

Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

**Summary of Course Evaluations (Students)**

Courses are listed in chronological order within course role, with newest courses first (e.g., I was Instructor of Record in Statistical Techniques in Spring 2021 and in Social Psychology in Fall 2019).

***Selected Quantitative Evaluations***

\* = course was graduate level course

Overall Instructor Rating

Course Role	Course	Scale	Course Mean	Department Mean	University Mean
<b><i>Instructor of Record</i></b>	Statistical Techniques	1 (Very Poor) – 5 (Very Good)	4.50	4.40	N/A
	Social Psychology	1 (Very Poor) – 5 (Very Good)	4.30	4.40	N/A
<b><i>Associate/Lab Instructor</i></b>	Statistical Techniques	1 (Very Poor) – 5 (Very Good)	4.40	4.40	N/A
	Stats & Methods 1*	0 (Poor) – 4 (Excellent)	3.33	3.14	3.14

Instructor emphasized student learning and Development

Course Role	Course	Scale	Course Mean	Department Mean	University Mean
<b><i>Instructor of Record</i></b>	Statistical Techniques	1 (Not at all) – 4 (A Lot)	3.70	3.60	3.60
	Social Psychology	1 (Not at all) – 4 (A Lot)	3.60	3.60	3.60
<b><i>Associate/Lab Instructor</i></b>	Statistical Techniques	1 (Not at all) – 4 (A Lot)	3.70	3.60	3.60
	Stats & Methods 1*	0 (Strongly Disagree) – 4 (Strongly Agree)	3.83	3.50	3.42

Instructor made students feel welcome in seeking help/advice in or outside of class.

Course Role	Course	Scale	Course Mean	Department Mean	University Mean
<b><i>Instructor of Record</i></b>	Statistical Techniques	1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree)	4.70	4.40	N/A
	Social Psychology	1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree)	4.60	4.50	N/A
<b><i>Associate/Lab Instructor</i></b>	Statistical Techniques	1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree)	4.46	4.50	N/A
	Stats & Methods 1*	0 (Strongly Disagree) – 4 (Strongly Agree)	3.92	3.67	3.56

## *Selected Student Comments*

### **Instructor of Record:**

#### *Social Psychology*

“Tessa is very energetic about social psychology and teaches very well! Social Psychology was one of my favorite classes this semester. Tessa genuinely tried to make sure that those who are confused get help and that the class is well paced for everyone. I would definitely recommend to take a class with Tessa!”

“The professor was very approachable and was clearly there to help her students in any way she could. Having a professor who you know wants you to succeed in the class is reassuring and very encouraging and made me want to do better in her class.”

“I liked how class participation was required (tophat) and the lectures were informative so I really made the most of my time in class. I also like the way the tests are written – they seem designed not to trick us, but they also made sure I knew all the material thoroughly. Whereas in some classes even after knowing all the material, the tests are tricky. I also really appreciated that there were so many quizzes and assignments so that the whole course isn’t just a test.”

#### *Statistical Techniques*

“I liked most that [Tessa] was always energetic about the material and finding fun ways to engage us as students even with something like the harry potter themed canvas page, I really enjoyed having her as a professor and would absolutely recommend this course with her to anyone”

“I loved Tessa!!! She was such a good instructor and made it genuinely fun to learn about a subject that is not necessarily easy or enjoyable. She was always passionate and seemed to care about what she was doing. The Canvas page provided plenty of opportunities to learn and review and Tessa was always helpful and quick to response to questions. One of my fave classes at IU so far.”

“The presentation style and how the material was explained/taught were very fun, interactive, and super great for learning/referencing. (I’m definitely keeping my notes for this course for future reference.) As an instructor, I appreciated how easy it was to ask for help and how much inter-student communication you encouraged. The whole course was fun and it made me feel smart or like I was actively getting better all of the lessons. I can’t believe “I’m going to miss statistics” is a sentence I will actually be saying.”

### **Associate/Lab Instructor:**

#### *Stats & Methods I\**

“Strength: the instructor’s in-depth knowledge and enthusiasm for statistics. Weaknesses: loves stats a little too much.”

“I think the instructor took mid-semester feedback really well and improved tremendously. The games/quiz in prep for stats exams were helpful and the SPSS notes slides were useful for completing homework.”

“PowerPoints were easy to follow and data used in class was fun to work with. Tessa was always willing to answer questions and make info more clear. As a first time SPSS user this class made learning the software easy.”

