

GLG 101D Intro to Geology I Fall '05 (~200 students)
Hervig/**Toke**; SLN #26924
TTH 9:15-10:30 a.m. PSF 166

Teaching Assistant: **Nathan Toke**

In this document I separate the positive and constructive comments and provide an explanation to each set of comments in relation to my philosophy as a teacher and the specific issues brought up in each category:

Responses to the Positive Comments: I was flattered by so many positive comments and encouragement to teach more. Many of these comments do highlight things that I emphasize as a teacher.

1) *Many students commented that I graded very quickly:* I strive to grade material quickly and provide constructive feedback in a timely manner so that students will be able to recall the material that was graded.

2) *Some commented on my enthusiasm:* I try to convey my enthusiasm for subjects that are very exciting for me. I find that this engages students and keeps them interested.

3) *Some thought I did such a good job with my lecture(s) I should have been teaching the entire class:* They were probably so impressed because I lectured on earthquakes/faults/active tectonics which is one of my areas of expertise and something I can get very enthusiastic for and am extremely knowledgeable about. Thus they probably felt as though there was additional energy in the classroom when I lectured. However, Professor Hervig did an excellent job too!

4) *Students generally found me to be very knowledgeable:* This is because I have been trained as a geologist since my first year of undergrad so I am knowledgeable.

5) *Students commented that I was available and very helpful:* This is something that I strive to do. I think that teaching extends beyond the lecture/classroom and often more learning can be conveyed in casual conversations. So I encourage office visits, email communications, and other interactions outside of lecture.

Specific Comments:

- Not in the lab, but the TA for the class lecture is very knowledgeable and caring. I would highly recommend him to friends if he ever taught a class.
- Great job! Thanks for all, great lecture.
- Nate is very helpful and always ready to answer questions. He is also a great lecturer.
- Good guy, excitement about volcanoes is contagious.
- Grades material quickly... Thanks! Always held study sessions before exams.
- Very helpful at review sessions.
- The TA is very knowledgeable in this subject
- Very helpful during and outside of class
- Good with help, usually available
- Very helpful and knows all of the material very well. Often available for help.
- Helpful the few times I contacted him. Very prompt with emails.
- Helpful when I have needed him.

- Very cute!
- Understands the material and is helpful to students needs.
- Extremely helpful when asked for help, answered all questions.
- The study sessions are a great help.
- Your review sessions were great! Enjoyed your lectures about earthquakes as well.
- Only contact I had with Nathan was when he taught one of the lectures. Not quite up to professor Hervig, but quite good for a TA. One of the best TA lectures I've heard. From what I understand help was easily available to those that wanted it outside of class.
- One lecture given – was very knowledgeable.
- Nathan is nice and makes himself available to speak to when needed. He is still learning and over time his ability to explain things thoroughly will get stronger.
- Very awesome!! Teach more classes.
- Very good! He should have been teaching the lectures based upon the times he filled in.
- Nathan is very helpful and knowledgeable. He should be teaching the course.
- Very helpful with questions about homework and earthquakes.

Responses to the Constructive Comments: I value the criticism I received and believe the students have helped me by providing them.

1) *Needs to work on public speaking skills*: The students are correct that when I lectured I spoke too quickly. I believe I tried to convey too much information in my lectures because I was so enthusiastic and wanted to share everything I know about faults/earthquakes. However, some of this material should have been saved for an upper level discussion class. That being said, I recognize that I need to work on my lecturing skills. Slowing down the pace helps student follow along, leaves more room for questions and prevents me from “trailing off”.

2) *Seemed unprepared for review sessions*: I think that some student misinterpreted my review session strategy. In review sessions I like to have students lead the discussion. At this point (prior to the exam) they know quite a lot and during the review sessions I try to build up their confidence. My strategy is to have them lead with questions and then ask the other students if anyone knows how to start answering the question. More often than not other students do know the answer and this builds confidence for those students. I then use their responses to expand from and continue the conversation. Thus it may appear that I defer to the other students for answers and this is true. Additionally, I do not prepare a lecture or list of exactly what will be on the exam because I feel that devalues the other material taught and don't want that to happen.

Specific Comments:

- Needs to work on public speaking skills when it is a subject he is less familiar with. He seems to struggle in that area. Did a really good job in the volcano lecture.

- When he lectures he needs to remember we are in GLG101 and we don't know all the terms.
- Good helpful and available. When taught lesson was very quick, little unclear on information that we needed. Spoke quickly/mumbled.
- During lecture talks too fast to be able to follow
- Really knows his overall knowledge, but seemed unprepared for pre-exam reviews. Very prompt with emails and extremely willing to help.
- I went to one of your study sessions and it seemed like you really weren't clear as what we were really learning. Students were answering questions for you and you seemed very nervous. You didn't help at all.
- Nathan- When you did your lecture you ran through it too fast. I'm sure you were nervous, but slow down and don't put so much on powerpoint. Too much to read when you go too fast.