

Muang, Doris Chien-Yun

905-7604-6 Lowell House

HARVARD COLLEGE
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Admitted in 2002 from PINEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
Status: Good Standing

Date of issue: February 17, 2004

Field: Government

Language Requirement: Met

Barry Kane, Registrar

Not valid unless signed and sealed

ISSUED TO STUDENT

COURSE TITLE		GRADE	COURSE TITLE		GRADE
		full half			full half
2001-2002			2003-2004		
BIOE S-110	Principles/Molecular Biology	A	HIST 1834	The Chinese Overseas	A
EXPO S-20D	Social and Ethical Issues	B	GOV 97A	Tutorial-Sophomore Year	A
ANNUAL GPA: 4.000, RANK: I		COURSES PASSED: 1.00	CHEM 30	Organic Chemistry	A
2002-2003			HIS-STD B-64	The Cuban Revolution, 1956-1971	A-
LIT-ART B-51	First Nights	A	LIT-ART A-57	Bilingual Arts	-
FRSNR 44X	Tackling Tough Challenges for	SAT	GOV 97B	Tutorial-Sophomore Year	-
CHEM 15	Intro to Inorganic Chemistry	A	GOV 1300	The Politics of Congress	-
SPANISH 38	Spanish and the Community	A	BIOLOGY 95HFF	Games Parasites Play	*SAT
CHEM 20	Organic Chemistry	B+	ANNUAL GPA: 3.918		COURSES PASSED: 7.00
FRSNR 320	Painting the Dark Side	SAT	CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.917		SATISFACTORY LETTER GRADES: 6.00
EXPOS 20	Expository Writing	A			
MATH 21A	Multivariable Calculus	A			
ANNUAL GPA: 3.688, RANK: I		COURSES PASSED: 5.00			

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

RICHARD J. LIGHT
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION
JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
79 JOHN F. KENNEDY STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138
(617-495-1183)



(SCHOOL OF EDUCATION OFFICE)
HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
LARSEN HALL
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138
(617-495-3566)

February, 2004

Recommendation for Ms. Doris Huang

From: Richard J. Light, Professor.

Doris Huang has told me that she is applying for a Fellowship. She was a student in a freshman seminar I taught last year, and was one of the two superstars in that freshman-seminar. She is currently working closely with me (and a team of nine other sophomores) on a major project to understand and strengthen undergraduates' experiences at Harvard College. I absolutely could not imagine a better candidate.

The main point.

Doris Huang is a young woman who has an unusual and extraordinary mix of three great strengths. First, she is a terrific young scholar. More about that in a moment. Second, she is remarkably entrepreneurial, especially for someone her age. And third, she will be a distinguished researcher and PRACTITIONER as well. I have taught at Harvard for 30 years. As a result have met and worked with literally thousands of students. Doris ranks among the top one percent of all students I have ever taught. I do not say that lightly! Add to that the wonderful contributions that Doris has made to the entire Harvard community, such as her volunteer work in The Crimson Key, and she is a great example of Harvard at its best.

How do I know Doris?

Last year I taught a freshman seminar called "Tackling the Toughest Problems in Modern American Education." The enrollment was limited to 14 by the university, to keep the class a seminar, yet I had about 115 applicants for those 14 places. So I asked each applicant to write two short essays about why they wanted to take the seminar. Doris wrote great essays. Yet perhaps even more exciting was her unique and unusually focused interest in real specifics of education reform and improvement -- she didn't write lots

2

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

of platitudes. She wrote about concrete challenges. Inviting her to participate in that freshman seminar was a decision I celebrate regularly.

Doris Huang's Entrepreneurial and research flair.

Doris' research paper for the freshman seminar was, quite simply, unlike anyone else's. She expressed an interest in doing a serious research paper on bilingual education for children. As you know, this has been a very controversial issue in many states, especially in California where Doris grew up. The question is whether the state should offer extensive bilingual training to young children of immigrants, or require those young children to learn English right in English immersion programs in schools.

Several years ago, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur named Ron Unz sponsored a "Proposition" in California that voters passed overwhelmingly. It forbade bilingual education the way that California had been doing it, and required far more English immersion. The voters passed this Proposition overwhelmingly. It was a highly controversial vote.

