January 5, 2014

To: Admissions Committee

Refugio Martinez Gonzalez has asked me to write a letter of recommendation in support of his application for admission to the Department of Special Education: Early Childhood Preliminary Credential program at San Diego State University; I am happy to do so. Refugio is one of the best students I have had in many years. In Spring 2013, Refugio was a student in my Contemporary Social Theory course, and in Fall 2013, he was in my Social Construction of Reality course. Both courses are upper division courses in the Sociology Department at San Diego State University. Refugio got As in each course and the highest total points in each course.

The two courses Refugio took with me are two of the most difficult in the department. They demand both abstract and critical thinking, a wide knowledge base, and good writing skills. The evaluation process in each course consisted of three exams and two papers. Refugio received the highest scores on each of the three exams in the theory course and two of the three exams in the social construction course. He did equally well on the papers. Theory papers are more difficult for most students because they require students to think critically and think at a higher level of abstraction. Refugio wrote the best papers and got the highest scores on each of the two papers. Academically, I would rank him in the top 1% of students that I have taught at San Diego State, approximately five thousand. I believe that his performance in these two courses is a good indication of Refugio’s ability to handle the academic challenges posed by any advanced degree program.

I know the teaching credential programs, especially those that deal with young children with special needs, look at other than academic factors and I can comment to a small degree on those other factors. Refugio’s attendance was perfect. He is very articulate and participated fully in class discussions, asked intelligent questions and made relevant and insightful comments that reflected an engagement with the material. He was always attentive and respectful. It was a diverse class and he interacted well with all the other students. During the time that I have known him, I have come to think of him as a kind and thoughtful person who cares about others.

I am happy that Refugio has asked me to write a letter of recommendation for him and I highly recommend him without qualification. I believe that he 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.

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