

March 1, 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

As the former Lead Faculty in Academic Technology, I am writing this letter of recommendation for Dr. Jerry Schutte, who has been nominated for the 2012 Distinguished Teaching Award. I have known Dr. Schutte a little over ten years, during which time I had the honor of collaborating with him to improve teaching effectiveness and increase student engagement and learning outcomes using technology. I've also had the pleasure of serving on numerous committees with him, including Educational Resources Committee where he led the efforts to better meet our working students' needs by exploring alternative scheduling of classes and special Technology Taskforce to examine learning management systems for best practices in teaching and learning.

He is one of the pioneering faculty who used technology to improve student engagement and learning outcome in academically demanding classes with high failure rate, specifically in Social Statistics and Research Methodology courses. He created reusable learning objects and made his lectures and problem-solving exercises available on demand, 24/7, providing linguistically and culturally diverse students with much needed opportunities for repeated exposures and individualized tutorials. Such thoughtful and innovative online learning materials helped his students realize their learning success. He is also one of the first faculty to experiment with the Clickers as a way to increase student engagement and better monitor student learning outcome in his large lecture classes.

More importantly, he sets high expectations and standards for his students who are, by and large, first in their family to go to college, and he treats them as fellow researchers and scholars. He makes learning meaningful for his students by generating research questions that address the real educational and social problems from their every day lives. He demonstrates how best to conduct research and communicate research findings to wide audiences, ranging from highly technical to the general public. He encourages and enables his students to think like social scientists and researchers through careful scaffolding and apprenticeship. He makes them believe in themselves. His devotion and commitment to student learning success is clearly evidenced in stellar student evaluation of faculty—an average of 5 across courses, over time—and the long waiting list of students wanting to add his classes. He is well-respected and sought-after by his students.

With the same level of enthusiasm he teaches and supports his students in their learning, he also willingly shares his knowledge and wisdom in teaching and learning with his colleagues, mentoring new and seasoned faculty in his department and college, as well as those across the colleges and disciplines.

Many faculty have benefitted greatly by working alongside him, and some even had the good fortune of receiving his mentorship, reaping great successes in student learning outcome. Dr. Schutte has been and continues to be a true inspiration for his students and for us educators. He is truly a Distinguished Teacher well deserving of CSUN's 2012 Distinguished Teaching Award.

Sincerely,

*Sandra B. Chong*

Sandra B. Chong, Ph.D.

Professor, Elementary Education