Fall 2012 - Course Evaluations
Geography and the Environment – GENS 1401

Dr. Colin Laroque

Student Comments:

• Very enthusiastic and good at getting points across. Explains the material well and knows when and when not to have fun. Being more available if you need help.

• Class lectures are well prepared, informative, and engaging. Excellent job incorporating the class into lectures and working in personal anecdotes which for the most part fit. Very fair and up-front about expectations for tests. Overall an enjoyable University course. Don’t change a thing. I tried thinking of something... can honestly say I am happy with every aspect of the course.

• He made it fun to come to class every day. He was great.

• The lecture outlines were extremely useful. I found that it was very helpful to use them as I read the chapters in the textbook. If possible, it would be nice to receive the next weeks lecture outlines the Friday before they are discussed in class. It helps to identify the key concepts in the text.

• He is enthusiastic about the subject which makes it enjoyable to be in his class. I also like that he put his course on Moodle so even people who did not show up could learn the material. His videos he put on-line were also very helpful to learn with. I enjoyed his powerpoints but I wish that there were some other formats on other days. Having the class structure change up a little would help me learn the material in the classroom.

• He was very passionate about the subject matter and his stories were wonderful and brought his points to the forefront and clarified everything. The exam and midterm layout is also good. The class atmosphere was positive and welcoming. Put up diagrams/pictures before the slide with the explanation and put them up on Moodle those not in the textbook.

• Hilarious lectures (very engaging). Videos of real-life things we were learning was interesting. Collaborative midterm and exam – Awesome. Put images online instead of notes (or page numbers/sources for images on slides).

• Colin was very energetic and kept the class awake with his jokes. He explains the material very well. More of the important stuff to cut back on the amount of notes.

• Prof was very enthusiastic and seemed to know what he was talking about. Class notes on Moodle were very helpful!

• Knowledgeable of everything pertaining to the Earth. Very funny! Very good looking... so good looking. None.

• Very enthusiastic, generally makes the material fun. Great way of doing tests. Posts the course notes online makes it so much easier to listen to his lecture and learn. Great teacher, great notes, very well prepared. The lab was ok but Graham was frustrating when you needed help. Would ask for help but he would either shrug or just go “Well, I don’t want to give you the answer.” Well I was not asking for the answer just for help with the material to understand it.

• Felt he did a good job keeping people’s attention. No complaints.

• He loves what he teaches. He shouldn’t change anything and he’s good... and of course, ridiculously good looking. Nothing.

• Maybe don’t let everyone (who is copying notes) take down every word as it slows down the lecture – especially when everything is online anyway. Overall a really enjoyable course! The labs were a nice compliment to the material.

• Enthusiasm on subject matter was great! Made me want to attend class. Very good teacher and Moodle videos were excellent. Interesting lectures and stories. Keep everyone interested. Also
very good looking (couldn’t resist). Online notes also helpful. Letting a bunch of first years pick
the midterm format was a treat. No improvement necessary!
• The way you present the material is great! I know it gives unfair advantage to students who
don’t come to class, but having the lectures online is great because during class we can just
listen instead of scrambling to copy notes.
• Teaching approach with variety of learning styles was great. Labs were a very good opportunity
to get out and see the actual things we were talking about. More labs even would be good. Even
if they were just walks around town. Maybe to the Querry or something to look at rocks. I found
that the sarcasm was at times hard to take and made me slower to ask questions.
• Enthusiastic. Good explanations. Awesome examples.
• Concepts in this course were very thoroughly explained which was very helpful. Class
participation was encouraged, and the work load was manageable.
office hours.
• Amazing teacher! This was by far my favorite class. I had no interest in Geo before this class and
now I love it! Laroque is so enthusiastic. This was the only class I actually wanted to go to every
day! There is nothing Laroque needs to improve, taking a class with him has been so rewarding
😊
• Has been and or experienced almost everything he has been teaching, very knowledgeable.
• Great professor. Easy look, listen to and obviously passionate. Loves to see students succeed, all
this makes class extremely enjoyable. Look forward to more classes with him!
• Dr. Laroque was very passionate about the course. It was nice seeing personal photographs and
hear personal experiences regarding the subject matter he was teaching. Overall, great course
and great professor! Maybe having more opportunities for assessment, like two midterms
rather than one.
• Funny, understood the information, accessible for questions after class, attempted to make a
sometimes dry subject, entertaining. Would be nice if the labs and class information matched up
more often, to when they were being taught, but of course that won’t always happen. Ex: learn
about soil in one class and do the lab the same week.
• Outdoor labs were incredibly useful. N/A.
• Videos. Funny prof. Good attitude. N/A.
• Very enthusiastic about material, explains it in a way students understand.
• The videos that were posted on Moodle gave a great visual image of what was actually being
taught. The adding of extra examples as he went through the powerpoint was extremely helpful
in fully understanding some things. Graham was extremely knowledgeable and helpful in the
labs.
• The prof was very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject. Overall a very solid course
I don’t see anywhere that can be improved.
• Great course! It would be beneficial if the lab material was taken in conjunction with the related
course material. The labs were often on material that had been taught weeks prior or had not
yet been taught. It would have been nice to have them match-up.
• Colin is such a good teacher. He knows what he is talking about so if you have questions 99% of
the time he knows the answer. If you didn’t understand something he would be able to explain
it to you. He is always cracking jokes in class so it makes the lectures fly by and interesting. He is
a very approachable guy. He wants you to succeed so he is very accommodating. Best teacher I
ever had! Labs are really fun because they help with understanding the material. Information
can get heavy at times but it’s good I guess.

