

# Application Summary

## Competition Details

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<b>Competition Title:</b>	2019 CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award
<b>Category:</b>	Institutional Awards - CTL
<b>Award Cycle:</b>	2019
<b>Submission Deadline:</b>	02/01/2019 at 6:00 PM

## Application Information

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<b>Submitted By:</b>	Brian Hammer
<b>Application ID:</b>	3052
<b>Application Title:</b>	2019 CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award nomination packet
<b>Date Submitted:</b>	02/01/2019 at 12:31 PM

## Personal Details

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<b>Applicant First Name:</b>	Joe
<b>Applicant Last Name:</b>	Lachance
<b>Email Address:</b>	joseph.lachance@biology.gatech.edu
<b>Phone Number:</b>	(404) 894-0794

### Primary School or Department

Biological Sciences

<b>Primary Appointment Title:</b>	Assistant Professor
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## Application Details

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### Proposal Title

2019 CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award nomination packet



**School of Biological Sciences**  
Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0230 USA  
Phone: (404) 385.7701  
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January 31, 2019

**RE: Joe LaChance – CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award nomination**

It is my pleasure to nominate Dr. Joe Lachance, an Assistant Professor in the School of Biological Sciences, for the CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award.

Joe is a unique teacher and mentor of students outside and in the classroom. His informal conversational style and friendly demeanor put his students at ease and create an environment where students are respected, questions are encouraged, and learning occurs. His innovative and practical course activities prepare his mentees for success beyond the doors of Georgia Tech.

Joe is a Class of 1969 Teaching Fellow whose deploys a diverse array of strategies in his classroom, by complementing white board instruction with topical case studies and lively demonstrations. He also delights in developing and using fun, innovative hands-on activities in class. For example, students learn game theory by competing in a contest as either a Hawk or Dove in BIOL 2400 Mathematical Models in Biology. In BIOL 3600 Evolutionary Biology, students review the semester's material with an end of the semester festival of films they create themselves. Testimonials speak of Joe as a teacher who genuinely cares about each student, makes time to listen, and adjusts instruction for diverse needs. Joe Lachance is unabashedly passionate about teaching, and students notice.

Joe is also a talented genomic researcher who is particularly adept at articulating how, and showing why, the methods presented and used in the classroom and lab are relevant to the world around us. His obsession with this connection between campus and the broader community erupts in his courses where classroom activities apply concepts in class to "real world" and even "out of this world" challenges. Students in Joe's BIOL 2400 course develop a math model to determine the genetic diversity needed by founders to establish a successful human population on a new planet. Like the diverse assemblage of students in his own research group, those in all of his courses are called upon to harness real-world "big data" to approach modern problems. The effort to keep his courses relevant and the content fresh is appreciated by his students and apparent by his impressive CIOS scores.

Finally, Joe's global view extends beyond campus to a varied set of outreach activities. He communicates with and trains aspiring researchers in the FOCUS program, at Clark Atlanta, and as a member of a consortium called MADCaP, which seeks to address high cancer rates in African populations. Likewise, his own lab is comprised of a diverse group of talented young researchers thriving, in part, due to Joe's attention to the unique talents of each mentee. Joe is truly passionate about his opportunities to teach, this is not simply a job to him.

The CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Award is given to recognize excellent teaching and educational innovation – Joe Lachance is an excellent choice.

Sincerely,



J. Todd Strelman  
Professor & Chair  
School of Biological Sciences  
Petit Institute for Bioengineering and Bioscience  
Georgia Institute of Technology

## **Reflective statement on teaching**

My goal in teaching is to foster independence and critical thinking in students. These skills will last long after classes end and they will serve students well into the future. In addition, these skills are central to understanding science as a process rather than just a collection of facts. My teaching is motivated by a desire to share my enthusiasm for population genetics and other topics in biology. As a Class of 1969 Teaching Fellow at Georgia Tech I have benefitted greatly from discussions with my peers, and I am continually refining how I approach teaching.

## **Integrative, hands-on learning**

My primary role as a teacher is to facilitate student learning. Because different students have different learning styles, I make an effort to make accommodate multiple perspectives. Often this involves integrating lectures with discussions of the primary literature and in-class activities. An important aspect of my teaching involves active learning exercises using computer simulations or analysis of real-world genetic data. These empirical datasets are sometimes messy and complex, and this requires students to apply critical thinking when generating results, as opposed to just applying techniques by rote.

