

STUDENT EMAILS

Prof. Rickards may be one of the most impactful professors I have had during my time at Drexel.

I had her for a number of classes, some community-based, that focused on the concept of justice in a variety of ways. Through these classes, I feel as though my world view was challenged. Prof. Rickards taught me how to navigate the complexities of lived experience and how they collide with various facets of society. She helped me learn about my own place in the world and how I can use my platform to be a champion for a safe, clean, and equitable society.

Lastly, she showed me that a big world is really not that big, and that we as people are interconnected by the struggles we face and that we can use that connection for the greater good. I owe so much of the person I am to Prof. Rickards and cannot thank her enough for preparing me to tackle an ever-changing world. ~ Jarod Watson

STUDENT EMAILS

I hope that you enjoy winter break and time with your family. It sure has been a crazy year and decompressing and enjoying our loved ones is NEEDED! I just wanted to email you to thank you so much for all you've done for me during my journey at Drexel. Your courses and their associated discussion sparked immense passion in me (specifically in the realm of public health) and were very enjoyable. This winter quarter was my last at Drexel, but I will not be a stranger! I hope to come visit everyone once on-campus operations are back to what they were because this "see ya later" was very unexpected and I need to see everyone again!

You were a pivotal part of my educational journey and self-discovery. I feel that I have learned way more in these two years I had at Drexel than I have in my entire life. While I was a transfer student, I found my home at Drexel and in the criminology department. My next steps are unknown, I'm trying to parse that out as I work as an emergency department technician for now and organize my thoughts. I will keep you updated on my future plans and will definitely keep in touch.

Thank you so much again. I truly will miss seeing you around campus.

Best,
Miranda

STUDENT EMAILS

Hello Professor Rickards,

I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for a truly wonderful class. Before this term started, the only real person I hung out with was my brother. Now, I am friends with two of my Dutch colleagues on Discord, and I have already played Among Us with Arjen and his friends from Scotland (how cool is that?!?!). We also have plans to play in the future, and this is possible solely because of your class. This is an awesome development in my quarantine environment, and it is one that will last beyond the COVID-19 pandemic (Arjen has several contacts on Discord of people he's met around the world that he regularly games with, which now includes me). Thank you so much! I also wanted to mention a class I took in the winter quarter called Urban Sociology taught by Dr. Jason Orne. I mention it because it also deals a lot with the holistic nature in which systemic problems form in communities, like environmental racism. This reminded me a lot of your class, and even if you do nothing with the information, I just wanted you to be aware in case you weren't. Anyways, thank you so much again for a great class!

Aidan

STUDENT EMAILS

Hi Cyndi,

I have been doing a great deal of thinking throughout this course and the more I read, discuss and study the more I am drawn to it. I really would like to look at how I could possibly complete this as a minor or major. My problem is that because of my current challenges coming to Campus is an obstacle. I am not sure how I would satisfy the requirements for the classes not online or available online. Its something I am really thinking about and so wanted to get your thoughts. I also want to make sure I am not reacting from the sheer emotion of it and that it is truly the direction I want to head. I am not getting any younger and my most immediate goal in coming to Drexel was to obtain my degree and finish something I had not completed. My folks have always been so disappointed that I did not complete my degree and so have I...Getting sick really changed a great deal for me and my intent was to work in hospice counseling when I completed my schooling and Masters God willing I am still here. But I am really feeling this pull towards the criminal justice and specifically juvenile justice and while I am not sure of the time frame of my future I know that I am just overcome with a desire to pursue this. I don't know how your feel about faith but I am very faith oriented, and I pray a lot on things not necessarily for answers as much as to open my heart and mind to hear and see opportunities in everything and so far it has helped me.

The minute I started this course I was overwhelmed, excited, incompetent and searching for all I could find on the topics we discussed and it has not stopped. I feel like a crazed student gone off the deep end but I can assure you I am just so caught off guard by how much more meaningful all this is for me at this time in my life. 20-20 hindsight if I had only known then what I know now but I think that my life is just truly this awesome adventure that has been made so much richer by everything from my family, the Cancer, Drexel....I know how cheesey this sounds but I guess what I am trying to say is WOW if you or any professor wonder if you are making a difference or getting through call me. I have been truly enriched by every professor and my time at Drexel.