• The prof was captivating and hilarious, he always kept me interested in class and because of this I never missed a class. Love the “sexy” jokes and other funny jokes and stories told in class. I wouldn’t improve anything. Just keep doing what you’re doing because I don’t think anyone else could make this course as interesting as you did. Please try to find a way to reward the people who do go to class though because they deserve it.

• The analogies and stories relating to topics were helpful in understanding. The online videos also helped visualize subjects. Keep doing what you’re doing and making class interesting and funny.

• I find Colin relates well with his students. Always shares past experience of his trips to keep us entertained.

• Teacher is very knowledgeable and made subject material relevant and interesting. Labs were very effective – I liked the practical application they provided. Work load was very fair and appropriate. I felt that the powerpoint notes were often too wordy and made it difficult for me to listen and write notes. I realize they were up on Moodle but I like to write things down in order to retain the information. Never received feedback on what I did wrong on the labs – I just got the mark. It would be nice to know where I needed to improve. Often times notes were conflicting with textbook information – Difficult to know which to pay attention to.

• Very friendly, interesting, fun, makes it memorable, makes things easy to understand. I’m not sure that the aloofness always worked to your advantage: regarding planning exams and joking about people not attending class (although I’m not sure how much that would have changed the outcome).

• Perfect…. Needs more dancing though.

• Lectures were well presented and explained. Labs were appropriate for understanding material. Online notes could incorporate slide pictures as seen in class. Emailing the class (when sick, etc.) would be better than putting a note on the door.

• It’s great that we get to “design” our midterm and final. Powerpoints are very clear. Appreciated the videos on-line. Great class and great prof!

• Very good professor, funny, likable, relatively easy course, a lot of information though. N/A.

• Professor asks for student input before making tests/exams. Really cares about the success of all of his students.

• Facts are made easy and straight forward. Good examples. Videos of you talking with your class. More cool, exciting videos on geography like exploding volcanoes or parts from planet earth to make it less dry and boring at times.

• The course is well put together. Marking scheme is good as a lot of the marks come from the lab. There isn’t much more to be done with a class this big. The logistics of any improvements would be a problem because of the class size.

• Very, very handsome and I really had fun to be in his class. And I am looking forward to being in more classes in my next semester.

• Laroque was clearly very passionate about the subject material and provided students with an excellent amount of learning materials to facilitate learning. I found the amount of material that was presented a little overwhelming. There is too much to learn and too little time. I do not think this is a product of the course, just a comment in general. I think that I would have preferred three classes a week over two classes a week.

• Instructor is engaging and well prepared. The labs that were done outside made the course material much more relevant and interesting. When labs are done outside, split into smaller
groups so everyone gets a chance to do all aspects of the lab. This also ensures everyone is participating. Continue labs outside for the entire course! It seems odd to me that our soil lab and the final lab write up are worth the same percentage.

