

Law Letter of Recommendation

To the attention of the Admissions Committee,

I am writing to recommend my former student XXX for the Graduate Program.

My contact with XXX work was back when she invited me to be part of the board of examiners of her final paper, which she submitted for the conclusion of her undergraduate studies in Law. Unlike other students, she handed me her final paper in full at the very moment she invited me, way before the term given to students to conclude their work. This is a rather unusual gesture among undergraduate students, so in my opinion this shows her great sense of responsibility and compromise with the commitments she makes.

For her final paper, XXX did a comparative study on the treatment given by Brazil, Holland and Portugal on the use and trade of cannabis. She invited me to be part of the board of examiners because the topic of drugs is my main purpose of study at the College of Law of the University of Brasilia. My PhD work is about the secondary criminalization of drugs traffic in the great Brasilia region, Distrito Federal - a study that has served as a theory and methodology parameter for XXX final paper. Because of my studies on drugs, I can state the high quality of Gabriella's work, which stood out among many studies I have analyzed so far.

Her final paper is organized in three parts. The first one presents the history on the criminalization process as well as the War on Drugs. To make this analysis, most references she used were in English, evidence of how fluent she is in this foreign language.

The second part shows the comparative analysis of the legislation and public policies regarding cannabis in Brazil, Portugal, and Holland in detail. To achieve that, she had to meticulously research domestic standards and policies of each country and be in touch with a wide range of studies already made on this theme. The result presented shows her skills to carry out a research and to make a critical analysis of documents. It also underlines her concern with the precision of data, as she resorted to information issued by the governments of the respective countries whenever any official data was mentioned. It is clear that, despite all difficulties related to this type of research, Gabriella managed to submit trustworthy reference that made her work solid and coherent.

The last part presented a critical reflection on the current decriminalization policy adopted by Brazil and asked if the decriminalization options adopted by Portugal and Holland could be alternatives to the Brazilian reality. At this stage of the research, XXX was able to show an analytical sense and to apply the adequate methodology rules used in comparative studies, presenting consistent results. Her analysis highlighted the limitations arising from the major differences between the countries considered, but it also able to identify applications Brazil learned from the Portuguese and Dutch models. In addition, when emphasizing the need for objective standards to make a difference between users and dealers, the student has shown a mature reflection on the Brazilian social reality. That is, taking in consideration the current lack of definition that leads poor black men to always be considered dealers, whereas white men carrying the same amount of drugs are simply considered users. Also, when problematizing policies of decriminalization of drugs before international conventions signed by Brazil, XXX has shown her capacity of dealing with complex themes, mentioning the various elements that should be considered in a possible decriminalization of cannabis in Brazil.

To sum it up, XXX final paper is innovative, clear and concise, marked by complex analyses, with a coherent development section and conclusions in line with the arguments presented throughout the text. I am sure that, considering the paper she wrote and the way she presented it, XXX has initiative and responsibility to all commitments she assumes. She is able to present innovative approaches in a solidified way and is constantly updated about socially relevant themes, which dialogs with the academia. Her paper particularly shows her critical sense to carry out research and her ability to relate the study of Law and the concretizing of social changes, necessary for the construction of a less uneven society.

XXX also took my subject "Criminal Procedural Law 2", achieving the top grade. For this subject, students were asked two main activities: a simulated jury and the presentation of a paper. At the simulated jury, XXX was part of the group who performed as the defense of the defendant. For the paper, her group presented a study on the evidence of the criminal procedure. I must underline that, because she was in her last semester, XXX was entitled to study this subject in the condition of a tutor, i.e., she attended two subjects at the same time, meaning that her occasional absences were accredited, but she had a commitment to submit all papers necessary with the utmost quality. Despite this prerogative, XXX was present to almost every class, due to her interest in the subject. In addition, as a way to compensate her few absences, she had an essential role in her group's works, coordinating them in an impeccable way, showing not only leadership skills but also, one more time, her great sense of responsibility for the commitments she took.

I must also emphasize her outstanding academic record: out of the 51 subjects she took throughout her undergraduate studies in Law, she passed in 40 of them with the highest score. Her background in International Relations is also worth mentioning, as she had the highest grade in most subjects she took. This fact shows XXX high level of dedication and excellent results throughout her academic days.

Considering the above, I strongly recommend XXX for the Graduate Program. Because of her final paper and because of her academic performance in the subject I teach, I believe she will be an excellent student in the program in reference. She has proved to be persistent, having initiative and being proactive, with skills to develop complex studies on relevant and current themes - all characteristics necessary for a graduation student.

I am available to provide any information that may be necessary

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