

# Nomination of Dr. Mary Hudachek-Buswell for the 2020 Undergraduate Educator Award

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## Reflective Statement on Teaching

The first time I set foot on the Georgia Tech campus for my interview years ago, I felt as if I was home. I am an educator, and am so proud to be a part of the Georgia Tech community. I have the distinct honor of guiding young computer scientists and engineers through the dynamic content in computer science. We have experienced exponential growth in the discipline, and these are exciting times in computer science.

### Teaching Core Courses, Required Courses, and Large Courses

Education is the foundation upon which we can improve our global society and quality of life. Georgia Tech students are the future of our world. They will be the next generation of engineers, scientists, analysts, educators, researchers and leaders. It is my duty as an educator to positively influence every student, and provide engaged learning that stimulates their curiosity. I want to reach out to those who struggle, and inspire those who wish to excel. My role is not to just share my knowledge and experiences, but to foster critical thinking, and to promote teamwork. I want students to develop an appreciation for problem solving, and articulate their thoughts in both verbal and written communication.

I teach computer science introductory courses, such as Introduction to Computer Science and Data Structures & Algorithms (both are required for all CS majors), where the material and skills are immediately applicable. Enrollment in these courses runs approximately 300 per section. I teach intermediate courses, such as Data Manipulation for Engineers, CS 2316, where the content is the foundation to future learning. The upper level courses, I teach, focus on the project experience such as the Junior Design/Implementation course sequence. In all, the courses I teach impact more than 1750 students annually.

As a professor, I take it upon myself to provide students with content scenarios that challenge them intellectually and require engagement at high levels of cognitive demand. Good educators are prepared, organized, enthusiastic, and reflective in the courses they are teaching. I have found that students respond best in the classroom when they perceive their instructor to be a confident, competent, and caring teacher.

I prepare detailed lesson plans prior to class and select appropriate in-class activities that will act as catalysts for discussion of concepts.

### Educational Innovations

My single greatest accomplishment has been to create an online course for Data Structures & Algorithms, CS 1332, from 2018 to 2019. Up to this point, there has not been an online version of CS 1332 at Georgia Tech. I produced more than 113 videos with accompanying slides, and all work was original content I developed. I approached the project from the perspective of the student, and what did they need to see in order to understand the dynamics of the differing data structures and algorithms. Additionally, I supervised the development of a visualization tool by my TAs to assist the students with learning, <https://csvistool.com/>, which turned out pretty spectacular (feel free to take a peek ☺). I created over 45 mini quizzes that are interwoven with the videos so students can check their understanding. The following materials are available to the online students: written extension worksheets for more than half the topics to develop a deeper understanding of the concepts; all my personal lecture notes and examples are transcribed; implementation slides on the topics in the course; and original homework assignments.

In other courses, such as Introduction to Computer Science (CS 1301), I redesigned the course emphasis with Dr. Melinda McDaniel to incorporate content instructional lessons on data science and manipulation. In Introduction to Computational Media (CS 1315), I added also added more relevant topics such as web scraping and data mining. I served on a committee to complete rework the Junior Design/Implementation sequence of courses, CS3311/CS3312, required for CS majors. We developed new criteria and assessments for the course, and I was instrumental in shaping the Project Implementation Expo for this capstone sequence.

### Accessibility and Impact on Diverse Student Populations

My primary focus as an educator is make the content accessible to all students. For me, diversity is not in population demographics, diversity is in how students learn and what do they require in order to learn. There are so many different learning styles and disabilities that this is where I need to spend my time. I work very hard to create multisensory instructional resources for students to interact with to gain a better understanding of the content. Computer science is so very abstract to those looking in from the outside, but it is actually very dynamic. If I can capture the dynamics of the content, and present it in such a way the students can grasp what is occurring, then learning is a beautiful thing to watch.

I want to include a Thank-A-Teacher note from a student with multiple physical disabilities and whose name I have removed for privacy reasons.

“I wanted to take a minute to thank you for being a FANTASTIC professor and a "squeaky wheel" for your students. While Georgia Tech has some work to do in terms of Disability Services, it is inclusive and caring professors like yourself that make it possible for students like me to succeed at Tech. From making course materials easily accessible to speaking up for me about my challenges within the Disability Office, I will be forever grateful for everything you did this past semester to help me be successful. Keep being an outstanding professor and advocate for your students!”

