

Dec. 31, 2010

To: Ector/Beard Outstanding Teacher Awards Committee
From: Awards Committee of the Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering
Re: Nomination for Professor Steve M. Potter

Steve Potter has accomplished something truly remarkable through his outstanding teaching, and we hereby nominate him for the Class of 1940 W. Howard Ector Outstanding Teacher Award for senior faculty. Since 2002, Dr. Potter has been instrumental in working with Dr. Wendy Newstetter to establish and shape our department's cutting-edge Problem-Based Learning (PBL) curriculum, which alumni surveys have shown to play a major role in putting the Coulter BME department into the top three BME departments in the country for over five years running, which is especially remarkable considering the department is only 12 years old. Of course, a number of other BME faculty also helped shape our PBL curriculum, but Dr. Potter was the first to develop a *laboratory* course with open-ended PBL projects devised by the BME undergrads themselves, Neuroengineering Fundamentals (BMED 4400). This problem-driven learning philosophy incorporates real-world, current problems for which no one solution exists, and teaches our students many skills that make them highly competitive in academia, medicine, government, and industry.

From the success of his "Neuroeng. Fun." course, and the graduate version he also spearheaded, Hybrid Neural Microsystems (BMED 8813), Dr. Potter was inspired in 2007 to develop a revolutionary "Real-World Curriculum" for his Introductory Neuroscience lecture course (BMED/BIOL 4752). This elective course for biology and BME seniors has been remarkably successful, with high CIOS rankings and enrollment of over 50 students, despite being a very difficult and demanding course taken during the students' busiest year. As you will see in the comments attached, both CIOS and unsolicited, many of the students felt this was the best course they have taken at Tech, and that Dr. Potter was their favorite instructor. His office is decorated with several "Thanks for Being a Great Teacher" certificates from the Center for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, initiated by his most grateful students.

Why have the students been raving about Potter's IntroNeuro course? Because his Real World Curriculum not only prepares the students for life after graduating from Tech, but forces them to interact with *and improve the real world during the course*. As a result, they leave with a great sense of accomplishment, new and useful skills that are applicable in any career setting, and potentially life-changing experiences, as indicated by the attached alumni survey.

Because of the success of Dr. Potter's Real World Curriculum, and its general applicability to many courses, the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning has invited Dr. Potter for the past two years to give instructional seminars to other Tech faculty to promote this novel and successful approach to structuring a course. The most significant of Dr. Potter's IntroNeuro assignments is that each student spends the semester becoming an expert in a chosen neuroscience topic, and then writes a substantial Wikipedia article on that topic. Thanks to his course, there are now over 200 new Wikipedia articles based on peer-reviewed scientific literature and written with the highest level of quality. Leading up to this capstone assignment are a number of other real-world assignments that help the student become an expert in his or her chosen topic. For example, each student must choose and read a neuroscience book, and write a detailed, informative and useful review of it on Amazon.com. Lists of Wikipedia articles and book reviews written by Dr. Potter's students are attached, with links to the

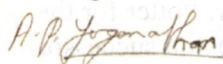
online versions. Finding and reading the scientific literature is an important real world skill his students practice extensively. They teach the world about one of the papers they found, by presenting a review of it on YouTube. Some of the YouTube videos are very creative and entertaining, in addition to being educational (see [online YouTube playlist IntroNeuroFall2010](#)). They also must interview an expert in their chosen topic orally. In the age of email, SMS and Twitter, students need a push to learn to appreciate the greatly enhanced communication provided by real-time two-way interaction with an expert. Dr. Potter also gives them invaluable coaching on how to obtain interviews with busy academics.

Another popular and successful facet of Dr. Potter's Real World Curriculum is to invite a dozen or so top neuroscientists from the Atlanta area to give guest lectures to the class about their research. These are integrated with Dr. Potter's lectures, to show the students how the topics they have learned are applied in real research labs. Acknowledging the limitations of our understanding of the nervous system is something Dr. Potter emphasizes throughout the course. Seeing real scientists grappling with these limitations, and making incremental advances, brings this point home in a way that no textbook can.

Dr. Potter has distinguished himself in the care and attention he gives to each student in his classes. Numerous students have commented on what an impression it made that Dr. Potter had learned all of their names (sometimes over 60!) during the first week of classes. He does this by filming them introducing themselves on the first day and repeatedly studying the video. He actually admits that he is "bad with names and faces" but that this technique, with substantial effort, pays off in the greatly improved discussions he encourages in class, and in the ease with which his students can approach him with questions and problems. Acknowledging that different students have different learning styles, he provides them with multiple alternative ways to do well in class. For example, they can attend departmental neuroscience seminars at Emory, Tech, Georgia State, or elsewhere, and write them up for extra credit. When the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience was in Atlanta a few years ago, Dr. Potter obtained funding from the local SFN chapter and the Center for Behavioral Neuroscience to pay for the registration of over 20 of his students to attend the conference and write about it for extra credit.

In summary, Steve Potter has consistently and repeatedly gone above and beyond the call of duty in his teaching (while simultaneously running a successful research lab of a dozen people), and has created a new Real World teaching approach that has been highly influential in the lives of his students. His approach can be replicated elsewhere to the benefit of many more students. We strongly feel that his outstanding teaching efforts and accomplishments should be rewarded and are the type of innovation that the Class of 1940's teaching awards help to promote.

Best regards,



Ajit P. Yoganathan

Chair, Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering Awards Committee

Steve M. Potter, Ph.D. Associate Professor

Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering and Emory University School of Medicine

steve.potter@bme.gatech.edu

<http://neuro.gatech.edu>

Whitaker Bldg., rm. 3110 x52989

Last update: January 27, 2011

- 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, since Fall 2005).
- Developed curriculum for graduate Hybrid Neural Microsystems (BMED 8813 2004, 2006, 2009).
- Taught brain-computer interfaces, Neuromorphic Cognition Engineering Workshop, Summer 2010.
- Facilitated Problem-Based Learning in Biomedical Engineering (BMED 1300, six semesters).
- Created lab and lecture NeuroEngineering Fundamentals course (BMED 4400 since Spring 2004).
- 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 search)

31 Refereed Journal Publications, plus

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

Selected Recent Publications

1. Rolston, J. D., Laxpati, N. G., Gutekunst, C.-A., Potter, S. M., & Gross, R. E. (2010). Spontaneous and evoked high-frequency oscillations in the tetanus toxin model of epilepsy. *Epilepsia*, 51, 2289-2296.
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 Hybros,” 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

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, 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 50 journal articles and foundation grants.
- Reviewed numerous grants for the NIH, NSF, and foreign governments.

