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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China requests all civil and military authorities of foreign countries to allow the bearer of this passport to pass freely and afford assistance in case of need.
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Sometimes I feel it is my fate to be in the field of computer science, and whenever people say “you are born for computer”, I feel I am one step nearer to my dream. Yes, I have made the field of Computer Science my life-long devotion, and to work with it for a better world is my dream. Now one concrete step towards my dream, which I am eager to take is to pursue a graduate study in your master program of Computer Science, and I am enthusiastically and tirelessly working on the application for acceptance into your program after my expected graduation in 2012 from UW-Madison.

It is said that interest is the best teacher. My interest in computers started ever since I was a little boy, when I was always fascinated by the things going on in the solid box called “computer”. The childhood fascination grew along with me, and finally motivated me to choose my beloved major in Computer Science, Economics and Mathematics in UW-Madison three years ago. The undergraduate study life opens up a new horizon and offers me a vast field of exploration, where I feel like being a sponge myself, eagerly absorbing knowledge in my interested area.

While studying as an undergraduate, I get more chances to acquaint with some of the big names in this field: Bill Gates’s story has always been a resounding classic, Facebook’s founder Mark Zuckerberg strikes me with his genius, and more impressively, I am encouraged by Apple CEO Steve Jobs’ words at the Stanford University Graduation Ceremony: “Stay hungry, stay foolish”. Jobs’ story of being fired by Apple but restarting two companies within 10 years and coming back as CEO impresses me as legendary and makes him my career idol. I am excited to realize that these people’s expertise, talent, courage, and entrepreneurship have not only made them successful, but also made our life easier and better, and that the potential of computer is big enough to transform not only the people but also the world. Thus, my undergraduate study has re-confirmed my passion in computer science, and further clarified my life goal. I wish I could devote myself to this field, contribute to the further realization of computer’s potential, and to be a professional like Steve Jobs.

In the meantime, the more I learn about computer, the more I realize the inadequacy in my knowledge, and the more I wish to learn. The thought of pursuing a M.A. course in Computer Science naturally came to me, but in a strong way: to be a top professional, I need more to equip myself, more than a B.A. program, and even more than an ordinary M.A. – I need a “best” master program. I decide to take the challenge and dive myself further into the field by applying for a top-ranking Computer Science course in a best university, like the one in your prestigious university. I am fully aware of the challenge I am facing, but I am equally convinced that I am qualified for your program, in terms of my academic study, my research ability, and my communication and organization skills.

During my study in the competitive Department of Computer Science of UW-Madison, among the best of its kind in U.S.A., I have kept an enviable study record, reserving a top position in class with a 3.95/4.0 GPA and 4.0/4.0 Major GPA, and holding an array of academic honors with
varieties of scholarships and contest prizes. My great interest in computer spurs me to always striving for the best, and my parents’ encouragement for me to “work hard” urges me to spare no effort in my academic study. Thanks to my interest and diligence, I have been remembered by many as “an outstanding student”.

Being a good student is not enough to realize my dream. A successful research life requires not only good ability to learn “in class”, but also, and more importantly, the ability to study on one’s own, which I have acquired, and am still gaining, through painful but fruitful experience.

In 2009, I travelled to take two classes in UC-Berkeley Summer School, Computer Science and Linear Algebra. Not aware of the level of the class, I had a tough time in the first class. The Linear Algebra class required related background, but I was then as ignorant as a blank paper; for the CS class, they changed lecture class to lab-based class, which meant two intense hours in the lab everyday. Both classes appeared like “missions impossible” to me, and I began to think of quitting and taking easier classes and enjoying the ocean air of California instead. Even my instructors saw the difficulty and agreed. But in the last minute, I changed my mind and decided to take up the challenge with perseverance. I got up at 8 a.m. everyday for the morning classes and went to bed at 3 a.m. after reviewing and previewing everything for the past and coming classes. The long-lasting arduous work and heavy study burden almost overwhelmed me, but I survived, and survived well: at the end of the courses, impressed by my progress and performance, my instructors awarded me a “Special Prize for the Course”. But the biggest prize I have gained from the experience is the spirit of never giving up, the belief in one’s unlimited potential, the virtue of perseverance, and, more significantly, the ability of self-study.