Why do I tell all this, and what does it have to do with Doris Huang? I tell this because we discussed this topic during one session in our freshman seminar, and so Doris decided to do a serious, in-depth research paper on it. Yet the special feature about her is that she didn't just do a paper. She didn't just search the Internet and write something up. SHE ACTUALLY TOOK THE INITIATIVE AND SOUGHT OUT RON UNZ IN HIS HOME IN CALIFORNIA AND SAT WITH HIM IN HIS HOME AND INTERVIEWED HIM! THIS IS NOT NORMAL. This is very special. You can easily see why Doris is a student whom faculty should fight over to get her to work with them. She is a terrific young researcher, and a terrific young person who wants to do "real world work out in the field," and it all was clear in that freshman year paper.

Other points to add.

I have discussed with president Larry Summers, a plan to do a four year study of how different students from different backgrounds, different ethnicities, and with different interests, can make personal decisions at college

(and even in high school before they arrive at college) to maximize the excellence of their experience here. To do this, we will interview more than 100 undergraduates, about eight times each, over their four years at college. I wanted to begin with one young woman interviewer and one young man interviewer, and so Doris was that young woman. And she is indeed vigorously pursuing this work. Doris and I have now been completing our third interview with more than 100 undergraduates (sophomores as Doris is now) here at Harvard College. And this is to the benefit of a future generation of students from an enormous variety of different backgrounds.

Doris's capacity to transcend narrow activities:

Doris is a great example of how Harvard's freshman year can change a person, sometimes in profound ways. When she first arrived here, she was quite sure she wanted to be a doctor in the future, or alternatively to pursue a career in the biochemical sciences. Now, after exposure to various courses here in her first year, and especially after exposure to grappling with real-world policy questions (such as, for example, the bilingual education controversy), she has decided unexpectedly she will concentrate in Government. And she is doing that this year, very, very successfully. I am entirely confident that she will "combine" her continuing strength in math and science with applications from government and policy work. And her EXTENSIVE volunteer work.

Of all the students I know at Harvard, I can't imagine any single student who will be stronger than Doris at combining research with field work and practice in the real world, helping people in the real world as she capitalizes on these two very different perspectives.

Summary.

Doris Huang is a joy to have as a student, as a research assistant, as a young colleague. Her freshman year was life changing for her. It was a hard earned and unbelievable success in every way. She worked very, very hard to accomplish this. I hope you choose to award her a scholarship. I recommend Doris very highly and without reservation. She will build on her unusual freshman year accomplishments, and now her sophomore year accomplishments, and Doris will just get better and better.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard J. Light

Richard J. Light
Walter H. Gale Professor of Education

I have had the pleasure of reading your letter of the 11th and in reply to inform you that your letter has been forwarded to the appropriate authorities for their consideration. I am sure that they will give it the attention it deserves.

Your letter is a very interesting one and I am glad to hear that you are interested in the work of the Department. I am sure that you will find the work of the Department very interesting and I am sure that you will find the work of the Department very interesting and I am sure that you will find the work of the Department very interesting.

I am sure that you will find the work of the Department very interesting and I am sure that you will find the work of the Department very interesting and I am sure that you will find the work of the Department very interesting.

I am sure that you will find the work of the Department very interesting and I am sure that you will find the work of the Department very interesting and I am sure that you will find the work of the Department very interesting.

ASTON SEGO TRAVELING FELLOWSHIPS
2003-2004

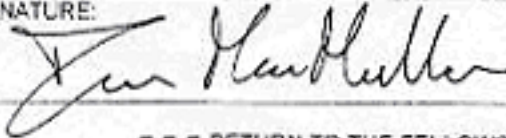
HOUSE EVALUATION FORM

■■■ PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NEATLY IN THE SPACES BELOW ■■■	
NAME (LAST, First and Middle Initial): HUANG, Doris	CLASS: 2006
TRAVEL DESTINATION(S): Oaxaca, Mexico	EVALUATOR'S NAME: Ian MacMullen

Traveling fellowships aim to meet a candidate's compelling personal need for the fellowship experience—an experience involving significant immersion in a foreign culture or cultures. In view of this fact, frank evaluation of the candidate is essential to the selection process. The Selection Committee appreciates your participation.

PLEASE SUMMARIZE YOUR HOUSE'S SUPPORT FOR THIS CANDIDATE IN THE SPACE BELOW, with concise, substantive comments about the candidate's motivation and seriousness of purpose, maturity and judgment, resourcefulness and adaptability, ability to relate well to others, and sensitivity to regional issues in his or her destination. Please limit your comments to the space provided below.

