Dear Award Committee Members,

It is my great pleasure to write this letter of support for Dr. Abhyuday Mandal to be considered for the Sandy Beaver Excellence in Teaching Award. Dr. Mandal is the one who opens the door of the magic world of statistics for me. Without Dr. Mandal's invaluable mentoring, I may never step into my career as a statistician. I sincerely hope other students would benefit from the teaching of Dr. Mandal, especially at their early years in college.

I first met Dr. Mandal in my second year of Ph. D life in the major of Bioinformatics. Before that, I had my bachelor's degree also in Bioinformatics. At that time, I would see myself to be a postdoc after graduation, working at a genetic lab with sequencing plates and data, maybe to pursue a faculty track at some points. It is equally important career path but not that I am deeply passionate about. At that time, I never thought I will be a statistician someday. Then I met Dr. Mandal in his Applied Linear Models class (STAT 6420) and its pre-requisite class Tools of Statistical Theory (STAT 6800).

How amazing it is that Dr. Mandal presents both classes in a clear and friendly way. Considering the different levels of the two courses, Dr. Mandal adopted a more interactive way in STAT 6800 to raise the interests of students, making us feel we own the course so that every student including me has the strong willing to participate in the learning process. I have never been looking forward to the next class for any course before. When I looked back to those days, it is that I know Dr. Mandal cares and acknowledges every little effort I made that build up my confidence in learning statistics and encourages me to be a better myself in every aspects.

For course STAT 6420 at a comparative higher level, Dr. Mandal is not only teaching, but helping students connecting dots among statistical pieces not limiting to the current course. STAT 6420 Applied Linear Models is a core course for students in statistical majors. It covers lots of key points which are the foundation of many following courses. Among all that, Dr. Mandal tried in every way to present to students what a magic world statistics is as with making inferences and prediction, which opens a new world for me as I saw how fit and fantastic it is to link the inference and prediction piece of statistics to my own field – Bioinformatics. When I talked to Dr. Mandal about how exciting I were, it is Dr. Mandal who inspired me to re-direct my career path to be more statistically focused with a strong background of Bioinformatics. Through formula derivation under Dr. Mandal's guidance, I found a point of perfect matching of my passion and my career focus.

From that on, I kept in my mind that I would like to pursue a master degree in statistics during my Ph. D study. But I want to wait for Dr. Mandal to teach another core course STAT 8260 Linear Models. It's a pity that this course was not on Dr. Mandal's teaching plan for the next few years. After more than 4 years of waiting, I took the class that was instructed by another very good professor. Now I have graduated from University of Georgia with both a Ph. D in Bioinformatics and a Master in Statistics. I am currently a Statistician at Bayer Crop Science, not mentioning generous mentoring and numerous help that I received from Dr. Mandal in my job hunting.

In my heart, Dr. Mandal is my teacher, my mentor, and my dear friend. I would not hesitate to reach for advise and help to Dr. Mandal whenever in need, as I know Dr. Mandal always cares for any of his students. And I hope more students could get to know Dr. Mandal as in return they will not only receive expert knowledge but a helping hand, so when they start to explore their own journey, they are not alone. With that, I sincerely hope you will consider Dr. Mandal for the Sandy Beaver Excellence in Teaching Award. He is the best teacher I met ever.

Sincerely,

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