Campus Committees

- Student Computer Ownership Committee, Georgia Tech, since 2009
- Elected to Executive Committee, Neuroscience Graduate Program, Emory GDBBS, 2007-2010
- BME Awards Committee 2009-2010
- 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 9 Grants from NIH, NSF, and private foundations, totaling over \$4M

Investigator on 4 additional grants

Awards

- Georgia Tech BMES “Outstanding Faculty Award,” 2008
- “Thanks for Being a Great Teacher,” Georgia Tech Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, 2008, 2009, 2010



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January 24, 2011

Dear Members of the Faculty Awards Committee:

Professor Steve Potter exemplifies many of the characteristics that we associate with excellent teachers. First of all, **he cares** that his students learn--and his students know this because he learns each student's name the first week of class (even when he teaches very large classes). **He is innovative**—he created the first laboratory course in his department with problem-based learning projects, and in CIOS evaluations students applaud this “refreshing approach to teaching a course, different than any other taken at Tech.” **He challenges and supports** his students in learning more in his *Introduction to Neuroscience* than they think they can. The result? Students send him notes through CETL's *Thank a Teacher* about how he's changed their lives: *“This course has changed my goals significantly....Now I'm in love with brains....I seriously think about brains almost every second of the day.”* Another student in an Alumni Survey wrote: *“The class I took with you was the first time that I considered the possibility of a medical career focused on neuroscience. I remember the passion that you had for neuroscience, and the passion you had for getting us interested in the subject. It really carried through to the content of the course, and it made neuroscience more than something to learn for a grade. The way you taught that course, neuroscience became something worth learning about and investing in.”*

However, there's another very important reason that I would like to support the nomination of Steve Potter for the Class of 1940 W. Howard Ector Outstanding Teacher Award. In addition to being an excellent teacher, **Steve is eager to share his findings about what promotes student learning** with his colleagues and he seeks out venues to do this.

As Associate Director for Faculty Development (CETL), I first met Steve a few years ago when he came to my office to discuss several of his “real-world” assignments with me. He described the process he designed to help students each develop expertise in a particular area and then contribute a detailed, well-referenced **article on Wikipedia** about a neuroscience-related topic of his or her choosing. In another assignment, he asks students to select a neuroscience book and write a detailed, organized and useful **review of the book on Amazon.com**. An “extra credit” assignment Steve developed connects students with **neuroscience research lectures** in the Atlanta area; after attending, students submit a one-page summary and reflect on the real neuroscience research that they just learned about. And finally, Steve uses **class activities and tests** to connect students with the real world. He invites local neuroscientists to talk with the students about their current research projects and findings. He leads discussions about complex and controversial neuroethics topics--topics that are easily misunderstood. And when it comes to tests, he emphasizes critical and creative thinking that involves concepts students are learning rather than “factoids” that there is no real need for them to remember.

Once Steve Potter had discussed his approach to using real-world assignments with me, he made an offer that I could not refuse: he volunteered to talk with campus faculty about his efforts that were having such a positive impact on student learning. In the past, many Georgia Tech faculty had told me that they were disappointed with the quality of work that students produced on assignments—and many Georgia Tech students had told me that they felt that many of the assignments they were asked to do were just “busy work.” Steve’s Potter’s offer came at just the right time!

Since he made his offer to partner with CETL and share what he has learned, Steve has connected with faculty at two CETL events: he prepared a workshop for CETL’s *Fall Teaching Kick-Off*, and he served on a faculty panel at *GREET* (Georgia Tech Retreat Exploring Effective Teaching). Some of the faculty members attending these events have followed up with Steve on an individual basis to discuss how they might adapt his approach to achieve their course goals.

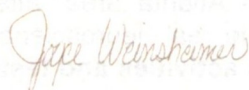
Recently a student submitting a note to Steve Potter through CETL’s *Thank a Teacher* confirmed that providing a venue for Steve to share his findings is the right thing to do. Here is what the student wrote:

....I wanted to say thank you. 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. Whatever you have done to become such a phenomenal professor, please share it with the rest of your colleagues as Tech needs many more faculty members like you. Thank you so much for the class; it means a lot to me to have classes like this one.

With Sincerest Gratitude,
Morgan Wolfe

Please give your strongest consideration to Steve M. Potter for the Class of 1940 W. Howard Ector Outstanding Teacher Award. Steve is an outstanding teacher to his students, and he is providing leadership on the Georgia Tech campus to help others succeed in the courses they teach. I highly value the contributions he has made and I look forward to many more in the future.

Sincerely,



Joyce Weinsheimer, Ed.D.
Associate Director
Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning

January 26, 2011

TO: Ector/Beard Outstanding Teacher Awards Committee

RE: Dr Steve Potter

From: Dr. Wendy C. Newstetter

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 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 both his BMED4400 class where both graduate and undergraduate students worked together on projects and also in the Hybrid Neuro-microsystems (HNM) laboratory that was developed using a problem-based learning approach as part of an IGERT grant. In the latter, PhD students take the course twice serving as mentors in the second year to the first year PhD students.
- **Class projects:** In the HNM course, students designed and fabricated Multi-electrode arrays (MEA) for signal capture just as they would in the Potter lab. In doing so, they experienced both the challenge and the impasses associated with research, important lessons for graduate students. Additionally, in the undergraduate 4400 class students worked 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 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 the most successful faculty member at GT in doing this. He should be commended but more importantly recognized for making these contributions to how we design learning environments.

I emailed a questionnaire to my students from the last three years (the ones I could track down with help from the Alumni Association), to see how my teaching may have influenced them. Using Google Docs to create questionnaires makes this very easy, and logs their responses automatically into a spreadsheet. I have excerpted and highlighted below a selection of responses that show that my teaching and Real World Curriculum were effective and have been a positive influence on them today. The entire unedited spreadsheet can be seen here:

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/ccc?key=0AgYFgVAVjGQfdG1zM3l3X0xvREh6OU4xbGxMR1JqS2c&hl=en&authkey=C0mb0-YI>

Starting Fall 2008, I have been the sole instructor for Introductory Neuroscience (BMED/BIOL 4752). Before that, I co-taught IntroNeuro with Bio Prof. Nael McCarty, who is now directing the Cystic Fibrosis Center at Emory.

Here are the questions I asked my former students:

Name, Email, Year graduated, Course taken
What are you doing these days? Career goal?
How would you compare my course to other courses you took?
How does it influence you today?
Did the class influence your career path?
What was the most memorable thing about me or the course?

