

February 12, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my absolute pleasure to recommend Ryan Furlong for the University of Iowa Outstanding Teacher Award. I am currently a second year student, studying History and Secondary Education at the University of Iowa. I had the immense pleasure of meeting Ryan when I enrolled in his section of English 1200: The Interpretation of Literature during the Spring of 2017. I will forever be grateful that I decided to enroll in his class because of my opportunities to learn from such a compassionate teacher, study enthrilling and relevant course content as well as my new found relationship with one of my best mentors.

Every day, Ryan's personal teaching pedagogy proved his skill and love for the profession. His passions and knowledge were evident throughout the duration of his course. Ryan's eagerness to tap into every student's potential was evident in how he constructed his classroom instruction. For example, he offered many methods for students to participate in discussion and engagement both in and outside of the classroom. His empathy towards our classroom full of diverse learners allowed for *all* students to gain knowledge. For example, Ryan provides diverse and meaningful ways for student participation, showing Ryan's prioritization of equitable learning in the classroom.

As a student in the College of Education, a consistent conversation we have as future teachers is the importance of teacher-student relationships. Ryan does an impeccable job at exemplifying this critical component of classroom success through his eagerness to truly know all of his students. He was able to call us by name by the third class session, and showed an authentic interest in our lives by asking us questions about our passions and interests. His skill of cultivating crucial conversations created an excellent classroom environment centered around genuine relationships.

Ryan makes it an priority to give all of his students relevant and thorough feedback on all written assignments. I have never had a teacher give such passionate and astute feedback to *all* students in the classroom. This absolutely proves Ryan's commitment to educating all of his students individually. His devotion to meeting the needs and pushing the potential of all students he teaches. Ryan's expectation for us to use office hours exemplified his dedication to ensuring both our classroom and teacher-student relationship success.

As a future educator myself, I feel so fortunate to have Ryan as a mentor. The conversations Ryan and I have regarding teaching have given me great insight. Ryan has shown me the importance of student-centered learning and differentiated lesson-planning. Ryan has also exemplified the importance of being an active community member through his commitment to taking part in educational initiatives in the Iowa City Lucas Farms Neighborhood. Ryan shows that you do not need to be in the classroom to be a teacher, which truly embodies the meaning of being an impactful educator in the community.

I have the absolute confidence that Ryan is more than deserving for this prestigious award. If you have any more questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Enthusiastically,



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