



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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November 29, 2012

Dear Madam/Sir:

It is a great pleasure to write on behalf of Zach Taylor's application for your PhD program in social psychology. Zach has taken three courses from me and earned "A" and "A+" grades in them. He has come into my office on many occasions and had long conversations with me, during which times I have come to know him quite well.

I first came to know Zach when he did an outstanding job in my large lecture class (Soc 152A), earning a high "A" grade. As a consequence, I invited him to be in the honors course (Soc 152B) that I hold the next quarter for the very best students in the prior quarter. It was in the honors class that I first came to know Zach well and to respect his intelligence, integrity and deep concern for humanity. This small class is a discussion class and Zach made many intelligent and creative contributions. I got to see Zach thinking "on his feet," and was very impressed with how quickly he formulates ideas and clearly he expresses them.

After that quarter, I asked Zach to be one of the writers and webmasters for Soc 152C, which is a small class that writes material for the UCSB-hosted website called SexInfo. Zach has written over 50 articles and Q&As for the website and contributed many creative ideas to the class discussions. He also joined the webmasters who take care of all the technical computer work needed to make a website function.

Zach has earned a 3.52 GPA in his four undergraduate years, which is very impressive—especially since the Psychological and Brain Sciences Major is one of the harder ones on our campus. Zach wants to do original research in social psychology, along with publishing and teaching. He loves analytical thinking and writing, which makes him very well suited for a career in academia.

While here at UCSB, Zach has done research at the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education on programs to help 10 to 12-year olds become better educated in issues of mental health. He belongs to a research team that has created empirically tested measures for studying stigma, prejudice and attitudes about mental health. He has used these research tools to collect data, enter the data and analyze the results. He will soon be involved in writing up the findings and will be cited in the scholarly manuscripts that derive from this work. He has also worked at the UCSB Recreation Center, and been promoted up to the position of supervisor, which shows how responsible he is.

Zach is quite skillful in his use of English, in both spoken and written forms. He is a cheerful, humorous and outgoing person, leading people to like him and enjoy working with him. He relates well to many different types of people. He also carries responsibility well and takes his projects extremely seriously, working carefully and with attention to detail. He is forward looking in attaining his long-term goals.

By now it should be abundantly clear that Zach is an exceptional person who is developing into an outstanding scholar. He stands out among his peers as a very serious and honest person who is using his years at the university very effectively. He loves challenges and wants to gain ever-increasing numbers of skills as he advances through his career. Zach is both a serious worker and a cheerful, well-adjusted person with whom it is a pleasure to interact. He earns my highest recommendation. If I can be of any further help to you, please do not hesitate to phone me at (805) 967-4995.

Sincerely,



John D. Baldwin

Professor

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