Georgia Institute of Technology®
Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

May 30, 2012

Dr. Linda Noble
Vice Chancellor for Faculty Affairs
Board of Regents of the University of Georgia
270 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Dr. Noble:

It is my distinct honor to nominate Dr. Steve M. Potter for the FY 2013 Regents' Teaching Excellence Award. As the following documents will demonstrate, Steve Potter is highly successful at motivating students by ensuring that the work they do for his classes is authentic and relevant.

Steve is a faculty member in the Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering at Georgia Tech and was the 2011 winner of the prestigious W. Hector Outstanding Teacher Award that is sponsored by the Georgia Tech Class of 1940. The main courses that he teaches are in the area of neuroscience – a highly technical area that requires the integration of science and engineering knowledge and approaches. His overarching teaching philosophy includes the statement that "Any student can get the grade that they want." This leads to innovative instructional strategies that are aimed at creating the **desire to learn** enough to earn an "A" in his classes. Outside of the classroom, Steve works to advise and mentor students interested in neuro-related work. He is the faculty advisor of the recently-formed GTNeuro undergraduate club and is working to set up an undergraduate collaborative research group called "Learning by Innovative Neuro Collaborations Research." Georgia Tech has no major or building that is devoted to Neuroscience, however there are over 100 researchers on campus who do some form of work in this area. Steve is working at unifying these widely scattered research groups specifically to provide a coherent experience for our undergraduates. He works hard at interacting with undergraduates, bringing them to do productive work in his lab, advising them, and mentoring them with enthusiasm.

One of the most compelling aspects of Steve's approach to his classes is to create assignments that do two things – first (perhaps as expected) they are designed to facilitate student learning; and second they are framed so that the artifacts created by the students actually benefit others outside of the class and even the Institute. The students interview experts in the field (personally – not through e-mail) and they attend lectures by outside researchers in the field to hear about the current issues that are being investigated. Through a variety of course assignments, each student develops critical thinking and writing skills through researching and then writing a Wikipedia article, reading a book in the area and then writing and posting an Amazon book review, and creating and posting a YouTube video. Through these assignments, Steve's students learn that a technical education implies a responsibility to contribute to the global body of public scientific knowledge. This also engages today's Georgia Tech students with scholarly uses of the same technology that they use in their private lives.

In conclusion, Georgia Tech considers Steve Potter to be the epitome of the excellent teacher – one who brings his research expertise into the undergraduate classroom in order to inspire and motivate his students. Moreover, in alignment with our strategic plan goal of ensuring that public service is a fundamental characteristic of our graduates, Steve's students give back to the broader community through their book reviews, survey articles, and videos – helping to educate the public about important scientific concepts and discoveries.

Sincerely,

Rafael L. Bras
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

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May 16, 2012

Dear Board of Regents Awards Committee,

On behalf of the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering at Georgia Tech and Emory University, I am pleased to write this letter in support of Steve Potter for the 2012 Regents' Teaching Excellence Award. Steve is a brilliant researcher and innovator in the field of neuroengineering, and he brings the same level of creativity and passion he exhibits in his laboratory research towards the design of some of the most innovative and invigorating learning environments I have ever seen. In particular, Steve has addressed a key challenge in education: as advances in social media and communication devices exert a huge influence on the lives of our students, how can we integrate these changing technologies into our learning environments? How can we, as university faculty, leverage "new media" in the context of higher education, particularly in technically challenging engineering courses? Steve has very effectively met this challenge in multiple courses here at Georgia Tech. In recognition of his efforts, Steve was recently awarded the class of 1940 W. Howard Ector Outstanding Teacher Award. This honor is awarded each year to a Georgia Tech faculty member who puts forth extraordinary efforts in teaching, inspires students, demonstrates intellectual integrity and scholarship, and who impacts the post graduate success of his or her students.

Steve met the challenge of how to integrate modern technology and social media into his learning environments by providing his students with real-world assignments that benefit people who are not taking the course, and that will be validated or assessed, at least in part, by an external audience. For example, when Steve taught BMED 4752, "Introduction to Neuroscience", his students created a Wikipedia article on a neuroscience topic of their own choosing. They interviewed experts in a topic of their own choosing and they read and reviewed several peer-reviewed articles. In addition, they read neuroscience books and posted reviews of them on Amazon.com. They even posted comments on other students' reviews. His students were motivated because they were allowed to choose which topic to investigate, and because their work had a life and influence that extended far beyond the lifetime of the course.

Steve brought his "real-world curriculum" philosophy to another class he taught, BMED 4400, "NeuroEngineering Fundamentals". With this class, Steve was the first in the department to employ problem-driven learning approaches in a lab class. His goal was to create a lab experience that would prepare students for graduate school by making his class a microcosm of what real lab research is like. His class did not use cookbook experiments that have already been proven to work. Rather, students began the course by learning about the tools that were available in the lab. They then searched and read the literature to design experiments that would advance the state of the art in neuroengineering. They worked in small groups of 2-4 to acquire the materials, build the equipment, and write the software that was needed to carry out the proposed experiments. Next, the students actually carried out the experiments and analyzed their data. By engaging in these real-world activities, students learned that things often do not work as planned in real research, and that so-called "failures" can actually be significant learning experiences. Steve found that students, when allowed to develop their own projects, are much more involved and enthusiastic, and they are more likely to take personal ownership and responsibility for their own learning.

At Georgia Tech, after a course ends, students are asked to complete a Course Instructor Opinion Survey (CIOS) where they rate various aspects of the courses on a 1 (very poor) to 5 (exceptional) scale. Steve's average rating in these questions last term in his Neuroscience

course (BMED 4752) course was 4.7, which is extraordinarily high. Student comments on Steve's courses were glowing. A few representative examples are included here:

"I learned a lot more from this class than I thought was possible. Not only was the material presented in class very thorough, but a lot of the concepts we learned challenged the way I think about everyday things"

"The Wikipedia project was an amazing part of this course and I learned a lot about something I didn't know existed"

"Fantastic and creative teacher that promotes novel methods of learning"

"The best aspect of the course was the variety of different assignments and the creative control the student was able to assume"

In summary, Steve is an incredibly rare person who is both an outstanding research scientist and teacher. He has made extraordinary efforts to create real-world learning environments that resonate with today's students, and as a result, he connects with and motivates his students to do extraordinary things in the classroom. I therefore recommend Steve, with the absolutely highest level of enthusiasm possible, for the Regents' Teaching Excellence Award.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph M. Le Doux, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies

Georgia Tech

The Wallace H. Coulter
Department of Biomedical Engineering
at Georgia Tech and Emory University

EMORY UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

May 21, 2012

To whom it may concern:

While most faculty members see a great and unfathomable divide between their research activities and their teaching, Professor Steve Potter is the rare faculty member who innovates in the classroom by seeking ways to bring parity between the two. Over the last eight years, Dr Potter has brought the excitement, the challenge and the reality of doing science at the frontiers into both graduate and undergraduate classes. More specifically, he has been able to simulate the laboratory environment in his Neuroengineering Fundamentals in three areas:

