

# Application Summary

## Competition Details

---

<b>Competition Title:</b>	2021 Eichholz Faculty Teaching Award
<b>Category:</b>	Institutional Awards - CTL
<b>Award Cycle:</b>	2021
<b>Submission Deadline:</b>	02/28/2021 11:59 PM

## Application Information

---

<b>Submitted By:</b>	Eric Schatzberg
<b>Application ID:</b>	5932
<b>Application Title:</b>	Eichholz Nomination for Amy D'Unger
<b>Date Submitted:</b>	02/28/2021 2:03 PM

## Personal Details

---

<b>Applicant First Name:</b>	Eric
<b>Applicant Last Name:</b>	Schatzberg
<b>Email Address:</b>	eric.schatzberg@hsoc.gatech.edu
<b>Phone Number:</b>	(404) 894-1122

### Primary School or Department

School of History and Sociology

<b>Primary Appointment Title:</b>	Chair
-----------------------------------	-------

## Application Details

---

### Proposal Title

Eichholz Nomination for Amy D'Unger

**Nomination Packet for Amy D'Unger  
2021 Eichholz Faculty Teaching Award**

Contents

- Letter of nomination from Eric Schatzberg, Chair, School of History and Sociology
- A reflective statement on teaching from the candidate
- Illustrations of the candidate's teaching excellence
- Letters of support
  - Douglas Flammig, Professor, School of History and Sociology
  - Sarah McDougal, undergraduate, School of Computer Science
  - Charlotte Canavor, undergraduate
  - Rishab Chawla, B.S. chemistry (2019)

February 28, 2021

Selection Committee

Geoffrey G. Eichholz Faculty Teaching Award  
Center for Teaching and Learning  
Georgia Institute of Technology

Dear Members of the Selection Committee:

With greatest enthusiasm, I nominate Amy D'Unger for the Geoffrey G. Eichholz Faculty Teaching Award. D'Unger is a perfect fit for this award, a faculty member who regularly teaches core and general education courses that primarily serve non-majors and fulfil the Core Area E general education requirement. D'Unger has been the Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies and the undergraduate advisor in the School of History and Sociology since 2007. As an academic professional, she usually teaches two courses each year, though she has often taught an extra course when needed. D'Unger's received her Ph.D. in sociology from Duke University, and her teaching is essential to the School's curriculum. She regularly teaches one large lecture course, Introduction to Sociology, as well as smaller, more specialized classes, including Sociology of Gender, Sociology of Crime, and Social Issues and Public Policy.

D'Unger has already won a myriad of teaching awards. She was most recently named to the fall 2020 Student Recognition of Excellence in Teaching Honor Roll, and she also received the Class of 1934 CIOS Award. Since 2009, she has received 11 Thank-a-Teacher prizes. She has received the Class of 1969 Teaching Scholar Award (2009), Ivan Allen College Teacher of the Year (2016), and the Class of 1934 Undergraduate Educator Award (2017). She was also selected as one of the Chancellor's Learning Scholars for the University System of Georgia in 2019-2020. And she has received many awards as an academic advisor. These honors all speak to her dedication to pedagogy and her achievements as a teacher.

CIOS scores may not be the best measure of student learning, but very high scores clearly indicate that the instructor is doing something right. D'Unger's scores are phenomenal, particularly given the well-documented bias against female instructors in student evaluations of teaching. Since 2014, on the question of overall instructor effectiveness, she has an enrollment-weighted average of 4.87 out of five. This score is particularly impressive given that most of her students are in SOC 1101, Introduction to Sociology, which reliably enrolls close to its capacity of 180 when D'Unger teaches the course. But her scores are high across a range of courses, including the capstone seminar for majors and smaller lecture courses with enrollments in the high 30s. Since 2014, her score on instructor effectiveness has never fallen below 4.8.

In fall 2020, D'Unger taught, HTS 3017, Sociology of Gender. Her CIOS scores for this course are particularly impressive in light of the pandemic. With an 89% response rate totaling 31 students, D'Unger scored 5 for the two key questions of overall effectiveness and respect for

221 Bobby Dodd Way, Old Civil Engineering Building, Atlanta, GA 30332-0225  
ON 404.894.3196 AX 404.894.0535 www.hsoc.gatech.edu  
*A Unit of the University System of Georgia An Equal Education and Employment Opportunity Institution*

students, and 4.9 for enthusiasm. These are amazing scores given the difficult conditions of fall 2020.