- Excellent lectures with good notes. Interesting lab component, loved going outside. Excellent use of humor to engage student interest. Prof and lab instructor were helpful and good at clearing up questions. The class is so big! Would have been way cooler if it had been smaller and more outdoorsy – admin = pay to make this happen, isn’t that what Mt. A is all about? Some labs (entering data pts), were a bit tedious and not terribly helpful with the lecture material.
- Labs were in retrospect informative, which is good. I liked how you encouraged questions – people seemed comfortable speaking up. Graham was very helpful and accessible which was great. Lectures sometimes felt slow, but overall were good.
- Keep doing what you’re doing, this course is great.
- More pictures in the slides. I like the pictures. AND STORIES! They help me remember concepts.
- Teaching methods. Analogies. Comedic responses. Passion. Fun. I would like to have been outside more and engaging with the landscape that we were learning about in a more hands-on way. The labs were good but they weren’t enough. More experiential and smaller class sizes would help with this.
- Enthusiastic; not an eyesore; dresses decent; showers. Lectures aspect was, although basic, quite enjoyable to sit through. The labs; they didn’t mesh well with in class lectures, or, I feel, accurately represent knowledge of class material. I feel like I’ll do much poorer in this course than my theoreic knowledge should allow for because of marks lost on irrelevant, vague, cryptic, or just poorly organized lab questions. Graham’s snippy attitude was not appreciated. When I have a question I want an answer, not sarcasm.
- He is very enthusiastic and interesting. I enjoyed coming to class. Liked the movies. Subject matter was well presented and taught. Exams were fair. I don’t like the labs. I didn’t get anything out of them and they didn’t really correspond to the class = not fair. I would suggest not putting the class notes on-line, makes it really easy for people to skip.
- Very enthusiastic and lectures were well structured/presented. Lab instructor was not overly helpful and some of the questions on the labs were pointless and repetitive.
- Dr. Laroque was a very enthusiastic professor who somehow made learning about rocks and soil interesting. The videos and pictures were very helpful. He was very prepared for each lecture. Good course overall!! I found that some of the labs were just punching in numbers mindlessly and did not help me understand any concepts from class. The soil pot examination labs were interesting and a good way for us to see and feel what we’re learning.
- The teacher’s obvious enthusiasm for the subject make it more interesting than it possibly is. Also, the lab instructor is very knowledgeable and helpful outside of lab hours. I liked this course. But, it was too easy for students to skip when notes were made available on-line before class. Having the notes is helpful, if class is missed due to sickness, but maybe only post them two weeks before each exam. Keep the students guessing if they will be there.
- Very knowledgeable and makes class not boring.
- Creative teaching, styles keep students engaged! You really feel like you make the course yourself based on all student input. He has made me want to take more GENS courses. Couldn’t possibly imagine it being any better.
- Enthusiastic about course material. Notes online in case you missed some words that the prof said. Labs were helpful to get a better understanding of material. Shouldn’t be assumed that students know material considering it’s a first year course and that there is no prerequisites. Sometimes the prof just assumed that the students knew about information.
• Dr. Laroque is one of my favourite professors; he provides an interesting lecture format and shares personal stories from field work which makes learning easier and more enjoyable. He is interested and enjoys his work so it creates a positive learning environment. I think having two midterms would be beneficial because many students don’t do well on the first round of midterms, so having two could give the student a chance to work harder and redeem themselves.
• Great teacher. Lectures were mostly interesting. Enjoyed the movies shown. Love to have again. Goes on too many rants and starts to babble at times.
• Laroque’s enthusiasm was greatly appreciated. That, coupled with his firsthand experience, knowledge and humour combined to make this my favourite course. Honestly, can’t think of anything 😊
• The labs were helpful in understanding the material. The professor taught everything well. The text book was very good. The course is very interesting. I like how you want to ‘punish’ those who don’t come to class – it’s very amusing and completely understandable. Some of the labs, like the soil one was very disorganized which didn’t help very much. Your voice is a little bland while you’re speaking. I think you could be more up-beat while teaching. The people that mark our labs aren’t always doing it fairly – They can be very different sometimes, sometimes you should have gotten a higher grade or lower than you should have.
• So glad to wake up and come to this class in the morning, Colin made it fun and interesting. Loved the analogies. Flips through the slides too quickly.
