



Sherilyn Tejada Martinez

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It is my pleasure to write this letter of support of Dr. Gurajala's re-appointment. My name is Sherilyn Tejada Martinez, Class of 2019 and currently working as a Systems Engineer at Lockheed Martin. This letter is based on multiple interactions I've had with Dr. Gurajala as a student in her class, a Teachers Assistant for her course, and a participant in a conference poster presentation under her advisement.

Dr. Gurajala is both a motivating and inspiring professor, who provides various teaching styles in order to provide the best teaching environment for her students. For example, for Theory of Computation and Cryptography courses, she used traditional chalk and blackboard in order to provide step by step explanation that tailored to student live questions and comments. While in Computer Networks she used PowerPoint slides that allowed to a quick flow of information at a short amount of time. All the lectures were paced appropriately, and students were always encouraged to ask questions. There were weekly in-class quizzes that we received feedback right away, as well as daily homework that would be reviewed in-class after being returned.

With Theory of Computation being one of the more challenging courses for students, Dr. Gurajala makes it a point to pair theoretical concepts with relevant examples, making the course relatable for students and more entertaining. While in Computer Networks, Dr. Gurajala explained concepts and protocols in class but also provided hands on experience by demonstrating their application using the GENI platform. This platform was a great tool for us to understand networks-related concepts clearly. In Introduction to Cryptography, with this course having a strong math background, Dr. Gurajala made sure to take extra time to provide the mathematical background necessary to understand the encryption and decryption algorithms. What made this class so unique was that we had to implement each algorithm as part of our assignments. As a challenge, Dr. Gurajala would encrypt our assignments. Thus, the assignments are all ciphers and the cipher texts had to be decrypted in order to know what the assignment entailed. With most of her courses being challenging, she made sure to be available outside of class to help as needed.

In addition, I was also a Teacher's Assistant (TA) for two semesters under Dr. Gurajala. At the very start of the semester, she meets with the course TAs and clearly explains what is expected from them. The TAs workload is also managed to ensure that we do not have to work beyond our committed time.

With Dr. Gurajala being an active faculty member in ACM-W student chapter, she advised us on a poster presentation for NYCWIC (New York Celebration of Women in Computing) conference. I want to note that Dr. Gurajala's role in our poster presentation at 2019 NYCWIC. Due to a busy schedule, we fell behind in preparing our poster for the conference, but she pushed us all to put in our best effort and get it done in the last minute. The poster got the best poster award at the conference and we greatly appreciate her advice and efforts.

To summarize, Dr. Gurajala was a big part of my undergraduate career. With me being a student, TA and a member of the ACM-W chapter, she provided vast knowledge and inspiration that was a very motivating for countless of students within the Computer Science Department.

Sincerely,
Sherilyn Tejada Martinez,
BA, Class of 2019