

To the Faculty Senate Committee on Distinguished Teaching,

I am writing this letter in support of Dr. Jerry Schutte for the 2012 CSUN Faculty Senate Distinguished Teaching Award. I am a first-year faculty member in the Sociology Department, and Dr. Schutte is my official mentor. Let me begin this letter by saying that Dr. Schutte has been an AMAZING mentor to me. He has offered candid advice throughout these first few months I have been teaching at CSUN, and his wealth of knowledge and experience has really been appreciated. We both have the same interests professionally—social psychology, statistics, sociological theory, and research methodology. We also have similar backgrounds, with both of us receiving our doctorate degrees in the University of California system. His advice in how to acclimate to teaching CSUN students has been invaluable. He understands the type of student I was used to at the UC, and has helped me to understand how CSUN students are different and what their specific needs are. I really have enjoyed teaching CSUN students and I think my experience is a direct reflection of Dr. Schutte's helpful advice regarding pedagogical strategy and how it differs at the CSU.

Another reason I feel Dr. Schutte should win the Distinguished Teaching Award regards my experience and relationship with one of his ex-students, Jesse Fletcher. Jesse received his BA and MA in Sociology from CSUN, and entered the Ph.D. program at UC Riverside in 2006 (Where I received my Ph.D.). Like Dr. Schutte at CSUN, I was a mentor to Jesse when we were at UCR together. I was finishing my doctoral work; Jesse was just beginning the program. Jesse worked underneath me and was sort of my main "research strategist" during data collection for my dissertation. At that time I did not personally know Dr. Schutte, but Jesse constantly referred to his courses and experience with Schutte at CSUN, and the amazing, rigorous education he received. Jesse remains one of the most brilliant people I have ever met, but his exceptional abilities needed to be honed and developed—they did not appear on their own. It is clear that his

skills and education were a direct reflection of the time he spent under the wing of Dr. Schutte. Indeed, Jesse always emphasized that any talent he had acquired as a social psychologist was provided to him by Jerry Schutte, and to this day Jesse speaks extremely highly of his time at CSUN. Jesse completed his Ph.D. at UC Riverside in 2010.

In addition to Jesse, two additional CSUN graduates eventually enrolled in the Ph.D. Program at UC Riverside: Matthew Grindal and Preeta Saxena. In my estimation Matt and Preeta represent the upper echelon of graduate students in the program. Their training was exceptional, and they too were trained by Dr. Schutte.

Just as Jesse, Matt, and Preeta before me, I feel very fortunate to have Dr. Schutte as my mentor. Of course, mentoring an assistant professor is different than mentoring a graduate student. The point is that Dr. Schutte is amazing at both: when one is a perfect teacher one can help anyone.

I wish to convey my greatest appreciation for Dr. Schutte's assistance to this point, and emphasize that he very much deserves to be named Outstanding Teacher by the Faculty Senate. There are undoubtedly thousands of students whose lives he has touched over the years. Please accept my recommendation and see that he gets this award. NO ONE deserves it better.

Sincerely,

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