

DATE

To whom it may concern:

I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation for FULL NAME, who has applied to your institution for graduate studies in medicine. I am a professor of Classics (Greek and Roman culture), in which FIRST NAME had a second major while at COLLEGE. I should make it clear, therefore, that I cannot provide an evaluation of NAME'S abilities in the natural sciences. I can, however, speak to NAME'S broad intellectual interests, her general qualities as a student, her maturity and unflagging optimism. I know NAME well, and I believe that she will become a fine physician.

NAME took several classes with me and was one of a select group of students whom I took on a January term trip to Greece to study ancient art in its religious context. As a student, NAME was ideal: enthusiastic, engaged, and inquisitive, I could always count on her to help move discussion forward. She did particularly well in a course I teach on ancient Greek and Roman sexuality, in which student are pushed to question their deeply held assumptions about what constitutes "normal" human sexual desires. No doubt her training in the biological sciences had already prepared NAME to be a bit skeptical about claims of normalcy – but in any case, she was particularly adept at analyzing various literary and historical works as evidence for cultural beliefs. NAME was also the student who continually pushed herself; she frequently stopped by my office with additional questions, or to seek feedback on her formal papers. She strikes me as someone with a natural inclination for learning.

Perhaps more important than her performance in my classes, however, was her presence on the tour of Greece. When traveling in Greece, one has to be prepared for the likelihood that things will not always go as planned. It is not unusual to arrive at an archaeological site only to discover that it is inexplicably closed. There is usually something else to do, nearby – but some students have difficulty shifting plans. At these sorts of moments, NAME was one of the students that I could count on to remain flexible and optimistic; she would be enthusiastic about whatever we found to do, and would help rally the others. In addition, NAME was one of a small subset of students who really set out independently in the evening. It can be difficult to navigate a foreign city, without a guide, when one does not speak the language. NAME and her friends simply did so, consistently, and as result she had a much richer experience of Greece than some of the more timid students. At the same time, NAME was absolutely reliable – when she needed to be somewhere at a specific time, she was (not a small thing on a foreign tour.)

Since her graduation from COLLEGE, NAME and I have kept in touch. We've talked a bit about what she wants to do in the field of medicine. She is not yet sure what area she will specialize in – what she knows is that she is interested in doing work in a hospital where she will be continually challenged, and will have the opportunity to learn from her peers.

Finally, a quick word about personality. A practicing physician can succeed (or fail) because of her ability to interact positively with her patients. NAME is a genuinely compassionate person, easy to talk with, and positive in outlook. She will, I believe, excel at the aspects of medical

practice that require human interaction. Her patients will like her and trust her, and she will bring her passion for lifelong learning to the profession. I recommend NAME highly.

Yours sincerely,