## **Examples of in-class activities**

### Mathematical Models in Biology - BIOL 2400

One way that I have incorporated active learning into the classroom was by organizing an iterated hawk-dove tournament. Each round of this game involved pairs of students choosing either to adopt either an aggressive “hawk” strategy or adopt a cooperative “dove” strategy. Student scores were then increased or decreased depending on which pair of strategies were chosen. Over the course of the tournament students adapted to the behaviors of their classmates. Not only was this a fun exercise, but the evolving strategies that arose were evidence that every student had gained a deep understanding of game theory.

### Human Evolutionary Genetics - BIOL 4803/8803

Many of my in-class activities involve analysis to big data. One example of this was an exercise that required students to integrate genetic information from multiple online databases. First, students found genetic variants that are associated with different diseases using the NHGRI-EBI GWAS Catalog. Next, students used the UCSC

Genome Browser to obtain functional annotations for each disease-associated locus. Finally, the Geography of Genetic Variants browser was used to determine which disease-associated loci have large allele frequency differences across human populations, i.e. disease loci that are potential targets of natural selection. By combining information from each of these databases students were able to generate novel hypotheses about the evolution of hereditary disease risks. Many students went on to use these online databases in their own undergraduate and graduate research.

### Introduction to Evolutionary Biology - BIOL 3600

The Society for the Study of Evolution holds an annual film festival as part of its yearly conference. Using this as a template, I organized an evolution-themed festival at Georgia Tech for students in BIOL 3600. Over the course of the semester students produced short videos as group projects to illustrate different concepts in evolutionary biology. During the penultimate class of the semester we held a film festival (complete with popcorn, ballots, and a small trophy for the top film). This activity was a chance for students to showcase their knowledge and creativity, and it also served as an alternative way to review material that would appear on the final exam.

### **Respect for students**

I believe that it is important to foster an environment where students are comfortable expressing their solutions to scientific problems. One way I do this is by keeping my classes as conversational as possible. By fostering a comfortable environment, a good balance can be struck between brainstorming sessions and critical appraisal where ideas must be vigorously defended.

### **Mentorship outside the classroom**

An important aspect of my teaching and mentoring involves being accessible to students. These one-on-one and group meetings maximize learning and they are a great way for introverted students to open up. It is clear that a “one size fits all approach” to mentoring is suboptimal. Instead, I make every effort to consider the personality and goals of each individual trainee. I also believe that engagement with the larger scientific community is an important aspect of training. With this in mind, I encourage students to attend scientific meetings and workshops, and I set aside enough resources for this to be a common occurrence. It has been a great pleasure to see members of my research group present their work in oral presentations at major international conferences. Ultimately, my role is to facilitate the intellectual and professional growth of each these students.

## Illustrations of teaching excellence and impact on student learning

My commitment to teaching excellence extends from the classroom to mentorship of students in my research lab. Representative comments from students are shown below. These comments reveal my enthusiasm and respect for students, as well as the impact of my teaching on student learning.

### Student CIOS statements

#### Mathematical Models in Biology - BIOL 2400

Spring 2015 (24 students) - CIOS overall effectiveness: 4.6

Spring 2016 (21 students) - CIOS overall effectiveness: 4.9

- *The lectures were done quite well. Having us follow along and answer questions on the problems we were working really facilitated learning.*
- *He was always so excited for class and was there to offer help 24/7.*
- *Dr. Lachance is very approachable and brings a lot of life to the course. It helped the course to be very fun.*
- *Really good intro to modeling in biology, the professors did a good job of connecting the models to topics students care about.*

#### Human Evolutionary Genomics - BIOL 4803/8803

Spring 2016 (16 students) - CIOS overall effectiveness: 5 (undergrad), 4.8 (grad)

Fall 2017 (26 students) - CIOS overall effectiveness: 5 (undergrad), 4.97 (grad)

- *The instructor's concern for every student gaining the most from the class. He would take out time with each student during lab and he was able to deal with the various skill levels in the class. I was impressed!*
- *He was very enthusiastic and willing to help/answer questions. You couldn't ask for a teacher to be more into teaching, which is refreshing being at Tech.*
- *He is very engaging and excited about the material. He's great at explaining complex concepts.*
- *I learned a lot from the in-class exercises. It was really helpful to actually work with data.*