11/26/2010 2:33:20 Nishant Zachariah zach@jhu.edu 2010 Introduction to Neuroscience, Fall 2009

I am currently pursuing my Masters in BME at JHU and have been at JHU for the last 3 months. Career goal: Medicine / Academia (Still debating between the two). Intro to Neuro was an astonishingly different course in both the way it was structured and the way it was taught. 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. 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. Dr. Potter, my sole exposure to Neuroscience prior to graduate studies, was your course at Tech. The class sparked within me an interest in the field which resulted in the research that I am currently a part of today. Thank you for both your dedication and hard work. 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.

12/2/2010 14:41:13 Christa Caesar ccaesar3@mail.gatech.edu 2010 4752 - Intro to Neuroscience

Graduate school at Georgia Tech [currently BME PhD student]. Intro to Neuroscience was completely different from all my other courses because of its real world approach. This approach made the material relevant, interesting, and useful at the same time, therefore making learning a fun process. 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. I never did any of this in any other course and this made Intro to Neuroscience extremely refreshing and novel. I do very often think about many of the topics I learned in your course these days. I have always had a soft corner for neuroscience and have always found it very fascinating. Therefore, I often find myself engaging in conversation, learning, or educating my family and friends in the area. Yes, neuroscience did strengthen my decision to go to graduate school. By the end of the course I realized how little I actually knew and I had a strong desire to continue learning (either neuroscience or cardiology). The most memorable thing from your course was on day 2, when you recollected each of our names in class (I remember how awe-struck I was, that a professor actually cared to remember my name, the 2nd day of school). You made the course a very personal experience since that day. I also loved the fact that we had so many speakers teach in class. Most were very inspiring.

Thank you for working so hard to make this course such an awesome experience for us students! Thank you even more for caring to hear back from us.

1/11/2011 11:48:32 Mike Weiler mweiler@gatech.edu 2010 Intro Neuroscience

PhD at Georgia Tech, Career goal: Industry. Much much different than typical undergrad courses. The format is actually more similar to grad courses in my opinion. The focus of the course is less on raw memorization of neuroscience principles and instead uses the general concept of neuroscience as a theme to engage students in "real world" activities. The purpose of said real world assignments is to introduce students to the type of responsibilities they may be facing in the future. 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. In addition to publicly displaying my work, the assignments helped to expose me to the types of activities I now find myself doing on a regular basis in graduate school. The amazon book review assignment helped me to think critically about the writing of others and be able to compose a thorough and thoughtful review of the main points. This skill has become invaluable as I assess journal articles for my research. The wikipedia article was also extremely unique and was actually my favorite element of the class. That was my first exposure to truly "publishing" scientific information. I still read the wikipedia entry occasionally to this day, and I'm very proud of the work I put into that article. The experience has helped me to write journal articles of my research and I now have two published papers. It did not influence my career path in terms of direction, but it did help to prepare me for graduate school (see above). Most memorable: The style of teaching and attitude towards teaching/learning. I really enjoyed the course, one of the most interesting I have ever taken.

12/9/2010 10:38:28 Morgan Wolfe morgan.b.wolfe@gmail.com 2009 Intro Neuroscience (Fall 2008)

I am currently in medical school at Washington University in St. Louis as a second year. Career goal: Medicine. Dr. Potter's course was by far one of the best courses I took at Georgia Tech. Not only was he an extremely effective lecturer - his course was interesting, expected us to learn useful and meaningful things, and was fair. I remember the assignments being diverse and formative. The wikipedia assignment is probably the only assignment I still remember having done, enjoyed, and am proud of. Personally, I know the foundation I got in Intro Neuro was extremely helpful in giving me a great foundation and leg up in my neuro course in the first year of medical school. While I don't plan on going into a neuro-based career anymore, I do think that the course influenced some of the experiences I have had in my educational training. Most memorable: Easy. Dr. Potter's clear excitement and enthusiasm for the subject matter and his students' learning. The perfect components for an excellent course. Thanks Dr. Potter for being a fantastic addition to the education of the BME Yellow Jackets!

12/9/2010 19:04:26 Audrey Southard audrey.southard@gmail.com 2008 BMED 4752 - Fall 2008

I am currently in my second year of medical school at the University of Missouri. Career goal: Medicine. **BMED 4752** was my favorite class in my undergraduate education. The assignments were interesting, and I honestly looked forward to each and every class session. I appreciated all of the guest lecturers who talked about their areas of interest, as well as your lectures on neuroanatomy, neurology, and other concepts related to neuroscience.

The interest that your class sparked was extremely valuable in my first year of medical school. We have an entire quarter dedicated to neurology - neuroscience and neuroanatomy. This quarter is generally dreaded, and most of my classmates were miserable, trying to rote memorize the complex pathways and anatomy of the nervous system. Although I still had a lot of learning to do, I found myself genuinely enjoying it. I really think that enjoyment was directly attributable to my experiences in **BMED 4752**. The class I took with you was the first time that I considered the possibility of a medical career focused on neuroscience. I am not sure if I will end up as a neurologist; however, it seems like a distinct possibility. I remember the passion that you had for neuroscience, and the passion you had for getting us interested in the subject. It really carried through to the content of the course, and it made neuroscience more than something to learn for a grade. The way you taught that course, neuroscience became something worth learning about and investing in.

11/22/2010 13:19:48 Gwyneth Halstead-Nussloch gwynethhn@gmail.com 2008

3rd year Ph.D. candidate

This was one of my favorite courses. Both you and Dr. McCarty were extremely knowledgeable and had effective teaching strategies. More specifically, I learned a lot about analyzing papers in this course, I even think part of my Wikipedia article is still posted. This course prepared me the most for grad school, even though I went into a completely different field. It reminded me why I think science is cool. I remember you being very approachable, detail oriented and really good at explaining difficult concepts. I do remember you putting a lot of effort into knowing each student and making sure they were on track, also.

11/22/2010 14:31:22 Alex Stroh DASTroh@jhmi.edu 2008 Intro Neuroscience, Neuroengineering Fundamentals

This is my third year in medical school. Medicine. Compared to other classes at Tech - more independent, focused on student driven learning, I felt like it gave you interesting bites that made you want to follow up with a more exhaustive search.

Your real world assignment on editing a wiki page was an interesting foray into developing skills in teaching, which I've come to appreciate as an excellent way to learn (forced to learn something and organize it well enough to teach it). 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. Memorable: About the course - recording from my neurons on an MEA/real data analysis and the demands therein.

11/22/2010 17:03:26 Saira Ahmed ahmed.saira@gmail.com 2009 Intro Neuroscience - Fall 2008

I'm a high school math/computer science teacher with Teach For America in Bridgeport, CT. Career goal: Medicine. It was a lot of work and studying but I really enjoyed the content more so than a lot of my other BME classes. I really liked the Wikipedia project and the Amazon book report project as well. It is so interesting to think about how the brain works in terms of how my students learn and study. I sometimes wonder what is actually going on in their heads! It was one of the few classes that I was honestly really engaged in and I loved that about it. I always recommend it to other students.

