

Student Course Evaluations

All comments were gathered anonymously by the university through Canvas at the end of each semester; transcribed directly and organized chronologically.

Lab TA: *Historical Geology* (Fall 2019 - Fall 2021)

Lab TA: *Maps and Mapmaking* (Spring 2022 - Fall 2022)

Lab TA: *Advanced Cartographic Design* (Spring 2023)

Instructor of Record: *Maps and Mapmaking* (Fall 2023 - Spring 2025)

FALL 2019 - Lab Teaching Assistant for *Historical Geology* (GEOL 1420)

Very thoughtful and understanding instructions that helped not only broaden understanding, but assist with the physical tasks at hand in a engaging and interactive manner. Never was afraid to ask a question, or say I didn't understand

Lab instructor was great! She was very helpful and engaging. The last fossil lab where you had split even's and odd's between the class made the lab go faster and actually made us learn the fossils.

She was extremely helpful when I was confused on any of the labs and was always happy to help. I'm not always in the best mood either and she seemed to always be which honestly had a huge impact on how I felt in each lab. She knew what she was talking about and didn't struggle to bring the information down to my level.

Heather Sweinton is a calm presence that makes learning easy and fun. She has a great grasp of the knowledge and can impart it clearly. Well prepared and organized. A joy to learn from.

I'm not a huge fan of writing papers and I wasn't expecting to write two within this Geology lab, but I understand the purpose of getting students to enhance their writing skills by repeatedly writing.

She was a really great lab instructor and she knew what she was doing. Always helped everyone when they needed the help.

Great instructor overall and made the labs fun!

Strengths: super understanding and accommodating, honest (when she doesn't know she'll tell you she doesn't know instead of guessing which is super helpful) weaknesses: literally nothing

SPRING 2020 - Lab Teaching Assistant for *Historical Geology* (GEOL 1420)

Heather was such an amazing instructor. She was fun and always motivated to teach. Personally I felt calm and wanting to learn more in her classes. I learnt more in her class than I did in my lecture class. Everything about her class was perfect. Thank you Heather!

You were a fantastic instructor and an even greater person! Thank you so much for the great semester and I hope to see you soon!

Heather was very nice and knowledgeable. She is a soothing presence and I enjoyed lab with her a lot. My only suggestion would be that she be a little more aggressive in getting the class to participate.

Heather Swienton was an absolute blessing, she has been one of the best lab instructors I've had at TXST. She is extremely helpful and was always nice about students asking questions even if that meant stupid questions. Everything I did not understand or did not learn in class I learned in lab, and she was always available and answered emails quick. Top 2 best lab IA I've ever had highly recommend.

I do think that if someone misses a lab, and comes in on a different lab day to make it up, they should be able to do so for credit. I came in, did my lab, but it was apparently just for the learning, and still received a zero otherwise. I could've stayed home and learned the material. I commute.

Heather Swienton gets ideas across in a quick, to the point, and logical way that not only helps memorize and understand key concepts easier, but also just taught concepts better than the lecturer by a mile. Highly recommend.

She was very sweet and kind with us. She was very clear with instruction and was very helpful with information that we didn't know.

For the Lab instructor, Heather, she was very organized and very helpful with content. She was very good at explaining herself and assignments. Her assignments are also fun and help apply the content.

FALL 2020 - Lab Teaching Assistant for *Historical Geology* (GEOL 1420)

N/A. Told students what to expect and did not disappoint.

Miss Heather was very helpful towards her students. There were some moments of misunderstanding I had that she cleared up in a timely manner via email. I could communicate with her efficiently. Heather was very welcoming in her office hours going over the lab details, and answering other questions. I would highly recommend her as a Lab instructor again. I enjoyed this lab and the information provided to working on the labs very much. I liked learning about how the Earth came to be. One lab I favored over the others had to be the field notes. I got to visit family on our ranch, and learn all about how the land there came to be. Made me think twice about where I am on the Earth now.

Very communicative and helpful throughout the course!

SPRING 2021 - Lab Teaching Assistant for *Historical Geology* (GEOL 1420)

Very good instructor

This lab was great, it kept me interested enough even though I am not focusing on geology for my major.

Very helpful to the lecture.

Instructor Swienton is a very nice and knowledgeable and makes lab fun. She made the class comfortable to ask questions and she was willing to help you out if you have a hard time with a concept.

FALL 2021 - Lab Teaching Assistant for *Historical Geology* (GEOL 1420)

Heather is easily the best lab instructor I've had at txstate. She was fun, informative and helpful while still providing plenty of opportunity to learn and figure things out for ourselves.

