

# Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

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## Examples of Student Ratings and Comments

### Introductory Physics I: PHY 117-02, Smith College, Spring 2022

#### Course description

The concepts and relations (force, energy and momentum) describing physical interactions and the changes in motion they produce, along with applications to the physical and life sciences. Lab experiments, lectures and problem-solving activities are interwoven into each class. Discussion sections focus on building skills with mathematics, data analysis and problem solving.

#### Selected student ratings

Student ratings from Smith College are scored from strongly disagree (1.0) to strongly agree (4.0).

Criteria	Mean score	Dept. mean	College mean
The instructor created an effective learning environment	4.00	3.68	3.65
The course contributed significantly to my education	3.71	3.53	3.56

#### Selected student comments

“I learned about how to see the world in terms of physics (I’ve joked with my friends about it to the point they’ve become annoyed) and how to take a step back in problem solving to see the bigger picture. I also now understand how to relate different aspects about things in order to analyze if what I solved for is correct.”

“Casey was really good at breaking down complex problems into smaller more simple manageable pieces, which really helps for new people learning. I also LOVE that she implemented some code into our learning.”

“Professor Berger was very helpful and patient. I enjoyed all of her lectures. I also did like working on the whiteboards. She was very quick to respond to emails and questions and I really did see the effort she put into her job. She really cared about teaching, which made the feedback on assignments very thoughtful and helpful.”

“I thought the jigsaw problems were a great way to try more complex problems, and teaching them meant I really had to understand the process. Even though I never ended up retaking anything, I appreciated the multitude of opportunities to earn credit back. The structure took away some stress and supported the idea of a growth mindset.”

“Take this class! Especially with Casey! I really didn’t know how I was going to handle a class like physics, I didn’t initially believe I’d be capable. As you might be able to tell, that clearly was not the case. Everyone’s capable, even if you have to put in more work and time than other people, you will get there! Casey’s growth mindset reminds you that you don’t need to get it right on your first try. If you put in the effort, Casey will too and it’ll feel so gratifying to understand all of the concepts in PHY 117.”

## Introductory Physics I: PHY 117-02, Smith College, Fall 2021

### Course description

The concepts and relations (force, energy and momentum) describing physical interactions and the changes in motion they produce, along with applications to the physical and life sciences. Lab experiments, lectures and problem-solving activities are interwoven into each class. Discussion sections focus on building skills with mathematics, data analysis and problem solving.

### Selected student ratings

Student ratings from Smith College are scored from strongly disagree (1.0) to strongly agree (4.0).

Criteria	Mean score	Dept. mean	College mean
The instructor created an effective learning environment	3.83	3.32	3.66
The course contributed significantly to my education	3.67	3.27	3.55

### Selected student comments

“If you are considering taking this class, I would encourage you to take it. I thought it was well organized and presented the material well. Additionally, I would recommend taking it with Casey Berger, as she did a terrific job of teaching physics in a way that was relevant and engaging. I would recommend making study sheets for each exam to help make sure you understand the topics as you go, as they are cumulative.”

“Take advantage of Casey’s office hours, she is very helpful and willing to spend time with you if you are struggling in class.”

“I felt like I came in with a lot of anxiety and self doubt, and Casey helped me feel more comfortable with being uncomfortable with the material, managing the stress, and asking for help.”

“I absolutely loved your teaching method. I found that you explained things in a very helpful way that wasn’t overly complicated or filled with jargon. I appreciated how much you understood the complexity of the material and still presented it in a way that helped us feel like we could solve it.”

“I really love your patience when explaining concepts and going through questions with us. I also like how you are willing to answer all our questions.”

“Casey is certainly the best teacher I’ve had at Smith College or maybe anywhere. She is very available and understanding and always makes a point to not leave anyone behind who is really trying to learn and improve.”

## From Laboratory to Layperson: IDST 89-002, UNC Chapel Hill, Spring 2018

### Course description

Scientific literacy is a critical cornerstone for growth and progress in economic, intellectual, and policy matters worldwide. This course seeks to provide students of all academic backgrounds and interests with an understanding of scientific literacy by exploring how science is done, communicated, and understood by the public. Science is a process that is applied in many forms. The course therefore takes an interdisciplinary approach that integrates basic, observational, and applied sciences, drawn from the course instructors’ respective disciplines of exercise and sport science, nutritional epidemiology, and computational physics. Students will explore foundational concepts relating to logic, reasoning, communication, and critical evaluation of evidence, which will provide them with skills that apply to a variety of fields and concepts.

**Selected student ratings**

Student ratings from UNC are scored from strongly disagree (1.0) to strongly agree (5.0).

Criteria	Mean score	Standard Deviation
The instructor recognized and was sensitive to individual differences in the abilities of students	5.0	0.0
The instructor interacted positively with first year students.	5.0	0.0
This FYS included well planned, effective in-class activities.	4.0	0.82
This FYS encouraged me to work with my classmates and learn from them.	4.5	0.58
This FYS promoted my critical thinking about issues raised in the course.	4.75	0.5

**Selected student comments**

“Casey is great! She is extremely kind and caring, and obviously very intelligent. I learned a great deal from her.”