11/22/2010 17:53:58 Amar Kadaba amark571@gmail.com 2009 Intro to Neuroscience, Spring 2008

I am finishing my Masters at the University of Pennsylvania in Biotechnology, and I will be starting a job in January as a Market Research Analyst for a Biotechnology and Healthcare consulting firm. Career goal: Industry. I really enjoyed the Neuroscience course and the many guest lecturers. 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. I still remember many things, and when I read or hear things neuro related I can always think of some small tidbit that I picked up in Intro to Neuroscience. The extra credit opportunities (neuroscience seminars) were a great way to raise our grades as well as learn about a broad range of neuro-related topics from esteemed lecturers.

11/22/2010 19:36:02 James Musselwhite james.musselwhite@gmail.com 2007 Intro to Neuroscience, Fall 07

I'm working for Microsoft. They had a program that hired non-CS majors in an effort to get some new blood. Your course was the best course I've taken because of two reasons. One is that I thought you were awesome and I came this close to trying to be one of your grad students. The second is that I love neuroscience and still do to this day. I think about neuroscience all the time. I'm always thinking about what I learned and how to possibly put my own life into its correct context. Most memorable: When we wrote wikipedia articles. My article on metaplasticity remains largely unchanged after all this time, which is both interesting and alarming. You're awesome, keep it up.

11/22/2010 20:50:23 Sarah Black sablack@mcg.edu 2008 Neurobiology Fall 2007

Medical student at Medical College of GA- 3rd year. Career goal: Medicine. I use the neurobiology class material all the time in med school. I've always had an interest in neurology, and having a really good base knowledge helped me to focus on the clinical applications during class. I believe that by learning the ins and outs of the physiology behind neurology, it is an area of strength. I am considering a career in medicine as a neurologist. The wikipedia page was the most memorable- I still show all my friends!

11/22/2010 23:35:26 Eli Riddle eliriddle@hotmail.com 2008 Neuroscience Fall 2007

I'm currently a third year medical student at Washington University in St. Louis. Career goal: Medicine. I thought this was an excellent course, well-organized and well-taught. The neuroscience concepts were very understandable and I felt that I had a good grasp of them after the class. I remember feeling well-prepared for my Neuroscience course in the first year of medical school, and I had a much better grasp of certain concepts, such as visual processing, than some of my classmates, due in large part to what I learned in your Neuroscience course. I also thought the Wikipedia project was a really neat idea. I've been back to the page I started many times, and it has been expanded and changed over time. I have shown other medical students and residents the page, and they were all impressed with the idea. Wikipedia is frequently used in medical school, and the creation of new and accurate information there is really an important contribution. Your course was the basis of my understanding of Neuroscience, and although I will probably not be a Neurologist or Neurosurgeon, I have excelled in my medical school Neurology coursework and Neurology clinical rotation. The course... I think it did encourage my interest in medicine and the clinical applications of science. I think your teaching of the visual processing system is the best I have seen including my medical school teaching. It was an excellent course overall and I really learned a lot about the basics of neuroscience.

11/23/2010 10:34:17 Richard Hartnett richard.d.hartnett@gmail.com 2008 Intro Neuroscience, Fall 2008

After graduating, I worked at the US Patent and Trademark office for ~7 mos before going to graduate school. I am currently finishing up an MS in Electrical/Biomedical Engineering at the University of Rhode Island. Career goal: Medicine. Compared to others, Intro to Neuroscience was a more diverse course, at least in the way the material was presented. There was a considerable amount of textbook reading and studying straight from notes, but there were other facets to the class that I really appreciated. I liked that we were able to attend seminars and write responses to them for extra credit. I got more out of that than I expected. Likewise, I liked how we had to read books and write reports on the subject, and also write the wikipedia articles. Even something as simple as having class discussions about ethical issues was

valuable. One particular thing about the course that stuck out in my mind was how Dr. Potter memorized everybody's name and seat assignment. This was impressive, and gave a personal feel to a class with quite a few students in it-if I remember correctly was at least 65 people. I've read a number of articles and books that discussed brain plasticity since taking Neuroscience. Neuroscience ended up being one of my favorite classes. As a result, I took a neuroengineering course in graduate school. It also helped to guide me in my decision to apply to medical school.

11/23/2010 16:31:07 He Zheng neuron@gatech.edu 2008 Neuroscience Fall07, Neuroengineering Spring 08

As you know, working [as BME PhD student] for Garrett Stanley since Fall 2008 Career goal: Academia. The intro neuroscience class is actually fairly close to the first year Emory systems neuroscience class. With less time, you covered less details, but it's more interesting because I liked the philosophical discussions. The courses provided me with really good neuroscience and neuroengineering introduction. Really helpful. I was already determined to get into neuroscience. They were helpful and interesting classes. They were hard classes!

11/28/2010 14:39:57 Matthew Ward matthew@wardsrus.net 2008 Neuroscience, Fall 2007

Currently I am a junior medical student at the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta. I went straight from GT to MCG. Career goal: Medicine. You clearly spent much more time thinking about how the curriculum was designed than other courses. I remember a good balance between didactic/scientific lectures and experimental curriculum which attempted to bridge the gap. Neuroscience helped out a good bit in the first two years of medical school. A lot of the neuro anatomy was new but the cellular concepts were quite clear. In fact I would say of all my senior electives neuroscience was the most useful in medical school. I had pretty much decided to go to medical school by the time I took NS. Most memorable: Probably the Wikipedia project, which I still glance at occasionally. Thanks for working hard at being a strong teacher--I feel that sometimes at Tech professors get so wrapped up in research that the classroom suffers, but you work hard at both. Thank you.

11/29/2010 19:42:18 Patrick Lynn pjlynn@gmail.com 2008 BMED 4752 - Fall 2007 or Spring 2006

I'm in my 3rd year of medical school at the University of Florida, currently rotating in Psychiatry in Jacksonville, FL. I'll be here until at least May 2012, when I'll graduate and head off to residency. Career goal: Medicine. Your course included a lot of the necessary info that we get in Neuroscience, physiology, Neuropathology, and some of the neurology clerkship. Lots of basics that I'm glad I covered early. Set a good foundation of material for the above mentioned classes in med school. It was a difficult class and I enjoyed seeing people really have to work hard to do well in a course. Also enjoyed having people from different majors in a BMED class. Thanks for all you did, the hard work I put in at Tech has kept me going through med school.