Peer observers confirm the superlative quality of D'Unger's teaching. Doug Flamming, a previous Eichholz award winner, describes her lecture in Introduction to Sociology as simply "splendid." Flamming notes D'Unger's "singularly impressive" ability to interact with students, not an easy task in a lecture hall with over 170 students. In the observed lecture, D'Unger connected with students primarily by asking them to interpret visual images, including videos, producing an "admirable" level of discussion. D'Unger also used popular culture effectively to encourage students to participate, for example by comparing prisons to Disney World.

In 2016, D'Unger was also observed by another colleague in the School of History and Sociology, Laura Bier. Bier also praised D'Unger's interactive teaching style, this time in a smaller class of about 30 students. In this class, D'Unger showed students a video about a couple raising their five year old child "gender-free," that is, without disclosing its gender. Bier reported that "the discussion ... was one of the liveliest and most skillfully moderated I have ever seen at Tech." D'Unger gave students the freedom to express diverse opinions, while carefully bringing the discussion back to key sociological concepts.

The three letters from students confirm her impressive impact. D'Unger is a teacher who transforms how her students see the world, a goal she stresses in her teaching statement. Her students are excited to share what they learn with their friends. These letters testify to the "truly remarkable class environment" that D'Unger creates, as Charlotte Canavor notes. This environment also create bonds between students. Students praise D'Unger's approachability and accessibility, even when teaching a class with over 160 students. As Rishab Chawla reports, D'Unger happily spent a full hour with him during office hours, something few faculty have time to do when teaching a large lecture course. These letters repeatedly stress the clarity of D'Unger's lecture style, and her ability to make students care about abstract sociological concepts by grounding them in concrete examples and current events.

D'Unger is also deeply committed to pedagogy, especially in her role as Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies. She was central in creating a new minor in Social Justice, and she also led the effort to redesign the History and Sociology major, creating a series of tracks that allow students to shape the major to fit their specific interests. And she is also an prize-winning advisor, receiving a prestigious award from the National Academic Advising Association.

What I most admire about Amy D'Unger is her tireless pursuit of excellence in everything she does, especially in her teaching. Many of us aspire to be that teacher who changes a student's life. D'Unger actually succeeds in doing so.

Sincerely,



Eric Schatzberg  
Professor and Chair

*Amy V. D'Unger, Ph.D.*  
*School of History and Sociology*  
*Georgia Institute of Technology*

**Statement of Teaching Philosophy, Goals, and Methods**

I believe that institutions of higher learning have an obligation to teach students the material and skills that will enable them to be both intellectually and professionally fulfilled after graduation. However, it is not the responsibility of the professor to provide "personal enlightenment" to all students enrolled in her classes. ***Rather, it is the teacher's job to give students the tools to seek their own intellectual growth.*** Conversely, students have both the right and responsibility to seek out such information. My goals in teaching are fourfold:

- to *foster critical thinking and writing skills,*
- to *inspire questioning norms* and the status quo,
- to *foster curiosity* in the students on the topics that are presented in class, and
- to *foster discussion.*

I am an advocate of "making connections." I believe that my role as a teacher is to facilitate students' ability to ***draw connections between the information that they learn in class and their experience and understanding of the larger world.*** While I cannot do this for them, I can serve as a "guide" on the path of their intellectual development. During this historical moment with the intersections of a global pandemic, economic crisis, and continuing exclusion of and violence against BIPOC and LGBTQ+ people, I believe that students need to develop their critical thinking skills to effectively critique and repair social injustices. Sociology is a perfect tool for doing this, accessible to any student, regardless of major. I strive for my teaching to provide a fundamental skill in students' "tool box" for success in their lives as members of a global community.

Because I teach sociology at a university dominated by engineering and computer science, I see the work that I do as especially critical, as I may interface with students in one of the few social science classes they take while in college. While my classes range across levels, all of the classes that I regularly teach (SOC 1101, Introduction to Sociology; HTS 2016, Social Issues and Public Policy; HTS 3017, Sociology of Gender; HTS 3071, Sociology of Crime) are part of the Core Area E general education requirements for Georgia Tech students. This means that I must teach to students with a broad range of backgrounds in the social sciences, balance the presentation of introductory information with opportunities for deeper engagement and discussion, and use the semester that I have with the students as an opportunity to help them broaden their worldview and understanding of such things as social institutions and inequality.

To do this work, my standards are high and I see my students as complex individuals who have lives outside of the classroom that they can draw upon to help them learn. Conversely, these experiences may also be impediments to their learning, which must also be recognized. Race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc. all add complexity to individuals and the way that they learn and contribute in the classroom. ***Through being able to change the way that they see the world I can have the greatest impact.***

My first responsibility as a teacher is to communicate to students the substance of the class. I recognize that not all students will leave my classroom and become sociologists. However, each will become a citizen in a world in which things such as race, class, gender, and sexual orientation are inescapable

constructs and in which inequality and social control are ubiquitous. In addition, they will be bombarded with conflicting messages regarding all of these, particularly from the media. Each will also enter a world in which the ability to communicate and critique ideas is an invaluable skill. Teaching them content is only the first step. Helping them to translate that content into their own life experiences is the more valuable task. Students must learn to look beyond their own lives and worldviews. I believe that my classes help to do this, and thus impact the students during the semester in which they enrolled and (hopefully) into the future.