These precious lessons help me to take up more challenges later with more self-assurance and courage. In the summer of 2010, I interned with Epic Systems Corporation, which is famous for its electronic databases and snagged a coveted chance to learn about the healthcare industry. Once again, my ability and potential was taken to the limit and beyond. During my internship, while I was technically inspired by Epic’s brilliant idea of user-friendly administrators’ toolkit, spiritually thrilled by its motto of ‘keeping curious, thinking critically and ‘stay hungry, stay foolish”’. I was also constantly struggling with difficulties in project implementation and seeking for solutions. This time, however, there were no university professors to offer help, and there was even no ready answer to any problem. Everything rested upon my hands, and upon my ability of self-study and independent research. I stuck to the problems, persevered in my attempts, and after much difficulty, finally made my project a success. Today I am still proud of my ability to solve problems on my own and of the small contribution I made to the future of the healthcare industry. Earlier this year, with more assurance, I conducted an independent research on Cross-Input Efficiency Improvements for Concurrency-Bug Detection with a partner, which further confirms and improves my self-study ability. This summer, my independent problem-solving ability also gained me a valuable experience on the infrastructure Team-DAO at Facebook. As many programming skills are not taught in school, I studied all the required programming languages on my own and succeeded in implementing an important Data Provider component. My Facebook internship also taught me another thing with its company culture: “move fast, break thing”, “hack”, and to switch to another solution when one doesn’t work.
These thrilling ways of thinking will further build up my research ability and assist me to realize my dream. Nevertheless, while developing my study and research ability all the way, study is not the whole of my life. Character building can be equally important to one’s career life, and I have always been very active in various social activities. Previously, I was math tutor for University House for a year, working with freshmen to help them out of difficulties, walked them through problems, and regularly held group discussions with 6-10 students. My knowledge and willingness to help made me extremely popular among students. By the end of the year, my session was so loved by students that my supervisor invited me to stay, which, however, I declined as I had accepted a new challenge position: to work as house fellow. Many friends tried to persuade me out of taking this position, for its noted as time-consuming, but I stayed and am working again with a helping heart. From these experiences, I have developed great communication skills and fostered strong leadership ability as well as built a good relationship with my residents as they settled down in the new campus.

My communication skills and leadership ability have also brought me the 1st Place in NEST Software Contest for “Passim” by UW CS department in 2011 with my team. At first, as a team member, I proposed a weekly meeting to push forward our progress. But with everyone busy with schoolwork, few turned up. Knowing we need to be organized to pull out everybody’s potential and talent, I tried various social activities to unite us, having movie nights, lunching together, etc., and planned and assigned work among us. After a difficult time, our meeting came to be enjoyed by everyone, and the project went on a normal track. It proves to me that a team spirit can be very important in career success and communication and leadership ability is vital. Now determined to further build up my character, I am shouldering an important responsibility, besides House Fellow position, in UW-Madison as serving as Vice President of student organization Hub, working outreaching serious speakers from CS, Business school as well as from different companies like Facebook, intuit, Microsoft and so on. Hub aims at connecting CS undergraduate students, the CS department, other Madison students as well as company alumna, encourages students to start working on new ideas as a team and get involved in starting up. Since Hub is a new student organization, formed in May with only four members, 2011 and introduced to Computer science student in fall semester, 2011 with about 50 members signed up, it requires a significant amount of time and effort to make it successful on campus.