- ***Mentoring***: Like the research lab where post-docs mentor the grad students and the grad students mentor the undergraduates, Steve has intentionally reproduced this social configuration in his Neuroengineering Fundamentals class where both graduate and undergraduate students work together on projects following a problem-based learning approach. Students develop hypotheses, design and run experiments and do data analysis. Not everything goes as intended so students have the opportunity to learn from mistakes, a fundamental life lesson rarely experienced in an engineering classroom.
- ***Class projects:*** In the undergraduate Fundamental class students work on an NSF funded project in the Potter lab using neurons as potential models for new power systems grids and delivery. More impressively, equipment developed in that class is now being used centrally in the Potter lab. Dr Potter is a firm believer that students should develop classroom projects that start but move beyond the literature, so students iteratively craft a research proposal through several versions and then conduct experiments that could, if there were time, lead to publications.
- ***Lab notebooks***: "If it's not in your notebook, it didn't happen." Central to research is the laboratory notebook and understanding its importance is fundamental to becoming a successful researcher. Dr Potter thus makes the development of a comprehensive, thorough notebook central to his laboratory-based classes. He stresses that a lab notebook should be so well designed and executed that a new lab member could pick up and continue a project by just using it. This is what he strives to have his students achieve for whether they are lab members in industry or in a university the value of the lab notebook is unquestioned.

Post secondary engineering education needs more faculty members willing to bridge the research/teaching gap. Steve is a super star in this area because he wants to have his students experience both the highs and the lows of engaging science at the frontiers. He is always looking for novel ways to narrow this gap, and in my experience, he has been a most successful faculty member in doing this. He should be commended but more importantly recognized by receiving the Regents Excellence in Teaching Award for making these contributions to how we design innovative, forward thinking learning environments.

Sincerely,

Wendy C. Newstetter

Wendy C. Newstetter PhD

Steve M. Potter, Ph.D. Associate Professor
Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering at Georgia Tech and Emory University

steve.potter@bme.gatech.edu Whitaker Bldg., rm. 3110 (404) 385-2989
http://neuro.gatech.edu Last update: May 13, 2012

- Associate Professor (March 2008-present) and Assistant Professor (March 2002-March 2008), Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology and Emory University School of Medicine.
- Director, Laboratory for Neuroengineering (8 BME & ECE Faculty and their groups), since 2009
- Senior Research Assistant (2001-2002), Senior Research Fellow (1996-2000) and Research Fellow (1994-1996) in Biology, California Institute of Technology (non-tenure-track Research Faculty positions).
- Ph.D. in Neurobiology, U. C. Irvine, Department of Neurobiology and Behavior, Oct. 1993
- B.A. in Chemistry/Biochemistry, U. C. San Diego, June 1987

Teaching

A. Individual Student Guidance

Caltech: Primary mentor to 2 post-docs, 3 PhD students, 1 masters, and 7 undergrad researchers.

Georgia Tech: Primary mentor/advisor to 3 post-docs. Graduated 5 PhD students. Currently advising 7 PhD students, 6 undergrad researchers. Supervised over 25 Georgia Tech and Emory undergrad researchers.

B. Other Teaching Activities (Georgia Tech)

- Developed Real-World Curriculum for Introductory Neuroscience (BMED/BIOL 4752, taught since Fall 2005).
- Created lab and lecture NeuroEngineering Fundamentals course (BMED 4400 taught since Spring 2004).
- Facilitated Problem-Based Learning in Biomedical Engineering (BMED 1300, since Spring 2002).
- Developed curriculum for graduate Hybrid Neural Microsystems (BMED 8813 2004, 2006, 2009).
- Taught brain-computer interfaces, Neuromorphic Cognition Engineering Workshop, Summer 2010.
- Taught 3D Live Cell Imaging short course, U. of British Columbia, Summers 2002-2004.
- Served as Guest Lecturer in numerous courses at Georgia Tech and Emory.

Publications (all are downloadable from http://neuro.gatech.edu)

Most recent publication list and citation counts for Steve M. Potter: Click Here (Google Scholar Profile)

32 Refereed Journal Publications, plus

- **Over 30 additional Peer-reviewed Conference Papers and 7 invited book chapters**
- **Over 45 Conference Abstracts**

Selected Recent Publications

1. Hales, C. M., Zeller-Townson, R., Newman, J. P., Shoemaker, J. T., Killian, N. J., & Potter, S. M. Stimulus induced high frequency oscillations are present in neuronal networks on microelectrode arrays. *Frontiers in Neural Circuits*, 6, 29.
2. Rolston, J. D., Gross, R. E., & Potter, S. M. (2010). Closed-loop, open-source electrophysiology (Invited Focused Review, peer-reviewed). *Frontiers in Neuroscience*, 4(31), 1-8. doi: 10.3389/fnins.2010.00031
3. Hales, C. M., Rolston, J. D., & Potter, S. M. (2010). How to Culture, Record and Stimulate Neuronal Networks on Micro-electrode Arrays (MEAs). *JoVE*, 39, doi: 10.3791/2056.
4. Rolston, J. D., Gross, R. E., & Potter, S. M. (2009). A low-cost multielectrode system for data acquisition and real-time processing with rapid recovery from stimulation artifacts. *Frontiers in Neuroengineering*, 2(12), 1-17.
5. Rambani, K., Vukasinovic, J., Glezer, A., & Potter, S. M. (2009). Culturing thick brain slices: An interstitial 3D microperfusion system for enhanced viability. *J. Neurosci. Methods* 180, 243-254.
6. Bakkum, D. J., Chao, C. H., & Potter, S. M. (2008). Spatio-temporal electrical stimuli shape behavior of an embodied cortical network in a goal-directed learning task. *Journal of Neural Engineering*, 5, 310-323. [5]
7. Bakkum, D. J., Chao, C. H., & Potter, S. M. (2008). Long-term activity-dependent plasticity of action potential propagation delay and amplitude in cortical networks. *PLoS One*, 3(5), e2088.
8. Bakkum, D. J., Gamblen, P. M., Ben-Ary, G., Chao, Z. C., & Potter, S. M. (2007). MEART: The Semi-living Artist. *Frontiers in NeuroRobotics*, vol. 1, article 5, 1-10.
9. Potter, S. M. (2007). "What Can Artificial Intelligence Get From Neuroscience?" In M. Lungarella, F. Iida, J. Bongard, & R. Pfeifer (Eds.), *50 Years of Artificial Intelligence: Essays Dedicated to the 50th Anniversary of Artificial Intelligence.* (pp. 174-185). Berlin: Springer.
10. Potter, S. M., Wagenaar, D. A., DeMarse, T. B. (2006) "Closing the Loop: Stimulation Feedback Systems for Embodied MEA Cultures." In *Advances in Network Electrophysiology Using Multi-Electrode Arrays*, M Taketani, M Baudry eds. New York: Springer

Independently written scholarly treatments on our research

- A philosophical journal article analyzing our work entitled, "Brains, vats, and neurally-controlled animats," was independently written by N. C. Manson, in *Stud. Hist. Phil. Biol. & Biomed. Sci.* 35 (2004) 249–268.
- A page about our work, "Studying Neural Networks with Hybrots," appears in the college textbook, *Psychology*, *3rd Canadian Edition*, by Santrock & Mitterer, 2006.
- Several pages were written about our work by Rolf Hughes in the scholarly book, *Architecture and Authorship*, Black Dog Publishing, 2007
- Several pages describe our "pioneering" work, in *How the Body Shapes the Way We Think: A New View of Intelligence*, by Rolf Pfeifer and Josh Bongard, MIT Press, 2007
- Our semi-living artist project is described in *Rat (from the Animal series)* by Jonathan Burt, Reaktion Books, 2006.