#### Introduction to Evolutionary Biology - BIOL 3600

Spring 2018 (49 students) - CIOS overall effectiveness: 4.7

- *I've never had a more enthusiastic professor in my life! Dr. Lachance truly made me eager to learn more about evolution, and he was so passionate about the subjects he was teaching. He tied in real-life examples and cutting-edge research to apply these situations to our daily lives.*
- *His enthusiasm for the course was inspiring and I really feel like I learned a lot from his lectures.*

## Student success beyond the classroom

An important part of my teaching includes mentoring undergraduate and graduate students in population genetics and computational biology. Quantitative skills gained by working in my lab have helped place students into PhD programs in biomedical informatics, public health positions at the CDC, and private sector jobs as data scientists. Notable achievements by these trainees include the following:

### Undergraduate students - 12 total

- Kane Patel (2015-2016): 2<sup>nd</sup> author of a paper in *Genome Biology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> place poster award at the Georgia Tech research symposium, PURA award, ORISE fellow at the CDC
- Taylor Cooper (2015-2017): 2<sup>nd</sup> author of a paper in *Human Biology*, Cherry L. Emerson Research award, School of Biological Sciences Fast-Track to Research Scholar, SSE/BEACON Undergraduate Diversity in Evolution travel award

### Masters students - 8 total

- Binbin Huang (2015-2016): Bioinformatics RA award (2x), Placed into a PhD program at Michigan State University
- Andrew Teng (2015-2016): 3<sup>rd</sup> author of a paper in *Genome Biology*, 4<sup>th</sup> author of a paper in *Cancer Research*, NIH/NCI summer internship in genetic epidemiology, bioinformatics RA award (2x), placed into a PhD program at the University of Washington

### Doctoral students - 3 total

- Melanie Quiver (2015-present): NIH T32 training grant fellowship, 2<sup>nd</sup> place poster award at AISES 2015, Jackson Lab short course travel award, Summer Internship for Indigenous Peoples in Genomics fellowship, American Indian Education Fund fellowship, Reviewer's Choice award at ASHG 2017
- Michelle Kim (2015-2016): 1<sup>st</sup> author of a *Genome Biology* paper, selected to give a talk at SMBE 2017, session chair at ASHG 2018

## Impact and service

I have also taught at the Summer Institute for Statistical Genetics, where my teaching scores were among the top 10% of all instructors. My outreach activities have been driven by the principle that education must be inclusive. This includes being a guest speaker for "Your Health Connection" on Clark Atlanta University's radio station and hosting multiple events for students who are from under-represented minorities as part of the FOCUS program. I have also trained researchers from Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa in bioinformatics and population genetics as a member of the MADCaP Network (<https://www.madcapnetwork.org>).



1/27/2019

Selection Committee  
CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award  
Center for Teaching and Learning  
Georgia Institute of Technology

Dear Selection Committee,

I am extremely pleased to write a letter of support for Dr. Joseph Lachance, regarding his nomination for CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award, 2019. I have known Dr. Lachance since he joined our department and became one of the faculties with the School of Biological Sciences. I have worked closely with Dr. Lachance in developing BIOL 3600/6600 Evolution course that we taught together in spring 2018. This class is required for all undergraduate biology majors, while some non-majors and also graduate students choose to take this class too.

Dr. Lachance is unquestionably one excellent research scientist with broad intellectual interests and truly admirable intellectual abilities. He has shown equal passion for teaching and made many contributions to the overall educational quality of our School. One unifying theme in his teaching has been integration of in-class activities with other forms of teachings. This includes our evolution-themed film festival (BIOL 3600), organization a tournament where students competed against each other in simple hawk-dove games for candy prizes (BIOL 2400), and weekly chances to play with real data in his human evolutionary genomics class (BIOL 4803/8803). Dr. Lachance always made effort to keep his students engaged and to promote their learning. In our Evolution class last spring he demonstrated the best teaching practices and shared his enthusiasm for research with all of our students. He always maintained student's interest in the new and challenging material, with interactive classroom practices and interesting problem solving activities. Dr. Lachance has shown wonderful results, with professionalism, dedication and care for his students. In addition both his graduate students and undergraduate students frequently praise his mentorship and teaching skills.

