

To Whom It May Concern,

I have known Matthew Hernandez since the fall semester of 2017 when I took their Philosophical Issues of Gender class. I had never taken a philosophy class before, nor did I think that I had any interest in it. However, I took the class to fulfill a general education credit, and to my surprise, fell in love with the subject. I owe this completely to Matthew Hernandez, whose passion for the subject, engaging teaching methods, and relatability made the class not only interesting, but one of my favorite classes that I have taken at UNC. In addition, Matt's performance in that first class prompted me to take another class from them the following fall semester.

It was clear from the beginning of both classes that Matt was incredibly prepared and knowledgeable about the subjects, and cared deeply about providing diverse readings and class activities aimed at promoting our understanding. Their ability to take complex philosophy concepts and apply an easily understood and relatable contemporary example is unparalleled. Additionally, Matt excelled at soliciting student involvement in class discussions, as they created a class environment that was welcoming. Since they did not lecture using slideshows, and instead sat with us and started informal conversations, they cultivated a class culture that put us all on equal ground and allowed us to speak our minds. The sensitive topics covered in their classes required mutual trust between classmates and the instructor, and I have never met an instructor so successfully create this rapport as Matt did.

Matt not only engaged me in class, but also was always available outside of class to answer my questions or act as a resource. Our discussions in office hours always left me with a challenge to do better or think deeper, and each time strengthened my interest in philosophy. In addition to helping me better understand philosophy, Matt also wrote several letters of recommendation for me, and provided me with invaluable support through a campaign I was running on UNC's campus for several months.

It was thanks to Matt's unending enthusiasm for their subject and their stellar teaching methods that following the second class I took with them, I declared a minor in philosophy. I made the difficult decision to drop a second major that I had in order to earn a philosophy minor. I am completely convinced that another instructor could not have made such an impression on me, and I believe it is a testament to Matt's teaching ability that they could inspire me to make such a leap of faith.

Put simply, Matthew Hernandez is an incredible instructor, but their influence radiates beyond the classroom. I have consistently felt challenged, respected, and supported through my time in Matt's class and in all the time since I ceased being their student. It is with pleasure and admiration that I wholeheartedly recommend Matthew Hernandez for any position they seek.

Sincerely,
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