December 23, 2010

To: Admissions Committee

Community-Based Block Cross-Cultural Counseling Program

Jennifer McCarty has asked me to write a letter of recommendation in support of her application for admission to the Community-Based Block counseling program in the Department of Counseling and School Psychology at San Diego State University. Jennifer was a student of mine in my Contemporary Social Theory course, an upper division required course in the Sociology Department at San Diego State University. And this semester Jennifer was my ISA. I have known Jennifer for over a year, and I have been extremely impressed with her academic ability and maturity.

The evaluation process for the Theory course is comprehensive and I think is a good indication of Jennifer’s academic ability and potential to do graduate work. The process consisted of three exams, two papers and small group extra credit assignments. Jennifer did well on all the exams and wrote extremely high quality papers on difficult subjects. She received an A for the course. Jennifer excelled in other ways; she attended class regularly, got along well with the other students, and she made positive contributions to the class discussions. She also took advantage of office hours to discuss issues that were raised in the class. I believe that Jennifer is in the top 5% academically of students that I have taught at SDSU in upper division courses.

In fact I was so impressed with Jennifer and confident that she would do a good job that I lobbied aggressively for her to be my ISA the following semester even though she was only an undergraduate. And Jennifer did an outstanding job as my ISA. She attended classes, helped maintain order in the large class (240 students), graded exams and papers, held office hours and met with students. She did such a good job as my assistant that I was able, more than any other semester, to focus on teaching.

In both the classes I teach, I give extra credit assignments which require the students to view a specific documentary and then come to the office to talk about it. I was able to observe Jennifer’s interactions with the students several times during these extra credit discussions. I was extremely impressed with her in these interactions. She was engaging, open, encouraging, yet firm. The latter, firmness, a requirement because students would actually try to get extra credit for viewing the documentaries when they clearly had not viewed them.

I believe that Jennifer would do well in the program and would complete the program. I recommend her without qualification. If I can be of further assistance, I can be reached at 594-5906 or [psemm@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:psemm@mail.sdsu.edu).

Sincerely,

Paul Tom Semm

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