I am convinced that with my passion in Computer Science, my solid educational background, my perseverance, my outstanding self-study capacity, and my strong communication and leadership abilities, I am qualified for your prominent program. I also believe that your distinguished faculties, advanced courses, and state-of-the-art facilities would greatly facilitate the achievement of my aspirations in the field of Computer Science. It is demanding to study in a top university like yours, but I am ready to take the challenge and am sincerely looking forward to the most favorable reply.
Peisen (Philip) Zhao

Date of birth: 08/16/1989   Nationality: Chinese

EDUCATION
Aug. 2008 – May 2012 University of Wisconsin-Madison
◇ Major: Computer Science, Economics and Mathematics.
  GPA: 3.95/4.0, Major GPA: 4.0/4.0
◇ Studied upper level class of Computer Science and Linear Algebra in UC-Berkeley in 2009
  (June - August) for summer school

AWARDS & HONORS
2011
◇ Awarded DeWitt Undergraduate Computer Science Scholarship
◇ Certificate of Participation of G. Steven Burrill Business Plan Competition for “Passim” (by UW Business School).
◇ Awarded the 1st Place in NEST Software Contest for “Passim” (awarded by UW CS department).
◇ Recognized by Phi Beta Kappa Society 2011
◇ Awarded College of Letters & Science George Enfiled Frazer Scholarship
◇ Being on Dean’s List for 5 semesters
2009-2010
◇ Awarded College of Letters & Science Marie B. Gabrovic Scholarship, 2010
◇ Recognized by National Society of Collegiate Scholars, 2009
◇ STT (student technical training) Core IT I with certification, 2009

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE
◇ Supervisor: Prof Shan Lu (Clare Boothe Luce Assistant Professor, UW-Madison))
◇ Purpose: to discover a way to reduce the overall time spent in detecting concurrency bugs.
Nov. 2009-May, 2010 Research Assistant in Human-Computer Interaction Laboratory, University of Wisconsin, Madison
◇ To plan, organize, and carry out long-term and short-term research project.
◇ To work on the Virtual Human Project to create human-like behavior with Behavior Markup Language script.
◇ To analyze, research, and study open source projects such as SmartBody, OpenSim, HippoView and Virtual Human Toolkit.
◇ To develop a habit of analyzing, studying other people’s codes.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
Summer, 2010 Epic System Corporation Software Developer intern
◇ Improved the Print Group Design application
Used HTML/CSS and built a toolkit for Hospital administrators to create “Your Visit Summary” reports

Worked both on client side and server side programming, to pick new language such as Cache, VB and HTML as quickly as possible and to communicate with customers and peers to gain instant feedback

**Summer, 2011**  Facebook Intern with Infra team
- Transformed data storage from MySQL to HBase to increase the writing performance
- Succeeded in implementing a component called Data provider for HBase
- Project covering a large variety of components as well as programming languages, such as TAO (in C), data providers store (in C++), and HBase (in Java)
- Assisted Migration team to develop a new data provider called Composite Data Provider

**September, 2010-May, 2011**  Math Tutor for University House
- Tutoring College Calculus, Multiple Variables and Linear Algebra
- Walked students through problems, helped explain textbook materials, and summarized methods
- Skilfully managed group discussions with 6-10 people
- Welcomed and loved by students

**ACTIVITIES**

**Vice President of Hub student organization**
- Responsible for recruiting Computer Science students (from freshmen to Senior)
- Responsible for reaching out to companies to create meaningful and educational events around campus
- To encourage students to get involved in developing new project outside school
- To help students to form a team and encourage them to develop their team building, communication, and leadership skills

**Interned with WISPIRG (Wisconsin Public Interested Research Group)**
- Worked with BRGG (Big Red Go Green) to raise awareness about the Environment and saving energy among the University residence halls
- Succeeded in recruiting 100 people to sign to support Wisconsin State global warming bills and reducing University Housing electric bill by 10,000 dollar within one week.

**Selected as House Fellow (or Resident Assistant) of University Housing (2011-2012)**
- To work with 78 residents, all freshmen
- To help solve residents’ problems, to facilitate communication, and to maintain a good community in the House as well as the entire Hall
- To hold two outreaches every week to connect with residents and to create two events for the House every month to encourage residents get involved.

**TOGGER Director (Ogg Hall, residence hall).**
- Focus on the volunteer opportunity to encourage residence to participate in the volunteer activity such as blood drive and Halloween Event decoration.