I have always educated with the one main rule in place, “What I do for one student, I must do for all.” This means that all students are treated equally and fairly. However, all students must own and accept the responsibility of their learning. I have always worked for and with underrepresented populations in education. CS 1332 had only one female TA when I became the sole instructor for the course in 2016. I have worked hard with the TAs to help them understand that a diverse TA community is incredibly healthy for them and the students they serve. I am exceedingly proud to say we now have 50% women in the CS1332 TA community.

### Impact on Students' In and Beyond the Classroom

In my courses, I regularly incorporate interview questions from companies. It prepares my students for interviews and stresses the importance on the content in my courses. I want to include a Thank-A-Teacher note from another student who submitted the note anonymously.

“This class really helped in my CS interview I had last week. They asked me questions about sorting algorithms and I ended up getting the job! Thank you!!”

I also have industry representatives come and present one of our topics during the semester so that students can see how the course material relates in their future profession.

I have always supported organizations in the College of Computing and in the Institute as well. I have served as a judge for HackGT, the annual intercollegiate hackathon, multiple years now. I have been an Advisor to the student organization Quizbowl for going on 6 years. This Quizbowl has qualified 3 teams to compete nationally, and I am very proud of their hard work. I have served as a judge for the Inventure Prize, and I mentored a team for an entire year that became finalists in the competition.

### Educational Outreach Beyond Georgia Tech

The Willis Road Elementary School, WRES, Computing and Engineering with LEGO® and Scratch, CELS, program has been one of the most rewarding projects with which I have been involved during my career as an educator. In 2017, our educational partnership was formally formed, and our mission was to broaden participation in computing and engineering at WRES. LeAnne Cheatham was as passionate about bringing computing to WRES students, as she was fearless in implementing an innovative program. We both knew that we needed assistance with developing the CELS program, and Ruchi Banerjee became the face of CELS to WRES students We are entering into our fourth year of the CELS program.

The first hurdle in CELS program was acquiring the robotics. I found funding for the purchase of the LEGO® Wedo kits from Yamaha Motor Manufacturing Corporation in Coweta County, and Georgia Tech's Constellations Center for Equity in Computing. I researched and created robotic builds, incorporated the basic engineering principles associated with the robotics, and open source robot builds. I created the CELS Lessons Rubric that correlates grade level, and associated engineering principles. I drafted 15 lessons that contained the same framework so that the students could focus on learning the computing and engineering principles.

Ms. Banerjee, other GT CS students, and myself travel down to WRES to observe, assist, and work with the WRES students. The connection between WRES students and Ms. Banerjee, along with other GT students, is inspiring to see. WRES students want to be engineers and computer scientists at Georgia Tech just like Ms. Banerjee. This last year we hosted a “Ramblin’ Robots” competition for the 5<sup>th</sup> graders. It was amazing!



### Good Georgia Tech Citizenship

I am proud to be a member of the Georgia Tech community, and I want the institute to be the best it can be. I have served on faculty search committees, the college award committee, and have been asked to serve in the award process at the institute level. I worked to add some additional student awards at the college level and they have been approved.

I love Yellow Jackets sports. I was asked by the GT Baseball coaches to assist them in developing a recruitment tool that provides more accurate data and lets them optimize their player retention. I have been working on this tool in collaboration with the coaches for 2 years.

## **Illustrations of Teaching Excellence**

### CIOS Survey Excerpts of Student Comments on Instructor Greatest Strength

CS1332, Data Structures and Algorithms, Campus (course lead since 2016):

- Dr. HB clearly knows a substantial amount about data structures and algorithms and cares a lot about the material. This was reflected in her lectures and made me want to learn more, for instance, how could an algorithm, that I am learning now, be made more efficient or how can I use a certain data structure to make previous code that I have written more efficient as well. Another small note is that she was perhaps the first professor to tell me to have a great day at the end of class. While this is something rather small and simple, I appreciated it, and overall, it is the little things that can make a big difference.
- Clarity of lectures, great in-class notes, HB is a very intentional speaker, and I like how she talks slowly, clearly, and with purpose
- HB cares. She cares about her students, her TAs, and especially about 1332. I do not know what her situation is, but I honestly felt like I was her only section of 1332. She spoke to us in class very casually, but with authority. At the beginning of the semester, she told us a story about her dog and how she thought she wouldn't like him and then ended up really liking him. I thought that was bologna, but through the course of the semester I found myself enjoying 1332 and especially HB's lectures. I appreciate her sincerity, her work ethic, her intelligence, and her sense of humor.
- Professor HB is really elaborate in lecture in providing details and examples to trace through. Even if you have trouble with the coding, as long as you pay attention in lecture, you can understand how logically speaking the code should be to ensure proper execution.
- I like that she wanted us to not only learn the course materials but also to learn how we could apply the concepts in real world and ethics we should have as computer scientists. It showed that she actually wanted us to learn and succeed.

