

2016 Telegraph Avenue
Unit #1910
Oakland, CA
94611

February 11, 2023

Dear admissions committee,

I am excited to have the opportunity to heartily recommend Andrew Hinh for admission, via transfer, to your university.

I am not your typical letter writer: after finishing my PhD in Theoretical Neuroscience at the Redwood Center in the University of California, Berkeley, I moved on to teaching in the private sector. I now run and teach a popular collection of MOOCs on engineering and product development with deep neural networks and large language models.

An atypical letter writer is a great fit for Andrew, who is a far from typical student.

This past summer/fall, he took my course *Full Stack Deep Learning*. When previously taught at as a graduate course at UC Berkeley, we found that even senior undergraduates were insufficiently prepared to fully make use of the course material.

So when Andrew submitted his registration materials, which included a high school ID (!) as proof of academic affiliation, I felt compelled to reach out and warn him that he probably wasn't prepared. I sent him a quick test: "Someone asks you to `git clone` a repo with a convolutional network in it, change the number of channels, and retrain it using an existing bash script. Do you feel prepared?". Andrew replied: "Honestly, this test sounds like something I do regularly, so I feel like I'm prepared to take this course."

Andrew more than lived up to his claim of precocious preparation.

He was one of the most assiduous students. This is especially noteworthy for an ungraded online course, where most students, even adult professionals, succumb to distraction. Andrew took advantage of office hours. He asked thoughtful questions that demonstrated prior effort. Andrew was, in all, a model student.

Andrew also demonstrated clear understanding of the material. His course project, *Admirer*, which provided question-answering for webcam images – "How many fingers am I holding up?" – was among the best. This was in a course that drew primarily from post-docs and industry professionals.

He continued to develop *Admirer* and went on to win "Most Promising Entry" at a public MLOps competition, again in competition with adult professionals.

I am still following Andrew, because I expect he will do great things, whatever he chooses to do. I can, without hesitation, recommend that you admit him to your university and help him on his path to excellent work.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CFrye', written in a fluid, cursive style.

Charles Frye, Ph.D.