Heather was the best lab instructor I've ever had! She truly changed my perspective for this area of science and actively shared interesting assignments that only further cemented my love for this class. If students ever had trouble with a problem she presented critical thinking strategies to get to the right answer rather than simply giving the correct responses or leaving students to struggle. I look forward to her becoming a professor as she we become a valuable asset for any geological department.

Made lab enjoyable and helped understand course

Amazing lab professor, helped my lab partner and I on a numerous occasions and I always appreciate it, thanks to the lab, I've learned more about different minerals and fossil samples.

The lab instructor was helpful in breaking down the lab instructions, had energy to engage everyone present for lab, and organized the lab material well. Consider slowing down the lectures. They were rushed and it was hard to follow and remember most of what was said and showed. I find that taking a deep breath and releasing that energy back into the earth helps me focus on the present. Thanks for the great semester!

Heather Swinton very nice and patient with students. Would love to see her as a professor here at texas state.

She was a great instructor.

Great lab, great time!

I thought they were super helpful when it came to questions, what I loved that is that she was very fast and responsive to emails which in the end was very helpful.

Heather Swinton is an absolutely excellent lab instructor. I usually leave negative reviews when I feel they are justified but I can find nothing. Excellent member of the txst faculty

SPRING 2022 – Lab Teaching Assistant for *Maps and Mapmaking* (GEO 3411)

I felt as if Heather Swinton was very passionate and helpful throughout this lab coarse. I really enjoyed speaking with her in and outside of class. When the lab began I felt very stressed out about Adobe Illustrator but Heather was very understanding and patient as we were learning the software. I think she is very well organized and felt like I always knew what was going on in the class. She was always available outside of class for extra help if need be! I would recommend this class to anyone especially if they get the chance to take it with Heather. I am not one to ever want to miss or skip class so having a teacher like Heather made this that much more enjoyable and really helped me get through the semester simply because she was that cool to be around. Her instructions were very clear and understandable for each lab and really helped me get better grades. She is very mature and respectable person so she was super awesome to be around! She is going to make an awesome Professor one day!

she is so great

I cannot say enough good things about Heather. I came into this lab with little to no knowledge about the technology we were to be using and struggled with the most basic aspects of it. Heather was understanding and helpful from day one. She answered any question we had and encouraged us to attend office hours or email her about anything we were struggling with. She provided direction and assistance whenever it was needed, not just to me but to every other student in the class. It was obvious she has a passion for teaching and wanted to be sure that we not only completed the work but that we understood what we were doing. I looked forward to attending this lab and would not have done as well or learned as much as I did had it been taught by a different instructor. Heather is the kind of teacher I wish I could have in every class.

Heather was a fantastic lab instructor. She was incredibly helpful when students needed help in the lab room and was always easy to reach through email.

Heather was an excellent instructor. At first she was hesitant about using and teaching illustrator but throughout the semester she really held up and was super helpful and informative.

Extremely organized and detail oriented TA. Lab instructions were never confusing. She is extremely committed to what she does and it shows.

Heather was a very helpful and knowledgeable lab instructor who easily navigated the different skill levels in the course. She communicated clearly, was always prepared, and was eager to help students succeed.

Heather was a great lab instructor. She always made sure the objectives were clear and would be patient if I had any questions. I enjoyed this lab because of her.

Heather is a very good instructor and will make an amazing professor one day. She always showed up to class energetic (sometimes the only one with energy) and showed she was passionate about the subject she was teaching. She was also great about getting back to students when they needed help and even helped me out with another class one time. 5-star review for Heather

I can't think of anything you could improve on. You have all the qualities of an exceptional teacher: knowledgeable, personable, and caring. You're great!

Heather is one of the best TA's I've ever had at Texas state! She is always willing to help students in class and outside of class and is super nice. I like how when she helps she explains what is happening and why so you're still learning. Usually I am very scared to ask for help in classes but after the first lab I never hesitated to ask for help if need be. Heather is a wonderful TA and I genuinely don't have anything she could work on- I thought she was great!

Heather is a phenomenal instructor. She is in-tune with student needs and made herself available at all times for students. I found she was incredibly easy to discuss issues with labs and she always made efforts to make sure students were successful and could comprehend the goals for the week. Her instructions were clear, concise, and easy to follow.

Heather was always extremely helpful and patient with answering any questions. She always came to class with a good attitude and energy, which I appreciated.

SPRING 2023 – Lab Teaching Assistant for *Advanced Cartographic Design* (GEO 5417)

I absolutely love this class and the involvement of both the lab instructor and the students. I always felt included in discussions and that there was help provided with any concerns along the way.