Okay somewhere in all that rambling is just genuine appreciation and to let you know I am going to take whatever is offered online in criminal justice and see where it leads.

Thanks Cyndi for genuinely trying to help us all become better people and sharing what you know.

Jan

STUDENT EMAILS

Hi Cyndi,

Happy New Year! I wanted to let you know that I was able to meet with Ryan last week for coffee. You were right, the work The Lindy Institute does aligns with so many of my interests. He was able to answer my questions and I learned a lot about the institute and their graduate program in urban strategy. Thank you so much for connecting us!

I really appreciate the time you took to get to know me and my interests in order to help me further pursue work that inspires me. Your class was one of the most impactful classes I have taken at Drexel and I know that moving forward, I will be taking what I have learned from you and my peers with me.

I hope our paths cross more over my last year and a half here. I'll be sure to look out for any other honors classes that you teach. Thank you again!!

Best,

Abigail Gard

B.S. Civil Engineering | Drexel University 2021
Pennoni Honors College

William Lukas 

January 11, 2017 at 2:00 PM



Hi!

To: Cyndi Reed Rickards

Hey Cyndi,

Been meaning to write you for a while now since I've been off FB and wanted to let you know that I'm thinking of you and all that you do! I have an interview with The Imagine Bus Project today for a teaching artist position at SF juvenile hall - <http://imaginebusproject.org> - wanted to say thank you for believing in me and challenging and inspiring me - especially during my time at Drexel when things felt really rough and isolated. I hope you and your family are doing well and that the New Year brings lots of tenderness and power to you.

With love,
William

Sent from my iPhone

STUDENT EMAILS

STUDENT EMAILS

That is fine...I have to tell you Cyndi I was intimidated by your assignments when I had your class for the first time and I do not mean that in a negative way at all. I think, as I was, many students are used to being led through the assignment meaning very distinct and clear guidelines for what is to be done. Your assignments actually encourage and challenge students to think beyond the material and to apply the concepts and ideas your teaching. It was very troublesome for me and I imagine for others who are used to being led a little more. I know returning to school I had a great deal of anxiety and apprehension and did not trust my instincts always on some assignments and so it was a bit intimidating (may be too strong a word) but the more I got into it the more I learned to trust that I was getting it and then I actually began to look forward to the assignments and discussions. From what I have experienced thus far in this course there is a great deal of discussion and very interesting students and perspectives.

I think students are not used to being asked to be so active and with online courses it is very important to engage students us because we are not right in front of you in a classroom situation. I know I was not used to the Drexel method as I fondly refer to it now but I cannot ever imagine going back to being a passive student ever again and believe it or not I was at one time. So I guess the long and the short of my dissertation here is I think your classes are some of the best I have ever taken and I think that you are very perceptive to see that it takes time for us to "get it" so to speak. I think your Wimba sessions will be helpful as I remember how much I got out of Tim's discussion and being able to hear the voices of my classmates.

I know you didn't ask for an opinion but I wanted to let you know that I don't think anyone has any challenges understanding how or what you teach I know for me it was just getting used to a professor who CARED what I thought and what I actually had to say instead of regurgitating the professor. Okay enough of my two cents...lol

STUDENT EMAILS

Hello Cyndi,

This is Inesse Hanna. I am not sure if you remember me, as the only course I took with you was "Justice in our Community" (CJS260) before I transferred to engineering. Still, I read [this New York Times article](#) today and immediately remembered your class. In all honesty I scrolled past the original article last week because the headline sounded rather one-sided, but I really enjoyed seeing the kind of dialogue it created among readers and researchers. It is a rare example of the incredible effects that well-presented research can have on an open-minded public, and just from this article, I think I learned a lot about our society that I previously took for granted.

Perhaps my favorite part of this article was the first question in the section on [Addressing Inequality and Racism](#); this question was from a relatively affluent parent of two African-American boys asking what she could do to prevent them from "toxic racism." A psychology professor responded by advising her to "equip [her] children with facts" and to look to mentors in their community and demographic, among other things. This response reminded me of how few people possess the knowledge to enact lasting change, and how fortunate I am to have come in contact with you and other similarly passionate and knowledgeable individuals.

