SAMANTHA SWINDELL:

Online students oftentimes are balancing a lot of demands with family and work. But I think, at the end of the day, they want the same thing that the sort of traditional college student wants. They want a quality learning experience. They want clear expectations. They want the material to be meaningful and relevant. They want a supportive learning environment. And they want prompt feedback on their progress.

My favorite part about teaching is seeing students be successful. I have a lot of appreciation for what we ask students to do. I think that the learning process is challenging. It can be frustrating. It requires a lot of hard work. But it can also be really rewarding. And so I think the best part of teaching are seeing those moments of success for my students.

I think two things really impress me about online students-- the fact that they can work with a lot of autonomy, but they’re very adept at being able to get information from outside of the course, implement it into the course. They seem very resourceful to me. And many times, they’re excellent time managers.

And I think the other thing that impresses me, too, is because-- at least in my experience-- many of my online students have been a little older than my traditional on-campus students, they bring a wealth of sort of real-life experience into the classroom. And because there’s a lot of discussion in my courses, I think that really enriches the learning experience for all of the students in the class.

I’ve been teaching for about 15 years. I’ve been involved with WSU online for approximately 12 years. I love being a professor. I think it’s the greatest job in the world. I can’t imagine myself really doing anything else.