

To whom it may concern,

I am Naum Markenzon, an incoming fourth-year Computer Science + Cognitive Science student, as well as a former student of Matthew Gray's CMPS 42A course *Survey of Applied Computational Science*. The course was taught by Matthew Gray along with 4 other instructors, with each instructor having a specialization in the content they were teaching. The course was designed to introduce students to many interesting aspects of Computational Science including Number Theory, Encryption, Compression, Information Theory, among many other exciting topics. Although each instructor was mostly knowledgeable about their portion of the course, it truly amazes me that Matthew was always able to contribute very interesting perspectives and details the other instructors may have missed or explained incorrectly. Matthew was a very competent instructor and motivated me to learn more about these topics by displaying his wealth of information on seemingly any topic related to Computer Science and Computational Science. I cannot emphasize enough how often topics from this course came up in future courses, so it made future classes easier by having an understanding of the topics beforehand.

Not only was Matthew a fantastic instructor, he was also a great mentor. He shared personal stories about his experiences of discrimination while doing research in Computer Science, and also began a group to fight discrimination from certain figures of power who were abusing their authority. It was enlightening to hear about the dark side of academia at UCSC and he set a great example for others by fighting for what is right. In addition, Matthew also helped the students get into touch with other graduate students and other professors for potential research opportunities. It feels as though Matthew genuinely wanted his students to succeed and get involved with research, despite the dark side that currently exists.

All in all, CMPS 42A was a great experience and I am happy to have met Matthew Gray. I hope our mentorship and friendship continues into the future where our paths hopefully cross again, and/or potentially work on research together.

Sincerely,  
Naum Markenzon