In conclusion, Dr. Lachance has shown great teaching qualities in both undergraduate and graduate teaching as well as in mentoring his research students and collaborators. I strongly believe that Dr. Lachance is a truly outstanding junior faculty at Georgia Tech and I would like to offer my best recommendation for this prestigious award. If you should have any further questions on this wonderful candidate, please do not hesitate to call me at (404) 385-6885 or contact me via email: [mirjana.brockett@biology.gatech.edu](mailto:mirjana.brockett@biology.gatech.edu)  
Thank you.

Sincerely,

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*Mirjana M. Brockett*

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Dr. Mirjana Milosevic Brockett

Senior Academic Professional  
School of Biological Sciences  
Georgia Institute of Technology

January 25, 2019

Dear CETL Teaching Award Review Committee,

I highly nominate Dr. Joe Lachance for the CETL Teaching Award as he has proved himself an immense resource to me both as a student and as a scientist. I met Dr. Lachance in the Spring of 2017 as an undergraduate student in his Biological Math Models course, and have since graduated into the School of Biological Science's PhD program, where Lachance continues to be a fundamental character in my studies. I would like to take any opportunity to celebrate the work Dr. Lachance does to inspire students across the School of Biological Sciences while he maintains a rigorous scholarship in population genetic modeling.

As the Biological Sciences is generally bifurcated between the field sciences and modeling sciences, I did not have much contact with Dr. Lachance before I enrolled in Lachance's Math Models course (BIOL2400) in my last semester as an undergraduate at GT. Lachance turned what is a generally an intimidating course for biology students into an accessible and enjoyable course that left students with some tools to jump into one of the fastest growing fields of biology. Though I've always been more interested in field research, this course showed me how valuable modeling can be across biological systems and how modeling can be used in tandem with experimental data to create more compelling argument. Lachance went above and beyond what most would have done for this course as he really believes in his students and in the importance of having some foundation in modeling.

In a department that can feel cold and insular, Lachance has made himself widely available for students regardless of background or issue. Lachance opens his lab to the broader community every February for Darwin's birthday party, where he hosts a community gathering to eat peppered moth cookies and discuss the many ways Darwin continues to impact our lives.

Dr. Lachance continues to strongly impact my life as a graduate student: Dr. Lachance is an important resource for staying up to date in technology and anticipate technology needs on a 3-5 year period as graduate students prepare themselves for post-graduation. Dr. Lachance makes himself available for students to bounce ideas off of and to plan through any number of issues. I interviewed with Dr. Lachance when applying to graduate school at Georgia Tech, and sitting with Dr. Lachance reviewing student expectations was my least nervous period over the course of three interview days. Dr. Lachance is strongly involved in the GT's seminal Bioinformatics and Quantitative Biosciences and Dr. Lachance works to combine state of the art programming ability to population genetics projects with great potential benefits for a number of current and ancient human genetic problems.

Dr. Lachance continues to show up for practically all Biological Sciences community event and remains the most reliable professor in the department. Lachance's availability and respect for his students makes him vital across the department.

Most Sincerely,

Drake Lee-Patterson  
PhD Student, Biological Oceanography Lab  
Georgia Institute of Technology

January 18, 2019

Attn: CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award Committee

It is my distinct honor and privilege to write this letter of support for Dr. Joe Lachance. During my time at Georgia Tech, I have been lucky enough to take two classes with Dr. Lachance, Math Models in Biology and Introduction to Evolution. Both classes were required for my degree and could have been the kind of classes that you just have to labor through, but Dr. Lachance helped to make them not just bearable but enjoyable.

One of the ways he did this is with his clear passion for teaching and his enthusiasm for all of the subjects I've seen him teach, regardless of if they are part of his area of expertise or not. He brings in real-life examples and has numerous stories from his own life and experiences that he is willing to share with his students, and these all serve to make students relate to the material and remember it better. Dr. Lachance also designs in-class activities that serve as direct applications of the course material. I have had many classes where the activities were either not helpful or felt like excessive busy work, but all of the work I did in and for Dr. Lachance's classes helped me retain the material and review the concepts we were learning about.

