

University at Buffalo
State University of New York

Department of Computer Science and Engineering

December 31, 2016

Graduate Admissions Committee
Re: applicant Yudong Feng

Dear Graduate Admissions Committee:

I am happy to provide a reference for Mr. Yudong Feng. I have known him as a student in one course, “CSE396: Intro Theory of Computation” last Spring. I am an Associate Professor with long happy service at UB.

Mr. Feng earned an A- in CSE396, one of only nine to earn A or A- out of 152 students finishing the course. He had an A on both prelim exams, a B+ average on homeworks and an A- on the final exam. His work was steady throughout the course and he had no difficulties with the formal mathematical content. On the final he was nearly perfect (87/90) on two long word problems involving context-free grammars and induction proofs. From his writing also, I infer he had good command of English.

He also has a notably diverse background—also the most overtly capitalist of anyone from mainland China with recent involvement there whom I’ve ever written for. I did not have the chance this month to view his version of Scrabble—I was called suddenly to Manhattan for filming for possible inclusion in a documentary and so missed three days of our exam week.

Mr. Feng clearly has the intellectual horses for PhD study as evinced by his overall GPA and projects both at UB and with financial companies. His current weighing of various career options strikes me as well-motivated, not a hesitation. I think you should treat him as a clear PhD prospect. In any event he has strong command of the whole array of data-analytics talents. Our department does not yet offer a formal certificate in that; we are currently reorganizing our undergraduate curriculum to do so. I wish he would be staying here at least for our BS+MS program, as then he could be in my graduate seminar on data issues exemplified by my recent article <https://rjlipton.wordpress.com/2016/11/30/when-data-serves-turkey/> and its followup post on the *Gödel’s Lost Letter* blog.

In sum I can recommend him most highly. I will be happy to answer any further questions you may have.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Kenneth W. Regan