my Teaching Philosophy Statement, I would be delighted to discuss these issues with you further.

(425 words)