Dr. Lachance's classes have also given me and my peers unique opportunities to exercise our creativity with what we were learning. Two of the most memorable and enjoyable projects I have done at Tech have been in the classes I took with Dr. Lachance. In Math Models in Biology, my partner and I were given the conceptual tools we needed and encouraged to create a model for the wild hypothetical of "if the human population had to start over on another planet, how much diversity would need to be in the founding population to keep heterozygosity and species fitness high?" It is the kind of crazy hypothetical situation that in any other context, my classmates and I would have discussed briefly before moving on. But instead, we built an entire model around it, and I still remember the concepts we used for the project. Without Dr. Lachance's guidance and encouragement, my partner and I never would have tried to conquer such a nebulous idea let alone succeeded. In Introduction to Evolution, Dr. Lachance designed a project based around an actual evolution film festival wherein groups of students had to create video projects on topics covered in the class and then we had an in-class film festival where everyone voted on the best videos. It was by far, my favorite video project I have ever done, and it gave me and my peers an opportunity to push the limits of our creativity while also delivering real, informative content.

Dr. Lachance is also one of the most approachable professors I have ever had. He is effortlessly kind and engaging, and he makes sure his students know that he is available for them. When I went to review a test I did not do particularly well on with him, he was extremely encouraging and took the time to explain all of the problems I wanted to discuss. He also asked me about my education and career goals and gave me open, honest advice. Dr. Lachance clearly displays care for his students above and beyond what I expected from him and what I have gotten from most of my other professors. He is also one of the few professors I would still feel comfortable going to for help or advice even though it has been a year since I have been in one of his classes.

Overall, Dr. Lachance is an exemplary professor who goes out of his way to express his vested interest in his students' achievements and well-being both within the classroom and beyond it. He is one of the best professors I have had throughout my four years at Georgia Tech, and I hope he receives your full consideration for this award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amelia Melas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

Amelia Melas  
Biology - Georgia Institute of Technology 2019  
Undergraduate - School of Biological Sciences  
(678) 899-0131

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019

Dear CTL Selection Committee,

I enthusiastically write you this letter of strong support for Dr. Joseph Lachance in his nomination for the CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award. My undergraduate experience with Dr. Lachance stems from my time in his *Math Models of Biology* class, as well as my time researching genetic disease risk across global populations with him for multiple semesters. We seldom have the opportunity these days to recognize those that help shape the person you become after undergraduate schooling ends. For this reason, I truly hope that I can express the qualities in teaching and personal connections that Dr. Lachance exhibited to help achieve the success that I've had.

The class that I took with Dr. Lachance was an eye-opening experience for me. Admittedly, I despised math when I was younger. It was difficult for me to grasp mathematical concepts without them visually demonstrated, and the nature of undergraduate classes to that point for me was unforgiving in terms of patient professors. Naturally, I was nervous on that first week of *Math Models of Biology*. However, my fears were unwarranted because within 20 minutes of Dr. Lachance speaking about the course, I knew I was in good hands. Here was a man who was so enthusiastic not only about the topics in the class itself, but the opportunity to *teach* them to us. This passion and enthusiasm were the reasons I looked forward to attending that class—it was an effort to find the same enthusiasm and understanding that he himself clearly had found. And the simple truth of the matter is that I *did* find it. However, the only reason I was able to love this class was because Dr. Lachance was an excellent teacher himself. He was patient enough and understanding enough to recognize that people learn at different speeds and through different mediums. As a result, he was always available for consultation and would never hesitate to go over difficult concepts again in class. In addition, he deployed various methods in which he taught the class (traditional whiteboard, to in-class group activities, to exploring case-studies, to video demonstrations). More than that, the clarity of his lessons was refreshing. It was evident that he took time before classes to go over *how* he would be teaching and to make sure that his lecture was concise and clear so that everybody would understand it. I was able to use what I learned from his class and apply them to other classes, which helped my grades overall—and I have no doubt that other students benefited as well.

I was honored when, upon completion of this course, Dr. Lachance asked me to interview for an undergraduate research position in his lab working with population genetics. After my experience in his class, I did not hesitate to interview and agree to join his lab. I can confidently say that joining the Lachance Lab was the most important decision I made in getting to where I am today. The most important lessons about my future goals and the science-world in general came from his lab. For example, prior to joining his lab, I had very little experience in coding, managing “Big Data,” writing papers, conducting true research, and scientific writing. It was Dr. Lachance that emphasized these skills and taught me the essentials of them. For someone who had little experience in this, knowing I was going to learn from someone like Dr. Lachance made me very excited. And I did learn (was there ever a doubt with Dr. Lachance teaching me?). In fact, the first two questions for my current job at the CDC were, “Do you know how to code?”

and “Do you excel at managing Big Data?” Before joining his lab, those two topics were not something that I ever thought I was going to be interested in, let alone good enough to land a job with. But it was a side of science that was missing from my life until then! Dr. Lachance employed the same enthusiasm, passion, and patience to his research that he did with his teaching—for that reason his students, myself included, benefited so greatly from his lab after moving on.

