

*Ruth J. and Howard F. Newton Memorial Graduate Student
Teaching Award in Statistics
2023 Recipient - Rebecca Lee*

Rebecca Lee is the 2023 recipient of the Ruth J. and Howard F. Newton Memorial Graduate Student Teaching Award in Statistics. Rebecca was selected to receive the Newton Teaching Award based on her outstanding evaluations by Dr. Scott Bruce for her work as Graduate Assistant - Teaching (or, TA) in STAT 624: Databases and Computational Tools Used in Big Data in Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Fall 2022, and Spring 2023. This is a very important class for the department, as it is part of our Data Science offerings and features modern and rapidly-evolving content. Demand for the course has been very high, and enrollments have grown steadily since its creation. Because of the growth of the course, we had to begin offering multiple sections and assigning multiple TAs. TAs for this course need to have strong written communication, be proactive and reliable about grading and keeping track of attendance, and be responsible when it comes to managing communication with students (e.g., keeping an eye on discussion boards and making sure posts are responded to promptly).

Dr. Bruce had effusive praise for Rebecca. She responded to emails from the instructor and students very promptly. She consulted with the instructor when she had questions about grading and addressing student concerns. She graded and returned graded work to students before deadlines, used Gradescope effectively (including following rubric items provided by the instructor) to give feedback to students, and addressed regrade requests promptly. She made sure that students were completing DataCamp assignments and maintained the gradebook without any delays or issues. She was very generous with her time during office hours, often helping students troubleshoot their code. In addition to completing required tasks on time, she was proactive in reaching out to Dr. Bruce to ask whether there was anything more she could do to help. She was able to balance her coursework and TA duties very well. One specific comment from Dr. Bruce: "I cannot ask for a better TA than Rebecca."

We look forward to continued excellence from Rebecca during her time with us.

Alan R. Dabney

Associate Professor & Associate Head for Teaching Excellence
Department of Statistics