Presentations

- **14 Keynote, Distinguished, or Plenary Invited Lectures**
- **Over 70 other *Invited* Talks**

Research-related media articles, interviews, and TV specials

Science Channel series, "Through the Wormhole" with Morgan Freeman, season opener 2011; Full-length documentary, "Is this art? - Volume 4: MEART The Semi Living Artist" by ArtFilms, Robots Podcast, BBC Horizon documentary "Human v2.0", WIRED Magazine, The Economist, New York Times, Discover, IEEE Intelligent Systems, New Scientist, National Geographic, Photonics Spectra, Technology Review, US News & World Report, BBC News, NPR, "Beyond Human" TV special, CNN, Canadian Broadcast Company, Australian Broadcast Company, and others.

Exhibits

MEART: The Semi-living Artist, was exhibited in galleries in Perth, Moscow, New York, Shanghai, Bilbao, Melbourne, and Atlanta. (2003-2008)

Silent Barrage won 1st prize (€18,000) in VIDA 12.0, 2010 (Fundacion Telefonica's artificial life art contest), and was exhibited in New York, Brazil, Beijing, and Dublin. (2010-2011)

Professional Contributions

- Associate Editor, Frontiers in NeuroRobotics, 2007-present
- Council Member, Society for Neuroscience, Atlanta Chapter, 2006-present
- Organized and chaired various conference sessions.
- Served as peer reviewer for over 55 journal articles and foundation grants.
- Reviewed numerous grants for the NIH, NSF, and foreign governments.

Campus Committees

- Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons Faculty Advisory Committee, since 2011
- Student Computer Ownership Committee, Georgia Tech, since 2009
- Elected to Executive Committee, Neuroscience Graduate Program, Emory GDBBS, 2007-2010
- BME Awards Committee 2009-2011
- BME Educational Assessment Committee 2006-2008
- BME Faculty Recruiting Committee 2002-2004
- BME Faculty Advisory Committee 2003-2004

Grants

Principal and Co-Principal Investigator for 11 Grants from NIH, NSF, and private foundations, totaling over $6M

Awards

• 2011 W. Howard Ector Outstanding Teacher Award from the Georgia Tech Class of 1940.
• Georgia Tech BMES "Outstanding Faculty Award," 2008.
• "Thanks for Being a Great Teacher," Georgia Tech Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, 2008-2012.

I got in big trouble as a Teaching Assistant (TA) for Psychobiology Lab when I was in graduate school. I was teaching a section of about 20 undergraduate students, and my fellow TAs, who each had their own group of 20 students, found out that I had given As to over half the class. They were justifiably outraged at this clear example of grade inflation...until I showed them my syllabus. Each TA had a lot of control in how they ran and graded their lab section, and they said, "Wow. Your class is *much* more difficult than mine!" So how did my students do so well, given the tough workload I had put them through? The main reason, I think, underlies my whole teaching philosophy: Any student can get the grade they want. I never grade on the curve. There are not "dumb students" and "smart students" but disinterested, unmotivated ones, and motivated ones. I lay out in great detail all the things it takes to get an A, and do my best to raise their excitement and motivation to a level that makes all that work seem like fun. Across my nearly three decades of teaching, I have seen many times that when students are told they *can* do well, and are given the tools and encouragement to *believe* they can do well, they do well.

But how do you motivate students who don't think of themselves as A students to get As? In the past 6 years or so, I have developed curricula for my Introductory Neuroscience, Hybrid Neural Microsystems, and Neuroengineering Fundamentals courses based on what I call "Real World" assignments. These are not only tied in to real-world topics, but actually benefit the real world beyond the classroom. For example, my IntroNeuro students have to choose a neuroscience-related topic and write a Wikipedia article about it. In addition to the regular lecture material, they spend the whole semester becoming an expert in this topic by finding and reading lots of papers about it. They also have to interview – orally, not by email – a key person in their chosen topic. My students have now added hundreds of new, detailed articles to Wikipedia (from 1500 to 3000 words each), based on rigorous, peer-reviewed literature. Another Real World assignment is for them to read a neuro-related book, and write a detailed review of it on Amazon.com, using their real name. They learn about the peer-review process in an assignment where they rank each others' Amazon.com book reviews as if they were grant proposals, according to set Review Criteria. Students often tell me they went on to read more books that this assignment exposed them too, which is remarkable considering that busy seniors seldom pick up a book for fun. My students have reviewed journal articles on YouTube, some using very creative songs, animation, and humor, to bring neuroscience to the masses. The accomplishment of contributing to the Real World is very rewarding for them, and knowing they will be judged not only by their teacher, but by people across the world who read or watch their online material, motivates them to do outstanding work.

Based on alumni surveys and on the anonymous Course & Instructor Opinion Surveys (CIOS) at the end of each semester, this Real World approach is very successful at motivating students. Many of my students reported that IntroNeuro was the best course they took at Tech, that it taught them skills they are using years after graduating, and in some cases, that it was crucial in helping them choose their career path (see attached comments). I heard an excellent scientific talk years ago, and went up to the speaker to ask how he became such a good speaker. His reply continues to inspire me. He said, "I worked *really* hard at it." When planning my courses before each semester, I re-read all the CIOS comments and use them to reinforce what worked, and to change what didn't. I record and watch videos of my lectures with a critical eye. The negative CIOS comments are fewer as I try new methods or approaches, but as long as some students are still not fully engaged or are unhappy with the course, there is always room for improvement.

I strive to make my lab classes useful and relevant to the Real World, too. I create a microcosm of what graduate school is really like, to the extent possible in one semester. I have them first read the current literature. I familiarize them with the tools and equipment they have at their disposal, and they spend several weeks, working in small groups – and with lots of feedback – to come up with novel experiments whose goal is to take the state of the art in neuroengineering and neuroscience a step further. They often must build equipment, or write software to carry out their experiments or analyze their data. Some of their course projects have inspired PhD projects for graduate students in my own lab. This open-ended, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach is one our department (Biomedical Engineering) has pioneered, thanks to Dr. Wendy Newstetter. Its effectiveness at producing biomedical engineers who are well prepared for the real world is probably the main contributor to our current US News and World Report ranking of #2 in the nation. Mine was the first lab class in our department to employ PBL methods, and now there are several others in which students work in small groups to devise and carry out their own projects. One key tenet of my lab classes is that failures are just as important as successes. In real research, things seldom work the first time. I train my students (as I do with the undergraduate and graduate students in my own research lab) not to be discouraged, but to learn from every failure and to create a lasting record (lab notebook that stays in the lab) that will prevent such failures in the future.