11/29/2010 21:32:06 Steven Ryan stevejryan@gmail.com 2007 Intro Neuroscience, Fall 2006, Special Topics Spring 2007

I'm a graduate student in the Neuroscience PhD program at Emory. I started the program the August after graduating from Tech, and anticipate graduating sometime in 2012. Intro Neuroscience was great! Dr. McCarty's and your lectures were well-planned, had a good sequence, and were engaging enough to encourage questions. There was plenty of material to cover, but this class formed the basis of my neuroscience knowledge that got me through the first year or so of graduate coursework at Emory, and I'm glad to have had it. I learned a LOT about literature searching and research in the course of the project. I can't say I feel like the research topic turned out particularly well itself, but the process taught me a great deal about science writing and background research. Did it influence my career path? Definitely. Your Intro Neuroscience course reminded me of my interest in the topic, and heavily influenced my decisions about what graduate programs to apply to. 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 => Thank you for your time and patience, first as a teacher in the Neuroscience course, later as a sort of mentor in the directed study.

12/2/2010 18:49:40 behnaz yousefi bzyousefi@gatech.edu Introductory Neuroscience, F09

I am pursuing my phd studies: this is my second year I had the opportunity to study some basics about neuroscience and I loved it, the course was different in many ways: that is obvious. The course was full of varieties that I can imagine to linger in my memory for my lifetime : youtube video, amazon book review, all the lectures by students and emory faculties, the discussions we had and you asked us to tell our opinions and you wrote them on the board, the wikipedia page, the exams, clicker quizzes!, doige book, etc. Specifically about you, the most memorable things is that you answered my email, while I was in my homeland and wanted to apply to gatech and join your group with an offside background: that was and still is very valuable for me - I would never forget this part for sure. Figuring out how the brain works is the most valuable, meaningful thing to me - among all other nonsense we do in life.

12/3/2010 13:50:12 Jessie Furman jessie1508@yahoo.com 2010 Intro Neuroscience

Masters student in Nutrition at UGA Career goal: Government. Similar Since my diagnosis with epilepsy in 2003, I have had an interest in neuroscience. Dr. Potter's class provided me with the basic tools to understand the brain in a greater fashion. Learning more about catamenial epilepsy, which was my wikipedia topic, and my specific subset of epilepsy. The wikipedia page, on the other hand, was essentially a term paper with markup language--- this was a wonderful assignment that forced me to learn so much about a topic I was truly interested in.

12/5/2010 0:07:57 Jared Ivey j.ivey@gatech.edu 2009 BMED 4752

I have been working as a software engineer at Robins AFB in Warner Robins, GA, since June 2009. Also, beginning this semester (Fall 2010), I have begun my Master's degree in software engineering with a minor in engineering management at Mercer University. Career goal: Government. 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. The course helped develop me into a more productive engineer, primarily in the sense that I developed the skills to utilize my resources well and learn on the fly in order to complete an assignment or solve a problem. This class did not influence my career path, either positively or negatively. It was just an extremely interesting course that honed my skills as an engineer. Most memorable: The Wikipedia assignment - The task of learning how to create a Wikipedia page and then actually develop it into a useful and informative resource will stick in my mind for a long time.

I wish I had some productive criticisms to aid your development of the class; however, you really did an excellent job in organizing and implementing the class. I truly appreciated the experience.

12/9/2010 10:51:25 Virgil Secasanu virgil.secasanu@gmail.com 2008 Intro to Neuroscience, Neuroengineering

2nd year medical student at University of Central Florida Career goal: Medicine. Well-organized with the view of treating us as graduate students. As a future medical researcher, I think the assignments like Journal Clubs and processing our own MATLAB code (in neuroengineering class) was very useful. The Intro to Neuroscience was useful in exposing me to the graduate-level type of work (where we read the book on our own, came to class for supplementary info (not necessarily book regurgitation), and taking written exams (where we had to organize our own thoughts and defend our answer). The Neuroengineering class exposed me to doing self-managed neuro research, as well as really awesome up and coming medical advances, including replacement prosthetics. I had a strong interest in medicine. 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.

12/9/2010 21:06:12 Casey Hand handsc@umdnj.edu 2009 Intro to Neuro 2009

Medical student at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in NJ. Second year student, graduating in 2013. Career goal: Medicine. Assignments and course were good. I definitely had a headstart in the neuro course which was very nice, and it prompted interest in neuro as a specialty choice (although I think I'm moving away from that now, but honestly who knows). Yes, it helped me solidify the fact that I would prefer to be in medicine as a doctor rather than an engineer and also sparked interest into the neuro specialty. Wiki page, and the lucid dream talks (used those studies as part of papers we had to write for medical school). Maybe a little more anatomy? Otherwise a great course! Even as a graduating (super) senior and being borderline mentally checked out, I was really glad I took the course.

12/12/2010 17:14:58 Joseph Abrahamson abrahamson.j@gmail.com 2010 Intro Neurosci, Fall 2009

I'm at John's Hopkins pursuing a PhD in Electrical and Computer Engineering searching out a number of opportunities in computational neuroscience as one possible research avenue. Career goal: Entrepreneurialism. Happily serious, a comprehensive and useful introduction to a lot of neuroscience passionately taught. The work was occasionally more time consuming than expected, but usually not too bad. The Wikipedia page project was pretty fun though. I'm still proud of that thing. Like most introduction classes, the primary effect was contextualization. I'm a lot more aware of current thoughts on the field of neuroscience which becomes imminent when learning anything new. Your class gave me something of a boost in perspective over others with similar backgrounds, though certainly (obviously) not too the level of anyone who studies it more intently. I'm definitely a lot more interested in neuroscience-related research projects! Most memorable: Unabashed passion about the topic which came through not just in the expected ways -- excitement, knowledge, patience, comprehension, whatever -- but in the interest in connecting hard neuroscience knowledge with the larger curiosity about how we think. Fantastic class. I wish I had decided to take your lab as well.

1/20/2011 17:04:44 (by email) Jenny Kim <jenny.kim309@gmail.com> Intro Neuroscience, Fall 2010

I really enjoyed your class and definitely learned a lot. 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 Parkinsons Disease. I'm again really sad that I had to drop your [Neuroengineering Fundamentals] class but I would love to continue to keep in contact in the future. Thank you for everything.

Dr. Potter,

Alysia Rudis

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 really 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,

Kirsten Kepple

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.

Merry Christmas!

