

# Letter of Recommendation

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From: Donald Cooper  
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To Whom it May Concern,

I take great pleasure in recommending John Goettle for your consideration as a graduate student after having completed his degree at Washington State University. My experience with John as a student leads me to believe he will benefit immensely and produce useful, important work through the skills offered by your public policy program. During my time as an instructor, I've seen John demonstrate qualities which help me believe he can fulfill both the requirements of graduate school as well as any further graduated responsibilities that may come in pursuing his research interests or working with faculty. Thank you for taking the time to consider his application and this letter.

I am Donald Cooper, and I first met John in the course of teaching a class on American Public Policy for Washington State University in 2021. I've since had him for a class on Public Administration as well (though to be clear this was not as part of the University's Master in Public Affairs program, previously offered through the Vancouver campus, which regrettably stopped taking admissions several years ago now - John had been considering it as he finished his undergraduate degree) As both a graduate of and now instructor for Washington State University myself, I've been with the institution in various capacities since 2016; I'm an incipient doctoral candidate with a Master's degree in Political Science with a certificate in Global Justice and Security Studies. I've been teaching and helping teach courses for the Department of Politics, Philosophy, and Public Affairs for the last three years.

In the courses I've had with John, he's shown skills and characteristics that I think stand out for your office's work. He writes in a clear, succinct fashion that has allowed him to pack a great deal of relevant information into the page limits I've given him in courses. In engaging with other students for class discussions and communicating with me separately, John makes his points and asks his questions directly. He has been attentive to details in course material that many other students have not; and when he's had questions about this material, John has been the first one to ask about it to the betterment of all students' learning. I consider John to be forward, an effective communicator, responsible in his work, and to demonstrate a willingness to put in the effort necessary to do everything he does quite thoroughly.

Additionally, I think you'll find that these aptitudes do not just come from John's pursuit of a grade - in the course of taking classes on public policy and administration, he's shown what I believe to be a deep and practical interest in politics. In all of his papers, discussions, and one-and-one conversations we've had, John brings in current examples of policy and legislation to relate to the material. For instance, in one of the last papers I had from him discussing changes to the administrative state that took place in the Progressive reform movement of the early 20th century, John related the protections of most non-partisan government positions to recent controversies over the Postmaster General, Louis DeJoy, appointed during the Trump administration. Due to changes meant to protect the administrative state and its services from becoming a political currency, John explains, we have a situation today where DeJoy couldn't be removed by a majority Democrat legislature or executive alone. John made the long-term connection here to a more recent issue with which, among others, it became very clear to me that he is considerate and keeps himself informed of present issues; this has stood out to me among all my students, and I believe it will help him bring a lot of useful background and interest to your program. I think you will find it much easier to bring John onboard as a graduate student, and that it will take much less initial input to see him rise to the challenges and opportunities of independent research.

Further, having previously recommended and seen John go on to serve in a legislative internship in Washington, D.C. over the last year, I can say even more emphatically now that practical experience and an abiding interest in particular issues - environmental policy and its distributive consequences stand out - make a policy program like yours an excellent fit. Having a student having been involved at close reach with policy formulation come out as John has now, with a desire to answer specific questions and intimately understand the research which addresses them, leads me to believe you will find a productive and diligent student if you accept him.

If you'd like more examples or information, please contact me by e-mail at [donald.cooper@wsu.edu](mailto:donald.cooper@wsu.edu) (university domain) or by phone during regular business hours Pacific Standard Time at (509) 412-2729. I'd be more than happy to elaborate on my experience with John as an applicant for your position; thank you again for your time in reading this, and I hope you'll consider that your time with him will be well-spent.

Best,

Donald Cooper  
Department of Politics, Philosophy, and Public Affairs  
Washington State University