

1/20/2023

It is my pleasure to write this letter for tenure support for Dr. Gurajala. I am a recent graduate of the Computer Science Department of SUNY Potsdam as of 2022. Currently, I am working at TelosAir as a Software Engineering Intern. During my time at SUNY Potsdam, I had taken a myriad of courses taught by Dr. Gurajala. She also was my advisor for my senior project capstone for my Computer Science degree.

My very first computer science course was taught by Dr. Gurajala. After taking a couple years of courses prior, her class immediately stood out as her teaching style is very effective to produce a fruitful learning environment. Something that is not to be underestimated are things like how she will go over the quizzes and homeworks as soon as they are turned in so that her students can immediately find out if they solved the question correctly and understand how they should have solved them. This was a very effective way to learn from our mistakes on these assignments is to go over it while it is still fresh in our memory.

It is also very evident in the way that Dr. Gurajala conducts a class that she is a great professor who cares about her students' learning experience. I recall that all questions from the students were always answered to the fullest extent in order to ensure the students' fully understood the answer, even with any amount of follow up questions. Dr. Gurajala also demonstrated her willingness to adjust her schedule to ensure that everyone stayed on board with the lecture. This shows her deep commitment to and ability to teach her students.

Over the duration of the school shutdown due to COVID-19 and the shift to remote learning, Dr. Gurajala gracefully adapted to the format change and made sure to keep the same level of attentiveness to her students' learning. She swapped her chalkboards for a tablet and a stylus and was able to provide her students with the same high quality lectures that we had received in person. The quick adaptation to online teaching helped make the temporary transition very easy to get a grasp on.

During the online lectures, I took a lot of great courses taught by Dr. Gurajala, like Theory of Computation and Database Systems. The Database Systems course stood out to me as we were able to do a research project on a real life database as well as a final project involving databases. Both of these projects had a giant effect on my experience as a Computer Science student as they motivated me to really get into the field and connect the theory with the real world. A lot of what I learned in Database systems I use in my position now when it comes to data handling.

When I approached Dr. Gurajala last minute, needing to find a senior project for my capstone, she was able to help me figure out a few options and sort it out, which absolutely saved me. We ended up being able to submit our work from this project to the American Association for Aerosol Research (AAAR) annual conference as a platform presentation. This research was centered around using machine learning to extract the topics and trends within the abstracts of papers submitted to the conference in past years. With her guidance, I was able to cultivate a lot of confidence in programming during the time with this project. Overall the project was a very fun learning experience.

In my time at SUNY Potsdam in the Computer Science Department, Dr. Gurajala stood out as a professor integral to my learning experience. I know from other students in my class

that this is not unique to just my experience and that she had a lasting effect on many others taking her courses. I am grateful to have had her as a professor and I am sure those who take classes with her in the future are going to be as well.

Brandon Beattie

Class of 2022