



COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS

*Department of Mathematics
and Computer Science*

September 11, 2013

Letter of Recommendation for Suey Liu

I am writing to recommend Suey Liu of the Holy Cross College class of 2012 for graduate study in secondary mathematics education. Suey was my academic advisee for three years during her undergraduate career, during which she completed a major in Mathematics and a minor in Latin American Studies. I never had her as a student in one of my mathematics courses, but I followed her development and talked to her on many occasions as her interest in teaching developed and matured. Although she was never one of our strongest mathematics majors, she has a solid mathematics background plus a true passion for providing quality math teaching for students in inner-city schools like those where she volunteered as a tutor during her time here. So I would say she has exactly the right motivation for seeking an M.A. in secondary education. In addition, I am confident she has the skills and the persistence to succeed in a graduate program because of the way she matured as a student during her time here.

During the first four or five semesters of her time at Holy Cross, Suey struggled a bit, especially in the “bridge to abstract mathematics” courses – the Algebraic Structures (MATH 243) and Linear Algebra (MATH 244) sequence, plus the Principles of Analysis (MATH 242) course that are all required courses for our majors. Only half-jokingly we call these the “boot camp” for the majors, and many students who did well in high school and in calculus never quite get the hang of them. It was clear that these proof-oriented courses were something new in Suey’s experience too, and it took a while for her to get comfortable with that style of working. But she really persevered and developed a good approach to studying and learning this material.

Around the beginning of her third year Suey really seemed to hit her stride in the upper-level mathematics courses. The hard work she had consistently put in throughout her time here started to pay off in better grades. As a result, her confidence also increased markedly and it was great to see her maturing into a solid major. Moreover, it was about this time that she started tutoring off campus and developed an interest in pursuing teaching as a career. We do have a relatively small Education department and offer courses that can lead to certification for secondary mathematics teaching in Massachusetts. Because of the course requirements of her other minor program and the fact that she only developed this interest about this time, though, Suey did not pursue that option.

In sum, I am pleased to recommend Suey and wish her the best. If there is any other information I can provide, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John B. Little".

John B. Little
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