



March 4, 2022

Dear Committee Member:

I am writing in my capacity as associate chair of undergraduate studies for the Philosophy Department at Fordham University in the strongest possible support of Jeanne Proust who has been teaching for our department for the past three years as a post-doctoral teaching fellow (unfortunately without the possibility of further renewal). I should stress that Jeanne did not ask me for a reference; I am offering this because of the immense contributions she has made to our department during her time at Fordham. Jeanne has been a fabulous instructor and been far more involved in our department than any other postdoctoral fellow I have ever seen. Her presence in the department over the past three years has been invaluable on multiple levels and I really wish there were some way in which we could be permitted to keep her. Any department that hires her would be lucky indeed.

Jeanne has been teaching multiple sections of the required course in “Philosophical Ethics” for us each semester. This is the second required philosophy course in the core; it usually has 35 students enrolled per section. The feedback from students in Jeanne’s courses is absolutely stellar. Her course evaluation ratings are consistently among the highest in the department, and students speak of her classes with immense enthusiasm. Some of the following comments are representative: “Professor Proust is one of the rare professors that has the ability to make a topic that may not be particularly interesting subject to a student interesting. Her passionate responses to our feedback to questions she provides and the overall fairness and respect that she shows us proves that she truly cares about how we do as students and cares for our educational experiences.” Or: “I found the professors teaching style new and engaging. I have had very few professors like her at Fordham and I genuinely think that is a shame! More professors should take a page out of her book. She demands the respect of her students by being highly knowledgeable, funny, respectful, and no-nonsense.” To the question of what aspects of the course were positive, one student responded: “Everything. This was the most valuable class I have taken during my Fordham career. Our Professor made sure the readings and the class content not only taught us how to ask questions and think deeper but also how these sorts of moral quandaries could apply in real life. Everything we did was relevant.” Another student said that he or she “thought Professor Proust taught with a lot of energy and helped students fully understand certain concepts.” Comments like these abound on her course evaluations. To cite just one more: “I really enjoyed Professor Proust and her course. I am not a philosophy major or anything near a philosophy major and tend to struggle in these classes and understandings. However, she made the class so enjoyable and understandable by taking the time to explain and make sure we had an understanding. She really cared for the students and wants to see us do well. I learned so much as well, all the homework were extremely relevant and

interesting. I overall really really enjoyed her class and her teaching style. Amazing!!!” Students frequently comment on her passion for philosophy, her enthusiasm about the subject, her level of care for them, and the clarity of her instruction. Jeanne has a rare gift for communicating with and motivating students. She is truly a fantastic teacher.

Jeanne is also incredibly generous with her time. She has been highly involved in the department, in a way that is unusual for postdoctoral fellows. She consistently attends department events—from lectures to discussion groups to many pedagogical events—and participates in them with great enthusiasm. Over the past three years, she has also offered help on all kinds of levels that went way beyond the call of duty. For example, she has been involved this year with two departmental grants for teaching race across the curriculum, not just contributing her insights consistently, but even serving as a faculty panelist for a panel discussion with students, taking the lead on a podcasting project on the topic, and contributing extensively to a variety of discussions and initiatives. She also contributed extensively to the various discussion and initiatives surrounding the challenges of teaching during the pandemic. She is always happy to participate in anything that will serve the students and the department. Just yesterday she came to a session of a pedagogy seminar for graduate students I currently teach to share some of her insights with future instructors. Her comments were illuminating and very helpful—and her enthusiasm contagious. The students and I were extremely appreciative.

In short, Jeanne is an excellent teacher and a wonderful colleague. I highly recommend her to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any further questions you might have.

Sincerely,



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