

12-31-11

Dear Laurie and Professors Cohn, Blackstone, Huisman, Markides, and Barkan:

I hope you all had a relaxing vacation and holiday. Each one of you has been such a wonderful guiding force in my academic career thus far and I wanted to let you all know how appreciative I am of the help I've gotten from you. To be specific:

- It was Dr. Markides' Introduction to Sociology class that lit the fire and got me interested in sociology many years ago, and every class I've taken from him since has been fascinating and stimulating. Each one has reminded me of why I am in this major and why I intend to continue in the field of Sociology as a life career.
- Dr. Huisman introduced me to micro-sociology and social psychology, which is now the focus of my work and the field I intend to pursue in the future. Her encouragement and support with revitalizing the Sociology club was absolutely necessary to its success, and the community service projects we've accomplished have been a great source of pride and are a great reflection of the department and the school. With her recommendations for the upcoming semester, I think we can have a bigger presence at the school and bring some great speakers and events to UMaine.
- I probably learned more in Dr. Cohn's classes than any other class I've taken in my entire college career. His ability to teach and the depth of his knowledge never cease to amaze me. It is because of Dr. Cohn that a teaching career would be an option for me, whereas before I would never have considered it. In addition, Dr. Cohn has been so supportive of my future endeavors, recommending me for the ASA honors program, giving me praise when I needed it most, and always being there for me when I needed guidance and encouragement.
- Dr. Barkan had been my advisor up until his sabbatical. The amount of time he spent helping me decide which classes I should take to help increase my GPA, what would be most appropriate for my degree, and on my senior thesis is just astounding. The level of commitment Dr. Barkan has had to me and my studies is truly humbling... not to mention helping me with my complete ignorance in the world of statistics. I'm still amazed that I got a good grade in that class – and would never have been able to without Dr. Barkan at the helm.
- Dr. Blackstone has helped me with everything from the sociology club (and guiding me through the perils of being president), to helping me develop my thesis during my research methods class, letting me borrow books, developing a syllabus and structure for my thesis work, taking me on as a T.A. (I'm so excited!), and always making me feel comfortable about asking for help in anything I'm struggling with, I can't imagine making it through school without you!
- Of course none of this would have been possible without Laurie making sure everything runs smoothly, promptly answering my every inane question, and going above and beyond to accommodate me. Hands down the best administrative assistant I've ever had the pleasure of annoying :0)

I was prompted to write this email when I saw my GPA, newly calculated after last semester's grades were posted. It is now up to a 3.44 from a 2.7 when I returned to the sociology department just four semesters ago. I expect to have over a 3.5 by the end of spring semester when I graduate. I couldn't have done it without each and every one of you and I wanted to thank you for believing in me and giving me so many opportunities to realize my true potential. Seeing that number on my MaineStreet account was the best holiday gift I could have gotten.

See you all this upcoming semester,

Jennifer M. Moulton '12