Teachers of sociology are faced with an interesting dilemma when attempting to help students translate sociological knowledge into practical experience. Often, students enter the classroom with an assumption that sociology is all about "stuff that we already know." ***It is my philosophy that it is crucial to balance the belief in helping students to integrate sociological concepts with their daily life and to challenge the notion that sociology is merely describing the known.*** I think that my teaching methods are crucial for doing this, as they focus on thinking critically and challenging what we think is "known" about the social world.

*Amy V. D'Unger, Ph.D.*  
*School of History and Sociology*  
*Georgia Institute of Technology*

**Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness (Including Teaching Awards and Evaluations)**

I have taught a wide variety of courses. At the undergraduate level, these include: Race and Ethnicity; Sociology of Gender; Social Issues and Public Policy; Sociology of Crime; Juvenile Delinquency; Gender and Crime; Introduction to Sociology; and Introduction to College Life. These have ranged in size from seminars with 8 – 10 students to lecture classes with 180 students. At the graduate level, I have taught Gender, State Policy, and Social Control; Socialization, Society, and the Life Course; and Gender and Crime, with class sizes of 2 – 15 students.

Because of these diverse class sizes and topics, I have had to be flexible in the teaching techniques that I use, as well as the expectations and assignments that I give to students. When I teach a large class, I recognize that discussion and small-group interaction might not be feasible. However, merely standing in front of a class and lecturing “at” them is not my preferred method of teaching, so I always try to make the materials engaging and relevant. Given that my large class tends to be Introduction to Sociology, this is an easy and fun task because of the relevance of sociology to everyday life. I integrate video and audio, information from the news, current events, and pop culture into my lectures to make the materials applicable and relevant to their lives, as well as to show students how a sociological “lens” can be used to view daily life. And, despite the size of the class, I always have them write several short assignments that involve the application of sociological concepts to everyday situations.

In smaller classes, discussion and critical thinking are at the center of my teaching strategy. I try to make sure that discussions are inclusive of everyone, even if their opinions deviate from my own or that of others’ in the classroom. I include frequent short writing assignments (3 – 5 pages) as well as essay-based exams that ask students to apply their knowledge of course concepts. I always integrate elements such as guest speakers, videos, field trips, and artwork or other visual media into my classes.

Students report that my classes challenge them academically and make them think about things in a new way. While expressing the sentiment that my classes are “*very reading intensive*” and require a lot of work, most students felt that the “*interesting assignments encourage students to want to complete them.*” One student commented that, “*I actually enjoyed writing the papers, which is a comment I’ve never made in college before.*” A student comment that was typical of my evaluations was that the class was, “*very enriching and teaches [you] to take a critical approach—something that most Tech classes do not.*” At Georgia Tech, many of the students that I teach are engineers and scientists, which makes the social science material new and challenging for some of them. Many expressed a sentiment similar to this one, “*this class is so different from the other classes offered at Tech that it is really eye opening.*” I believe that my greatest achievement is expressed in this comment, made in a CIOS evaluation, from a student in Sociology of Gender, “*The best aspect of the class was the guarantee that you would learn something new and revolutionary almost every lecture.*”

**Teaching Awards**

***I. Student Recognition of Excellence in Teaching: Class of 1934 CIOS Award/Fall 2020 Honor Roll***

In January 2021 I was named to the fall 2020 Student Recognition of Excellence in Teaching Honor roll and won a Class of 1934 CIOS Award. These awards make me particularly proud because the teaching was done during a year of extreme stress and distress for many in the Georgia Tech community. Many students were struggling with multiple life issues and in environments that were not conducive to their learning (and sometimes even their personal well-being). At the end of this list, please see the note that I

received from a student in December 2020, at the end of HTS 3017, Sociology of Gender. It was an unsolicited note and I have redacted the student's name. I am also including some comments from CIOS evaluations from HTS 3017, Sociology of Gender, in fall 2020.