Being part of a lively discussion in class is a great motivator. I have noticed that it makes a huge difference in students' desire to speak up if they know I know each one of them. I am really bad with names and faces, so I work extra hard to learn them, even in large (>60 students) courses like IntroNeuro. I film my students on the first day, filing past the camera and saying their name and something they are interested in. Then I spend several hours playing and re-playing the video and memorizing the names, faces, and voices. I do this the first week, to set the tone for the course and let them know I care about each one of them. I repeatedly emphasize my policy, "No question is too dumb to ask," as even dumb questions are often a good jumping-off point for an interesting discussion, explanation, or humorous personal anecdote that ties in with Big Picture concepts. Being humble and announcing my own ignorance after a tough question gains their respect (we are *all* still learning). So does being understanding and flexible for accommodating students with special needs or when unforeseen circumstances come up. To help make up for missed assignments or poor exam performance, I encourage the students to come up with creative extra credit ideas. Last semester, quite a few students earned extra credit and raised awareness by walking as the "BMED4752 Group" at benefit walks to help Alzheimer's Disease and Multiple Sclerosis (see photo).

Why is education the one thing that people are willing to pay for and not get?[1] Why would a student spend an average of $77 for *each and every* lecture session[2], and then not show up? Probably,

[1] Paraphrasing William Lowe Bryan, 10th president of Indiana University.

[2] Based on this years' out-of-state tuition and fees at Georgia Tech.

because they don't find the lectures useful or interesting and don't see how it applies to them or the world outside academia. I try to divert my students' focus from their grade to what will matter years from now: getting the Big Picture of neuroscience. I de-emphasize factoids and textbook memorization. I teach them not to worry about what is "true" in science, but what works, today, to solve real-world problems. I have them read inspiring books and watch videos full of examples of the many ways in which neuroscience and neuroengineering are helping real people with real problems, even in the face of our very incomplete understanding of how the brain works. I have about a dozen guest lecturers each semester, neuroscientists and clinicians from Georgia Tech and the Atlanta area, who talk about how their research is making a difference. I also give extra credit to my students for attending neuro-related academic talks at Georgia Tech, Georgia State University, Emory University, or even at big conferences. They must pay attention and submit a write-up, as I expect my own graduate students to do when I send them to a conference. In a "Thank a Teacher" form submitted to CETL, one of my students said, "The knowledge gained from those [extra credit] talks as well as guest lecturers was invaluable in seeing how the information we learned in class is applied in the real life."

How do we know when someone is alive? Should criminals with brain tumors be excused? Because neuroscience relates to so many aspects of human behavior, there are many opportunities to have in-class discussions of neuroethics or the ways in which society is or will be changed as our understanding of the nervous systems grows. By keeping it exciting and relevant, and engaging them with the Real World, I hope that my students not only feel they are getting their money's worth, but that they will get a Big Picture understanding and some useful skills that will serve them for years to come, whatever their career path may be.

While Georgia Tech has nearly 100 researchers whose labs do some neuro-related work, sadly, there is no neuroscience major, center, program or building. We are scattered across campus and interact little with each other. I am working to change this. I am very excited that I recently won a grant from Georgia Tech's Fund for Innovation in Research and Education (GT FIRE) to help unify these disparate neuro-interested research groups on campus. I am the Faculty Advisor of the recently-formed GTNeuro undergraduate club (http://gtneuro.net/) and they will work with me on this GT FIRE project to set up what I call "Learning by Innovative Neuro Collaborations Research," or LINCR. The idea is for an undergraduate to propose and carry out a new collaborative project that brings together two neuro groups in different buildings on campus, for a full-time summer job. I have learned how fruitful and creative undergraduate researchers can be; I usually have 4 or 5 undergraduates working in my research lab, and serve as a mentor for the high-school outreach Institute on Neuroscience and summer BRAIN programs of the GSU Center for Behavioral Neuroscience. In addition to helping GTNeuro get more undergraduate students to seek out independent lab research, I am also working with them to help organize seminars, workshops, and career advising days. We have begun the process of creating a "Neurobiotechology" minor. My vision is that with GTNeuro's help, a critical mass will self-organize to transform Georgia Tech into a premier neuroscience school with a unique and increasingly valuable technology focus.

Audrey Southard
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April 30, 2012

Dr. Linda Noble
Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Affairs
University System of Georgia
270 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-1450

Dear Dr. Noble,

I am writing to you in support of Dr. Steve Potter's nomination for the Regent's Teaching Excellence Award. Dr. Potter is truly exemplary educator. As a former student of Dr. Potter's, I was fortunate enough to experience his innovative and engaging teaching methods firsthand. The neuroscience class I took in which Dr. Potter was the instructor was one of my favorite classes in four years of college – it stood out as a class that consistently interested and challenged me.

As a pre-medical engineering student, I enrolled for Dr. Potter's introduction to neuroscience course because I expected it to be a useful overview of a challenging subject. On the first day of class, it was clear that this course would be much more than just a useful survey course. Dr. Potter's enthusiasm for the subject matter was visible from the very beginning, and it permeated through every aspect of the course. In fact, his excitement was contagious: I found myself eagerly anticipating each class session and the lessons it would hold. Dr. Potter cares deeply about his area of expertise, and he works hard to develop the same enthusiasm in the students he teaches. He shared videos, anecdotes, images, and historical discoveries to teach both scientific concepts and the significance of these concepts. He frequently sought out guest lecturers – leaders in their respective areas of research – to teach us about cutting-edge research.

The passion and excitement demonstrated in Dr. Potter's teaching was unlike anything I had experienced in other courses; similarly, the course assignments were utterly unique. Instead of assigning reports and presentations typical of an introductory course, Dr. Potter utilized technology to design unique projects: detailed book reviews to be posted on Amazon's website and well-researched articles (with ample primary resources) about topics in neuroscience to be posted on Wikipedia were cornerstones of the semester's grades. Even Dr. Potter's exams were interesting. The questions were not just multiple choice – they asked for critical thinking and problem-solving. It sounds beyond belief, but I honestly have positive memories of taking his exams: Thinking through Dr. Potter's test questions was an engaging, thought-provoking process.

After taking Dr. Potter's neuroscience course, one reason that his teaching methods were so effective became clear: He was never content to maintain the status quo. Throughout the course, Dr. Potter sought feedback on what worked well, and what encounters left opportunity for improvement. He regularly sought feedback in a variety of forms: verbal, written, and digital. These structured opportunities allowed for class members to provide suggestions in an honest, constructive manner. And Dr. Potter appeared to take this feedback seriously: He sought it out intentionally, and he attempted to make modifications in real time to improve the educational experience.