CS1332, Data Structures and Algorithms, Online (created and offered for the first time Fall 2019):

- The professor goes out of her way to make sure her students are able to succeed and is very quick to respond to any problems and consider alternatives, as well as make sure between the on campus and online sections that the testing conditions are fair. Honestly through all my years at Tech (and I've been here for about five) I think she is one of very few professors who exceeds expectations in how much she cares about the students and works towards making the course be an excellent learning experience. She is very approachable and overall I really appreciated how much she cares about her students and the course experience.

- This is my second time taking this course. Professor HB took the time to meet with me several times over the course of the semester to make sure I understood the information to the best of my ability, even if it is something I don't care for.

CS1301, Introduction to Computer Science (first course for majors):

- I understood object-oriented programming, and big o notation more when Professor HB demonstrated by making students come to the front of the class.
- She was a very fair teacher, explaining what it took to succeed in the class in explicit detail and always sticking to her decisions. That is nice to see in a teacher.
- The greatest strength would be her ability to explain complicated things in a very simple manner
- That power-point for Big-O was amazing! The graphics really helped explain. Walking through code was very helpful too.

CS1315, Introduction to Computational Media (for non majors):

- Dr. Hudachek-Buswell clearly understood that this class is intended for students who have limited background in CS and worked to make the material as accessible and un intimidating as possible. Her compassion and concern for students was apparent; she clearly wants her students to succeed, which I really appreciated.
- She was very animated in class, demonstrating genuine interest in the subject and making students eager to learn more.
- The greatest strength of the instructor for me was definitely her ability to interest me in a field of which I had no knowledge before.

CS3311/3312, Junior Design and Implementation Sequence (capstone courses for majors):

- I liked how she kept teams honest during presentations and asked the tough questions.
- HB has strength in virtually everything she does. She is truly an exceptional professor (and person in general)
- The professor was very straightforward with the class on what she expected from us.
- Dr. Hudachek-Buswell gave a lot of good criticism and ideas for the project that we hadn't thought of.
- Prof. HB is great! I really appreciate that she made her standards clear and communicated thoughts clearly.
- Very clearly outlined what she expected of us and did not pretend that the course would be easy.

### Thank-A-Teacher

Below are a just a few of the more informative Thank-A-Teacher notes I have received over the years. I have removed names and any personal references the students may have made to themselves.

Student 1 – “I have never met a professor who cared so much about their students and their experience while taking their class. She had the challenge of making an online class section very similar and fair compared to an on campus section and throughout the entire semester she made sure everything was running smoothly and with any problems that came up she was quick to address and fix them. I really appreciate how comfortable I felt talking with her about the course and how approachable she was. She is an amazing professor who has the student's best interests at heart and deserves recognition for that! I had a great experience taking this course with her and know other students and ones in the future will feel the same!”

Student 2 – “Your class is awesome! It feels great knowing that I have a professor that cares for me as a student and ensure that everything is as fair and accessible as possible to everyone. Although sometimes it gets stressful in the class, I will miss it and look back on it quite fondly.

Student 3 – “Thank you so much for being an awesome professor. I truly enjoyed my time in your CS 1332 class, and I loved learning about how to better organize data and model real-world situations through the data structures and solve problems with algorithms. You have done an awesome job teaching the class, and I feel so much stronger and more confident as a programmer and a student than before. On top of all of that, the level of care and effort you put in to make this class great is phenomenal. I have never seen a class have as many resources online, ranging from the class notes, to the reality checks, to a whole host of slides presentations to help us understand the material, and much more.