*“Dr. D’Unger has been (seriously) the best instructor I’ve yet to have at Georgia Tech. She has been the most inclusive, most welcoming, and most concerned for her students’ well-being. I have enjoyed every second of her lectures, and I really appreciate the knowledge gained from this class.”*

*(Greatest Strength) “Her compassion and social awareness. Of course you expect that from a sociology teacher to a degree but I think people would not have opened up the way they did in class if she didn’t provide an incredibly safe and accepting space. It made the class great.”*

*“Dr. D’Unger is extremely talented in using inclusive language in class discussions. She is able to foster a welcoming environment at all times, and I really admire her ability to tackle tough discussions in positive ways.”*

*“I love a well-organized Canvas page it makes my life so much better and yours is one of the best I’ve seen so far so thank you for that. What really made the class great was your enthusiasm for the subject, how in depth we looked at how gender effects everything, and how you incorporated the intersectionality of the topic and how that can immensely effect experiences.”*

## ***II. Chancellor’s Learning Scholar***

In the fall of 2019 I was selected as one of four faculty members to represent Georgia Tech as a Chancellor’s Learning Scholar (CLS) by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. As a CLS, I facilitated a Faculty Learning Community, which provided the opportunity to engage in sustained, meaningful conversations about teaching and learning with supportive colleagues from across campus. A poster on the project was included in the 2020 Celebrating Teaching Day.

I am the only faculty member from the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts who has been selected. The topic of the 2019 – 2020 FLC that I facilitated was transparency in teaching and learning (“TiLT”). During challenging times such as this current historical moment, and particularly with a shift to online modes of teaching, the TiLT mindset is particularly valuable in creating open and equitable classrooms.

## ***III. Class of 1934 Undergraduate Educator Award***

In the spring of 2017 I was given the Class of 1934 Undergraduate Educator Award, meant to recognize teaching excellence among non-tenure track faculty. The award particularly focuses on teaching excellence in core courses or survey classes that reach a wide diversity of students and that impact students’ lives beyond the classroom. In the eight years that the award has been given, I am the only faculty member from the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts who has received it.

## ***IV. Teacher of the Year, Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts***

In the spring of 2016 I was named the Teacher of the Year in the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts (IAC) at Georgia Tech. The recipient of the award is selected by members of the IAC Student Advisory Board based on teaching excellence in liberal arts classes.

## ***V. Class of 1969 Teaching Scholars Program***

In the fall of 2008 I was selected to participate in the Class of 1969 Teaching Scholars Program, focusing on peer-assisted learning. The following semester I taught HTS 2016, Social Issues and Public Policy, so I chose to do a research project involving peers across institutions. I collaborated with professors at



Emory University and Clark Atlanta University and we developed parallel classes that focused on exhibits from writer and photographer Rickie Solinger, a visit by activist and scholar Angela Davis, and film screenings held on the three campuses. The courses were all on the themes of crime and incarceration; women and mothers in prison; and gender, poverty, and the welfare state. Students collaborated with each other and served as “consultants” on group projects, as well as participated in cross-university film screenings and a study circle on the work of Angela Davis, culminating in a talk by Davis at Emory University. At the end, the students evaluated the “value” of peer-assisted learning, particularly as applied across campuses. The results were presented in a session at the 2009 Celebrating Teaching Day.

**VI. Thank-a-Teacher Awards**

Since 2009, I have been the recipient of 11 “**Thank-a-Teacher**” Awards. Some excerpted comments from those award letters are below.

- [HTS 2016] *Thanks so much for going above and beyond the role of professor and creating so many learning opportunities outside of the traditional classroom!...I think the effort you make sets a great example for other professors for how they could be more engaged in the undergraduate learning experience and I know it has enhanced my own experience at Tech tremendously!*
- [HTS 3017] *I want to thank you for your support. Your support shows the true definition of a teacher, not one bound by just academic endeavors but as an asset to a larger community. Your support helped me reach where I am today. Thank you so much for your commitment as a teacher for all!*
- [HTS 2016] *Thank you so much for the passion and dedication that you have shown me these past few years...I have learned so much from you. Your classes have opened my eyes to the world and society. Thank you for your dedication and care for your students. I have loved all my classes with you.*
- [SOC 1101] *Your class has had an impact on the way I view my surroundings. It has opened my eyes to see how socially constructed many aspects of the society (and its institutions) can be, and how close to home many seemingly remote societal problems actually are. But most importantly, it has made me realize how lucky I truly am—not only to be where I am today, but also to have the opportunity of having you as my sociology professor.*

**VII. Faculty Materials and Supplies Grants**

In 2008 and 2017 I received small grants from the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program at Georgia Tech to support three undergraduate researchers in their work. One of them went on to present her work at the Southern Sociological Society meeting and another published his research in the Georgia Tech undergraduate research journal *The Tower*.

**Teaching Evaluations**

Results from university evaluations of undergraduate courses from spring 2007 – fall 2019 are presented below. Possible scores range from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Scores from the last three years are **highlighted**.