One of Dr. Potter's greatest strengths, I believe, was his insight into the goals of his teaching. No, his course did not produce dozens of new neuroscientists; this outcome was never his goal. Rather, Dr. Potter taught us to be excited about a field that is his passion and life's work. This accomplishment is not insignificant: The enthusiasm that Dr. Potter instilled in me has continued to serve me in medical school. Neurology is a notoriously challenging subject in medical school, and most of my classmates dread anything related to the field. However, I entered my first year of medical school eager to tackle this subject. Four years after taking Dr. Potter's course, I still find myself sharing neurology facts with my classmates and friends. When they ask how I remember the information, they are surprised by my response: I remember it not from a textbook encountered in the first two years of medical school, but from a story Dr. Potter shared in my undergraduate education.

Dr. Steve Potter's enthusiasm for his field of study and for teaching students is truly unique. The talent to convey that enthusiasm effectively makes Dr. Potter an exceptional educator. The lessons that I learned in his class – about neuroscience, but more importantly about the importance of teaching and sharing one's knowledge with passion – are invaluable. He is truly deserving of honor.

Sincerely,

Audrey Southard

For: Regent's Teaching Excellence Awards Committee
On behalf of Dr. Steve Potter's Nomination

To Whom It May Concern:

I have the extreme pleasure of supporting Dr. Potter's nomination for the Regents' Teaching Excellence Award. While I could spend pages recounting all of Dr. Potter's fantastic lecture skills, immaculate course organization, and exceptional student interaction skills, the best way for me to explain why Dr. Potter is a professor like no other and deserves this award is to simply describe where I am sitting right now.

This very moment, I am sitting in the Grand Opera Hall of the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. as an attendee of the 2012 TedMED Conference. You may not be familiar with TedMED or TED talks, but in short, it is an incredible conference that gathers leaders of every field to participate in the dialogue of how to solve the greatest problems and challenges facing our world today - in this case those pertaining to health and medicine. It truly is a life changing experience that will shape my entire life and career, and as a 3rd year medical student at Washington University in St. Louis, it is an honor to have been able to attend. The question then is "What does any of this have to do with Dr. Potter?" And the answer is everything.

Dr. Potter epitomizes how to have passion for knowledge, the drive to search for new knowledge, and the importance of sharing that knowledge. It was in his Intro to Neuroscience course my senior year at Tech that I saw my first ever TED Talk and was inspired by its ability to do just those things - expand the knowledge and creativity of its viewers. Since then I have been hooked on them and over the past 3.5 years have spent countless hours being inspired by the speeches and innovations that TED has shared with me. All of this prompted me to apply for a scholarship to attend this year's conference, which I had the extreme fortune of receiving. And let me tell you, being here is a thrill! I am meeting the most dynamic people and am inspired by everything I see and hear. Being here made me realize that I would not have had this opportunity if Dr. Potter hadn't been the phenomenal teacher and scientist that he is and expose me to such a simple video.

Even more so, here at the conference I have run into a fellow student and classmate from Dr. Potter's class and shared stories about how in essence Dr. Potter brought us here and what an incredible time we had in his class. We regaled how even his assignments were fun and focused on building and sharing knowledge - laughing how our infamous Wikipedia articles we wrote and posted are still online today, thanks to his assignment.

I share this story with you because I believe it perfectly captures what it means to have an impact as a truly outstanding professor. An exceptional teacher like Dr. Potter drastically impacts the lives of his students simply from the exposure to the passion and enthusiasm he has for teaching and his work, which years later still shapes the experiences and learning of his students. Who else but an unparalleled professor can have two former classmates living thousands of miles apart literally bump into each other at a world class conference like TedMED and say "Dr. Potter was a phenomenal educator and is a key reason I am here today"?

For me, the best and only way for me to share what an impact he has had on me as a student is to support his nomination for this award and to always remember how the passion that one shows for his work can have a larger impact than he could ever imagine. Dr. Potter taught me that, and for that, I thank him.

Sincerely,

Morgan Wolfe
M.D Candidate 2013
Washington University School of Medicine

How My Students Benefit the World With Their Work: Real World Assignments

I have successfully motivated my students to do amazing things out there in the real world by getting them excited about what they are learning. Much of college education does not prepare students for the real world. College students traditionally learn by being lectured at, they work and are evaluated as individuals, and their efforts immediately lose their value as soon as they are graded. In my courses, students learn by interacting with the real world. They often work as pairs or teams and **produce lasting artifacts that benefit the real world**. Knowing they are not just being evaluated by their professor, but by anyone in the public who can see their work, is a tremendous motivator that pushes them to excellence, and gives them a sense of pride that lasts long after they graduate.

As evidence of the success of my teaching approaches, I present comments that my students and alumni made about me and the courses I teach. Some were from the end-of-term Course and Instructor Opinion Survey, some were from a survey I sent out to my alumni, and some were written to me spontaneously by current or former students. Students and alumni will be quoted *in red italics.* These quotations show how much students were motivated by the different Real World assignments (Wikipedia articles, YouTube videos, Amazon book reviews), and how they learned by interviewing experts, hearing about neuroscientists' current research, and by conducting their own research in a problem-based learning context. The quotations below show how, even though my courses are very difficult, my Real World curricula and unique approach to teaching helped the students rise to the challenge and learn more than they expected. Many students also reported that my courses helped them decide the direction of their career. Finally, I include examples of how I am working to spread these ideas to my colleagues on campus and elsewhere.

"The real world assignment aspect of the course was one of the most valuable collection of activities I completed as an undergrad to prepare me for life as a graduate student. The real world assignments made a significant impact on me, both at the time of completion and to this day. The process of gathering information, publishing it in a public venue and taking credit/responsibility for the content of the writing was almost an entirely unique concept to me as an undergraduate. To that point my classes had required a significant writing component, however, there was never a requirement to put my name on the line and make my writing available to the public. To my surprise, that actually significantly altered the way I approached the writing and substantially improved the quality of my final product. The assignments motivated me to become engaged in the topic and do an excellent job because I wanted to represent myself well. This is the same process that I am now going through as a graduate student because all my work will be published, thus representing myself, my lab and my school."

