

Dear Mr. Besaw,

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of David Feurzeig in regards to his application to become a full professor at the University of Vermont. During my time at UVM I studied music theory for multiple years with Professor Feurzeig in his Harmony and Form classes. During that time I sought him out numerous times outside of class to answer questions, ask advice and, at times, chat pleasantly. It is for these reasons that I feel I can confidently vouch for Professor Feurzeig's character, his proficiency as an educator and his dedication to the study of the art of music.

Professor Feurzeig always possessed a firm and practical knowledge of the musical ideas and content that we were learning in his classes. He was a professor that could explain music's complexities in a way that was simple and easy to comprehend as a student. His educational techniques and devices always ensured that his lessons were never simply stale lectures. He designed his lessons around the students and their needs, he anticipated their misconceptions, their questions and other difficulties and he scaffolded his lessons accordingly, rather than simply working through a textbook. His sense of humor was subtle and golden, and his quirks made his classes all the more interesting and enjoyable.

The way in which Professor Feurzeig illustrated concepts was often what made his classes stand out to me. Professor Feurzeig would have us study rhythm by dancing, or chanting, or clapping to complex, interesting pieces that encouraged the entire class to participate. In his classes we would study cadences by Beethoven, Bach, Mozart and other well known classical composers and then he would sit at his piano and effortlessly play the same cadences as they were found in Radiohead songs, songs by The Beatles, or things that Led Zeppelin had written.

While other professors taught me rhythms in my seat, or taught me to count aloud with a hand floating through the air, an imaginary orchestra blowing in front of me, Professor Feurzeig stood me up from my desk and reminded me how important it was to dance to this music, to engage with it past the class. His lessons served as constant reminders that the complex system of notes and rests that I was obsessively studying over was always, at its heart, simply sound and silence, and that it was meant to be heard, sung, danced to, experienced and, in all ways, felt.

During my time studying with Professor Feurzeig I joyfully attended his classes, appreciated his presence in the music department, watched him play the piano beautifully and learned not only how to understand and play music better, but how to appreciate it that much more. It is for these reasons that I believe David Feurzeig has earned the position of full professor at the University of Vermont and I truly hope that he receives it.

Sincerely,

David Porter