

Dear Dr. Debose,

I am writing this letter not only to support Dr. Schutte's nomination for the CSUN Distinguished Teaching Award for 2011-12 but to express my unconditional gratitude to him as well. I met Dr. Schutte about three years ago when I was taking the statistics and methods combination class. After I added the class, I read online reviews which seemed comforting; however the idea of having an eight unit seven hour combination class on a Saturday was overwhelming. I contemplated for weeks whether I should drop the class or have the courage to take it. After the first fifteen minutes on the first day of instruction, I made my decision. Dr J, as we referred to him later, made everyone in the class feel comfortable about the upcoming semester. He made it very clear that if any student needed extra help, he would be available anytime to help us understand the material. Soon enough, I realized he was not like other professors who expected their students to do well in class and understand the subject matter simply because they themselves do. Dr. J was encouraging, comforting and did an excellent job taking the time to explain the lessons. Unlike other professors, he never expressed annoyance when students were struggling and needed help with the same lesson. He went above and beyond in making himself accessible to all his students. Throughout the entire semester his office hours turned into extra instruction time for the students who wanted help outside of class. Even though he could have easily spent his office hours sitting comfortably answering questions from a few students, instead he would run review sessions going over the lectures, explaining the material over again until each student gained an understanding. Almost every student would attend his office hours since the material was quite challenging and Dr J truly cared about each individual and always encouraged us to try to the best of our abilities. Besides coming in early and staying past his office hours, he set up extra days especially before tests to help us with questions, not to mention his prompt and thorough email responses to our last minute questions. I remember a student who had some personal issue and was missing class and Dr J actually made the effort to contact the student to make sure they do not fall behind. I really have not had the opportunity to meet another professor who truly cares as much about his student's success as Dr J does.

Along with the rest of my classmates, I spent Friday nights before our test on campus preparing until Saturday morning. I remember the time Dr J spent with me, answering all my questions, making sure I understand every detail in order to succeed in his class. I went from being afraid of taking his class to receiving one of the highest grades. However, I know my success was not due to the amount of time I dedicated to the class but to the amount of time Dr J dedicated to me. Dr J helped me believe in my abilities and encouraged me to be more confident in my work. I have recommended him to many students countless times because I believe each student should have such a wonderful opportunity to meet this unique individual. I consider myself truly fortunate to have a mentor like Dr J. I continue to keep contact with him even after my class, and he has only made me appreciate him more. He has given me advice outside of class regarding my career goals, as well as with personal matters.

I truly appreciate Dr J, all his hard work and I take great pride in being acquainted with someone with so many accomplishments. Most of his students know and love him as an amazing professor, but I believe it is a shame how so many people are unaware of the amazing achievement Dr J has acquired and the true visionary that he is. I take such a pride in him, always informing people that my mentor, a professor from the Sociology Department is the first

developer of many great innovations in education. He was the first to develop the idea of online classes, Saturday classes and Sunday classes. He brought the idea of changing the Monday, Wednesday, Fridays school schedule to simply Monday and Wednesday and Tuesday and Thursday. I remember I had not yet had the chance to meet Dr J but I was already a student at CSUN when the changes were announced. I was among the many students who appreciated the idea yet had no idea who made this suggestion and I believe Dr J deserves far more recognition. At the time he was working on his proposal to offer Sunday classes, I had made a visit to his office and was really fascinated to learn about all his successful ideas. It is clear to me that a man capable of such creativity also has the ability to teach in ways that make a combination class of such difficulty, become the most productive subject I have had in my college career.

I have been a student since the age of six and in all sixteen years of school, I have had many amazing teachers and professors but Dr J firmly holds the position of the best professor/teacher I have ever had. I cannot complain about any of the Sociology department professors since I have had great experiences with all but there are so many factors which make Dr J the most accomplished and most deserving of the Distinguished Teaching Award. In my eyes he deserves a Noble Prize since it is not every day we come across someone with such accomplishments. He is not motivated by self interest and does not expect or demand any acknowledgment, however his motivations are pure, altruistic and his character is humble, therefore, he is the best nominee for the award. I simply cannot imagine who would be more deserving of such a high honor and recognition as Dr J is, especially for all his hard work, dedication, creativity and positive influence he has had over his students' lives.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ruzanna Abovyan