It is hard to express what an outstanding young woman Doris Huang is. At the Senior Common Room meeting where we chose our nominees for this competition, speaker after speaker waxed lyrical about her extraordinary maturity, boundless energy, remarkable gift for working with people, and generosity of spirit. I cannot emphasize strongly enough how unusual it is for multiple members of our SCR to be so impressed by a sophomore, someone who has only been in our house community for five months. Not only is Doris an outstanding person, she has also prepared an excellent proposal to spend the summer in Oaxaca, exploring first hand the problems and paradoxes of a developing world city principally by teaching native street children. As her personal essay makes clear, Doris has done significant background research for this project, she has identified the organization through which she can work, and she has the language skills and bilingual teaching experience to make a great success of her summer. I give Doris the highest recommendation that I have ever given to any applicant for a Harvard travel fellowship.

■■■ SIGNATURE REQUIRED ■■■	
SIGNATURE: 	DATE: 2/23/04

■■■ RETURN TO THE FELLOWSHIPS OFFICE BY MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23. ■■■

"Ohh, *Oaxaca*," breathed Jenny Jacobs, the Spanish teacher with whom I volunteer at the AMIGOS bilingual school near Harvard. Her eyelids flickered momentarily, as if she were suddenly transported to a sleepy Mexican midday in the sun-saturated *zócalo*, or plaza, of a New World colonial city. She grinned as she opened her eyes. "I want to *live* in Oaxaca!" she exclaimed. "You'll have an amazing time there."

I cheered internally as I returned Jenny's grin. Long ago I had set my heart on spending two months in Mexico this summer to cap off my seven years of Spanish study (*dominar la lengua*, as they say) by living in a Spanish-speaking country; to do volunteer work, primarily teaching; and to observe the social dynamics in a nation that I suspect to be an ascendant North American political power. Since my travel experience in Latin America amounted to less than a day in chaotic Tijuana – which was teeming with San Diego tourists – I informally polled my more well-traveled acquaintances on their favorite Mexican cities. Virtually every one of them corroborated Jenny's enthusiasm, praising Oaxaca's pervasive historical legacy and lively indigenous cultures. Being a stereotypical Harvard student (i.e., a compulsive information nerd at heart), I could hardly restrain myself from perusing every article I could find to personally confirm the accolades for Oaxaca.

The more I learned, however, the more Oaxaca seemed to resist a straightforward understanding. Travel magazines splash earthy colors across their pages, capturing the whirling iterations of indigenous dancers and highlighting the vibrant facades of iron-filigreed mansions. Airy hotels fetching prices as high as any in New York City advertise night-lit tennis courts set in the courtyards of 16th-century Dominican convents. Their Oaxaca is a city that scintillates. Yet the Oaxaca that non-governmental organizations sketch could hardly be more different. Their portrayal is cold, direct, statistical: they say Oaxaca is the second-poorest state in Mexico, a country where 40% of the population lives in poverty, 9.5% of all Mexicans are illiterate, but an astonishing 21.5%

of *oaxaqueños* cannot read or write. And over one-third of *oaxaqueños* belong to indigenous tribes, which in general comprise the most disadvantaged sector of Mexican society.

Baffled by this juxtaposition of lucrative commercialism and inveterate destitution within a single city, I sought an explanation from Professor John Womack, an expert in Mexican economic history at Harvard. Professor Womack fielded my question with a weary nod, as if he, too, had long been plagued by this enigma. "I don't have an answer for you," he admitted, squinting in thought. "It's a phenomenon that happens everywhere - why do those places that are becoming the most modernized also suffer the worst poverty?" He glanced at me with a gently wry smile. I instantly sensed his meaning: it's *your* job to go find out. "Go there this summer and observe," he challenged me. "Observe, and see if you can't come up with your own answer."

It is in the spirit of Professor Womack's challenge - the challenge to come to my own understanding of Oaxaca as a means of ultimately understanding, to some small extent, the great paradoxes of developing countries - that I set my course for Oaxaca this summer. From the impressions I have gathered, Oaxaca appears to me to be a microcosm of Mexico, a confluence of so many opposites: new and old, rich and poor. How can such diametric opposites possibly coexist? Or perhaps the more accurate question is how they could possibly *not* coexist - how they might actually be inextricably interdependent forces that perpetuate each other as Oaxaca gradually comes into its own. As counterintuitive as such a connection seems, I sense that it does exist, although full comprehension of my instincts will require not only keen observation of the cross-cultural dynamics of Oaxacan society but also active engagement with my surroundings and as unabashed a readiness to be proven wrong as to be proven right.