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>SEMESTER</b>	<b>SCORE</b>	<b>PARTICIPATION RATE</b>
<b>GT 1000, Introduction to College Life</b> (approximately 10 students)	Fall 2007	4.8	57%
	Fall 2018	4.9	100%
	Fall 2019	4.8	46%

<b>HTS 1001, Introduction to HTS</b> (approximately 15 – 20 students)	Spring 2013 Spring 2014	4.7 4.9	74% 77%
<b>HTS 2016, Social Issues and Public Policy</b> (approximately 35 – 40 students)	Spring 2009 Fall 2013 Spring 2015 Spring 2017 Spring 2019	4.8 4.5 4.9 4.9 4.9	61% 77% 96% 95% 95%
<b>HTS 3017, Sociology of Gender</b> (approximately 35 – 40 students)	Fall 2007 Fall 2008 Fall 2010 Fall 2014 Spring 2016 Fall 2018 Fall 2020	5.0 4.7 5.0 4.9 4.9 4.9 5.0	55% 91% 42% 100% 94% 91% 91%
<b>HTS 3071, Sociology of Crime</b> (approximately 35 – 40 students)	Spring 2011 Fall 2015 Fall 2019	4.8 4.9 4.9	61% 89% 94%
<b>HTS 3813, Gender and Crime</b> (approximately 35 – 40 students)	Spring 2008 Fall 2011	5.0 4.8	42% 90%
<b>HTS 4011, Gender, State Power, and Social Control</b> (approx. 10 students)	Fall 2017	5.0	75%
<b>SOC 1101, Introduction to Sociology</b> (approximately 165 – 185 students)	Spring 2007 Fall 2009 Fall 2012 Fall 2016 Spring 2018 Spring 2019	4.8 4.8 4.6 4.8 4.9 4.9	35% 43% 91% 92% 91% 87%

Please go to the next page to see the note referenced in

- Teaching Awards, I. Student Recognition of Excellence in Teaching: Class of 1934 CIOS Award/Fall 2020 Honor Roll

Dr. Amy D'Unger,

Thank you. Thank you for teaching this course. Thank you for giving us all a chance to engage with you, the texts, other classmates, and ourselves. Do you know what it feels like to be able to say I am a polyamorous, pansexual who grew up on WIC supplemental program?? It feels glorious, to engage with and be proud of my entirety in an academic setting. Do you know what it feels like to engage with academic research that entails feelings and thoughts regarding my identity that I face everyday?? It feels like my emotions are justified. Thank you. I mean that. Your creation of a safe space to discuss gender, identity, poverty, and sexuality matters. I am leaving your class more confident in my identity and proud of my being. I also leave with the inequalities and Georgids poverty statistics engraved in my mind. Thank you.

Date: February 26, 2021

To: The Geoffrey Eichholz Teaching Award Selection Committee

From: Douglas Flamming, Professor, School of History and Sociology

Re: Dr. Amy D'Unger

I am delighted to write in support of Dr. Amy D'Unger's nomination for the Geoffrey Eichholz Teaching Award. In every way, she richly deserves the award.

As an Eichholz Award winner myself, I have a keen interest in teaching the large survey class. D'Unger and I have shared this interest and, over the years, have frequently discussed survey-teaching strategies and philosophies. I have always admired her commitment to the survey class. Until this week, however, I had not actually seen her teach. This letter is my review of her lecture.

Her lecture was splendid. Period. I would certainly be hard pressed to match its quality. It cemented my already-firm view that D'Unger is most worthy of the Eichholz Award.

The course was SOC 1101: Introduction to Sociology. The class met in the East Architecture lecture hall, and it drew a full house. SOC 1101 is not required at Georgia Tech and fulfills no special credit obligations (e.g., ethics requirement), so it is testimony to D'Unger's reputation as a top teacher that the class is so heavily enrolled – 178 students enrolled out of a possible 180, which is actually typical of her enrollments in this course. The lecture, given on Monday, February 24, was titled, "Crime, Control, and Stratification" – all basic concepts in Sociology.

The first thing to note is D'Unger's lecture style, which is very appealing. Her voice is strong, and she uses it effectively. She was easy to hear without a mic, and her voice had an upbeat, pleasant quality (easy to listen to). The *pace* of her lecture was also excellent – never bogging down but giving time for the material to sink in and for students to think and take notes. Excellent flow. In addition, she conveyed enthusiasm for her subject and equal enthusiasm for communicating the material with the students. On stage, she appeared to be in her comfort zone; she used the stage space well and, lecturing without notes, was in command of the material. On occasion, D'Unger added a note of light, appropriate humor, which the students seemed to appreciate. These stylistic concerns make a significant difference in the survey course. They matter.

