April 12, 2013

I am writing a letter of recommendation in support of Lorraine Perales’ application for an American Association of University Women Scholarship. I am happy to do so. I am currently a professor of sociology at San Diego State University where I have worked for twenty years. I have known Lorraine for four years. She was a student of mine in both Introduction to Social Problems and Contemporary Social Theory. I also came to know her through her participation in a student group that I worked with for a time. Lorraine is an excellent student who did well in both classes and she is a kind, thoughtful and caring person. Just recently she was accepted into the San Diego State Study Abroad program and she is going to study for a year in France.

I would rank Lorraine academically in the top ten percent of students that I have taught at San Diego State, nearly five thousand. The evaluation process in Contemporary Social Theory, an upper division course is very comprehensive and I think a good measure of a student’s academic ability. There are two papers assigned and I believe they demonstrate a student’s writing, critical thinking, and complex reasoning skills. Lorraine wrote excellent papers and received As on each. There was also an oral presentation component to the evaluation process and Lorraine did an excellent job. She was articulate and demonstrated a superior command of the English language. While she is in France, she will be attending school and doing a research project which is based on material from the two courses she took with me and which I am helping her design. The project, I believe, will be the basis for either a Master’s thesis or Ph.D. dissertation.

Lorraine comes from a minority and working class background and herself has made her way through school by working, but it has not been easy and has taken a long time. She has always dreamed of studying abroad in France and the opportunity has finally arisen. The Study Abroad program is expensive and the AAUW scholarship would be extremely helpful. I know Lorraine will be a wonderful representative of San Diego State University, San Diego, and the AAUW. I give her my highest recommendation without qualification. If I can be of any further assistance, I can be reached at [psemm@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:psemm@mail.sdsu.edu) or 619-594-5906.

Tom Semm

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