**Member of Hoofer Outing club and Hoofer sailing club**

**Member of Ballroom dance club, UWMBDA**

**Alternative Spring Break Trip to Grand Canyon, Arizona (2010)**
- Volunteered with Grand Canyon Trust to restore forest for 5 days.

**Alternative Spring Break Trip to New York City (2009)**
Helped LGBTQ and learned about their life under the unfair society in NY for 5 days
Brought information about LGBT and promoted LGBT awareness around the campus.

Participated in culture sharing with BRIDGE (Building Relationships in Diverse Global Environment)
Computer Science –Freshman Interested Group (FIG).

Learned how computer to revolutionize our society (2008).

ESA (Economics Student Association) member

Joined a trip to Chicago to visit companies, such as Merrill Lynch, the Price Water House Corp, and the Federal Reserve Bank and learn how to apply my in class knowledge to solve real world problems. (2008).
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| 05/16/10 Dean's List | |

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| 05/16/10 Dean's List | |

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<td>14.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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</table>

ADV STG CREDITS     6
UGRAD CUM CREDITS   106
UNDERGRAD CUM GPA CREDITS 89
UGRAD CUM GRADE POINTS 351.5
UNDERGRADUATE GPA     3.949
END OF RECORD
GRADING SYSTEM
All credits are based on semester hours. A 4.00 grading system is used. Prior to 1954-55 a 3.00 grading system was used. Intermediate grades of AB and BC were instituted as of September 1973.

Grades With Associated Grade Points Per Credit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>GRADE POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Excellent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB Intermediate Grade</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Intermediate Grade</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Fair</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D Poor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Failure</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR No Report prior to 1999</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades Which Do Not Have Associated Grade Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CR Credit</th>
<th>NW No Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEF Deferred</td>
<td>P Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR Dropped</td>
<td>PE Permanently Excused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI Extended Incomplete</td>
<td>Q Question on credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EX Excused</td>
<td>R Registered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF Incomplete - Medical School Courses only</td>
<td>S Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN Incomplete in Credit/No Credit Course</td>
<td>U Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No Credit</td>
<td>W Withdrawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR No Report beginning in 1999</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS
- Failed course that has been repeated. Credits are not used to calculate cumulative GPA.
# Course taken on a pass/fail basis
* With Name Full name in body of transcript
@ On Credits Question on credits
> Repeat of a failed course
> Course does not count toward degree
* Repeat of a non-repeatable course
+ Credit/No Credit course in progress
ADV STG CRS Credits earned on UW-Madison Campus
AU Course taken for Audit credit
CRS Number of credits
CUM Cumulative totals
EARNED CRS Total credits earned
GPA Grade Point Average
GPA CR Credits included in Grade Point Average calculation
GR Grade received
H Course taken for Honors credit
PTS Grade Points
SUM Semester/Term totals

YEAR LEVEL DEFINITIONS
1 = FRESHMAN - Less than 24 credits and 48 grade points
2 = SOPHOMORE - 24 credits and 48 grade points
3 = JUNIOR - 54 credits and 108 grade points
4 = SENIOR - 86 credits and 172 grade points
5/GR# = GRADUATE - A student pursuing a graduate degree
P# = Professional & Year

COURSE NUMBERING SYSTEM
000 - 099 Special Purpose Courses
100 - 299 Undergraduate Courses
300 - 699 Courses Open to Either Undergraduates Or Graduates
700 - 999 Graduate And Professional Courses Including Seminars

INCOMPLETES
The undergraduate student in Letter and Science must remove the grade of I (Incomplete) by the end of the fourth week of classes in the next semester (excluding summer) the student is in attendance. All other undergraduate students and most special students must remove the Incomplete by the end of the next semester they are in attendance. Incompletes that are not removed by the deadline dates lapse into a grade of F (Failure). The deadlines for removal of Incompletes may be extended with approval of the student's Dean's Office. Graduate and professional students are not subject to the above Incomplete deadlines. Students who are not in attendance for a five year period after an Incomplete is received may not remove the Incomplete without permission from the students' Dean's Office. These Incompletes remain on the record as Permanent Incompletes and do not lapse into failure.