I admit that while I was in class with you, I did not quite understand where your passion was founded or why, but certainly now I understand and appreciate it all the more fervently. I am thankful to have seen your drive and your bravery in addressing the issue of inequality and justice in our society, and only now have I truly considered what a daunting problem it is to fix. I want to thank you for all that you are doing to reverse the mistakes that hundreds of years of history have entrenched in our world, and I want to remind you that your efforts are making a lasting difference.

Thank you,

--

Inesse M.L. Hanna
Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering (BSCHE)
Drexel University, Class of 2021
imh35@drexel.edu | 858.333.1493

STUDENT EMAILS

Hello Professor! I just wanted to say that it was a pleasure being in your class this marking period! You were one of my favorite professors and I really learned a lot using sim city, and just sitting through our lectures! Partnering with our Amsterdam partners was also a memorable experience, so I just wanted to say thank you for everything! Have a great break! Carmen

STUDENT EMAILS

My name is Marisa McStravick and I have taken a sociology and criminal justice course with Professor Rickards.

Professor Rickards set a strong foundation of the basics of class material so that students were able to easily transition and make essential connections to the more in-depth information explored. As a class, we were encouraged to ask questions and discuss material frequently. Also, Professor Rickards always kept students timely with current events related to class.

Aside from choosing exceptional texts and films for both courses, Professor Rickards enveloped students in a creative learning environment atypical of other courses at Drexel University. We were introduced to a number of outstanding and knowledgeable guest speakers that further informed us on class material. We were also taken on class trips, such as a female correctional facility, that as students, would have been difficult for us to visit on our own. This hands-on learning environment really engaged students in class material and presented information to us in a way textbooks can't offer.

Professor Rickards had us complete journal entries after readings, films, trips, and guest speakers. I found this to be a great tool that encouraged me to really think about the course material and relate it to different venues in our society.

Professor Rickards has great relationships with many professionals outside of the educational system and she has turned out to be a great network connection for many students, myself included. During last term, we were introduced to two attorneys from the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office. As a prelaw student, with law school in my future, I mentioned to Professor Rickards how inspirational their visit to our class had been. Professor Rickards took the time to reconnect me with the attorneys and I now have a part-time internship with them at the D.A.'s Office. I have Professor Rickards to thank for this incredible opportunity, which allows me to sit in on hearings and gain hands-on experience in my future career.

On a personal note, Professor Rickards developed strong relationships with students. We were made to feel comfortable speaking with her about anything – class material, life goals, or personal issues. She truly listens to students and cares about their lives outside of the classroom.

Professor Rickards is a passionate educator and very knowledgeable about the subjects she teaches. Her invaluable background as a social worker and other past experiences allow her to give students insight that can't be found elsewhere. She has truly been a mentor to me and expanded my mind in more ways than one. I have her to thank for informing me on material I had not known existed. Without a doubt, she is a professor I will maintain a strong relationship with for years to come.

STUDENT EMAILS

I just read your comment on my final map and 🙄🙄.

I am in shock that I started my education at Drexel in your class and I'm graduating with you being one of my last professors. I still remember my first day at Drexel in CJS 260 when you sat me down after class and asked me if I was comfortable with the course topic. I gained so much respect for you that day and every day since it's only gone higher. I've learned so much from you both in class and out. You've been a fantastic influence on my life and an amazing mentor. I hope your mentorship does not end with me graduating because I know I'm not done learning from you! It may have been my last class as a student under Dr. Rickards, but I'll always be one of your students!

Of course, I will keep in touch outside of you being my mentor! I hope to be invited to talks as often as they happen! Also, I am filling out my application for Saint Joseph University M.S. program right now as we speak. I would love if you would write one of my letters of recommendation. I'm applying for an assistantship(T/A) over there and no one else is really qualified to speak on my experience with Drexel but you. No one can really speak on my Drexel come up overall like you can honestly.

I'm really sad that we're currently doing remote learning during my last year. I'm upset that I can't give/receive in-person thank you to everyone, especially you. However, in the sake of public safety I will say it 'virtually'. Thank you Dr. Rickards! Thank you for absolutely everything, for being hard on me and pushing me to succeed, for being there for me and suggesting therapy, for the T/A opportunity, for teaching me that "people, are not/cannot be inherently bad, but instead just make bad choices". You've been the best professor I could ask for!

Thank you,
K. McF