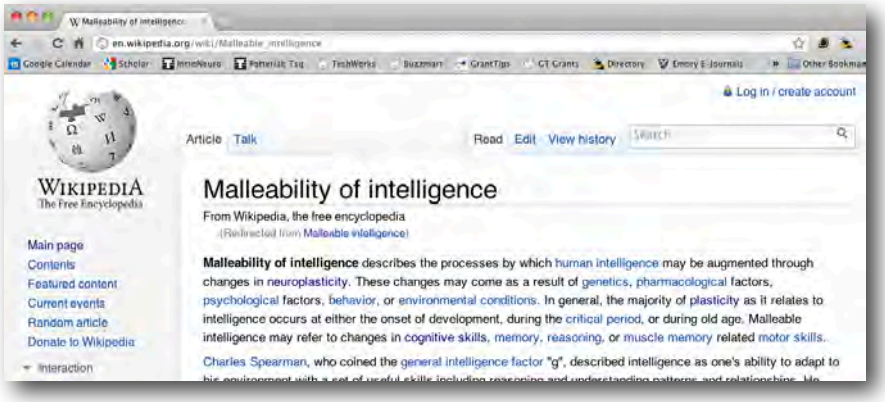
Creating New Wikipedia Articles

The most successful of my **Real World Assignments** is for each Introductory Neuroscience student (seniors in biomedical engineering and biology) to become an expert in a neuro-related topic of his or her choice and create a detailed Wikipedia article on it, based on the current peer-reviewed literature. My students have created well over 200 new articles on Wikipedia, on topics such as: *Animal Model of Depression, Neurostimulation, Neurorobotics, Synaptic Plasticity, Malleability of Intelligence*, and many others. I collected links leading to these Wikipedia articles here: http://neurolab.gatech.edu/wiki-articles and you can easily get to this page by scanning the QR Code below with your smartphone.

"I LOVED THE WIKIPEDIA ASSIGNMENT! I still go back to my wiki page and look at all the changes that people, doctors, scientists and professionals have made to my site. Knowing that someone studying a particular neuro- degenerative disease/illness can go to google, type in the name and possibly end up at my wikipedia page is really rewarding."

"Thank you for a fantastic experience learning about neuroscience. I believe the "real life" curriculum was very helpful and I still show my wikipedia page to friends."

"The Wikipedia assignment was unlike any other assignment I have ever had. It is really a smart idea because for most papers, students use Wikipedia to gather basic information without having to read through confusing,



Link to students' Wikipedia articles

high level published papers. Since we were writing the Wiki page for our topic, there was no Wiki site to reference. For this assignment, I contacted a professor and researcher at a northern university and conducted an hour long phone interview. I read countless papers and synthesized all of the information into a Wikipedia article written at a level that could be understood by the general population."

"This was a wonderful assignment that forced me to learn so much about a topic I was truly interested in."

"The Wikipedia project in Intro to Neuroscience was very useful and has changed the way I used wikipedia and increased my respect for it as a valuable tool."

"I believe you organized this course in a way that requires us to contribute to the availability of information to the general population (Wikipedia article assignment, Amazon.com book review); this also perhaps encourages us to take the assignments seriously and produce a higher quality of work than other courses since other people (not our classmates-literally anyone) will have access to what we turn in."

Creating YouTube Videos

To become experts in their chosen topics, my students must digest a lot of scientific papers. They present some of these orally to their classmates, and also create YouTube videos where they explain a research article to the lay public. Some of these are very creative, and have thousands of views! Here is a link to the playlist of videos from my Fall 2010 class, http://neurolab.gatech.edu/vids

"In addition to learning some great neuroscience, I also picked up on some very practical skills that I greatly value today - such as creating a Wikipedia article, directing, recording, and uploading a Youtube video, interviewing an expert in a neuroscience sub-topic, and writing an Amazon review article based on a book out in the market."

From: "Basal Ganglia Circuits" by Austin Bennett

Link to students' YouTube videos

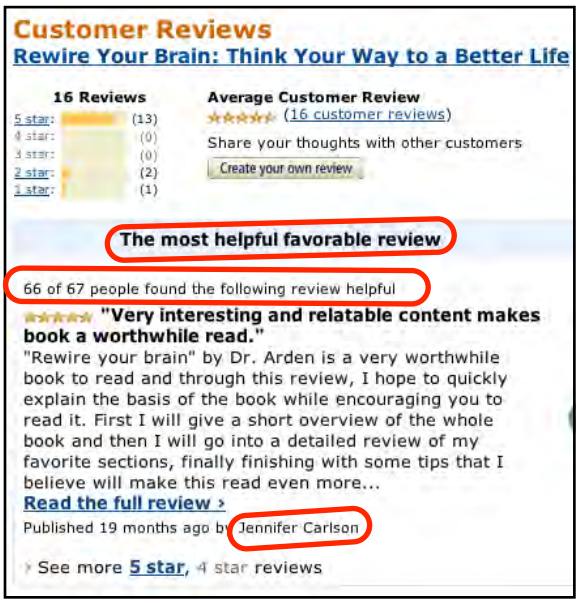
Reading and Reviewing Technical Books

Reading technical books is an important activity for all practicing scientists and engineers, for keeping current or for learning a new subfield. In most classes, students don't get to choose which books they read. By letting my students choose a book that interests them, they are much more likely to engage with the book emotionally, a crucial component of effective learning. Students are required to choose and read a neuro book, preferably one that will help them write their Wikipedia article. Then they must write a detailed review of it on Amazon.com. To get used to the scientific tradition of being publicly accountable for things we say, they are encouraged to use their Real Name on the review. Some students are chosen to present their reviews to the class orally. Several reported that their book somehow changed their life. Others reported being inspired to read extra books their classmates told them about, for their own enjoyment.

Here are links to the my students' book reviews. Some, like Jennifer Carlson's, were voted "Most Helpful": neurolab.gatech.edu/book-reviews

"With the book review going on Amazon.com and our neuroscience article going on Wikipedia, it made the assignments feel more like pet projects than actual class work."

" The Amazon report and the Wiki report are things that we work hard on, and that help other people. In most other classes we do work hard, but the result is meaningless in the bigger picture."



Link to Students' Neuro Book Reviews on Amazon.com

Learning by Interviewing Real Experts

Scientists and engineers working in the real world often must learn directly from experts, and this can be intimidating! My students get coaching on ways to approach and speak with busy academics and clinicians in an Oral Interview assignment. Many students, having grown up with email, don't appreciate how much more you can learn when you have a real conversation with high-bandwidth back-and-forth oral communication. These interviews boost their confidence, provide them with tips on how to structure their Wikipedia articles, and allow them to ask about the history of their chosen field and to learn quickly which are the seminal papers to read.

"This process proved that persistence is key when trying to contact an expert, and was good practice for contacting graduate school professors and research companies."

"It's very helpful to hear an expert talk about research on your topic rather than read articles because interviews are interactive and you can respond and change questions as the interview progresses."

"Some advice I would give next year students for conducting their interviews would be to not be intimidated. I was very intimidated to interview an expert in a field I knew very little about, but it turned out that Dr. Rorden was excited to share his knowledge of this topic and point me to places where I could learn more.... I believe that one reason the interview was so beneficial was because it was done face to face."

"He gave me helpful advice for both my Wikipedia article and any future research I conduct, as he cautioned me to 'stay broad in drawing any conclusions.'"

"The brain is very complex and not every mystery has been solved. During these questions with no correct answer, Dr. Fridrikkson systematically took me through the basics and told me where research has hit a stand still."

"I understand it can become very tedious to have to find and schedule an interview with a professional in your field, however, after experiencing a successful interview, I can say it was worth it to talk to someone who knows about your topic, and just to learn more about their field."