In addition to that, the atmosphere you build in the classroom and with the TAs is unique. I have always felt comfortable asking you and the TAs for help when it comes to homework, exam preparation, the course material, etc. Thank you for being a great person and professor, Dr. HB. I am proud to have been in and learned so much in your class. I wish you all the best and I hope we meet again! :)

Student 4 – “Professor HB is one of the most compassionate professors on campus. She can be intimidating from a distance, but I strongly encourage all of her students to get to know her better. The first time I took Mary's class I struggled, but I regularly kept in touch with her and updated her on my status. Unfortunately I ended up having to retake the class. When I signed up to take the class again, I still stayed in close contact with Mary. She was there to help, and guide me through the class with more precision this time to ensure I did well. I ended up with an A in her class; I was astounded. In the following semester the CoC career fair rolled around and I ended up running into Mary. She guided me through the career fair, introducing me to recruiters. She took me on like a son during this time. I've never had a professor do more for me than Mary has and I truly appreciate it. If I were to remember only one professor from my time at Georgia Tech, it would undoubtedly be Professor HB.

Student 5 – “Thank you so much for your engaging and informative lectures! Your methods of teaching and explaining concepts in data structures and algorithms truly helped me understand so many new concepts.

Student 6 – “Thanks so much for your entertaining lectures, and being consistent and honest with students!

Student 7 – “Thanks for being such a good teacher this semester. You are one of the seemingly few professors at Georgia Tech that cares deeply about both their subject matter and about education. It made a world of difference for me.

Student 8 – “...I was scatterbrained, and looking back at the beginning of this semester, I was a hot mess! I began to lose confidence in my academic abilities. Although I find it hard at times to ask for help, I took a leap of faith and asked my professors for help. I shared my plight with many of my professors. They indicated they would not be able to work with me to improve my grade performance in the course. However, after chatting with you, I felt a breath of fresh air. You were so kind, but also encouraging. I felt (and still feel) extremely enthusiastic about the course material, as I now view the coursework as a challenge I most definitely can conquer!

Through hard work, I began to perform better and better on each of the exams. I can hold my head up high, and be proud of the hard work I put into developing a true understanding of the topics covered in 1332. With the final exam in only a couple of days, I am excited to be able to demonstrate to you my

understanding of the coursework as I have worked so hard preparing for it. :) Looking back, I am so happy with the outcome of this semester. You have encouraged me to look deep within myself and not give up, but rather, do my best. I have made new friends and created study groups and was fortunate enough to work with the most helpful and talented tutor for 1332. I have spent countless hours at help desk and picked out my favorite T As in the whole world. And most of all, I found you, the most encouraging professor a student could ever ask for ☺

You have not only provided the necessary guidance for me to become academically successful, but you have been able to remind me that I belong at Georgia Tech and that I can rise to whatever challenge comes my way. For all of these reasons, I am eternally thankful and grateful. With all the hard work you do, I know you probably don't hear this often. So on behalf of all the students you teach, I want to again thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything that you have done for me and all of the 1332 students...

### Awards

William D. "Bill" Leahy Jr. Outstanding Instructor Award – 2019  
Georgia Tech's Education Partnership Award – 2019

### Grants

Computing and Engineering using Legos and Scratch (CELS) Program, Constellations Center for Equity Grant, \$5000, PI, 1/1/2018 – 5/1/2018, 0%.

Computing and Engineering using Legos and Scratch (CELS) Program, Yamaha Motor Manufacturing Corporation Grant, \$2500, PI, 1/1/2018 – 5/1/2018, 0%.

### Professional Growth and Development

#### Conferences Attended

Association of Computing Machinery, SIGCSE 2020, Portland, OR, March 2020  
Association of Computing Machinery, SIGCSE 2019, Minneapolis, MN, February 2019  
Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing, Orlando, FL, October 2017  
Society of Women Engineers Congressional Visits Day, Washington D.C., February 2017  
Society of Women Engineers Capitol Hill Days, Washington D.C., March 2016

#### CTL Workshops, Consultations, and Observations

"Think Globally, Teach Locally", February 2020  
"Understanding and Using Analytics in Canvas", October 2019  
"Brain-based Teaching: Using Neuroscience", September 2019  
"Managing Student Resistance to Learning", January 2019  
"Exploring Canvas Tools", January 2019  
"Supporting Students While We Teach", January 2019  
"Teaching with Technology: Turning Point", November 2018  
"Getting and Keeping Student Attention", September 2018  
CTL Education Consultant, Observation, and Course Feedback, Fall 2018  
"Technology: Flipped Learning in Large Chemistry Classes", February 2018



March 2, 2020

To the Selection Committee,

I am pleased to support the nomination of Dr. Mary Hudachek-Buswell, Lecturer in the Division of Computing Instruction within the College of Computing, for the CETL Undergraduate Educator Award. Since joining DCI faculty in 2014, Mary has worked diligently toward outreach within the community, honing her teaching skills, and online education.

