

March 24, 2014

To whom it may concern:

I am delighted to recommend Uyen Tran as an instructor and tutor in economics. The following letter details the traits Uyen has that make her an exceptional educator. However, by no means, does this letter encompass the countless other attributes that makes her an extraordinary mentor.

ECON 101 is known for being an extremely difficult class for timid first-semester freshmen. Often being very large, Uyen worked hard to create a comfortable and intimate learning environment for her classroom. From the first day of recitation, she made herself extremely approachable to her students, going beyond the expectation to ensure students didn't just receive a good grade in the class-but truly understood the information presented. Uyen's enthusiasm for economics and learning was contagious. Although I was a biology major, Uyen made economics fun and exciting to learn. She knew economics extremely well, enabling her to excel in explaining any topic to us. She would always follow up an explanation with a question to ensure we understood the information. Her way of testing us was never intimidating, but instead served to determine if we really did know the material.

Every recitation lecture Uyen designed for active student participation, developing a classroom setting where students could comfortably interact with each other as well as her. We were invited to solve problems she created on the board, serving as an extension on our weekly lecture. She encouraged us to ask questions and to debate answers, allowing the tricky and sometimes what seemed incomprehensible material soak in. There was never a point where I was afraid to ask a question, even if it was very basic. She made sure that every student had a chance to answer a question and demonstrate his or her knowledge. Most importantly, she taught her class in a way that made sense to 18 and 19 years old, using real life examples and pop culture in every topic we went over. Her style of teaching was unique and successful, as she didn't replicate boring problems from the textbook. Rather, she worked hard to devise her own problems and handouts that engaged all students with all different learning styles.

If your questions extended beyond the fifty-minute class, Uyen made herself available at everyone's convenience, going above and beyond what was expected as a teacher assistant. I spent countless hours with her, attending her weekly office hours, where I would leave assured of my understanding of the course. She held large study review sessions, going over practice tests to ensure that all of ECON 101, not just her students, knew the material. However, this is not what stood out the most to me in Uyen's classroom. It was when she gave up over 30 hours of her time to her students the week of the final exam. Not only did she hold six hour-long review sessions, but also she gave the majority of her students the chance to meet with her individually and ask any questions. This kind of academic attention is rare to see at a large research university like UNC. However, Uyen showed constant dedication to her students in this manner.

Regardless of the day, Uyen went above and beyond when serving as a teacher assistant. Due to a learning environment based on high energy and excitement, Uyen was effectively able to connect with all of her students. There would be no denial among my peers when I say Uyen is one of the best teacher assistants here at UNC. I have great confidence that most would recognize her commitment to educating students in economics in any situation, as she demonstrates proficiency, regardless of how difficult the task may be. I highly recommend Uyen Tran as a tutor and instructor. Please feel free to contact with me further questions or concerns regarding the recommendation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Emily M.