LAW SCHOOL GRADES
The Law School has its own grading scale. Law students entering in 2005 and thereafter are given letter grades of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, and so on through F.

Law students entering in 1992 through 2004, were graded on a numerical scale of 65 through 95. Letter-grade equivalents during that time period was as follows:
87-95 A 77.79 C
85-86 AB 70.76 D
83-84 B 65.69 F
80-82 BC

From 1970 to 1992, the following grading system and letter-grade equivalents were used:
87-100 A 70.76 D
82-86 B 65.69 F
77-81 C

Detailed information concerning Law grades is available from the University of Wisconsin Law School Registrar's Office.

MEDICAL SCHOOL GRADES
Detailed information concerning a student's grades, relative class standing and clinical performance is available upon request of the student from the UW-Madison Medical School Registrar's Office. The grade of IF is available to medical students in Medical School Courses.

THE HONORS PROGRAM
Some Schools & Colleges have developed special honors programs that replace or supplement the designation of awards based on grade point average alone. These programs encourage and recognize work of greater depth, scope and originality by undergraduates whose abilities and interests make them eligible. The content and pace of honors courses are adapted to students who have chosen to do intensive work (either of an accelerated or enriched nature) in the subjects. The programs are entirely voluntary.

TRANSCRIPTS FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS
The University of Wisconsin - Madison does not issue copies of transcripts or other documents received from other institutions, including the University of Wisconsin - Extension.

RECORDING OF UW WORK PRIOR TO JANUARY 1972
Prior to January 1972 all courses and grades for work taken within the former University of Wisconsin System (UW-Madison, UW-Milwaukee, UW-Green Bay, UW-Parkside, UW-Centers, and UW-Extension) were recorded on one record and may appear on this transcript.

Transcripts
Office of the Registrar
University of Wisconsin - Madison
Madison, Wisconsin
608-262-3811
www.registrar.wisc.edu

This is watermarked security paper and contains invisible fibers. Do not accept as authentic without noting watermark.

ADDITIONAL TESTS: When photocopied the words VOID VOID VOID appear over the face of the entire document. When this paper is touched by fresh liquid bleach, an authentic document will stain brown. A black and white or color copy of this document is not an original and should not be accepted as an official institutional document. This document cannot be counterfeited.
**Recommendation Form**

**Applicant name:** Zhao Peisen

**Proposed field and degree program:**

**Applicant DOB (for identification Purposes):** 08-16-1989

**Proposed Admit Term:**

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the applicant can waive his/her right to inspect this recommendation. Should the applicant decide not to waive the right, he/she will have access to the recommendation only if he/she enrolls in the Graduate School at Cornell University.

[X] I hereby waive my right of access to the information

*Peisen Zhao* 11-15-2011

☐ I hereby DO NOT waive my right of access to the recommendation

(Applicant signature) (Date)

**Recommender: Please compare the applicant with one of the following**

- [x] Undergraduates from your institution who have gone on to graduate study
- [ ] Current senior undergraduates at your institution
- [ ] Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic performance</th>
<th>Top 2%</th>
<th>Top 5%</th>
<th>Top 10%</th>
<th>Top 25%</th>
<th>Top 50%</th>
<th>Bottom 50%</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>[x]</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Intellectual potential</th>
<th>Top 2%</th>
<th>Top 5%</th>
<th>Top 10%</th>
<th>Top 25%</th>
<th>Top 50%</th>
<th>Bottom 50%</th>
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<th>Creativity and originality</th>
<th>Top 2%</th>
<th>Top 5%</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Motivation for graduate study</th>
<th>Top 2%</th>
<th>Top 5%</th>
<th>Top 10%</th>
<th>Top 25%</th>
<th>Top 50%</th>
<th>Bottom 50%</th>
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</table>

Write candidly about the applicant. Indicate how long and in what capacity you have known the applicant. Discuss the applicant's qualifications and potential to carry on advanced study in the field specified, as well as his or her promise of professional success. In describing such attributes as motivation, intellect, and maturity, discuss both strong and weak points. Specific examples are more useful than generalizations. Indicate rank in class, if known. If possible, compare the applicant with others you have recommended who have attended or are attending the Graduate School at Cornell University. If the applicant's first language is not English, comment on his or her ability to read, write, speak and teach in English.

