

OBERLIN

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Environmental Studies Program
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April 24, 2008

Dear Madam/Sir,

It is a pleasure to write this recommendation letter for Steve Bert. He is a bright student and a very good candidate for graduate study.

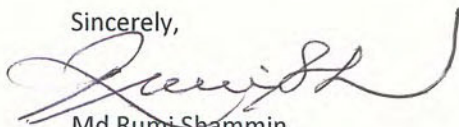
I met Steve as a student in my Environmental Studies Workshop (ENVS350) course in spring 2007 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This is a capstone course where each year students work on a particular project of local significance. This year the task was to develop a sustainable energy policy for the university. Through this course, I led an interdisciplinary group of students to conduct a comprehensive study on energy conservation issues and opportunities for the Urbana campus. In order to increase the impact of their work, we organized a final presentation that was attended by the Chancellor, University Vice Presidents and other senior administrators, facilities managers, faculty members, and presidents of relevant student clubs. We also engaged with the local media to encourage radio spots and newspaper articles on the findings of my students. This style of teaching stems from my belief that the 21st century classroom should focus on both the substance of the material being taught and effective strategies for communicating the knowledge gained. This was a rare opportunity for the students to work on a real, campus-based project of large significance, develop new and innovative solutions, and communicate the final product directly to the highest authorities.

Steve was one of the better students in the class. He is a highly committed, assertive, smart, and serious student. He has a strong economics background and demonstrated the kind of acumen required for being successful in a graduate program. He had a genuine interest in environment and sustainability and was eager to contribute towards an applied solution that goes beyond the classroom.

Steve is an excellent team player. Students in my class needed to work together in interdisciplinary groups and Steve soon emerged as an important member of his small group. He worked well both within his team and across teams. Towards the end of the semester, students from different teams needed to work together and craft the final presentation and Steve was selected as one of two students represented his group.

Steve has the right kind of preparation and commitment needed to succeed in graduate school and I have no reservations in recommending him for admission. If you have any questions about this recommendation letter, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Md Rumi Shammin
Assistant Professor