

1. Recommender's Name:

Text Response

Birgit Grund

Statistic

Value

Total Responses

1

2. Recommender's Email Address:

Text Response

birgit@umn.edu

Statistic

Value

Total Responses

1

3. Applicant's name for which you are providing a recommendation:

Text Response

Daniel Liden

Statistic

Value

Total Responses

1

4. How long have you known the applicant and under what circumstances have you become familiar with the applicant's academic abilities?

Text Response

I have known Daniel Liden since January 2017, when he enrolled in my lecture course STAT 8052 "Applied Statistical Methods II". Currently, I am advising his Master's thesis, and have been meeting with him regularly through the last couple of months. We repeatedly discussed challenges of analyzing real-life data (and the satisfaction of solving real-life problems in collaboration with specialists from other fields) during our one-on-one meetings for his thesis.

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5. Please assess the applicant's ability to contribute to the Data Science for the Public Good Fellowship Program.

Text Response

Prior to entering our graduate statistics program at the University of Minnesota, Daniel obtained a B.A. in the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Science and Medicine at the University of Chicago, so he is familiar with social science approaches and terminology. While our statistics graduate program does not specialize in sociology, the applied methods we are teaching are universal. Daniel excelled in my class. The STAT 8052 lecture course was fast-paced, demanding, and clearly targeted towards our Ph.D. students. The class was centered on correctly applying statistical methods to real-life problems. He scored close to the top of the class in a very strong cohort, receiving an undisputed "A". For his Master's thesis, Daniel is programming simulation studies to investigate properties of a new bootstrap test, which we developed because standard estimation methods failed for clinical trial data I worked on. In our many one-on-one discussions, I was deeply impressed by his maturity and common sense in approaching real-life data problems. He later told me that, in addition to his studies, he has been working for years part-time as consultant for a health analytics company, including data analyses. In this work, he gained substantial experience in communicating with his non-statistician colleagues and superiors about the statistical analyses and their interpretations. He clearly has experience in tackling "messy" real-life data. His communication skills are outstanding, both oral and written; explanations are calm, thoughtful, and to the point. He is proficient in programming R, which he is using for the simulation studies. Daniel would contribute his knowledge of quantitative methods, combined with background knowledge of social sciences gained during his BA studies. His outstanding communication skills and experience in collaborative work with non-statisticians would be a great asset for an interdisciplinary group.

Statistic

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1

6. How would you describe the applicant's motivation and initiative in pursuing his/her academic and career goals?

Text Response

In his work in class and on the thesis, Daniel was self-motivated, reliable, thoughtful, and went far beyond the call of duty. His application to the Fellowship flows from his interest in social sciences (evidenced in his choice of BA), combined with the desire to apply his quantitative knowledge from our program to real-life problems that matter. He is enthusiastic about applied data analysis; he took the initiative to find (and hold down for years) part-time work as statistical consultant in addition to his studies.

Statistic

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1