



Faculty Letterhead

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SAMPLE LETTER FROM FACULTY RESEARCH ADVISOR

TO: Interfaces Graduate Training Program (and/or Steering Committee)
RE: Letter of Recommendation

I am pleased to recommend Jane/Joe Student for the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Specialization in Multi-Scale Biology, informally known as the Interfaces Graduate Training Program. Jane/Joe started in my laboratory this year after obtaining his B.S. in Chemical Engineering from Stanford University. Her/His undergraduate research experience involved studies on the effects of substrate stiffness on cardiomyocyte contractility and differentiation from human pluripotent stem cells. He/she is applying those skills to study the maturation of cardiomyocytes.

Jane/Joe is currently working with a postdoctoral researcher in my laboratory to characterize the effects of defined stem cell media on the metabolic phenotype of stem cells. Although Jane/Joe had an extensive background in stem cell and cardiomyocyte biology, she/he has faced a steep learning curve for understanding metabolism and ¹³C metabolic flux analysis (MFA) techniques applied in my laboratory. To that end, she/he has spent this year learning the necessary techniques to perform MFA. She/He has continuously impressed me by his/her ability to tackle new projects and master the set of skills required for studying metabolism. She/He also identified gaps in his knowledge and sought out assistance from her/his peers when needed. Owing to her/his efforts on this projects, he/she will be a contributing author on this manuscript.

Jane/Joe will now start looking at the dynamic metabolic network of stem cells undergoing cardiac differentiation to further establish connections between hallmarks of mature cardiomyocytes (beta-oxidation of fatty acids, catabolism of branch chained amino acids, etc.) and in vitro differentiation kinetics. He/she has identified _____ as a potential co-mentor for this project and invaluable resource for the requisite cardiomyocyte molecular and cell biology.

Additionally, Jane/Joe has already started to collaborate with other bioengineers and members within the UCSD community. She/He is currently working with a 3rd year graduate student in _____'s lab to understand the differential metabolism on decellularized heart matrix gels.

In summary, Jane/Joe shows great promise from her/his work this year and is an ideal candidate for the Interfaces program. Jane/Joe's training would be greatly expanded and span disciplines as is integral to the Interfaces Program.

Thus I believe he/she is the ideal candidate for your program.

Sincerely,