Dr. Hudachek-Buswell's outreach to a rural elementary school is to be presented and published as part of the SIGCSE 2020 conference. Georgia Tech's very own Education Partnership Award, 2019, was given in recognition of this outreach effort. Her work in local outreach has made a meaningful impact for the children and teachers at the Willis Road Elementary School in Sharpsburg, Georgia within the Coweta School District. It has also helped to bring out the best in many of her undergrad teaching assistants who helped with this philanthropic activity.

Dr. Hudachek-Buswell has worked tirelessly on her teaching pedagogy by attending SIGCSE frequently and engaging with many of the services offered by GT's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). She has attended many CTL workshops and has even asked CTL experts to come and review her classroom teaching techniques and style. She is always open to new techniques and ways to engage her students.

As part of the College of Computing's interest in online education, Dr. Hudachek-Buswell recently developed an online version of our CS1332 course, Data Structures and Algorithms. This course was only the 2<sup>nd</sup> undergraduate online course to be developed within the College of Computing. Her CS1332 development was happening concurrently alongside a CS1331 online version by another lecturer. Mary was very much a trailblazer with her course development receiving very little external help with this new initiative. The course is a success and is testimony to her sheer drive and dedication to teaching.

The statements above and those highlighted by the other letters show Dr. Mary Hudachek-Buswell is as an excellent candidate for the CETL Undergraduate Educator Award, and I am pleased to provide my support for this nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Monica Sweat".

Monica Sweat, Director and Senior Lecturer  
Division of Computing Instruction  
College of Computing

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**College of Computing**

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February 15, 2020

This is a letter of recommendation in support of Mary Hudachek-Buswell's nomination for the Undergraduate Educator Award.

I was the first Director of the College of Computing's Division of Computing Instruction (DCI) and am now Senior Lecturer Emeritus. I hired Mary to be a Lecturer in the DCI because of her passion to be a teacher and her desire to be a part of Georgia Tech.

I am organizing this letter according to the selection criteria listed on the announcement of this award:

**Teaching excellence in core courses, required courses, or large classes.**

Mary was hired to teach first and second year CS classes to majors and non-majors. These classes are typically very large (250 person lectures) and require not only a love of teaching but serious organizational skills. Just the size of the undergraduate TA staff that assists is larger than many classes at this university. Mary does a terrific job of running these operations teaching in the neighborhood of 750 students a semester.

**Impact on multiple diverse student populations.**

I believe that GT has done an excellent job of admitting a diverse population of students. So the lecturer in a large introductory class will be presented automatically with a diverse population of students. The measure of the lecturer's effectiveness in dealing with this can be observed by examining the TA's who have been hired to assist the lecturer and the students. I have always felt that when a student enters my class they will see a TA they can relate to and my objective has always been to have a rainbow of TA's. Mary has followed my lead. When she started there was one female TA in her class. Today it's 50%. And extends this philosophy across racial and ethnic lines as well.

**Impact on students' lives, both in and beyond the classroom.**

Mary has nominated institute award winning TA's. She has developed outreach programs for rural schools and had her TA's assist her in introducing computational skills to grammar school students. She has advised the Quizbowl team for 6 years.

**Educational innovations.**

Mary has developed an online version of CS1332 a data structures course. She developed all materials including video lectures, online checkpoint quizzes and the examination system. She has led visualization tool development projects. She also revamped the introductory CS class switching the focus from robotics to data science.

**Educational outreach beyond the classroom and laboratory.**

Mary was awarded the CETL Educational Partnership Award for her work with developing a Lego computation program for a rural school. And I should add 100% of the credit for this goes to her. No one told her to do this or suggested to her that she do it. She saw a need and put in a lot of extra time to make a rural Georgia school better.

**Accessibility to all students, even those who were not performing well in the class.**

Mary is constantly searching for ways to assist students who are struggling no matter what the reason. Whether it be additional office hours, review sessions or just the voice of encouragement. Mary is dedicated to all her students. Perhaps a good example would be last year when she had a paraplegic student in her class. She developed a new evaluation technique to allow him to be properly evaluated in the class and even went out of her way to make sure he was getting the accommodations provided by his disability.