Learning by Getting Exposed to Real Research

Unless they have worked in a lab, many undergraduates have a poor conception of what neuroscience research is like. I bring real-world research into the classroom by having other scientists from around Atlanta as guest lecturers. They present their latest findings, and we discuss the implications, whether clinical, scientific, or

Prof. Larry Young of Emory University talking about his research on *Sex, Love, and the Neurobiology of Pair Bonding*.

ethical. This helps students ground new concepts by connecting them to the things they care about.

"In my opinion, the best part of the class was being pushed to go to actual seminars/talks. The knowledge gained from those talks as well as guest lecturers was invaluable in seeing how the information we learned in class is applied in the real life."

"All of the guest lectures were fantastic. I expected a few to be boring or less animated, but they all offered an interesting perspective in an engaging form."

"Constantly having new guest lecturers kept me on my toes."

"Fantastic and creative teacher that promotes novel methods of learning. The guest lecture aspect of the class was awesome."

"I absolutely love all these guest lecturers that you invite to come speak to us. You really have renewed my interest in the brain."

My IntroNeuro students can earn extra credit by going to neuro-related scientific talks in the Atlanta area, at conferences they may be attending, or by watching them online. Then they write one-page summaries; some attended and wrote up over a dozen talks! These write-ups are compiled into a book that is shared with all the students.

"Dr. Potter gave us an awesome way to earn extra credit points - Attending lectures over neuro-related material and writing essays. I enjoyed these lectures and learned something from each one."

"The most memorable thing was using a lot of my time during finals watching EC videos. More so than work, I found them to be more like stress relievers and that's when I really decided I want a career with something to do with the brain."

"While I thought it would be an easy loophole to exploit for getting an A, it turned out I learned quite a lot from the video lectures that I watched."

Learning by Doing Real Research

My Neuroengineering Fundamentals class includes both lecture and lab components. In the lab, the students work in small Problem-Based Learning (PBL) groups. I serve as the Facilitator to help them devise and carry out a complex neuroengineering experiment. It should be based on the current literature, but should raise it to a new level. To do this, they spend the first half of the semester reading papers, planning experiments, and building equipment and software they will need. Then in the second half, they carry out their experiments and analyze their data. I have tried to create a microcosm of what real research is like, to the extent possible in one semester. Real lab research often includes failure, so learning *how to learn from failures* is an important lesson. I also emphasize creating real, useful lab notebooks, which get used by future students who may wish to follow in their footsteps.

"Neuroengineering Fundamentals improved my approach to problem solving and record keeping (lab notebooks) which will undoubtedly be of value in the future. It allowed us to learn how to teach ourselves. Help was always available but it was really up to the student how deep we wanted to go into our projects or how adventurous we wanted to be with learning new skills. Not many other classes allow that kind of freedom, or demand that kind of responsibility, however taking that kind of initiative is expected in the real world. I believe it is an incredibly valuable experience to have while still having the safety net of being in school."

"The lab work in Neuroengineering was a fantastic prelude to graduate student work and bench research in general. One of the only courses to remind us that real world experiments stand behind what we read in textbooks, and positively reinforce that we can DO those experiments! I still do research (everyone in med school does) and if I had not learned how to keep a solid notebook I'd have gotten creamed."

"I think both classes reinforced my career path as well as stimulated me to consider the field of Neurology. You treated us as graduate students with our own responsibilities (and blunders). Thank you. I think I grew up a bit in your class."

"All activities were well-planned out and executed with the intent of facilitating learning through iterative feedback."

It Was Difficult, But Worth It

"It was definitely a love/hate relationship. At the beginning of that semester, the number and type of tasks that you presented on the syllabus were daunting; however, it turned out to be one of my favorite classes while at Tech. It was one of the toughest yet most rewarding classes I have ever taken."

"This was a time-consuming and challenging course but it was sufficiently interesting and rewarding."

"I learned a lot more from this class than I thought was possible. Not only was the material presented in class very thorough, but a lot of the concepts we learned challenged the way I think about everyday things."

"Some of these assignments are meant to begin our establishment in the scientific community and some develop skills that are required in the professional field. In a traditional setting, students are not exposed to these situations, and the skills required to handle them cannot be taught out of the book; they must be practiced and experienced."

"While the class was quite time consuming given the nature of the assignments, the use of expert lecturers to cover the myriad of topics that is the nervous system exposed us to some of the best minds in neuroscience that Tech has to offer."

"It was a difficult class and I enjoyed seeing people really have to work hard to do well in a course."

"You have very exacting standards as a teacher, and don't relax those standards to suit a grade distribution, and that's extremely memorable given the way things are usually done in education."

Students Like My Personal, Discussion-oriented Approach

"Dr. Potter took a real interest in his students. After 115 credit hours I have never had a professor that I have thought so fondly about due to the fact that he genuinely wanted to see everyone succeed."

"I still remember many facts and stories that Dr. Potter told us throughout the semester. His teaching methods were not just reading off the powerpoint slides or just reading the book, he provided a good sense of how these ideas were being used in practice."

"Dr. Potter, I loved the fact that you took the time to learn our names despite the large class size. It made me feel like I was more than a number for which I am still deeply grateful."

"I know for a fact (as MANY students and myself have talked about this many times) that many of us feel that this was by far the absolute best course we have taken at Georgia Tech. You did an amazing job making the class interesting and fun and everything from the lectures to the assignments were all incredible in getting us to learn so much about the brain."

"Only through learning actual concepts and applying them does knowledge stick. You emphasize learning to help you in the future, not just to get a good grade. Overall, I like the model because it focuses less on regurgitation and material and more on what is actually important. It teaches you real life skills."

"Dr. Potter was passionate about what he taught, and he was an incredibly successful professor."

"Professor Potter's enthusiasm was a great motivator. His discussion driven class was one of the more entertaining classes."

"Had great stories and discussions to keep you engaged in the material."

"He provided Interactive lectures. Dr. Potter does not get bothered by any questions."

"Exceptional instructor. Although neurobiology is daunting at first, DO NOT DROP, guest lecturers and discussions post-midterm are worth it!"

"If you haven't considered it before, please give this guy a raise. Professors who are this dedicated to student success need to be rewarded. It's the only way for Tech to get better."

My Classes Changed Their Lives

In their last two years of college, students are often making important decisions about their careers. My classes and the material they learned by doing the Real World assignments helped some of them decide to go into neuroscience and neuroengineering in graduate school, medical school, or industry.

"I never thought that Neurology might be a field that I'd be interested in, but it is now one of my top choices."

"I had wanted to be a Dermatologist basically my entire life prior to this course. Now, when people ask me what field of medicine I am thinking about entering, I say either dermatology or neurology. I realized how incredible the brain is, and I gained an appreciation for neuroplasticity. The book "The brain that changes itself" really helped spark my interest in neurology. Dr. Potter's class is the primary reason that I am now seriously considering a career in neurology. We are currently in our Neuroscience module at MCG, and the information and concepts that I learned in Dr. Potter's class have given me a great head start."

