



Whittier
College

Jordan C. Hanson, PhD

Jordan C. Hanson
Department of Physics and Astronomy
13406 East Philadelphia Street
Whittier CA 90602
Email: jhanson2@whittier.edu
Phone: 562.907.4200

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Recommendation Letter for Graduate Studies at OHSU

Greetings,

My name is Jordan Hanson, and I am an assistant professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Whittier College. I am recommending Taylor Watanabe for the graduate program at The Oregon Health and Science University. Taylor will make an outstanding PhD candidate. She is gifted, focused, and conscientious in her research and coursework.

Taylor will graduate this December (2020) with a degree in Biology from Whittier College. Taylor was my student in three courses: algebra-based physics 1 (PHYS135A), algebra-based physics 2 (PHYS135B), and a summer course in elementary statistics (MATH080). In each course, when Taylor submitted homework assignments, she earned perfect marks, the assignments were organized, and the reasoning was crystal clear. I found this level of conscientiousness to be rare among my students in those courses. Taylor studied diligently and earned A grades in all three courses.

During this same period, Taylor was building on research that had culminated from a Keck Fellowship and an Ondrasik-Groce Fellowship. The Keck and Ondrasik-Groce Fellowships are awarded by Whittier College to exceptional undergraduates who wish to perform research during the summer. The Ondrasik-Groce fellowship is the most prestigious scientific fellowship we have, and it is only awarded to sophomores or juniors who meet GPA requirements. Taylor was researching the effect of pesticides on the neuro-morphology of zebrafish embryos, and even gave a final presentation on her statistical analysis of the data towards the end of our statistics course. These fellowships are typically awarded to students who have the most creatively designed or innovative project ideas. They work independently in the lab and are responsible for solving research related problems as they arise in a short time frame.

I remember the experiences I had in graduate school, and what kind of character is required for the long haul through coursework, research, and teaching. I see these traits in Taylor and I trust she will become a productive and clever scientist in the future. I recommend her highly.

Sincerely,

Jordan C. Hanson, PhD