November 4, 2013

To: Admissions Committee

, a student last semester in my Contemporary Sociological Theory course in the Sociology Department at San Diego State, has asked me to write a letter of recommendation in support of her application for admission to the San Diego State University Graduate School of Social Work in order to obtain the Master of Social Work degree. The two theory courses, Contemporary and Classical, in the Sociology Department, are required and are arguably the most difficult courses that students encounter in the Sociology major and minor. The reason that I mention this is I believe that April’s performance in my Contemporary Theory course can provide a valuable insight into April’s academic ability and potential

April was the best student in her class which consisted of Sociology majors and minors and one graduate student in Sociology. Several of the students went on to graduate programs. There were two papers assigned and three exams; the exams consisted of short answer and essay questions. Theory papers are more difficult for most students because they require students to think critically and think at a higher level of abstraction. April wrote the best papers and got the highest scores on each of the two papers. April also got the highest scores on each of the three exams. Academically, I would rank her in the top 2% of students that I have taught at San Diego State. I believe that April would be able to handle the academic challenges posed by any advanced degree program.

I know the Social Work program looks at other than academic factors and I can only comment to a small degree on those other factors. It was a diverse class and April interacted well with all the other students. She participated fully in class discussions, asked intelligent questions, and was attentive and respectful. April attended all the classes except one; she notified me ahead of time that she would miss that class and provided me with the reason for missing the class.

I am happy that April asked me to write a letter of recommendation and I highly recommend her without qualification. I believe that she would do quality work in the program and quality work as a professional. If I can be of further help, I can be reached at [psemm@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:psemm@mail.sdsu.edu) or at my office NH 204 phone 594-5906.

Paul Tom Semm

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