#### *Statistical Techniques*

“Tessa was amazing in that she cared for all of the students in her class. She simplified the material enough for everyone to understand even the most confusing concepts. Most importantly, one of the exam questions asked how we were doing to which I jokingly during a stressful week wrote ‘not well’ and she took time out of her day to send me a lovely email asking if I needed to talk or anything. No instructor would go out of their way like this, or at least I have yet to meet one, so all I can say is that she would make an amazing professor one day! She is a wonderful human”

“Tessa was honestly the best AI I’ve ever had. She was so engaged, energetic, and she always graded the lab follow-ups within the day they were submitted. She was very respectful and helpful when my group got lost or had a question. I had a great time, and I’m so thankful I was luck enough to have such a great AI!”

“Tessa was very enthusiastic with the subject. I arrived every Monday morning for her 8am lab section. She was always in a good mood also. She also was an amazing guest speaker for the lecture portion of this class. (She was amazing!)”

### **Teaching Observation Evaluation**

The following excerpts come from a teaching evaluation conducted by Dr. Richard Hullinger, Lecturer and Director of Pedagogy at Indiana University Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences. The evaluation was given upon observing a guest lecture on correlations that was given on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in a course of approximately 190 students.

“I’m writing to provide my personal assessment after observing Tessa Benson-Greenwald teaching a lecture in my PSY-K300, Statistical Techniques, class.

**Background:** Tessa served as a lab instructor for my K300 course during the Spring 2019 semester. Her desire to gain teaching experience and receive feedback on her teaching led her to volunteer to teach one of the K300 lectures. We worked together to find a suitable date and topic and then she prepped her own lecture using my notes and lecture slides as her starting point. I offer this opportunity to all my graduate AIs, but this is only the third time in the past five years (more than 60 graduate instructors) that a student has volunteered. Her willingness to take on this challenge speaks volumes about her dedication and desire to be an excellent instructor.

### **Successful elements of lecture:**

Overall, Tessa’s pacing and presentation were excellent. It was clear that she was slightly nervous, which is a normal reaction for any instructor the first time they are in front of a large classroom. But unlike most new instructors, she kept her nerves well controlled and did not speed through the material. She worked slowly and methodically through the day’s content. She began with a review of ANOVAs, which were discussed in the previous lecture. Importantly, this review did not take the form of Tessa just explaining what we’d done while the students listened passively. She kept the review conversational, asking the students questions, either directly or with clickers, and smartly performing a think-pair-share exercise when it was clear from a clicker question that the class was divided on the right answer to one of the conceptual questions. Many instructors use this style in small classes, but lapse into a monolog in a larger classroom. Tessa did a fantastic job of treating the class as a dialog and keeping the entire class involved and focused. This engaged and active lecturing style continued into the presentation of correlational analysis, the new material for the day. She punctuated her entire lesson with questions for the students. Some of the questions were designed to check their understanding of what they had just been taught, some were designed to push them conceptually. She never spoke for more than a few minutes without posing a question to the class. Importantly, her questions were focused and thought provoking, not the typical “does any have any questions?” question that does little to engage students or foster learning. When students’ answers were muddled, she used that feedback to step back and approach the material again from a different angle to make sure the concepts were clear. Students obviously felt comfortable with her as an instructor. They were willing to raise their hands when something was not clear and Tessa did a great job of encouraging that behavior by affirming the students as she answered their questions. I’ve performed many peer evaluations of teaching and it is rare to see that kind of rapport with students in a large classroom, even among seasoned instructors.

Tessa also chose excellent examples and anecdotes to keep the material light and fun. For better or for worse, effective teaching in a large classroom requires a bit entertainment and showmanship to keep the students focused, and Tessa certainly brought that to the class. She talked about student loans, pirates, Nicolas Cage, and sharks. From the back of the room I had the unique opportunity to survey student behaviors and computer screens. The vast majority of Tessa’s students were following her and staying on task in the lecture.

### **Summary**

Overall, I believe Tessa head and shoulders above most of the graduate students in our department when it comes to teaching ability and initiative. The lecture she gave on correlations is one of my favorite lectures of the statistics course, and yet I was not reluctant to turn that material over to her. I think she did an outstanding job and I would welcome her back into my classroom at any time. I am excited about Tessa’s promise as an instructor and I have no doubt that her future students are going to appreciate her skills and benefit from her teaching.”