**Recommender Signature** David Anderson 11-15-2011

**Name** David Anderson

**Title** Dr.

**Email Address** anderson@math.wisc.edu

**Telephone**

**Institution Name**

**Institution Address**

U. of Wisconsin at Madison

University of Wisconsin Madison, 480 Lincoln Drive

Madison, WI 53706

USA

*This recommendation will remain confidential during the admission process and will be used by The Graduate School in its procedures relative to admissions and fellowships. If the student waived the right of access to the recommendation, it will become accessible to the student only if he or she enrolls in The Graduate School.*
September 26, 2011

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter of recommendation for the application of Peisen (Philip) Zhao to your graduate program. In my years of teaching at both Duke University and the University of Wisconsin, Philip Zhao is probably the strongest undergraduate student I have encountered. I therefore give him my strongest recommendation.

I first met Philip when he enrolled in my Introduction to Probability course in the Spring semester of 2010. This is the first relatively serious mathematics course encountered by many students, and it is quite often one that is challenging for even those who have never struggled with math until then. In terms of grades, Philip essentially got nothing wrong all semester. His final average was a 97. To put this in some sort of perspective, the average (mean) final grade was 75, and the median was 79. In fact, the student with the next highest final grade had a final average of 91.8. Thus, Philip was far and away my best student.

However, it was not simply his ability to get good grades that was impressive. Philip is the type of student who sits in class and pays attention to a lecture and asks the correct, pertinent questions when something is unclear to him. I distinctly remember a class in which Philip questioned me about how I could pass an expectation through an infinite sum (he was essentially asking about the Fubini-Tonelli theorem, but he had no way of knowing this). This is a question far beyond the typical student in a course of this level.

Due to his performance in my introduction to probability course, I suggested to Philip that he should take my Introduction to Stochastic Processes course in the Fall of 2010. This is not normal, as we usually recommend that students take a mathematical analysis course (at the level of Walter Rudin’s texts) between these courses. In fact, the stochastic processes course is a serious math course in which just under half are graduate students (from math, CS, and elsewhere), and a large emphasis is placed on proving the relevant theorems used. For reference, the text I used was Sidney Resnick’s Adventures in Stochastic Processes. Based on his performance in my probability course, I believed Philip would do well, but was admittedly apprehensive as students rarely go straight into stochastic processes. Once again, however, Philip was my best student. He, again, asked more (good) questions than anyone else in the class (by far), and he, again, ended with the highest grade in the class. His average was 97, whereas the class average
was 79. Considering the number of graduate students in this class (10 out of 26), I find this very impressive.

Clearly, I have not yet been able to push Philip to his limits. He is going to be taking my course on Brownian motion and diffusion processes next semester, however, so I am looking forward to another attempt!

On a personal level, Philip is a real pleasure to be around. He is obviously very bright, but is also easygoing and easy to have a conversation with (his English is perfect and it is almost hard to believe he is not a native speaker). I believe, therefore, that he will be a graduate student that strengthens any department on a social as well as academic level.

Overall, I will reiterate that Philip is probably the most gifted undergraduate student I have met at either Duke or Wisconsin. He also compares favorably with many of the graduate students I have known. Philip is a serious student who will do very well in his endeavors wherever he lands, and I recommend you make every effort to ensure he lands with you. I have no reservations in giving him my highest recommendation.

Sincerely,

David F. Anderson
Assistant Professor of Mathematics
University of Wisconsin at Madison
In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the applicant can waive his/her right to inspect this recommendation. Should the applicant decide not to waive the right, he/she will have access to the recommendation only if he/she enrolls in the Graduate School at Cornell University.