Kirsten

From my former co-instructor, Dr. Nael McCarty, to Prof. Julia Kubanek, arguing that I deserve a Bio TA (email cc to me, Aug. 11, 2010):

Julia et al.:

I write to strongly support Steve's request for TA assistance from Biology. The Neuroscience course was really top-notch when I left Tech, and Steve has improved on it even more since then. The "real world" approach adds variety and personalization to the course, which makes it much more interesting but also less "cookie-cutter".... Roughly half of the students each semester are from SoB. It certainly was the case, when I left, that a significant number of the top undergrads in Biology wanted to take this course. Several grad students also participated with or without credit.

At Emory, I often run into former students from the Neuroscience class who either are in the very rigorous Neuroscience grad program or are medical students. They remind me that they really got a lot out of the course (I give Steve credit for that).

Thanks for your consideration.

Best,
Nael

Nael A. McCarty, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Senior CF Scientist
Associate Chief for Research

Division of Pulmonology, Allergy/Immunology, Cystic Fibrosis, and Sleep
Department of Pediatrics, Emory University School of Medicine
Director,

From: "morgan.wolfe"
<morgan.wolfe@gatech.edu>

Date: December 13, 2008

Dr. Potter,

As you will read in my course critique, I wanted to say thank you. 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. Whatever you have done to become such a phenomenal professor, please share with the rest of your colleagues as Tech needs many more faculty members like you. Thank you so much for the class, it means a lot to me to have classes like this one. I hope you have a terrific holiday!

With Sincerest Gratitude,

Morgan Wolfe

Jianxia Cui

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

From: "Holcomb, Jessica R" <jholcomb6@gatech.edu>
Date: Mon, 8 Nov 2010

Hi Professor,

I know you have asked the question in class if this course has "changed any of our lives" and inspired us to alter our goals and dreams, and I have never raised my hand. However, as time goes on, I love brains more and more and love learning about them. This course has made me want to change my goals significantly. I wish I had taken your class earlier in my college career, because had I done that I would most certainly be preparing for graduate school and finding the best neuroscience program I could get in. Unfortunately, I will be graduating in May 2011 and have done nothing to prepare for graduate school, and never had anticipated even wanting to go. 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 should really start applying for jobs, though, so I was wondering if you had any suggestions. Do you know of any companies or career paths that might appeal to a biomedical engineer with a new-found love of the nervous system? I would sincerely appreciate your input.

Thank you,

Jessica Holcomb

From: Christa Caesar <ccaesar3@gatech.edu> (Now a PhD student in BME)
Date: Sun, 6 Dec 2009

Dear Dr. Potter,
Thank you so much for a great semester. 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.

Thank you, sir, once again for all your time.

Sincerely
Christa

From: Joseph Caubo <joseph.caubo@me.com>
Date: October 25, 2008
To: "Steve M. Potter" <steve.potter@bme.gatech.edu>
Subject: Re: Reviews on Amazon

Here is the book review. It is posted on Amazon (or at least getting processed to).

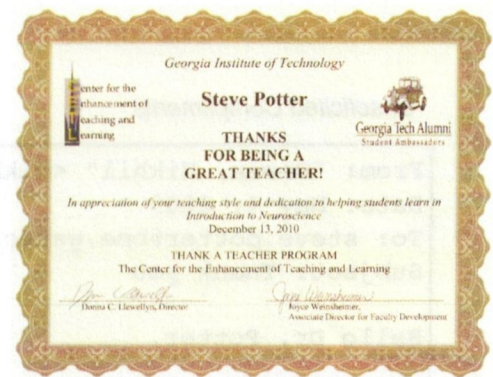
By the way, not that this has any relevance to my work or anything, but you're the first BMED teacher I have ever had that is truly interested in students learning about the topics that you teach – instead of just teaching because you need to but you'd rather be doing your research work. I absolutely love all these guest lecturers that you invite to come speak to us. You really have renewed my interest in the brain.

Anyway, have a great weekend!

Best Regards,
Joe

Unsolicited Compliments

Comments from “Thanks for Being a Great Teacher” awards from CETL:



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.

What would you like to tell this instructor? Dr. Potter -

I would like to thank you for your positive and caring attitude at teaching Intro Neuroscience and Neuroengineering Fundamentals. You have been one my few professors at Georgia Tech that actually cares about conveying the information and how well it is understood. I also appreciate your willingness to take any and all questions in class -- no matter how general they are.

Thanks so much!

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

From: "Dewan, Nikhil" <nikhildewan@gatech.edu>
Date: May 4, 2009
To: steve.potter@bme.gatech.edu
Subject: Thank you

Hello Dr. Potter,

I know you are very good with names but just in case, this is Nikhil and I had taken your Neuroscience course last semester. I wanted to thank you very much for teaching such a great course and also helping me in my future endeavors. I actually just graduated from the bme department and was accepted for a research position within the NIH in a neuro lab there. I will be working in the national institute of mental health and doing wet-lab and dry-lab work with autistic and schizophrenic patients under Dr. Lucas Kempf. I thought you would be happy to know that they quizzed me a little and asked about the class and I believe my responses and description were good selling points to them. I also wanted you to know that I recruited a few people for your class for the fall. A few of my close buddies got very interested when I described it them so expect to see them in the fall. Thanks again for everything and I wish the best for you in the future. Take care.

Sincerely,
Nikhil Dewan

PS: They were only further impressed when they saw my wikipedia page and that we had to complete such an assignment.

From: Amit Parekh <aparekh3@gatech.edu>
Date: January 7, 2011 12:08:14 AM EST
To: "Dr. Steve Potter" <steve.potter@bme.gatech.edu>
Subject: Neuroscience!

Hello Dr. Potter,

I hope you had an excellent break! 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. So I thought I should share that with you! I truly enjoyed all of it, especially the unique things like the guest lectures and EC talks we attended as an added learning as it really exposed us to the real world as you said. I will probably never have a class like this again. You are a great teacher and I wish i could take this Neuroengineering class without deviating too far from my curriculum, but all the best and continue being a great influence for us at Georgia Tech.

Best Regards!

--
Amit Parekh
Biomedical Engineering '13
Georgia Institute of Technology
Research Assistant
Emory University
404-543-0716

Selected Comments from anonymous CIOS questionnaires for Prof. Potter's classes

FALL 2009

This Instructor Was One Of The Best, If Not The Best, Teachers I Have Had At Tech.

12. Encouraged Creative Approaches To Problems Not Just Encouraged, Required!

Despite The Extra Work, I Feel Proud Of My Work And Engaged In The World Of Neuroscience In Ways Merely Covering The Book Could Have Never Broached.

Great class!! This was the most enjoyable class I took in my entire Gatech career! Prof Potter was a very effective teacher and a great guy!

Fantastic Class

Even though I took this class for Audit, I learned more than I expected to. The instructor has a very good teaching style.

I only wish your Neuro Engineering class didn't require a BME prereq. I would take it in an instant, this class was immensely stimulating!

