



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Department of Instructional
Systems Technology
Bloomington

July 2, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I want to recommend Elliot Jordan for your open position. Elliot has been a graduate student in Instructional Systems Technology (IST) at Indiana University (IU) in our master's program and our education specialist program (Ed.S.). Elliot came here with an MBA as well as a rich experiences in education. He has significantly added to that background while at IU.

While I am not his advisor, I have gotten to know Elliot quite well during the past couple of years. In fact, he enrolled in all three courses that I teach, one on learning theories (P540), one on emerging technologies for learning and the Web 2.0 (R685), and one on instructional strategies for critical and creative thinking, motivation, and collaborative learning (R546). These were quite diverse classes from heavy theory laden ones to an eight-week intensive class with many practical instructional strategies. Not only that, R685, with a 52 page syllabus, required extensive reading as well as an assortment of media production skills. In spite of these challenges, Elliot performed at or near the top end of each of these classes and received an A in all three. I found his enthusiasm, insights, and attention to detail superb. In each class, he was a student that his peers looked to for ideas and advice related to their own projects. When I needed someone to help me with an activity, I would often call on the services of Elliot Jordan. Thankfully, he never disappointed.

Elliot experimented with many new video, audio, and text-based technologies in my classes; especially in R685. In that class, he conducted weekly podcast reflections of his learning. Several of these podcasts were not only highly informative, but quite engaging with subtle humor and wit. I already have incorporated some of his projects as examples for the students in my upcoming R685 class in the fall.

In addition to myriad technology competencies, Elliot is an actor by training. The creativity and improvisational skills he picked up in the theater definitely will help him find success in a wide range of tasks and job-related responsibilities. As already alluded to, Elliot has extensive technology skills that he can call upon at any moment to help solve a problem. With those technology skills, he was a graduate assistant the past two years in the IST lab. Faculty members and students would often call upon his services for their technology support needs. On several occasions, I was in need of such services and Elliot came through in flying colors. As an example, he helped me with the filming and production of an 8-10 minute summary of my World is Open book for that was used as a keynote last year for the Flat Classrooms project (see Elliot help in this video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3hvFR5Cz9M>). During this filming, he experimented with several lighting and filming modes in our newly remodeled studio. It worked! I could not have completed this task without him.

I should also mention that during the past year we had a changeover in personnel as well as several illnesses in the IST main office. Fortunately, Elliot was always quite willing to pitch in and cover the front desk and other duties. That is simply the way Elliot operates. He not only wants to personally excel, he wants all of those around him to accomplish a lot as well. Suffice to say, he is both a high performer and a team player.

Elliot also joined my "Extreme Learning" research team which started back in August 2010. During the past year, he has made several valuable contributions related to the directions of our team. He has helped us locate relevant Web sites, research articles, conferences, and technologies. Each time my team had a meeting, I found Elliot to be quite flexible, articulate, and well organized. Those skills and traits were especially needed as the scope of the project grew and our team tripled in size from 5 to 15 people. Elliot not only contributed his knowledge but also his quick wit and engagement skills which often helped to liven up an otherwise seemingly dull conversation or dead end in our research path.

I am sorry to see him leave as our Extreme Learning project which will kick into high gear during the coming year. Part of the reason I will miss him is that I know he would be someone who could represent us well at conferences as well as when interviewing our research study participants. I have seen Elliot present and interact with others on many occasions. He is a delight to watch in action. During his time at IU, Elliot presented at both local and national conferences. He also volunteered much personal his time during these conference to help them out and reviewed proposals before these conferences started.

Elliot has extensive and highly valued teaching experience. As part of this background, he has a California Adult Education Teaching Certificate earned back in 2005. He continues to update these skills by attending professional development seminars and various conferences as well as through extensive reading and reflection. In the past, Elliot has helped with various teaching and technology mentoring programs for adults in the Los Angeles area. His dream, I think, is related to how such teaching and mentoring programs can better take advantage of open source software in education and open educational resources.

As detailed above, Elliot combines many diverse talents and skills into the complete package. He has interpersonal skills from his theater and acting career, pedagogical understandings and background from 7 years as a teacher, much technology savvy from his lab GA experiences at IU as well as his media production skills acquired before coming to IU, and business skills from his MBA and many previous occupations. I have always argued that it is at the interaction of technology, education, business, and psychology wherein interesting things happen; this perspective is especially true since the start of this century. Elliot epitomizes that intersection. He is interested in open education, personalized learning, virtual schools, mobile learning, and online music education. Without a doubt, the world has become increasingly open for learning. People like Elliot Jordan fully grasp these open education opportunities and intersecting fields while taking time out to share their insights with others. No doubt, Elliot will quickly find success in the coming years in whatever pursuit he takes on.

Elliot and I have had many conversations about the field of IST and human learning with technology in general. I often seek out his ideas when I am considering using, purchasing, or conducting research on a particular technology or Web-related resource. I find his opinions candid and highly beneficial to my decision making processes. In terms of his professional outlook, I view him as someone who is extremely focused, ambitious, and willing to take on new challenges. He also has charisma and charm that will help nurture difficult projects to fruition. As such, I think he has a well rounded perspective and a very bright future. Elliot's extraordinary level of commitment and boundless energy is welcome and contagious. Simply put, you will be very happy if and when you hire him.

Please let me know if you require further information on Elliot Jordan. I can be reached on my mobile phone at 812-322-curt (2878). I wish you well in your search efforts.

Sincerely,



Curtis J. Bonk, Professor
Indiana University
Instructional Systems Technology Department
(adjunct: School of Informatics)
School of Education: Room 2238
201 N. Rose Avenue
Bloomington, IN 47405-1006
812-322-2878 (mobile)
E-mail: CJBonk@indiana.edu
Personal Homepage: <http://php.indiana.edu/~cjbok/>