FALL 2022 – Lab Teaching Assistant for *Maps and Mapmaking* (GEO 3411)

Heather was very knowledgeable and a great instructor. She was able to lead and ask questions to students who were having issues, and did not simply provide answers/solutions

Heather was an amazing lab instructor/TA she made everything simple and well explained i'd take her again or a whole class with her THANK YOU!

Heather was amazing. I was really nice having someone like her to help you when you needed her, and you can really tell how much she enjoys this subject and how knowledgeable she is as well which is very helpful.

Honestly was surprised by using Adobe Illustrator, I always have a great time working on ArcGIS Pro.

Heather is so helpful and nice. I was nervous about this lab after being traumatized from the difficulty of my GIS class in the past. But no, I actually had a good time using adobe

I loved the TA Heather but [course instructor name] was hard to understand and did not help her students at all. If anything Heather and the other TA were much more helpful than [she/he] ever was.

Heather Swienton is a top-notch TA. She is highly knowledgeable and communicates effectively. She is personable and has a great sense of humor.

FALL 2023- Instructor of Record for *Maps and Mapmaking* (GEO 3411)

This class was enjoyable but not very interactive.

She did great.

Heather was a great instructor.

SPRING 2024 – Instructor of Record for *Maps and Mapmaking* (GEO 3411)

Professor Swienton is one of if not the best college prof I've had, with her clear communication and upbeat attitude this class quickly became what I would look forward to each Tuesday and Thursday. This class was so good it helped me figure out what I want to do after I graduate. No further comments

Heather is probably the best professor I've had during my entire college experience. She is an amazing teacher and taught the content very well. She brings a great energy to lecture and you can really feel her passion for the subject. I really wish I could take a course with her in the future.

I LOVED Heather, she was such a great instructor. She was super relatable and personable with us, which is refreshing after courses with more tenured professors (though they are still great). Loved the pop quizzes, loved the the syllabus, loved the class.

Overall great course, a slight downside of the course was the lecture speed. Most days, the last 20 minutes of lecture was rushed in order to cover all the content, so it was hard to follow along with the material towards the end of class.

One of my favorite professors! Shes really nice and very passionate about the subject and made effort to get the class excited about the content with fun projects, guest speakers and a general energetic atmosphere. I wish there was more cartography classes because I would take here again. Shes also really accesable of class and her office is really cute too!

Heather was genuinely a pleasure to be a student for. There was a string of absences I had due to illness and she graciously went over content that I had missed with me to help clarify and understand during her office hours. She might be one of the best professors I've had in my academic career and I would gladly recommend her to anyone interested in taking this course in the future.

She was amazing! I would have her as a teacher again if I could.

was a good learning environment. The PowerPoints were effective as well as visually engaging.

FALL 2024 - Instructor of Record for *Maps and Mapmaking* (GEO 3411)

Instructor was amazing! I thoroughly enjoyed this class.

Good at connecting with students and applying learned concepts to the real world.

Heather was a really amazing teacher who made the class very conducive to learning. She was engaging, her lectures were very informative and I looked forward to her class the most out of all my classes this semester.

professor Swienton provided class with great lectures, and presented class in a way that kept it engaging. Tests were consistent with the material taught. Material was also taught without the need for a textbook which is always a positive. Overall, Professor Swienton is really good at teaching, and should continue teaching this class. .

Heather was awesome

SPRING 2025 - Instructor of Record for *Maps and Mapmaking* (GEO 3411)

Overall, this class was a great one to take and i enjoyed it and also learned a solid chunk of information that will stay with me for the rest of my life. If there was any complaint I would have it would be that lectures tended to feel just a little bit to packed full and it made taking notes a bit of a challenge sometimes due to the speed we were going at. Still that was a rather rare occurrence so I wouldn't say it was that big ofd an issue.

great job, loved this class :)

Heather is amazing! Her teaching style is conducive both to learning and enjoyability. She makes the content interesting and engaging, while maintaining an atmosphere of both respect and camaraderie. Preparing for tests and quizzes requires studying as they should, but the content expected is clear and the time needed is entirely reasonable.

Great class, loved everything about it and the format!

not a fan of the exam format

You did awesome! Loved all the maps you showed in class. Also, if you wanted another way to cushion our grades, you could make the in-class "quizzes" worth one point each and it could be like another attendance point for showing up and participating. This is just an idea, and you wouldn't have to change the way you do the quizzes or how you grade them. Personally, I liked the class just the way it is, and I think you don't have to change anything to make another awesome class.

Thank you Heather for teaching a well-organized, interesting, and informative class on cartography. She is an engaging instructor and obviously cares about the material. She provided interesting examples and interactive learning methods, while still remaining rooted in the lecture material.

Amazing Instructor and a good course.

i love her give her a raise