I could continue to rave about the teaching skills of Dr. Lachance in the classroom and lab, but it was his characteristics as a *person* and willingness to emphasize being a friend as well as mentor that sets him apart from other professors that I had. He was always willing to talk and be a soundboard for any problems or concerns that I had during my time at Georgia Tech. It didn't matter how busy he was, or how small the concern was—he would always take the time. The conversations didn't necessarily have to be about something important like school or work. It could have been soccer (and we could talk for *hours* about that), an interesting show, or simply how I was doing that day. Those types of questions and conversations exposed a side of a man that really cared about the people he taught and worked with. That's exactly the type of person you would want as a mentor. And that's exactly the type of person Dr. Lachance is. This allowed for more comfortable experiences when coming to him for help and advice, further demonstrating how effective he is as a mentor for young students.

Dr. Lachance deserves this award. His ability in terms of preparation and clarity in teaching are noteworthy, and stood out as above others in my time at Georgia Tech. His dedication to mold those he mentors in his lab to be better prepared for the workforce after school shows how forward-thinking and attentive he is. But his desire and success at connecting with students (myself included) at a personal level truly sets him apart from many others.

I wholeheartedly support his nomination for the CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award.

Sincerely,

**Kane Patel**

PulseNet Reference, Outbreaks, and Surveillance Team (PROST)  
Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (NCEZID/DFWED/EDLB)  
Email: [npe2@cdc.gov](mailto:npe2@cdc.gov) / [patel.kane@gmail.com](mailto:patel.kane@gmail.com)  
Office: 404-718-1509

Dear members of the selection committee:

It is my pleasure and honor to write this letter in support of Dr. Joseph Lachance for the CETL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award. I was a student in his course BIOL8803 (Human Evolutionary Genomics) in the Fall of 2017. In the time that I've known him, Dr. Lachance has been an extremely approachable and helpful educator. Through his class, I got acquainted with seminal literature and important concepts in the field of evolutionary genomics – a field that is closely related to the concentration of my PhD research.

While I was taking the course, the lectures were a mix of core lectures (where Dr. Lachance explained different essential concepts from human evolutionary genomics) and paper presentations by students followed by discussion. The core lectures were informative and Dr. Lachance created an environment in class where it felt safe to ask questions. He would always be extremely clear in his response and often bring up relevant literature that would help students better understand the subject matter. The papers for discussion were well scheduled and helped in building an understanding of the evolution of the field itself. I picked a research article that was particularly challenging for me, but Dr. Lachance was accommodating and supportive whenever I had questions while preparing my presentation. During student presentations, Dr. Lachance provided encouragement and positive feedback to the presenter and other students who would ask questions. He would also lead the discussion into the broader implications and impact of the literature, often drawing from his own experience. I find myself constantly using the concepts I learned during Dr. Lachance's course in my own research. These concepts help me in evaluating my own hypotheses and in reading new literature from the field.

Along with teaching a well-designed course that was aimed at familiarizing graduate students with human evolutionary genomics, Dr. Lachance is extremely approachable. This is an immense quality in an educator. As a student, it made me feel comfortable in asking questions and discussing opinions, thereby making the entire course far more pleasant.

During my time at Georgia Tech, my lab has been on the same floor as Dr. Lachance. I constantly keep running into him and it is always a welcome experience. I have occasionally discussed some ideas with him and asked him questions about hypotheses I come up with. He continues to be a fantastic resource.

I started working on my PhD in the Fall of 2018. Discussions with Dr. Lachance helped me weigh the pros and cons of starting grad school. His support and mentorship have been extremely valuable for me and far exceed the boundaries of the classroom.

Dr. Lachance has been an excellent educator and I would highly recommend him for this award.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SD Nagar', written in a cursive style.

Shashwat Deepali Nagar