• Funny, energetic, carefully explained everything, fair testing. Last lab is too long and tedious and worth too little to be done well so close to finals.
• He is extremely enthusiastic and clearly loves his job. This is my favourite class and I love the lectures, the easy style and approachable nature is very much enjoyed. The lab is excellent and useful but the formal at the end of the year is worth so little especially around exam times that people might not put in the time you are looking for. I think if you wanted to have more people come to class, have a percentage of the mark, for instance 10%, towards attendance and participation. People then would make it a priority to come.
• Excellent notes – not posting diagrams online provides good incentive to attend class. Funny lectures, easy to pay attention to. Very approachable! Very fair exams and labs.
• You’re so funny. Didn’t make it clear enough that late assignments will get zero.
• He is unique so his lecture was interesting to take. He shows up notes on Moodle, but the speed to move on next slide was quite fast.
• Easy to relate course material to real world settings. Lab was useful and connected to the course. Loved the examples in class. Overall I found this course well balanced and really enjoyed going, therefore, no complaints 😊
• Made the classes fun which made me want to attend the lectures because I didn’t want to miss anything. Thanks for making it a great semester!! Videos were great fun to watch.
• Your lecture notes were really well prepared and it was helpful that you posted them on Moodle. Your videos are also informative and funny. The interpretive dances were really entertaining too. Final lab = not that fun.
• What happens in the lab seems to be very disconnected from what we learn in class. As well it is highly ineffective to show up to a lab only to find out equipment we’re supposed to be using doesn’t work or doesn’t have batteries. Then because whoever marks the lab wasn’t actually there for the lab, we lose marks because equipment didn’t work so questions couldn’t be answered.
• Good to have real life examples of the topics we learn in class. Labs are difficult and frustrating.
• Some of the labs were useless and the lab TA was rude and not fair. He wasn’t enthusiastic or didn’t care to be there. He would quickly explain the labs and he wasn’t easily confrontable to ask questions.
• He is very enthusiastic and interested in what he is teaching. Wants his students to do well. Course material was made interesting. Use more interpretive dances!
• The notes were very well organized. He explained concepts very thoroughly. I really see no problems with the course! Thanks for a great semester.
• Had a genuine interest in the material and enjoyed teaching it to the class with relatable examples, especially when he would explain using his personal experiences. Stop being so cool – jk.
• I like that Dr. Laroque is enthusiastic and funny, which makes me want to come to class and learn. Sometimes I felt that we could have spent more time on a topic as it seemed like they were really rushed through.
• I can understand lectures by some diagrams and pictures.
• Notes are very good. Uses lots of diagrams and examples. Explanations are clear and easy to understand. Engaging and enjoys what he teaches. Overall, a great teacher and a great course that is making me think of taking more courses of this type. No complaints!!
• Sexy diagrams!
• He was my favorite professor out of them all.
• Outgoing. Powerpoint/notes were very helpful. Great idea to let the students decide on what and how they will be evaluated on. Did not like the labs. Lab instructor could be a bit more outgoing and helpful. Rather ask questions to Dr. Laroque than lab instructors but we were always supposed to go talk to the lab instructor.
• Very enthusiastic about the subject. Nice to go outside for many of the labs – labs in general were well designed. Good explanations of concepts. Some way to make lectures more interactive/varied. Find a better way to encourage people to come to class – not posting all the slides hurts people who come to class but listen to the lecture without writing every word on the slide, because they assume it will be on Moodle – same goes for pictures; it is hard to copy the whole diagram down while in class and there are enough that it is difficult to find them in the textbook. Don’t go back a slide so one person can copy it down! The notes are on Moodle or they can get them from a friend – they are wasting everyone else’s time!
• The teacher was very enthusiastic and made the class enjoyable. The teacher could slow down when going through the slides a little.
• Positive, funny, encouraging, easy to talk to. Available more often.
• Best course this semester! The lectures were well organized and easy to follow. More diagrams and videos during class.
• I really liked the labs. I thought they were important to understanding the material. I also liked the videos Laroque put up. Maybe take the top 9 labs instead of including all 10?
• Teacher very enthusiastic about subject. Learned a lot. Very approachable. None.
• Very enthusiastic about what he teaches! Honestly, there is nothing I can comment on!