

Summary of Teaching Evaluations for Jennifer Hoffman
Department of Astronomy, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Spring 2000

Jennifer has taught four semesters in the Astronomy Department. Her numerical evaluation scores are listed below, along with selected student comments from each course. All scores are on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the best. Her scores are consistently high and have been improving over time.

Jennifer taught one section of Astronomy 114, the introductory solar-system astronomy lab course, in each of two separate semesters. Since these classes were small (24 students each), we have averaged her evaluation scores from the two semesters and combined the student comments. Since there were no TA's *per se* for this course, we used the standard instructor evaluation form.

Astronomy 114, Fall 1998 and Fall 1999

<u>Question</u>	<u>Score out of 5</u>
How do you rate the instructor's ability to communicate the material?	4.16
To what extent did the instructor make the material interesting and stimulate your thinking?	3.93
Was the instructor usually prepared and on time?	4.62
If you met with the instructor outside of class, how did you feel about the help you received?	4.62
How do you rate the instructor's overall performance as a teacher?	4.30
	Mean 4.33

Student Comments

"Did a great job of answering students' questions."

"Jennifer was an enjoyable TA. Very helpful and willing to answer questions. Good at explaining concepts. Great TA!"

"TA was great. She was very helpful. I really like her. She made this class enjoyable. I learned more in this class than in Astro 104 [the accompanying lecture course]."

Jennifer was the TA for the following two courses, which used the standard lecture/discussion format. Both courses are introductory courses for non-majors; Astronomy 104 is a solar system astronomy course, while Astronomy 100 is a general astronomy course. These questions are from the TA evaluation form.

Astronomy 104, Spring 1998

<u>Question</u>	<u>Score out of 5</u>
Rate your TA's:	
Understanding of the material and ability to communicate it	4.41
Getting the class interested and involved in discussion of the material	4.00
Covering the important topics evenly (and not spending the whole hour on one minor point)	3.76
Scheduling office hours and being there	4.26
Willingness to help with individual student problems	4.25
Overall performance as a Teaching Assistant	4.02
	Mean 4.11

Student Comments

“Jennifer is an excellent TA—interesting, organized, and helpful.”

“Jennifer was always well prepared and put in a lot of effort by sending us all weekly memos so we knew what was going on.”

“Jennifer seems to know a lot and is enthusiastic.”

“Jennifer is a great TA. She is always very helpful with questions and concerns and makes discussion section really interesting and productive.”

“The interaction in this class was excellent! This is only because it was fostered by the Prof. and TA. Very good job!”

In the case of Astronomy 100, the actual evaluation forms are in the possession of the professor, so the student comments are unavailable; our department does not keep copies of these forms. However, Jennifer supplied us with the informal mid-semester evaluations she conducted in this class; the listed comments are taken from responses to the question “How do you feel about my approachability, enthusiasm, attitude toward and interaction with students, knowledge and presentation of the subject matter, etc.?”

Astronomy 100, Fall 1995

<u>Question</u>	<u>Score out of 5</u>
Rate your TA's:	
Understanding of the material and ability to communicate it	3.43
Getting the class interested and involved in discussion of the material	3.30
Covering the important topics evenly (and not spending the whole hour on one minor point)	3.48
Scheduling office hours and being there	4.19
Willingness to help with individual student problems	4.13
Overall performance as a Teaching Assistant	3.68
	Mean 3.69

Student Comments

“Your attitude is friendly and enthusiastic... The subject material is presented in a way that is easy to understand for me, and I find the class interesting overall as a result.”

“I like the fact that you use email to its fullest extent... Since you use it often, I can ask a question and get an answer.”

“I think using models in class helps and makes me see things clearly.”

“Great attitude and personality and takes the time to listen and understand what the students have to say as well as teach.”

“You seem that you enjoy what you are doing and that makes it much more interesting to come to class.”

“You seem to be very nice and totally enthralled by astronomy. I don't feel afraid to ask you questions.”