**Passion about teaching and learning.**

All I can say here is that if there is a list somewhere of people who are passionate about teaching she is really near the top if not at the top. It was just such a pleasure to supervise someone who truly loved what she was doing.

**Good Georgia Tech citizenship.**

Mary is a tireless advocate for increased representation of women and minorities in education.

She has traveled to Washington, DC to meet with members of congress and their staffs in support of this advocacy.

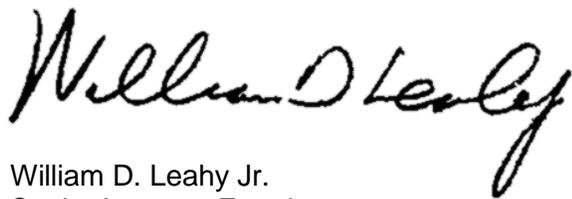
She regularly attends the Grace Hopper Celebration, the world's largest gathering of women technologists where she plays an active role.

I believe that if you cut Mary she would bleed white and gold.

I retired at the beginning of 2018 but I stay in touch with the College of Computing and when Mary asked me to write a letter in support of receiving this award I was delighted.

I would be happy to supply any additional information desired.

Sincerely,



William D. Leahy Jr.  
Senior Lecturer Emeritus  
Division of Computing Instruction

February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

To the Members of the CTL Undergraduate Educator Selection Committee,

It is my honor to nominate Dr. Hudachek-Buswell for the 2020 Undergraduate Educator Award. I first became acquainted with Dr. Hudachek-Buswell in Fall 2017 when I took CS 1332 (Data Structures & Algorithms) from her. Her innovative teaching style and attentive care for her students and teaching assistants inspired me to TA for the course, which I have been doing since Spring 2018. Dr. Hudachek-Buswell's inventive approach to teaching, genuine care for students, and dedication to the computing community continually impress me and deserve recognition.

Dr. Hudachek-Buswell takes an interactive and engaging approach to teaching which significantly helps translate abstract computing concepts to solid understanding. In my experience, many computing courses consist of watching a professor type code on the screen or click through slides. In her lectures, Dr. Hudachek-Buswell takes a more engaging approach. She takes the time to physically draw out the concepts and supporting visuals on paper which helps students follow along in real time. This teaching style yields a much higher degree of interactivity as examples can adapt as students ask questions. In further support of interactive learning, Dr. Hudachek-Buswell gives students "reality check" assignments during lecture to give them a chance to practice the concepts they've just learned with their peers. Everything done during lectures has undergone rigorous and continuous improvement. Dr. Hudachek-Buswell takes student feedback very seriously and continually works to improve the quality of the course.

In addition to exemplary presentation of current course materials, Dr. HB works diligently to create new resources for students. She puts in work each semester to generate and improve learning resources such as practice problems, course slides, and lecture activities. Dr. Hudachek-Buswell also encourages and facilitates the creation of new learning resources by her TAs. For example, with Dr. Hudachek-Buswell's support, we have been able to develop our own grading tools, visualization tools, comprehensive lecture notes, recitation videos, and more. In addition to Dr. Hudachek-Buswell's encouragement of her TAs' knowledge and interaction with course materials, she is a strong advocate for our success as students, young professionals, and humans. The faith and trust she bestows on us has been a key part of the strength and resilience of our community.

Dr. Hudachek-Buswell also demonstrates such genuine care for her students like no other professor I have witnessed. She has a saying when it comes to making decisions regarding her students, "What I do for one, I must do for all." Dr. Hudachek-Buswell is a strong believer in the fairness of education and strives to ensure her students all have equal opportunities to succeed. Her attitude towards teaching is what compels her course to be incredibly effective, earns her the respect of her students and colleagues, and makes her truly deserving of recognition.

Sincerely,



**Adrianna Brown**

B.S. Computer Science 2020  
Georgia Institute of Technology

## Nomination Support Letter, Mr. David Wang

Members of the CTL Undergraduate Educator Selection Committee:

Dr. Hudachek-Buswell was my professor for both CS 1301 and CS 1332. When I took the course, she was engaging and efficient. However, what I took most from her teaching style was her ability to react to feedback. She constantly asked the class how they felt and what areas were most confusing. She would ask what worked and what didn't work. While that in itself was notable, what made her teaching especially memorable was how she adjusted from the feedback. If consistently asked questions about a topic, she would spend more time on it. When students asked for more diagramming, she spent more of lecture on the diagramming aspects of the concepts instead of writing pseudocode.

