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Subject: Letter of Recommendation for Brennan McGinn

To the Committee:

I'm writing this letter on behalf of Brennan McGinn, who was a student in my English Literature and Film class, "Episodic Art," at the University of California at Berkeley, in the Spring Semester of 2020. This course met three hours weekly, and there were 17 students. In addition to class time, students worked one-on-one with me, and with each other in small groups. The intensity of our weekly schedule, and the small class size, allowed me to gain an excellent sense of the Brennan's level of seriousness, and his commitment to critical approach to texts, in thought, in conversation, and in writing.

Brennan has tremendous academic ability. He established himself in the top tier of my students, for his desire to learn and his consistency of effort. He is humble, hard working, takes criticism well. Yet he also believes in himself and stands up to defend his ideas. He set a serious tone in the classroom. He completed his assignments on time, and was ready to give a smart, critical response when queried. He gave his full attention to the activities, presentations, and lectures. He was also a regular in office hours. He was not one to talk over another student, and left a lot of the chit-chat to more talkative classmates, instead choosing to offer a well-placed comment or two when he felt it was appropriate. But he let me know his thoughts and opinions in our office hour meetings, and in his writing.

Brennan wrote three essays for my class. The two most impressive were dives into a season of cable drama. The first was a sensitive profile of the character of Don Draper from the first season of AMC's series, *Mad Men*. Brennan deftly analyzed Draper as an example of Arthur Miller's "Tragedy of the Common Man." The second essay took on the justice system in Baltimore, as portrayed in David Simon's *The Wire*. These were both excellent treatments, extremely well written, and they demonstrated deep and original thought. Brennan also completed a film with a group of two other students, on the subject of the ethics of action, crime, and the value of family.

Brennan is creative in the way he tackles a problem. His work in my class demonstrated this. It was a great pleasure to have him. He is truly gifted and I have no doubt he will be a leader in the field he chooses for himself.

Sincerely,

David Walter