



March 28, 2006

Letter of Recommendation for **MARGARET CLAYPOOL**

It is a pleasure to recommend Margaret (Meg) Claypool as a teacher of mathematics. I am confident she will make an excellent instructor. She has a high level of expertise in the subject, and a well-developed ability to communicate technical ideas verbally and in writing. She is both bright and hardworking. I suspect she will bring out the best in her students by helping them meet expectations as high as the ones she sets for herself.

I met Meg in spring 2005 when she was a student in my Math 204 (Introduction to Mathematical Thought) class. This is a course specifically for mathematics majors and helps in their transition from computational courses like calculus to more abstract theoretical subjects. The emphasis is on logic and proof and many students find the course very difficult. Meg showed unusual appreciation for the material. She writes clear, correct, and complete arguments. She grasps subtleties that many strong students miss. She earned a high A ranking first in a class of 25 mathematics majors. As I got to know Meg during this course, I learned one reason for her unusually strong performance. She has a degree (and a teaching credential) in French. Proficiency in a second language is an excellent attribute for someone who teaches mathematics.

Meg gained recognition as a strong mathematics major in spring 2005. She received the merit-based Travis Jepson Memorial Scholarship, a \$500 reward. She also entered the spring 2005 $\mu\alpha\theta$ (in Greek, that spells "math") contest, open to all HSU students. I was surprised, but not shocked, the Meg got first place. Her award was \$50.

The following semester, fall 2005, Meg enrolled in two of my classes: Math 210 (Multivariable Calculus) and Math 401 (History of Mathematics). Meg did very well in calculus, earning an A-. She ranked first in the history class by a large margin, earning an A. Her contributions to the history class were greater than that of any other student. The students were assigned to give several lessons suitable for a high school classroom, and Meg's were by far the best. She used "Power Point" software very effectively for her lectures. In addition she made several of her own manipulative devices that helped her audience (myself included) fully appreciate the content.

I am confident that Margaret Claypool will make an excellent secondary teacher of mathematics. Her students will benefit from a teacher with considerable mathematical expertise, prior teaching experience, and a unique ability to share her knowledge. I recommend her highly with no reservations.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey B. Haag, PhD, Associate Professor of Mathematics