The lecture itself was creative, interactive, and just downright interesting. D'Unger's Powerpoint slides were almost never bullet-point lists; instead, most of her slides were visuals – graphs and photos. For each concept, she began by presenting something concrete (a graph of incarceration rates, a photo of a Disney World playground) and invited the students to interpret

the slides: “What do you see?” or “How might you interpret this?” She then raised critical questions about the slide and asked the students to respond – and they did, quite readily in fact. The give-and-take was quite admirable.

I have long known that D’Unger espouses interactive teaching, but to see her in action, making it work in real time, in a large survey classroom packed with students, well, that was singularly impressive. Her ability to create an interactive learning environment in the large survey course is one of many reasons she deserves special recognition.

The material she presented was eye-opening – on crime rates, incarceration rates, the privatization of prisons, and the role played by race, gender, and class within the criminal justice system. She talked about the concept of social control by comparing control in prisons with control at Georgia Tech and control at Disney World. She showed a brief but telling video about the revival of “risky play” for kids in a town in Wales. All the while, she encouraged discussion and made it work seamlessly. Bringing Georgia Tech and Disney into the mix seemed appealing to the students.

Amy D’Unger has found a way to present core Sociological concepts by drawing on the everyday life of her students and the pop culture that surrounds them. This approach really hits home with them. She gives them new ways to look at, and interpret, their own world. She invites them to *think*, and that, in the large survey classroom, is something to celebrate.

With utmost enthusiasm and without any hesitation, I strongly recommend Dr. Amy D’Unger for the Geoffrey Eichholz Teaching Award.

Douglas Flamming  
Professor of History  
School of History and Sociology  
Georgia Institute of Technology

February 25, 2021

Sarah McDougal  
Undergraduate Student, Georgia Institute of Technology  
School of Computer Science

To Whom It May Concern,

It is a great honor to write a letter of support for Dr. Amy D'Unger's nomination for the Geoffrey G. Eichholz Faculty Teaching Award. The past two semesters, I have taken three courses with Dr. D'Unger (Intro to Sociology, Sociology of Crime, Social Issues and Public Policy). Throughout this time, it's obvious that Dr. D'Unger has had a great and positive impact on me. She brings so much passion and excitement to every course and deeply cares for her students.

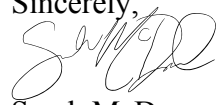
I decided to take Sociology of Crime on a whim because I needed to take another social science course. On the first day of class, Dr. D'Unger quickly employed her previous experience working in the field to engage the entire class. Each lecture was filled with extremely interesting material and personal anecdotes that she could add to many of them. She encourages a large amount of class participation, so the entire classroom is always focused. The manner in which Dr. D'Unger presents the material allows me to spend her class actively learning, rather than copying down a powerpoint and trying to learn later. I have never had to cram for one of her tests because her teaching style and lesson plans are so well thought out.

I am currently in two more sociology courses with Dr. D'Unger and in a lecture with 185 students, she still amazes me with her engaging teaching style. There is not a time that I am bored in either course. Sociology is a very interesting topic to me in general, but the way she is able to teach challenging, unfamiliar topics keeps me and other students actively involved and genuinely curious in each class period.

Outside of keeping any number of students engaged and interested in the course material, Dr. D'Unger also takes time to get to know her students. The first few weeks of my Social Issues and Public Policy class, she called out the attendance sheet so that she could learn everyone's names and now knows all of our names. At the end of each class period, there is always a long line of students waiting to talk to her about something from that day's class or just to chat.

I have also had the pleasure of working with Dr. D'Unger outside of the classroom. Last fall she even helped me with a cover letter for an internship application. She was incredibly helpful when it came to showing who I really was because she took the time to really get to know me, what I loved, where I come from, and why I was applying to this particular position. Since then, I decided to add a Sociology minor to my degree and will continue to take what she has taught me in and out of the classroom to my knowledge of sociology and the world around me.

I am so thankful that I am able to have Dr. D'Unger as my professor, and truly believe that she is the perfect candidate for the Geoffrey G. Eichholz Faculty Teaching Award.

Sincerely,  
  
Sarah McDougal

February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing this letter in full support of Dr. Amy D'Unger for the Geoffrey G. Eichholz Faculty Teaching Award. Over the last two years, I have had the privilege of taking several classes with Dr. D'Unger, including Sociology of Gender, Sociology of Crime, Intro to Sociology, and Social Issues and Public Policy. Throughout these courses, I was challenged by Dr. D'Unger to think differently about the world around me, consistently impressed by the mastery with which she wields the knowledge of her subject, and inspired by the compassion she shows her students. The opportunity to study with and learn from Dr. D'Unger has not only re-ignited my passion for learning but also played a major role in shaping my future.