I really enjoyed this class and cannot wait to take Neuroengineering Fundamentals next semester!

One of the best classes I've taken here at Tech so far. Intro to Neuroscience provided exactly that: a gateway to the field both in current knowledge and very current experimentation. Particularly wonderful was the Wikipedia article, for all its drudgery. Wikipedia actually offers a fantastic way to get someone to review and learn at a high-level with the pressure of publication against their name as impetus. Really it's a great assignment.

Refreshing approach to teaching a course, different than any other I've taken at Tech.

The instructor did a fantastic job in my opinion. I was very impressed by the fact that he put forth the effort to learn and remember the names of every person in an extremely large class. I also enjoyed the guest speakers. They were always relevant, interesting, and well integrated into the course material. You could tell the guest lecturers were selected with the overall course in mind instead of being poor substitutes for a busy professor.

The most fulfilling class I have ever taken!!

The classes were the most interesting that I took this semester and would recommend this course to a friend if they're genuinely interested in neuroscience.

While this class had many small and large assignments, it allowed student to have an introduction to neuroscience and investigate any area of neuroscience that was of a particular interest to the individual. 'Introduction does not equal easy' is true, but it is a very interesting and informative class.

FALL 2010

I Have Never Had A Professor At Tech So Willing To Get To Know The Students Of A Class.

I really enjoyed this class. There were times that I felt like it was more work than I was willing to do for one class, but in the end I'm glad I stuck it out. I thought you were a very effective teacher and I was impressed with how hard you tried to connect with each student.

You were one of the funnest and liveliest profs I've had.

Overall, this class was incredible. I absolutely love the 'real world' point of view the class took. It actually makes me wish my other classes were designed to teach me the way this class was.

My favorite part was the guest lecturers. Seeing their work and being able to put a face to neuroscience made learning the material much easier. It also put into perspective how much we don't know. Additionally, it made me much more excited to learn about neuroscience in general.

Although the Wiki article was difficult to do, I am proud of my accomplishment and it is nice to have something on Wikipedia I can show to friends and family.

Great class, excellent lecturers, unique assignments. Have to work hard, but you learn a lot.

I really appreciated that the professor took a personal approach and made an effort to learn our names and let us pursue our interests (wiki article). I wish more professors cared like that.

Thanks Professor, it was a very instructive class that I learned so much from. Thanks to it, I am going to try to focus my career paths on something neurological, and this is all because you showed how much new and cool stuff neurology can discover in the next 40 years. So thanks.

To get my students to reflect on the difficult and unusual assignments they had to do across the semester, I asked the following questions, and transcribed below a selection of their responses.

Q. "How are aspects of the Real World emphasized in this course and not in most other courses? Why do you think I did that?"

-Christina Graves: Aspects of the real world are emphasized by reading real papers (like most scientists do), conducting interviews with experts and peer review. I think you structured the course in this way so that we can be better prepared for Grad school/life after undergrad, instead of focusing on rote memory things that we would likely forget quickly, anyway. I think you did that also because you actually care about teaching, not just researching like a lot of professors here.

-Bilal Bari: 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.

-Jessica Holcomb: I think the best aspects of the "real world" are emphasized by the fact that we have several assignments and different kinds of tasks for which we are responsible. 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. Another reason I think you did this is because in our professional careers, most of us will not have tests but will have several tasks or assignments to complete by a given deadline.

-Mohan Natrajan: The work we produce is publicly available as a resource to others. Here are some reasons I think you did that:

1. A guarantee of something meaningful coming out of every single student who signs up for this class. Even if a student chooses to take nothing out of this class, they are forced to contribute to the field of neuroscience through the book review and Wiki article, ensuring you're not wasting your time.
2. Teaching us about what constitutes acceptable work in the realm of public works. By writing reviews and articles, we learn what we will need to be able to do to produce future works once we're out of school.
3. A word you may or may not treat with disdain: psychology. The prospect of being publicly shamed is a powerful impetus to produce acceptable work. Frankly, while I do hope to impress you, I may sometimes submit substandard work if I'm feeling tired or overworked. The thought of other students (especially my friends) in this class scrutinizing, perhaps even laughing at my work is unbearable.

-Regina Chang: We write a Wikipedia article and listen to presentations given by professors on their current research. I like it because knowing how something works and knowing how to figure out the inner workings are very different. Unlike other classes, like statistics, neuroscience is a constantly changing field. This gives us an opportunity to make a contribution. I think you did this because you want us to take pride in what we do. Our Amazon book review and Wikipedia article will be read by other people and inform them. (Unlike that World Lit essay I wrote on silver trading)

-Sarah Wetherington: We were given real world assignments including an interview w/an expert, writing a wikipedia article, writing an Amazon book review, and doing peer reviews. Guest lectures are frequent and give information about current research. Extra credit includes attending talks in the neuroscience community and writing what we learned. This is all done to increase our understanding of and appreciation for neuroscience, rather than just memorizing facts. Hopefully, this class will spark a long-term interest in someone in neuroscience and provide us with a means to actively pursue that interest. If nothing else, it gives us experience for deadlines and responsibilities similar to post-undergrad life.

-Savannah Cookson: This course includes many assignments that require students to apply their knowledge in the scientific and professional communities. For example, when we reviewed books, the reviews were posted on Amazon.com. We are also required to contribute a Wikipedia article, practice peer review, and interview experts in a neuroscientific field. 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.

