

February 27, 2012

Herman Debose, Chair

Department of Sociology

Dear Dr. Debose,

I was a student of Dr. Schutte for the fall semester of 2011. I took his Sunday methodology, and statistics class in which I thought would be such a burden since it was a on the weekends. Fortunately, Dr. Schutte made the process enjoyable and for reasons I still don't understand made an impact on my ambition to learn more about the subject to the point of considering furthering my education at a master's level. What separate's Dr. Schutte from other professors and makes him deserving of this reward is one simple over-looked quality of his character. Dr. Schutte's gift to his students more than his knowledge itself is his ability to be himself.

Dr. Schutte has this one overarching quality above all that allows him to connect with his students on a personal level. He was accommodating to us all in our fall class. He did not allow any student to be left behind. He had a friendly attitude of leniency that helped students from different circumstantial situations to complete our work at our own pace without lowering his expectations. It was as if I was speaking to both a PH.D professor and a friend that I've known for years. He had made me completely comfortable with asking him questions about my possible career paths and choices that have centered my focus on who I want to be as a person. Essentially, he helped me understand that our career choice is a reflection of ourselves and the relationship we want to have with this world. As an instructor he portrayed himself always as both teacher and student. During winter break I had emailed him asking if I could have his audio lectures from our fall class as reference guide for my future academic goals that he would record and post to our class webpage for review. His response was "I never thought I would have this request." I thought this was hilarious! I, a student was able to get a surprise from my professor with a small request. I believe it is just a compliment to his work as a Sociology professor and says a lot about his invaluable work. This is what makes Dr. Schutte a great Professor. He never allowed arrogance, prestige, or conceit that a teaching position may entitle interfere with the experiences his students could offer him. He understood that life is a metamorphosis and he would rather embrace it with his students than be hindered by it. His students are his children in many ways and I believe this is what makes him special.

Dr. Schutte is my professor, mentor, advisor, friend, and parent. I believe this is what allows him to be himself. He can embody all these qualities, because he is a whole person that understands his place in this world. His ability to embody all these traits is a testament to his experience, work ethic and his wiliness to take on all these roles as a professor. This is what makes Dr. Schutte a special person and a promising candidate for the CSUN Distinguished Teaching Award. Although this letter is brief I hope it is enough for you!

Sincerely,

Jason Castro

Sociology Major