

To Herman Debose, Chair Department of sociology,

I would like to give my support for the nomination of Professor Jerald Schutte for the CSUN Distinguished Teaching Award for 2011-12. Professor Schutte is not only a wonderful teacher but also a wonderful mentor, friend, and someone I consider family, in fact it feels weird referring to him as Professor Schutte, for I know him as Jerry, because that is the level of comfort he brings to his class and teaching style.

Taking a combined, hybrid, and six hour Sunday class (Soc 364 and Soc 497) seems like a daunting process, but with Jerry at the front of the class it's a walk through the park. I went into the class not expecting much from the professor, or from the students, but after the first hour I knew that Jerry was different, and as a result so was the class; he is one of those rare college professors that actually cares about his student's success. He doesn't say he wants to see you succeed (like most professors), but he shows you by offering his time in many different ways. One way is that he holds office hours, and tries to find a time that the majority of the class are available, these office hours soon turn into a mini class session, because a lot of the students are there, and the material is gone over again and aspects of the class that people are having problems with are gone over in more detail. Another way that he makes himself available is through the eliminate sessions, which are online study sessions that he holds before each exam, so that the material is fresh in our minds. He is also available through email, and will get back to you that same day. This type of availability from a professor is rare, and is much appreciated. He also makes himself available during class time, and during class breaks.

During the class he will stop his lecture and answer questions as students have them he will also provide commentary on comments that students make on something (i.e. if a student ties in a lesson to real life, Jerry will provide more examples or simply agree with that person's example). He also records all of his lectures, and posts them up onto moodle and his webpage, where they become available to students to re-listen to no later than 3 hours after class ends. Also another feature of his class, one that I am very fond of, is he assigns us partners after the first exam, pairing higher percentage students with the lower ones, and the higher one acts sort of like a mentor in studying tips, different ways of remembering things, etc. Jerry also encourages us to form study groups, which I did within the second week, and it was that study group that helped me the most, not with just the material, but with my life, and the problems I was having at the time. I formed lifetime binds with the people in my study group, we still meet every week like we did when we were in class, just to hang out and catch up.

Professor Jerald Schutte is a professor that all professors should take a class from, and learn a thing or two of what it means to actually teach, and not just stand in front of a class reciting facts. Jerry lets his students know he cares through his actions, and when he says "no student left behind" he means it. When he sees someone is struggling, he enlists the help of fellow classmates to help those that are falling behind.

Sincerely a former student,

Danielle Coughlan