**X** I hereby waive my right of access to the information*  
Peisen Zhao  
11-17-2011  
(Applicant signature)  
(Date)

**☐** I hereby DO NOT waive my right of access to the recommendation

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**Recommender: Please compare the applicant with one of the following**

- **☐** Undergraduates from your institution who have gone on to graduate study
- **X** Current senior undergraduates at your institution
- **☐** Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Bottom 50%</th>
</tr>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual potential</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
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<td>Creativity and originality</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td><strong>X</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation for graduate study</td>
<td><strong>X</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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Recommender Signature _Shan Lu_  
Date _11-17-2011_

Name _Shan Lu_  
Title _Dr._

Email Address _shanlu@cs.wisc.edu_  
Telephone _608-2626272_

**Institution Name**  
University of Wisconsin, Madison

**Institution Address**  
1210 W. Dayton St. University of Wisconsin  
Madison, WI 53706-1685  
USA

---

*This recommendation will remain confidential during the admission process and will be used by The Graduate School in its procedures relative to admissions and fellowships. If the student waived the right of access to the recommendation, it will become accessible to the student only if he or she enrolls in The Graduate School.
To whom it may concern,

It is my great pleasure to recommend Peisen (Philip) Zhao for admission to your graduate program in computer science. Peisen was a student in my “Introduction to Operating Systems” (CS537) class in Fall 2010 and did a project with me in Spring 2011. He did exceptionally well in the class and in the research project. Peisen has my strongest recommendation.

CS537 is a demanding course where students need to have both a good understanding of computer systems and a good programming skill to excel. Peisen performed extremely well in both. Among all 51 students in the class that include 11 graduate students and 40 undergraduate students, he ranked #2 in exams and #3 in programming projects. Overall, I consider him as the best student in the class.

In CS537, Peisen impressed me as a quick learner with great curiosity and determination. He did not have the best background in operating systems when entering the class. He also did not have much C programming experience at the beginning. However, he was very attentive in the class and asked tons of well-thought questions. Peisen never let a question go unanswered, no matter the question is about CS537 or about research stories I mentioned in the lectures. I have never seen a student that is so eager to learn as Phil. He also learns very fast. At the end of the semester, I was not surprised to see him became one of the best in both system knowledge and C programming skills in the class.

Peisen contacted me for research opportunities at the end of Fall 2010. I suggested him a research project that aims to improve the testing efficiency of multi-threaded software. He was very excited and even persuaded another student in my CS537 class (Borui Wang) to join him in this project. In one semester, Phil and Borui picked up the background of run-time program analysis and multi-threaded software testing, came up with several interesting ideas, and implemented a preliminary testing infrastructure. Peisen’s performance in this project further convinced me of his potential: he is never scared of picking up new techniques and he is very hard-working.

In Spring 2011, Peisen, Borui, and their three teammates won the first place in the NEST programming contest of our department. I feel really proud of them after witnessing their team’s development process. As one of two main developers in his team (as far as I know), Peisen had no experience of Web programming at the beginning. Just like what he did in CS537 and in the research project, he quickly picked new techniques up and excelled with his passion and determination.
Apart from good academic achievement, Peisen also has a very good personality. He is modest, enthusiastic, and has very good communication skills. I am always amazed by his passion and energy of working on course works, research, and the programming competition at the same time. His good personality makes him easily find good teammates around him. For example, he persuaded Borui to join him in his research project with me. In the NEST contest, his team was started after Phil got to know a business-school student through his economics class. Peisen has this capability of getting to know people and collaborating with people very well. I can easily see Peisen achieve great success in non-academic fields in the future.

Peisen is one of the best undergraduate students whom I have interacted with. In recognition of his excellent work as an undergraduate student, Peisen won one of the most prestigious scholarships in our department, DeWitt Undergraduate Scholarships, in 2011. I wish Peisen would stay in our Ph.D. program. Sadly for me, Peisen prefers a career path in software industry, and wants to go to a master program to widen and deepen his computer science understanding. I believe Peisen will become a great graduate student in your department and eventually a great software architect. Therefore, I am extremely pleased to recommend Peisen for your graduate program. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Shan Lu
Assistant Professor
Computer Sciences Department
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Email: shanlu@cs.wisc.edu