



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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Dr. Brenda Major
Self and Social Identity Laboratory
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Santa Barbara, CA 93106

Dear Madam:

It is a great pleasure to write on behalf of Scott McKernan's application to be a laboratory manager at the Self and Social Identity Laboratory. Scott has taken two courses from me and earned "A" and "A+" grades in all of them. Three years ago, I hired him to do important work for me and he has performed well for all three years. 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 met Scott when he did an outstanding job in my large lecture class (Soc 152A—Sociology of Human Sexuality), 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 best 18 students in the previous quarter. It was in the honors class that I first came to know Scott well and to respect his intelligence, integrity and deep concern for humanity. This small class is a discussion class and Scott made many intelligent and creative contributions. I got to see Scott thinking "on his feet," and was very impressed with how quickly he formulates ideas and clearly he expresses them. He is interested in an interdisciplinary approach to sexuality and has read broadly on the topic. His special focus is the area of gay, lesbian and bisexual studies.

After that quarter, I asked Scott to be one of the graders who scores the tests for my large Soc 152A class. He became one of the twelve students on the team and did outstanding work marking tests, recording grades and passing back tests quickly. Soc 152A reaches about 600 undergraduate students each quarter, and the grader team plays a large role in making the course a success, by grading three midterms and a final each quarter (all three quarters of the year), keeping errors to the very minimum. Everyone on the grader team enjoyed Scott's cheerful personality and dedication to making the team work as smoothly as possible. This requires a great deal of planning ahead, synchronizing with at least six other people for each exam. Scott always gave 120%, going above and beyond the call of duty.

Scott has earned a 3.64 GPA and has been on the Dean's Honor List many times. He graduated in spring of 2014. Before graduating, he worked in Dr. Karen Szumlinski's Addiction lab at UCSB, coordinating an helping run an alcohol addiction experiment. Between 2012 and 2014, Scott worked as a Peer Advisor for the College of Letters and

Science. He counseled countless students about course choices, schedule planning, selecting majors and much more. In 2013 to 2014, Scott worked a Primary Investigator for one year in Dr. Shelly Gable's Social Psychology Laboratory. He acquired a \$750 Santa Barbara URCA grant to study the impact of social support and its effects on people's relationships.

Currently, Scott has been working as a Research Assistant in Dr. Brenda Major's psychology laboratory, conducting complex studies on perceptions and suspicions among minorities and whites. Through this experience he has gained extensive background knowledge of the psychology of stigma. Scott has helped conduct studies under the supervision of 2nd year graduate student, Kathy Espino-Perez. Kathy has mentored Scott and taught him several useful skills such as basic statistical analyses in SPSS (cleaning data, t-test, averages, correlations, Cronbach's alpha, and some factor analysis).

Scott 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 Scott would be an excellent candidate for your position as Laboratory Manager. He has extensive experience working in psychology laboratories. He loves challenges and wants to gain ever-increasing numbers of skills as he advances through his career, aiming toward earning a PhD in Psychology. 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, PhD
Professor
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