

Friday, January 18, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my wholehearted recommendation for Mel Armstrong in their pursuit of a position in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. I had the privilege of being a student in VISA 110 at the University of British Columbia, where Mel served as the Teaching Assistant, and it is with great passion that I endorse any opportunity for them to progress in capacity as an educator.

Throughout the course, Mel consistently demonstrated a commitment to fostering open dialogue and incorporating student feedback, creating an environment of growth that transcended the typical dynamics of a classroom. Their dedication to encouraging constructive critique established a unique space where each student, including myself, felt not only heard but also actively involved in shaping the course's direction. Mel's approach not only facilitated artistic development but also cultivated an atmosphere where students were empowered to express themselves freely and engage in meaningful discussions about their creative pursuits. This inclusive and collaborative teaching style created a distinctive learning experience, setting the tone for a course that was not just about instruction but a shared journey of exploration and artistic evolution.

What particularly stood out was Mel's emphasis on the body as a counter to the prevailing tendency of academic institutions to prioritize the mind over other aspects. This perspective was a breath of fresh air, allowing me and my fellow students to explore and expand our creative expressions beyond conventional boundaries. Mel's insights into the holistic nature of artistic expression challenged traditional norms, contributing significantly to our intellectual and artistic development.

Moreover, Mel's dedication to their role as a Teaching Assistant extended beyond tutorial sessions. Their personal artworks served as a source of inspiration, igniting in me a fervent love for the visual arts that persists even a year later. Mel embodies the qualities of an exemplary TA—always open to feedback, mindful and holistic in their approach, and focused on fostering growth rather than mere performance.

I wholeheartedly recommend Mel Armstrong for a future in academia. Their passion for the arts, dedication to student development, and teaching methodologies make them an ideal candidate for any position within the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Thank you for your consideration in recognizing Mel's exceptional work as an educator.

Sincerely,

Aidan Cheung,

2nd year BMS Student

University of British Columbia