

Dear Board Members,

I was delighted to be asked for, and to provide, a recommendation letter for **Nicole A. Palma**. For the last twelve years, I have taught English for academic purposes to international students planning to enter higher education in the United States. Prior to that, I also taught a similar population at the University of Edinburgh in the U.K., and, at Universiteit Maastricht in the Netherlands, I taught both undergraduate and graduate students as part of a bilingual program of content and language integrated instruction.

Since 2016, I have also had the pleasure of being the lead instructor for one section of the hybrid sections of IDS 1161: What is the Good Life?, UF's interdisciplinary humanities course. It is through this course that I know Nicole Palma. Nicole was in one of the two honors discussion sections I taught in Spring 2022. Hybrid discussion sections of the course consist of twenty-four students in each group. What this number means is that students can distinguish themselves by engaging with the materials and their colleagues, or, if they so choose, to simply sit back and listen. Nicole most definitely fell into the former category from the beginning of the semester.

As an honors student in good standing at UF, Nicole is already academically competitive. You no doubt have access to the data that demonstrates that, so I want to focus on Nicole's skills, diligence, and love of learning. During the time that she was in my class, I observed her interpersonal interactions. She was always respectful and responsible in her communications with her peers and with me. She was not afraid of sharing ideas and learning from others, both in the online discussion board posts and in discussion section meetings. Her discussion board posts were always thoughtful, well-written, and thought-provoking for the reader. Nicole consistently came to discussion section meetings well-prepared to participate, no matter what the topic, and IDS 1161 covers a lot of diverse topics. Her ability to analyze some of the more complex material we covered and engage in dialogue with other students from diverse academic, social, and economic backgrounds about these materials showed a level of maturity beyond her years. Nicole's presence in the classroom was, I believe, one of the factors that contributed to the overall positive learning experience encountered by the other students in her section.

As an instructor, I like to be challenged to guide students to produce the best work they possibly can. Even though IDS 1161 is not a writing class, we do a lot of different types of writing, and I give a lot of feedback. Not only did Nicole incorporate each piece of feedback into her next piece of written work, but she also regularly used my office hours to ask for more feedback. She did not need to do this; she was already on track for one of the top grades in the class. She did so because of her commitment to being the best she possibly can be.

In addition to her work ethic, her interpersonal skills in class, and her participation on the online discussion boards, Nicole demonstrated creativity in the assignments designed to engage the students in constructing alternative undertakings for assessment, an Adobe Spark story, a postcard, and an audio essay. As a faculty member whose remit is only to teach, I regularly come into contact with a large number of students. In Spring 2022, I had direct contact with approximately 350 students, and I can safely say that Nicole stood out among them all. She is very clear on how she sees her future, how she wants to use her training to help people from underprivileged backgrounds, and how this scholarship is the next step on that journey. She will, I am sure, change others' lives for the better and having the support of a scholarship like this one can only help her achieve that dream.

I would not hesitate to recommend Nicole for any scholarship she should apply to because I know that she takes any commitment she makes very seriously indeed. Her dedication to each and every endeavor she undertakes will ensure that she graduates with the best possible degree that she can.

If you have any questions, or require any further information, please feel free to contact me at clarklhr@ufl.edu.

Yours sincerely,



Lynne Clark

Associate Instructional Professor
