

To whom it may concern,

I want to stress my appreciation and gratitude to Professor Michael Popovic. My first year of college I was nervous and scared of not having a clue what I wanted to do with my life. I was in a major I was unhappy in and was seeking counsel on what to do next. An upper classmate of mine talked to me about her major, international studies and how great the head of the department was, and it sounded like something that would be perfect for me. So, I made an appointment with Professor Popovic, and it was very impactful to my college career. He talked to me about not only what I could learn but the opportunities I could have. He didn't really know me at the time, but he genuinely wanted me to succeed. He made sure to talk to me and make me feel comfortable. As a former student of his, I believe that one of his many talents is that he is always thinking about other people. He always made sure to include everyone and you could really tell that he really cares for us. He could make anyone smile even at 8 am in the morning, which is something I really appreciate. He made sure we took in all the information the best way possible. I was always confident that I was learning and was always pushing myself to learn more.

Professor Popovic was always pushing us to go beyond the classroom. He introduced me to the program Soliya and First Year Connect which was very influential to me. I was able to work with people from all over the world and later became a trained facilitator. That program we were able to practice dialogue and teach it to the new generations of students. Things like this and Days of Reflections were greatly beneficial to students like me. As a woman of color having talks and discussions which in a place like Potsdam was helpful. It made me and other students feel like they had a voice. I was proud that he was my teacher, and we could tell how much it meant to him. I am grateful to Professor Popovic for always thinking of others and caring. Few people care about their students and the community around, but he does. There was never a class I was in that didn't have at least one student engaging in a conversation with him. We all have nothing but wonderful things to say about him. I am grateful that he worked closely with us and is our number one supporter. He is easily my favorite teacher, and he is a perfect example of what a good Professor looks like. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Essance Farrell-Artis