July 31, 2012

Memorandum for Air Force Officer Selection Board

From: P. Tom Semm

Subject: Letter of Recommendation for Emily Hader

I have been asked by Emily Hader to write a letter of recommendation in support of her application for the U.S. Air Force Officer Training Squadron and a position as an Officer in the U.S. Air Force; I am happy to do so. I am a Professor of Sociology at San Diego State University where I have been teaching for twenty years. Emily was a student in two of my courses, Introduction to Social Problems and Contemporary Social Theory, and I have known her for almost five years. I usually write letters of recommendation for students wanting to go onto graduate programs in sociology, social work or education; I do believe though that I can comment very positively on several things that might help the Selection Board make a favorable decision on Emily’s application. These would be Emily’s intellectual ability, her willingness and desire to learn, and her ability to work with and get along with others.

As I said Emily was a student in two of my courses. She got an A in each course. In the Introduction to Social Problems course the class average is C+ and in the Contemporary Theory course the class average is C. In terms of intellectual ability, I would rate Emily in the top 2% of undergraduate students that I have taught at San Diego State (over 5000). She also writes well and is an articulate speaker.

I got to know Emily in the Introduction Course, a course with 250 students, through office hours and extra credit assignments, but it was in the theory course, a much smaller course, that I got to know her better. The theory course is an upper division course and much more demanding. It includes not only exams but papers and group presentations. Emily excelled in the exams and the written papers, and her group’s presentation was the best in the class. Group presentations frequently do not work out for various reasons, lack of cooperation and failure to share work load being two of the main ones. Emily’s group was an example of a group presentation working as would be hoped-the students all worked well together and shared the work load equally.

During office hours, Emily and several other students, all A students, would come together each week to discuss the theories and ask questions. It was clear from these weekly sessions that Emily wanted to learn and was willing to learn. She was engaged with the material, had understood most of it, but would not hesitate to say when she did not understand something and she would ask questions

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I give Emily my highest recommendation without any qualifications. If I can be of any further assistance, I can be reached at San Diego State 619-594-5206 or by email at [psemm@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:psemm@mail.sdsu.edu).

Sincerely,

P. Tom Semm

Professor of Sociology