



August 24, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to highly recommend Stefan Reindl for a faculty position at your institution. He has the rare characteristic of being a remarkable scholar who is exceptionally critical, thorough, thoughtful, dependable, and well-organized in anything he does. In addition, he works tirelessly to accomplish anything he does. This letter does not give enough space to state all of the qualities that make Stefan a perfect candidate, but I will focus on a few key ones. From academic writing to teaching to organizing scholarly events to research to communicating within international spaces, among other tasks, Stefan always delivers well above what is asked of him. He always thinks outside-of-the-box to find solutions. This includes using and teaching theories to unpack highly complex situations and problems of education worldwide critically, as well as beyond education. His ability to utilize his comparative skills to better understand solutions from local to global perspectives is well beyond typical recently-graduated doctoral students.

Stefan took all my courses when he started his doctorate studies at Beijing Normal University (BNU). He is one of the top three students I have had throughout my many years of teaching at not only BNU but also other universities worldwide, which I have taught throughout my career. It was not only the quality of work he did on his assignments, which was exceptional, but also what he brought to the classes. His highly inquisitive nature and intellect, coupled with his own international experiences, brought another level of rich class dialogue to the courses' learning spaces. These traits were even more outstanding during the COVID-19 pandemic, in which dialogue in traditional classrooms was suddenly confined to virtual online spaces without much planning. It is important to note that Stefan not only participated as a student in these classes but also gave invaluable advice on constructing the courses technologically when abruptly shifting, as all the world did, to being online in early 2020. These are some of the reasons why I invited him to be my teaching assistant, which, fortunately for me, he accepted.

How Stefan brought out critical points through thorough theoretical and practical analysis in class makes him a great teacher. For example, he uses what he has learned on research methodologies and his own research experiences as a doctoral student to teach about the importance and essence of research as a teaching assistant in my courses, as well as the often not discussed contested terrains of research which are vital for my students to understand. He effectively communicates very complex ideas, theories, perspectives, and policies to help explain to undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students to understand them better. Stefan showed empathy and compassion for students who sometimes struggle in my courses while balancing with pushing them to reconceptualize how they have thought about educational issues by repositioning the topics back to the contexts they are most familiar with.

He is immensely generous with his time, spending the necessary time explaining and working with students to understand the courses' lessons better and improve their assignments. He has done this countless times, both within and outside the classrooms. It is good to note here that his language abilities in English, Mandarin Chinese, German, and Italian are especially beneficial in international contexts, as my students are from diverse locations worldwide.

His work as a teaching assistant also indicates how successful he will be in other areas of academia. All of my course assignments have students democratically dialogue with one another and us, as well as writing critical, augmentative papers that we review and students revise. In many ways, this writing process simulates the academic review and writing process for publishing both on our and the students' end. He is invaluable in the discussions, as previously discussed, but also in the reviewing process. For the paper assignments, Stefan is able to review the students' work in line with the best reviews from many professors. I can say this without question as I've been on many publication editorial boards, reviewed for many dozen high-impact journals, and edited various book volumes and special issues of journals. This not only illustrates his ability to be an excellent teacher but also someone who will do exceptionally well in publishing at all levels – writing, reviewing, and editorial positions. He also spends some time teaching about publishing for early career PhD graduates internationally. This is yet another indication of how well he will do in academia.

As a sign of how much I admire Stefan's abilities in these aspects, as well as brilliant organization skills, detail-oriented capabilities, and hard work ethic, I have invited him to be Assistant Editor of the *Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Environmental Education*, in which I am heading up. The encyclopedia is a very large 2-volume international endeavor in which Stefan will play an integral role. This is only one of many future projects that I look forward to working with him on over the following years. Great for me, I don't think he has not accepted an invitation to teaching and research projects yet – his willingness to participate is impressive, as well as being able to deliver well beyond what is expected.

Returning to his abilities to conduct innovative research, Stefan utilized his experiences as a student and then teaching assistant (TA) in my courses during COVID-19 for his exceptional dissertation. Entitled "Asynchronous Online Teaching and Learning: A Qualitative Study of Students' Experiences in Degree Programs at a Chinese University," his dissertation will further how we can be more dialectically engaged in pedagogical practices in an increasingly globalized, postdigital world. Although set within the educational challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic specifically, the dissertation will help further online education overall by furthering how we can have dialectically effective teaching that parallels critical pedagogical spaces in higher education, as well as informing all levels of education. Furthering research on postdigitalism and bettering education in conflict areas, which can be akin to various aspects of educational situations during COVID-19, are two of the many ways his research is tremendously relevant and crucial to global current events. This is one of many aspects of educational research in which Stefan has shown interest and expertise since I have known him.

Stefan has endlessly pushed himself to deepen and widen his understandings of the

connections between education and society within an extensive range of topics. I have often seen him come up with unique insights and advancing scholarly arguments. Without question, he is very well-versed in the issues of his dissertation and numerous others. Such intellectual inquisitiveness can be seen in the publications we have worked on together. Over the years, I have asked him to write on various topics, including critical theories of education and environmental pedagogies, which have resulted in very well-cited publications. I have already mentioned inviting him to be an assistant editor for the Bloomsbury Encyclopedia for a number of reasons; however, it is also due to his scholarship and intellect. I look forward to him contributing as a writer also to the encyclopedia.

This letter highlights some key reasons why Stefan is an excellent choice for a faculty position in your department. I would state that not selecting him might well be a misfortune.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need additional documentation for my recommendation.

Sincerely,



Greg William Misiaszek, Ph.D.

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