1. Username: Bbari3, "Perineuronal net"
2. username: ccarlson6, "Choice-Supportive Bias"
3. jcarlson6, "Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation"
4. Username: Chrisgiardina "Clinical Neurochemistry"
5. ihisu6, "Subgranular zone"
6. Wiki USERNAME = syim1288 My article "Jumping Frenchmen of Maine"
7. Nolan Ivie Username: Gth807e
8. Username: Vkatdare3 "Anti-MAG Peripheral Neuropathy"
9. jkim309, "Apotemnophilia"
10. Wikiname: skoenig3 Title: Emotional Lateralization
11. Username: Sliyanagamage3, "Chronesthesia"
12. Username: Lluce3, "Motor unit plasticity"
13. Pmcmenamin3, "Neurotrophic electrode"
14. Username: TaoPan, "Animal model of depression"
15. Username: spandya3, "Nominal aphasia"
16. Aparekh3 "Secondary Consciousness"
17. Username: Apaschall3, "Sopite syndrome"
18. wiki username: dhru4you title: "ALLOCHIRIA"
19. Wiki Username: Shawn Patel User ID: 13134798 Article Title: "Vision Restoration Therapy"
20. Username: Courtney Price "Alternating Hemiplegia of Childhood"
21. username: Bethany Thames title: "Auditory fatigue"
22. Username: Justin Tsay, "THOMAS (neuroscience)"
23. Jvanloozen3, "closed head injury"
24. Username: Swethering3, "Dentate nucleus"
25. jwilliams43, Malleable Intelligence
26. mickeymose "Alzheimer's Disease biomarker"
27. Username: Srbanton, "Aftertaste"
28. username: JorgeBaro "Neural Adaptation"
29. Username: ameliabicknese, "Copper Deficiency"
30. Username: NBourgeois "Diplegia"
31. Username: Aburns3 "Neurofibrillary Tangle"
32. Username: reginachang, "Topographical disorientation"
33. Username: Jconn3 "Body Schema"
34. Username: Adalapati3, "Thin-slicing"
35. Username: Rohit.ganju, "Mnemonist"
36. jgil3, "Primary Consciousness"
37. username: Christina Graves "Delta Wave"
38. Username DaKdeGO "Sensory stimulation therapy"
39. Username: Jhawes3, "Sensation (psychology)"
40. Username: Ashleyhenry, "Utilization Behavior"
41. Username: Jholcomb6, "Synaptic Plasticity"
42. Username: Mkiani3, "Neurostimulation"
43. Sknabe3 "Neurorobotics"
44. username: Amonroe3, "Bilingual Interactive Activation Plus (BIA+)"
45. Username: Mohan.k.natrajan, "Neuroplastic effects of pollution"
46. Username: Hpatel35, "Spatial view cells"
47. Username: Gtg849v, "Alpha Wave"
48. ctan7 is username. "Somnology"
49. Se Yoo wiki id: gth742d "SUNCT"

– The students' names and book titles below are hyperlinked to their actual reviews on Amazon.com –

1. Banton, Shereka - [The Psychology Of Flavour](#)
2. Bari, Bilal - [The Mind & The Brain - Neuroplasticity And The Power Of Mental Force](#)
3. Baro, Jorge - [A User's Guide To The Brain - Perception, Attention, And The Four Theatres Of The Brain](#)
4. Bicknese, Amelia - [This Is Your Brain On Music - The Science Of A Human Obsession](#)
5. Bourgeois, Neil - [Cerebral Palsy - A Complete Guide For Caregiving](#)
6. Burns, Ashleigh - [The Emotional Brain - The Mysterious Underpinnings Of Emotional Life](#)
7. Carlson, Carolyn - [The Seven Sins Of Memory - How The Mind Forgets And Remembers](#)
8. Carlson, Jennifer - [Rewire Your Brain: Think Your Way To A Better Life](#)
9. Chang, Regina - [Inner Navigation - Why We Get Lost In The World And How We Find Our Way](#)
10. Conn, Joseph - [How The Body Shapes The Mind](#)
11. Cookson, Savannah - [Over My Head - A Doctor's Own Story Of Head Injury From The Inside Looking Out](#)
12. Dalapati, Arghaya - [Blink - The Power Of Thinking Without Thinking](#)
13. Ganju, Rohit - [The Mind Of A Mnemonist - A Little Book About A Vast Memory](#)
14. Giardina, Christopher - [Molecular Neuropharmacology - A Foundation For Clinical Neuroscience](#)
15. Gil, Jhordan - [Wider Than The Sky - The Phenomenal Gift Of Consciousness](#)
16. Graves, Christina - [Sleep – A Great Overview Of Sleep Disorders](#)
17. Gray, Kevin - [Descartes' Error : Emotion, Reason, And The Human Brain](#)
18. Hawes, James - [Brain Sense - The Science Of The Senses And How We Process The World Around Us](#)
19. Henry, Ashley - [Impulse Control Disorders: Psychological Disorders](#)
20. Holcomb, Jessica - [Synaptic Self: How Our Brains Become Who We Are](#)
21. Hsu, Immanuel - [Memory - From Mind To Molecules](#)
22. Im, Sonia - [Boo! Culture, Experience, And The Startle Reflex](#)
23. Ivie, Nolan - [The Scientific American Day In The Life Of Your Brain](#)
24. Katdare, Varun - [Provocative Therapy](#)
25. Kiani, Mehdi - [Implantable Neural Prostheses 1 - Devices And Applications](#)
26. Kim, Jenny - [Better Than Well - American Medicine Meets The American Dream](#)
27. Knabe, Steven - [How The Mind Works](#)
28. Koenig, Seth - [Cognitive Neuroscience Of Emotion](#)
29. Liyanagamage, Shanie - [The Mystery Of The Crystal Skulls](#)
30. Luce, Lindsay - [Plasticity Of The Neuromuscular System \(Novartis Foundation Symposia\)](#)
31. Mcmenamin, Peter - [More Than Human - Embracing The Promise Of Biological Enhancement](#)
32. Monroe, Alexandra - [Language And The Brain \(Cambridge Approaches To Linguistics\)](#)
33. Natrajan, Mohan - [The Wisdom Paradox - How Your Mind Can Grow Stronger As Your Brain Grows Older](#)
34. Pan, Tao - [Mood And Anxiety Related Phenotypes In Mice - Characterization Using Behavioral Tests](#)
35. Pandya, Shivam - [The Man Who Lost His Language: A Case Of Aphasia](#)
36. Parekh, Amit - [Exploring The World Of Lucid Dreaming](#)
37. Paschall, Amy - [Fatigue Study - The Elimination Of Humanity's Greatest Unnecessary Waste](#)
38. Patel, Dhruti - [The Man Who Tasted Shapes](#)
39. Patel, Hitesh - [Eye And Brain](#)
40. Patel, Shawn - [The Cognitive Neuroscience Of Vision](#)
41. Price, Courtney - [Alternating Hemiplegia Of Childhood](#)
42. Probst, Marian - [Sleep - The Complete Guide To Sleep Disorders And A Better Night's Sleep](#)
43. Tan, Christopher - [Sleep Medicine - Essentials And Review](#)
44. Thames, Bethany - [Fatigue As A Window To The Brain](#)
45. Tsay, Justin - [The Oxytocin Factor - Tapping The Hormone Of Calm, Love, And Healing](#)
46. Vanloozen, Josephine - [Head Cases - Stories Of Brain Injury And Its Aftermath](#)
47. Wetherington, Sarah - [Brain Architecture - Understanding The Basic Plan](#)
48. Williams, James - [The Accidental Mind - How Brain Evolution Has Given Us Love, Memory, Dreams, And God](#)
49. Yoo, Keunhwa - [The Moral Challenge Of Alzheimer Disease - Ethical Issues From Diagnosis To Dying](#)
50. Yoo, Se - [Migraine And Other Headaches](#)