Currently, I have been Dr. HB's TA for four semesters. In that time, I have grown more confident of my opinion about her. Being her TA, I have seen more of how she operates. What I did not realize as a student was how much effort she puts into the course. She is constantly asking the Head TAs and Senior TAs what they remember from the course when they took it and if the changes she has made since then make the course better. She constantly asks all TAs to pay attention to the students and try to figure out what did not work well for them (since the TAs have more individualized interactions with students at office hours than she could during lecture). Sitting in on most of her lectures still, I see all the changes she makes based on not only the students' feedbacks, but also TAs' feedbacks. Even though her course is already spectacular, nothing stops Dr. HB from constantly trying to improve the course. She legitimately cares about her students. In addition, even while swamped with personal and course work, she also makes sure her TAs are treated well and have everything they need.

Through all my experiences with Dr. HB, I consistently see how much she cares for those around her and how much she loves her job. She is truly a worthy candidate for this year's Undergraduate Educator Award.

Regards,

David Wang

B.S. Computer Science 2020  
Georgia Institute of Technology

## Nomination Support Letter, Ms. Caroline Kish

Members of the CTL Undergraduate Educator Selection Committee:

It is my honor to provide Dr. Mary Hudachek-Buswell with a letter of recommendation and support for the CTL Undergraduate Educator Award. Her unique and effective teaching style, her empathy inside and outside of the classroom, and her drive to always improve the student experience in her course, and in Georgia Tech as an institution, make her the most deserving recipient of this distinction.

When I first entered Georgia Tech as a Computer Science major four years ago, I had zero confidence in my abilities and all the fear in the world that had built up because of GT's reputation as an inherently 'hard' school. I had been told countless times that to succeed required innate intelligence, and for me, used to succeeding based solely on work ethic, this meant that I was destined for failure. Little did I know however, that this paradigm of mine would shift entirely based off the Computer Science professor who taught my Introduction to Computing course. I am so lucky that Dr. HB was my first professor freshman year. Yes the class was difficult, but her teaching was engaging and unique. She drew connections with the real world to help solidify core concepts of programming. Furthermore, she took all questions seriously, including the most basic ones. She gave me, and the other students in the course, the ability to feel confidence in our ability to achieve the success that I had thought unattainable.

Dr. HB's passion to help other students learn helped me realize that I am also passionate about helping others learn. She helped me realize that I wanted to give students the confidence that I, myself, sometimes lack. Because of this, I became a teaching assistant. I started off TA-ing for the introductory CS course, but eventually became a TA for the Data Structures & Algorithms course, which Dr. HB teaches. As one of Dr. HB's TAs, I have seen even more of how much she cares about her students and how she strives to make sure that each student is satisfied with the knowledge they learn in her course. She encourages TAs to develop new learning materials for the course so that students have resources that appeal to all different types of learners available to them. Additionally, she changes her course based on student feedback from past semesters - for example, when students requested more practice problems, she started offering more 'reality checks' inside and outside of the classroom with practice problems to solidify the concepts learned in class.

Dr. HB also teaches the most successful online course I have ever seen at this university. Her online version of CS 1332 Data Structures and algorithms is just as rigorous and informational as the campus version. Furthermore, the online students have access to the same resources as campus students including TAs, practice problems, and office hours. She ensures that the online students are treated fairly given the sometimes difficult adaptation of in-person exams to Canvas exams. She is always patient and reassuring to the online students just as she is to the in-person ones, which makes students feel comfortable that they can give her feedback about the course as well as go to her with personal problems that they encounter.

Dr. HB does not just show her concern for students inside of the classroom. She is also available as a mentor even after students leave the course. She is always available by email or by a knock on her office door. She is loyal to her students - she will fight to help them in any way that she can, which to me, is a rare and extremely admirable quality at this institution. She works hard to make sure her

students and TAs have accessible career opportunities, and she offers professional advice to anyone who wishes it.

Dr. HB embodies everything that an educator should be. She gives students a reason to have faith in professors. There is no one more deserving of the CETL Undergraduate Educator Award than she is.

Regards,

Caroline Kish

B.S. Computer Science 2020  
Georgia Institute of Technology