My journey with Dr. D'Unger began as I sought out classes to fulfill my social science and free credit requirements. In the fall of my third year, I stumbled upon her Sociology of Gender class, as it was a perfect fit in my schedule and would round out my core curriculum. Through Dr. D'Unger's instruction, this class became much more than just checking a box; it became the first class of my college career to change how I viewed the world around me. No matter where I was or who I was with, I found myself reciting lines from Dr. D'Unger's lectures, trying to enlighten my friends at lunch or my roommates at dinner about all of the things I had learned; I simply could not stop talking about Dr. D'Unger's class and decided to pursue a minor in Sociology.

In every class Dr. D'Unger teaches, she is easily able to combine her extensive knowledge of the subject with relevant research and relatable examples that enable her students to both understand and remember concepts, sociological theories, and statistics. Furthermore, she can examine almost any question or issue through seemingly infinite lenses, providing insight and counter examples from a myriad of perspectives. Though I have had many professors in all different subjects, none have been able to convey their knowledge to a room full of people as eloquently as Dr. D'Unger.

One of Dr. D'Unger's greatest strengths is the truly remarkable class environment she is able to create in only a few weeks. In smaller classes, she knows everyone's name by the second or third week. But even in a large lecture, such as Intro to Sociology, she takes time to get to know her students, making them feel comfortable sharing their thoughts or opinions and answering questions. Each class I have taken with Dr. D'Unger has felt more like a community in which students feel both engaged by Dr. D'Unger's teaching style and in awe of her knowledge. Therefore, it is not a surprise that many of my close friends at this time in my life have come from these communities or study groups formed during Dr. D'Unger's classes.

While there is no shortage of exceptional faculty at Georgia Tech, it is a rare treasure for a student to encounter a professor as outstanding and impactful as Dr. D'Unger.

Best Regards,  
Charlotte Canavor

Dear Eichholz Teaching Award Selection Committee Members:

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, a recent alumnus of Georgia Tech, and I would like to highly recommend Dr. Amy D'Unger for the Geoffrey G. Eichholz Faculty Teaching Award. I had the pleasure of taking two courses with Dr. D'Unger as an undergraduate: SOC 1101 Introduction to Sociology and HTS 2016 Social Issues & Public Policy in the Spring 2018 and Spring 2019 semesters, respectively. I am writing this letter because she has left a tremendous impact on me, and her courses were immensely formative to my personal and career development.

What initially stood out to me about Dr. D'Unger is her openness. Even when teaching to a large lecture hall of one hundred eighty, she set up her office hours such that a time slot was free whenever she was in her office, a degree of commitment I had never before seen in a professor. As the academic advisor for all students majoring in HTS, she stressed her availability outside of the classroom, not solely for catching up on or clarifying concepts, but also to chat. So, I did something I never thought I would ever do. I visited a professor's office hours, not because was struggling with course material, but because I truly wanted to chat and make their acquaintance.

On that afternoon in February 2018, I introduced myself and noted that the topics we had covered in class up until then were quite emotionally charged. She smiled and nodded before asking me what was on my mind. I wanted to know more about the root causes of gendered violence and why men accounted for the vast majority of assailants. As an expert on the sociology of gender and crime, Dr. D'Unger was more than happy to share her knowledge with me, but instead of data dumping abstractly, she connected her insights to current or local events. For example, we discussed how recent legislation in GA that would have stripped away Title IX protections from sexual violence survivors could have racked up traction. Dr. D'Unger explained that patriarchy has been historically embedded in the legal system and other institutions to often side with male perpetrators, citing the very low level of conviction rates.

We ended up talking about everything under the sociological sun including mass incarceration, white-collar crime, involuntary sterilization, welfare reform, and the fate of organized labor. Through it all, Dr. D'Unger demonstrated, fluidly and methodologically, how inequalities in status, wealth, and power explain material conditions on the ground. I looked at my watch and noticed that an hour had passed, going well over the allotted time. She saw my look of apology and instantly affirmed that she really enjoyed our conversation and that I not hesitate to reach out at any time again. I left with my mind spinning (in a good way).

As the semester progressed, I began to appreciate Dr. D'Unger's use of humor and entertaining anecdotes. In a lecture on the socialization of gender roles and the fluidity of gender, she told the class that having both a boy and a girl is a sociologist's dream because they can experiment to their heart's content. She recounted a story of waiting in line to purchase a purple blanket at a baby store after her first child was born. A lady standing behind her had remarked that it would be perfect for her daughter. Dr. D'Unger replied, "Oh no, it's for my son," to an aghast look from the lady. The class erupted in laughter.

