

SAMPLE LETTER OF RECOMENDATION

[University letterhead]

[sender's name]

[sender's departmental address—if not printed on letterhead]

[sender's departmental phone number, if available]

[sender's departmental fax number—if not printed on letterhead]

[sender's institutional email address]

[today's date]

[recipient's name]

[recipient's institutional address]

Dear [recipient's name]: *or* To Whom it May Concern:

It is my pleasure to recommend Jane Doe for admission to [name of program] at [name of university]. I am a fifth-year Ph.D. student at the University of California, Berkeley. I came to know Jane when I was her Graduate Student Instructor for Philosophy 111: Ethical Relativism, taught by Professor John Smith. The course comprised [short description of course].

Overall, Jane is highly intelligent and has good analytical skills. Her project on ethical practices in ancient Greece demonstrated her ability to come a detailed understanding of the ethical practices of another, very different, culture, and to analyze the consequences of those practices for contemporary ethical theories. She gave a particularly interesting discussion of the difficult practice of infanticide, and showed both sensitivity and detachment when discussing its ethical consequences.

Jane has excellent communication skills. Her written work is both clear and concise, as well as interesting to read. She demonstrated her oral articulateness in the discussion sections that were an integral part of the course. Each discussion section focused on a particular ethical dilemma. Students were required analyze morally problematic situations, and to develop and argue for their own ethical views with regard to the issue in question.

At a personal level, Jane is a well disciplined, industrious student with a pleasant personality. She went well beyond the course requirements in the quantity and quality of her project, putting in a lot of extra research and attending office hours every week. Throughout the course, Jane demonstrated great perseverance and initiative. Not only was she interested in and motivated to learn the material, but she also put great work into assimilating it to her own experience and developing her own ideas about each ethical topic that we discussed.

intellectual creativity necessary to complete an advanced graduate degree. I would therefore highly recommend Jane Doe. If her performance in my class is a good indication of how she would perform as a graduate student, she would be an extremely positive asset to your program.

If I can be of any further assistance, or provide you with any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

[sender's signature]

[sender's name and title]