

7-9-2012

Good summer morning to you all,

This letter is long overdue but I figured that a thank you from the heart is always better late than never. As I sit here preparing for my final year of undergraduate studies, each of you has come to mind as someone who has helped shaped me into the person I've become. Forgive me if I start to sound a little like Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz, addressing you each individually, but I want to be sure that you all know exactly what you have meant to me on this journey and what I have taken from you to help guide me into the future.

Professor Blackstone, Amy, with your wit and ever-extended helping hand you have patiently guided me through the maze of academia and personally given me a world of opportunities. Working for you and learning from you has been the greatest gift and I feel so honored to have such a champion on my side. I can never thank you enough for all that you are, and all that you have done for me. Your intro class drew me into sociology as a major and since then, you have changed my perspective on so many things it's near impossible to point to just one. You have been much more than a professor and advisor to me; you have also been an incredible mentor and friend. Thank you for all the laughter, advice, letters, and most importantly for all the other things I wish I could articulate.

Professor Huisman, your attention to my struggles with some of the theories in your class, and your willingness to help (even after hours), made me feel like my success mattered to you. Your efforts not only encouraged me to push through my difficulties but have made me fearless in my search to take on even more challenging works. I'm no longer limited by what is safe or easy and I have you to thank for that.

Professor Cohn, you have such a brilliant ability to present the most abstract ideas in such an incredibly concrete way. The readings you assigned and the way you taught the class made me question everything I thought was certain. Thank you for opening the world to me in the most magnificent and glorious way. Because of you, I am academically rejuvenated and am truly excited to continue learning! Thank you.

Professor Markides, your stories, teachings and life experiences have opened my eyes to just how ethnocentric I am. The good news however is that I also discovered how much I can learn from those who are different from me if I simply dare to listen. Taking your classes and hearing all that you have been through inspired me to step outside myself and help others without assuming that they too held my views and ideology. This understanding has made me a better leader, a better volunteer and a better human being. For this and much more, I thank you.

Professor Rocque, I get truly emotional when I think about all you have done for me in the short time we have known each other. You made me feel that even though I am green your chosen field (and I mean GREEN) that my insights still mattered, my ideas could be sound, and that I have true potential to succeed. These are traits every student looks for in a professor and I have been truly blessed to find them in you.

Professor Leffler, although we have not had a class together we have had the opportunity to talk on a personal level regarding future plans. Your uncensored and honest advice was refreshing. As a student, and one with admittedly limited knowledge about grad school of any kind, your opinions regarding places to live and schools to attend were insightful and welcomed. It showed

me just how important each student is to this department and the people working within it.
Thank you.

Last, but certainly not least, Laurie. Laurie, you are the face and operator of the department and I am so thankful that you are. Your perpetually positive attitude, your "can do" spirit and your constant encouragement is an inspiration to everyone that has had the privilege of crossing your path (including EVERY sociology student). You have always made me feel as though I was an important part of this department and have consistently gone out of your way to assist me in whatever endeavor I was pursuing. You are a tireless advocate for all of us, and my college experience would have been left wanting without you in it. Thank you for everything!

To all of you as a collective, I hope that this letter has shown you the impact of your efforts. I know that I am just one student, but I'm sure you could multiply these comments again and again as my experiences with each of you were not held in a vacuum. Your recognition, your words of wisdom, and your concern for your student's success is obvious and I thank you for allowing me to be one of them.

Sincerely and with gratitude,

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