I was moved by the way she lightheartedly addressed serious topics, especially in the case of gender roles. When I was growing up, I was bullied for having "girly" interests or otherwise not fitting the masculine mold. In office hours, Dr. D'Unger validated my past experiences, stating how hilarious and ludicrous it was that certain music or colors define a certain gender, or that gentleness is effeminate. I also brought up that I sometimes faced homophobic slurs, but I sensed that the nature of these affronts was not really about same-sex attraction. She told me that jeers like those are primarily rooted in a desire to gatekeep the boundaries of masculinity, less so homophobia. Our meeting was a clinic in how Dr. D'Unger teaches sociology: by mapping both her vast knowledge base and emotional intelligence onto the learner's unique background and needs.

Needless to say, at the end of the semester, I wanted more. The introductory concepts had exposed me to "real world" topics that I had mostly put on the backburner as a chemistry major. Dr. D'Unger told me that she would be teaching Sociology of Gender in Fall 2018, but unfortunately the time



conflicted with my course schedule, to the disappointment of us both. She also told me about the HSOC Speaker Series, whose lineup of guest speakers she was involved in organizing throughout the semester, and I attended some talks in the Fall to keep my mind refreshed.

In my final semester at Georgia Tech, I took another class with Dr. D'Unger, a core elective called HTS 2016 Social Issues & Public Policy. I immediately noticed how her teaching style became more intimate as the class size had shrunk from nearly two hundred to forty. Now, she was able to probe the class more deeply for input, and introduce more rigorous reading and writing assignments.

In HTS 2016, the premise was to weave together two theories we had been taught in SOC 1101, conflict theory and symbolic interactionism. The name of the game was critical constructionism, and nearly all concepts relate to it. Dr. D'Unger brilliantly explained why social problems often mismatch with their magnitude, and how some phenomena are deemed problems while others are not; elites and corporate interests exert an outsized influence in the political economy, media, and culture, and thus they preferentially define and demarcate social problems. We went on to verify this assertion in every single lecture. She situated American social problems in a global context and would Socratically ask why some problems seem to particularly afflict us.

Finding relevant and timely sources is an underrated effort in designing a class that models everchanging events, and assigned readings can vary greatly by professor, but Dr. D'Unger put forth copious evidence through a combination of textbook, online articles, and documentary films. Some of the readings listed on the syllabus were published just a few weeks before the course began. Fortuitously, days after Dr. D'Unger delivered a lecture on the opioid crisis in March 2019, the Sackler family was sued for Purdue Pharma's role in deceiving the public about OxyContin. She made sure to tie it into future lectures and emphasize the topic on the exam. By highlighting the overlap between the news and course content, Dr. D'Unger's teaching blurred the lines between curricular and real life.

What made her HTS 2016 section so special is the degree to which it transcended the syllabus. Her goal is for students to not only apply critical constructionism to the topics of voter suppression, human trafficking, and environmental racism, but also to topics not explicitly covered in the course. With that, she instills a vision in students that they take with them beyond their undergraduate career, and I affirm that this class is the gift that keeps on giving. Her course truly operationalized what it means to think critically: to analyze claimsmakers, how such claims are typified by powers that be, and which groups have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo.

Indeed, when I evaluate my professors, the most points they can earn is if I can use and cherish concepts, not just facts and figures, they teach in the classroom in my everyday life — be it Mendelian genetics from biology, probability and statistics from math, or equilibrium from chemistry. This is an area that sets Dr. D'Unger apart from other candidates because her delivery of sociological principles, and namely critical constructionism, has changed the way I see the world.

In a few months, I will begin medical school, and without Dr. D'Unger's classes, I may not have concerned myself with the sociological and historical contexts of medicine. One of the first social problems we covered was the activism of pediatric radiologists discovering and speaking up about child abuse in the 1960s, paving the way for a host of child protection laws. It was an important lesson that the institutions of medicine and healthcare are inherently sociopolitical. I have since read about topics in medical sociology that I would not have had the spark to explore had it not been for her choice of examples.

As I reflect on the 2 years I have known Dr. D'Unger, I greatly value her management of both class formats with ease. She gave a broad overview of sociology in SOC 1101, presenting several theoretical perspectives alongside a range of topics. In HTS 2016, she applied a specific lens of

constructivism to many social problems. Of note, she teaches the two courses concurrently and has no problem switching modes.

I know Dr. D'Unger to be a personable, incisive, and bold professor. She has inspired me to ask not just descriptive questions but normative ones as well, to engage with counterhegemonic dialogues instead of hegemonic ones, and to not only seek out new viewpoints and theories, but to closely examine their underpinnings. It is my view that Dr. D'Unger is the top nominee to receive this award because of the lifelong impact she has had on students like me.

Sincerely,

B.S. Chemistry, 2019