**Instructor Name:** Alyssa Pybus

**Observer Name**: Ana María Estrada

**Course**: BMED 3600: Physiology of Cellular and Molecular Systems

**Topic**: Systems Biology and Neuroinflammation

**Date and time**: October 9, 2020 – 11:00 am to 11:50 am

**Class type:** Synchronous session through Bluejeans

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| LEARNING GOALS AND ASSESSMENT  *Does the instructor provide specific, clear learning objectives? Does the instructor then teach towards these objectives? Has the instructor gathered evidence of student learning?*  I really liked how you started the class by presenting the questions that you wanted the students to be able to answer by the end of the class. Your first slide was key for students to organize their thoughts about what was important about the lecture. I also liked that you mentioned to the students that the class's material was going to be assessed. I believe, by doing this, you engaged students in the lecture.  I would recommend that you add some additional slides throughout your presentation with the answers to the questions you introduced at the beginning. These slides are important because they give structure to the lecture and let students visualize the key message. In many slides, you mentioned the key take away, and I really liked that. However, I did not see students taking notes. That is why I believe it is better to have the answers written so that they can refer to the key points when revising the slides.  With the activities you had, I believe you were able to assess if students understood the material. My only concern is that I am not sure what the summative assessment for the lecture is going to look like. You provided a lot of information during the lecture, and it was not clear what the students needed to be able to do by the end of the class. If I were a student, I would be scared, thinking that I need to learn everything you said. I suggest that throughout the lecture, you revisit the learning objectives in the form of active verbs. For example, say something like: "For this part, what I want you to be able to do is to differentiate between inflammation within the brain and elsewhere in the body". This would let students know what they need to be able to do and where to focus their energy. |
| INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES  *Do the chosen instructional strategies seem to support the learning objectives and assessment? Are there areas where slides, handouts, explanations, student interaction, etc. could be improved?*  There are many things I liked about the class. The first one is that I could see you were passionate about what you were teaching and that you know a lot about the topic. I believe you were able to transfer this passion to some of the students because they were happy to participate in the class. I liked how, in some parts, you related what you were teaching to what you do in the lab. This helps students see that what they are learning is used in practice and motivates them. Another thing that I really liked was when you said that if they were interested in a specific topic, they could reach out to you to learn more. Your statement reflects that you care about students learning and that you are an approachable instructor. I am sure that students value this.  In general, I liked the activities you prepared for students to engage with the class. For the open-ended questions, I appreciated that after each of the students’ interventions, you made positive comments like: “really good answer” or “that is a really good point, great answer”. The way you lead these discussions motivated students to unmute themselves and speak and even turn their cameras on. This was my favorite part of the class. My only suggestion is that you have a closing remark at the end of the activities. In both activities, in the end, you said that time was tight and that you needed to move on, but you did not explain what the purpose of the activity was. It is important for the students to know why they are asked to do things; otherwise, they would lose their motivation. I also thought the last activity on PCA was useful to assess if students were able to interpret the results. However, I suggest preparing polls for these multiple-choice questions so that everyone in the class can participate. |
| CLASSROOM CLIMATE  *Does the instructor create a positive learning environment in which all students are comfortable participating?*  As I mentioned before, I really liked your interactions with the students. They know you care about them when you say “that is a good question” or when you ask “did I answer your questions?”. They are motivated to learn and to actively participate in class. My only recommendation would be to have some more activities where even the shy students can participate, like a poll. |
| PRESENTATION  *Do the structure, pace, transitions, visual aids, and verbal/nonverbal communication support learning?*  You did a good job conveying all the material in 50 minutes. When you presented the lesson plan, I was afraid you would not be able to do so. I was impressed because you had a good pace throughout the lecture. At times you mentioned you needed to move on, but I did not feel you rushed through anything. I also liked your slides. Visually they looked very pretty. I do not know much about biology, but I thought you did an excellent job explaining what PCA and PLS do and the difference between them. My only concern is that you provided a lot of information in a short amount of time. I am not sure that this was necessary. I think it might be better to define what the important information is and only present that. At times, I felt overwhelmed by all that was going on. You often said things like: “I know this diagram has many things, but the key information is here”. I wonder if it would not be better just to present the key information so that students don’t get distracted by unnecessary details. |

**Prioritized Feedback**

1. What do you think was the one most effective aspect of the teaching demonstration?

As I have mentioned, what I liked the most was how you interacted with students. First, by being approachable and thankful for their participation. Second, by showing your passion about the topic.

1. What do you think is the most important consideration for the presenter’s future teaching?

Teach only what is important. I know you are passionate about the topic and that is why you feel the need to convey all that you know to your students. However, they do not really need to learn everything, just focus on delivering the key messages. To help you do this, I believe starting with the learning objectives and then deciding on the content might be a good strategy.