March 5, 2013

To: Admissions Committee

Amin Neil Akbari has asked me to write a letter of recommendation in support of his application to the Columbia University of General Studies; I am delighted to do so. I have taught at San Diego State University in the Sociology Department for 17 years, and in that time I have taught entry level general education courses, upper division courses and graduate courses. Neil is one of the best students that I have taught at San Diego State, more than five thousand. Academically, I would rank him in the top one per cent. Last semester he took my Introduction to Social Problems course and this semester he is taking my Contemporary Social Theory course. Neil got an A in the Social Problems course; the grade average for the class was 2.5. This semester he got the highest grade in both classes on the first social theory exam and his first paper was the in best both classes.

I got to know Neil better than most of the students in the Social Problems class, a class of 200, because he would come to office hours to discuss the problems and issues that had been raised in class. It was obvious that he was committed to learning, had a broad knowledge base, and was capable of thinking critically. He is an excellent student who, I believe, will be successful at the University and will be an excellent representative of the school. I can recommend him without qualification. I wish he was not transferring. If you need anything further from me, I can be reached at [psemm@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:psemm@mail.sdsu.edu) or 619-594-5906.

Sincerely,

Paul Tom Semm

Professor of Sociology

Department of Sociology

San Diego State University