The affluent face of Oaxaca that beckons to tourists will be all too easy to read in the palm-lined resorts and four-star restaurants I am bound to encounter, but I will have to dig a little deeper to see the other side of Oaxaca. Besides my intellectual quest, I have a personal desire to participate

directly in Oaxacan life, to interact with *oaxaqueños* not as a visitor but as a contributing member of their community, much like a neighbor. In my mind, this is the only way to genuinely understand a place, to earn enough trust from local residents to glimpse the parts of their lives that tourists never see.

Accordingly, I plan to volunteer with a non-profit organization called Oaxaca Street Children Grassroots, which runs the *Centro de Esperanza Infantil* (Center for Children's Hope) in Oaxaca, a safe haven for the scores of Triqui Indian children who roam Oaxaca's streets selling gum and shining shoes to support their families. The *Centro's* administrator, Alejandro Leyva, has suggested that I lead a *taller de lectura y redacción*, or reading and writing workshop, for the children throughout the summer. While many of the factors that will shape the *taller* – such as the educational level of these children and the most appropriate format for the workshop – will not become clear until after I arrive in Oaxaca, I anticipate working with a few dozen children in separate small, rotating shifts for approximately twenty to twenty-five hours per week. As for specific activities, I have been gleaning ideas for reading games and writing projects from Jenny Jacobs' AMIGOS classroom over the past semester, where as a volunteer teaching assistant I have been supplementing the sixth-graders' social studies curriculum (for example, teaching a comparison of the major ancient Chinese philosophies) entirely in Spanish. While I am confident that my AMIGOS experience will prepare me well for my volunteer work, I realize that Cambridge, Massachusetts is worlds away from Oaxaca, Mexico, and I will remain open to any inspiration that may strike as I come to know Oaxaca better myself in my first days and weeks there.

DORIS CHIEN-YUN HUANG

SUMMARY

Sophomore Government concentrator from Los Altos, California. Fluent in Mandarin and conversant in Spanish. Enjoys community service, especially teaching both children and adults. Career interests still undecided, although would eventually like to go into elected public service.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

- Detur Book Prize recipient, 2003-04
- John Harvard Scholar, 2003-04

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Volunteer

- Volunteer teaching assistant/language tutor, AMIGOS School (public two-way bilingual elementary school in Cambridge, MA) and King School (supplemental Chinese bilingual program called Ni Hao) (Fall 2003-present)
- Volunteer intern with Hispanic-American Chamber of Commerce, Boston, MA (October 2002-January 2003)
- Volunteer, MIHNET (Music in Hospitals and Nursing homes Using Entertainment as Therapy) (performing music for the ill and elderly) (2002-03)
- Volunteer, Chinatown Big Sibling program (children's mentor program) (2002-03)
- Volunteer, Cambridge Youth Recreation program (teaching figure skating to underprivileged children) (Winter 2002-03)

Political

- Capitol Office intern with U.S. Congressman Mike Honda (CA-15), Washington, D.C. (June-August 2003)
- Senate committee chair, Harvard Model Congress Boston, Harvard Model Congress San Francisco (2003-04)
- International Treaty Summit vice-chair, Harvard Model Congress Europe (2003-04)
- Assistant to the Chief of Staff, Harvard Model Congress Boston (2002-03)
- Student liaison for Theresa Amato, president of Citizen Works, campaign manager for Nader 2000, and Institute of Politics Fellow at Harvard University (Fall 2002)

Other

- Co-Skater Liaison, An Evening with Champions (annual figure skating benefit for the Jimmy Fund, a children's cancer clinic) (2004)
- Assistant Skater Liaison, An Evening with Champions (2002, 2003)
- Team Manager/Competition Chair, Harvard Figure Skating Club (2004-05)
- Student interviewer for Harvard College Longitudinal Study of Students with Professor Richard Light (long-term interviews of Harvard students' satisfaction with their college experiences; to be published as a sequel to *Making the Most of College* by Richard Light) (Spring 2003-present)
- Crimson Key Society member (Spring 2003-present)

JOB EXPERIENCE

- Student interviewer/writer for Harvard University's Program for Health Systems Improvement (PHSI) Project on *Health Care Leadership*, a book on health care careers (October 2002-May 2003)
- Teaching Assistant at the American Village Institute in Lung Tan, Taiwan (teaching English to Taiwanese junior high, high school, and college students) (Summer 2002)