"I strongly believe that your class was one of the main deciding factors in helping me realize that I wanted to get a PhD in neuroscience and possibly work with patients with Parkinson's Disease."

"It reinforced my decisions to pursue grad school and specifically neural engineering."

"I wanted to thank you for everything you taught us this semester, and the way you taught it. It really was great and is part of the reason I've chosen to pursue a related field."

"Sir, your class opened my eyes to the enormous possibilities in the scientific realm that is neuroscience and spurred within me a thirst to explore the field. Since graduation from Tech, I have been a Master's student in biomedical engineering at Johns Hopkins...In more ways than one sir, I owe my passion in the field largely due to your tutelage."

"My current area of thesis graduate research (Auditory neurophysiology/neuroengineering) was largely inspired by the wikipedia article and you tube video that we were required to complete."

"My whole life I've been so obsessed with blood and blood substitution, never caring much for brains. I always thought brains were too "hard" to do something with since everyone's brain is different. But now I'm in love with brains. I probably sound like a crazy person, but I seriously think about brains almost every second of the day."

"I had a wonderful time learning neuroscience this semester, and thanks to your unique teaching style, every assignment taught me a valuable set of new skills that I will cherish as I step into graduate school and a career in BME."

"The skills I learned from these have already helped me elsewhere. I even check-up on my wiki from time to time! I am very interested in neuro-related companies, which I had never previously considered prior to your course."

"I fell in love with the class and hope to pursue this topic of study in the future. I plan on going back to graduate school at Emory University in either Neuroscience or Immunology and Molecular Pathogenesis."

Helping my Colleagues Teach Real World Curricula

These effective teaching strategies are the result of a decade of sometimes painful and embarrassing experimentation, and learning what works from other good instructors and the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (CETL). I still get negative evaluations from some students, and each one gives me a clue about how to improve my courses the next time around. I have worked with CETL to disseminate my more successful approaches. My syllabi and the links to my students' work can be found on my Home Page and Teaching Page at neurolab.gatech.edu. I also presented a poster on my "Real World Assignments for Learning What Matters in the Real World" at the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Society for Neuroscience, which was attended by over 30,000 neuroscientists.

Unsolicited Comments

I promise I'm not trying to brown-nose, but you've been one of my favorite professors at Tech throughout these four years (assuming you're the one reading this). I very much appreciate your teaching style and approach within the laboratory. It's refreshing to learn from a professor that's completely open to input and does not pretend to be preaching gospel truth. Moreover, the subjects of neuroscience and neuroengineering are by far the most fascinating aspects of the life sciences to me, and I hope to one day have a profession in one of these sciences. Although pursuing a neuro-related career has been the plan since I switched into BME three years ago, you have only strengthened those aspirations, and I appreciate that. I really don't have any complaints to speak of. I would heartily recommend this and the prerequisite class (Introductory Neuroscience) to anyone who might be interested in exploring the topic. Thanks for everything these past two semesters.

Dr. Potter,

Thanks for being such a great professor. I don't think I've had another professor who cared about what we are learning or gave real, meaningful assignments as much as you do. This is honestly the most worthwhile class I have taken at Tech. I know many of my classmates feel the same way, and we truly appreciate everything you have done this semester.

... I've never written a thank-you note on the back of a final before...

Dr. Potter,

I want to thank you for everything you've taught me this semester & for all your advice on my research. You've been an instrumental teacher for me & I really enjoyed your class.

Dear Dr. Potter,

Thank you so much for allowing me to audit your wonderful class. I've learned a lot not only neuroscience but also how to motivate and promote teaching!

Wish you a happy holiday!

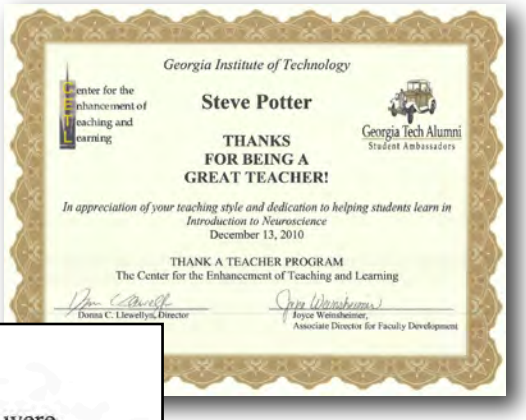
Sincerely, Jianxia

12/10/09

Dr. Potter,

Thanks for another great semester. Walking to this exam, I was trying to remember what school is like w/out my weekly dose of neuroscience, and I think it was simply much less interesting. If you don't mind I would love to stay in touch and get your recommendations on neuro-books or videos or articles, just so I can continue to learn.

Comments from "Thanks for Being a Great Teacher" awards I have received, which students took the initiative to submit to the Center for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning:



Georgia Institute of Technology

Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning

Steve Potter

Georgia Tech Alumni Student Ambassadors

THANKS FOR BEING A GREAT TEACHER!

In appreciation of your teaching style and dedication to helping students learn in Introduction to Neuroscience
December 13, 2010

THANK A TEACHER PROGRAM
The Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning

Donna C. Llewellyn, Director — Joyce Weinsheimer, Associate Director for Faculty Development

What would you like to tell instructor?

Thanks for such a great class! Even though the tests and assignments were challenging I feel like I learned so much throughout the semester. I had always been sort of interested in neuroscience so I decided to take the class to learn more and I'm really happy that I did. I may even decide to go into neurology if I get into medical school or I might try to get more involved in the ethical side of neuroscience thanks to the book that I read for the class. So thanks once again for such a great semester! -Saira Ahmed

What would you like to tell instructor? Dr. Potter,
I just wanted to thank you for being such an incredible professor over the last two semesters. I came into Intro to Neuroscience not knowing anything about the subject, and because of you, I am enthralled with the field now. You are so intelligent and passionate about Neuroscience, and it is very evident to your students. Your two courses are my favorite courses I have taken during my 5 years at Tech, and I will remember them long after I graduate. Thank you for enhancing my experience at Georgia Tech in a way that I was not expecting!

What would you like to tell instructor? Dr. Potter, I just wanted to say thanks for going the extra mile this semester. It's not every class that the professor takes video of the students on Day 1 and returns on Day 2 having memorized everyone's names. The interaction of the lecture made it much more interesting than any lecture I've ever had, and the guest lectures really opened my mind to different areas in the field. I think the Neuro Ethics talk was one of the most interesting lectures I've had in four years at Tech. Your willingness to bring in the experts to lecture on what they know best was invaluable, and I really appreciate your level-headed and open-minded approach towards teaching and assignments. I'll definitely be recommending this course as much as I can to other BMEs. Thanks for a great semester!

What would you like to tell instructor? Your course has been, simply put, one of the best courses I have taken at this university and that is saying quite a bit. Your use of guest speakers, excellent personal knowledge, and desire for dialogue within the classroom setting are all both very refreshing and inspiring. If I was a BME major, I'd certainly be taking your class in the spring and I'm disappointed to not be able. Please, keep up the good work, you are a model instructor.