BIOS 10130 5 - Principles of Biology - Instructor(s): Eric C Larsen

Project Title: **College Course Feedback - Winter 2024**

Number Enrolled: **115**
Number of Responses: **61**

Report Comments

Opinions expressed in these evaluations are those of students enrolled in the specific course and do not represent the University.

Creation Date: **Thursday, March 28, 2024**

The learning objectives of the course were clear and I understood how to achieve them.

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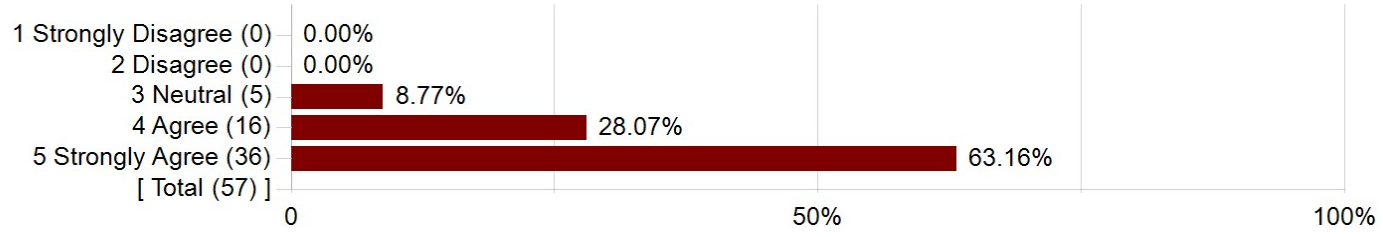

Statistics	Value
Response Count	57
Mean	4.54
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.66

The course helped me to make important progress toward the stated objectives.

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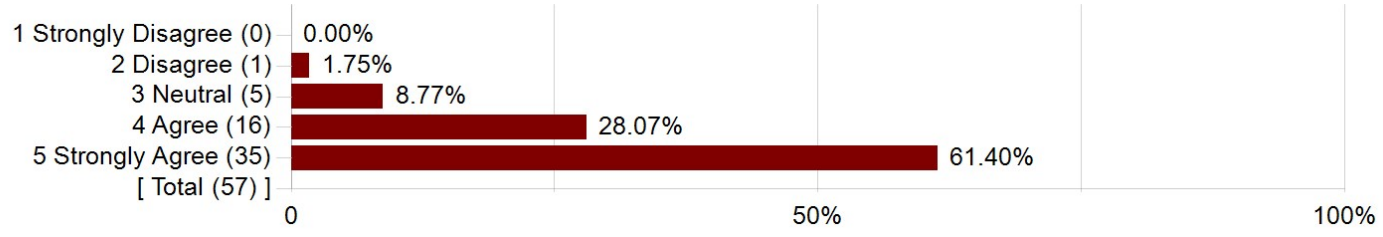

Statistics	Value
Response Count	57
Mean	4.49
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.73

The graded elements of the course were directed toward assessing my progress toward the stated course objectives.

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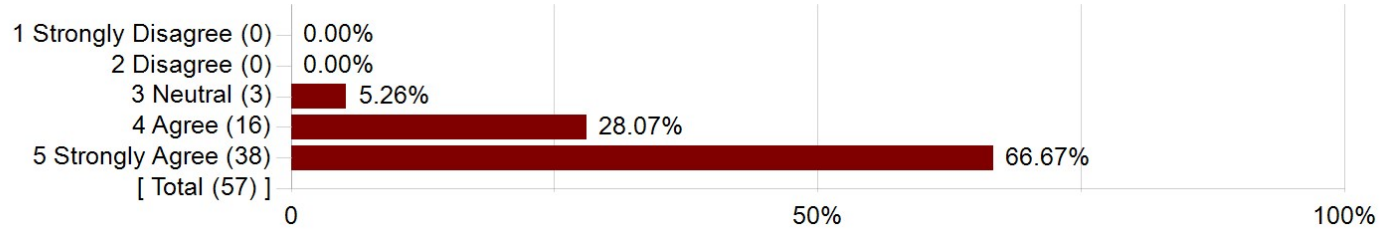

Statistics	Value
Response Count	57
Mean	4.61
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.59

This course had more than one instructor and they connected well with each other.

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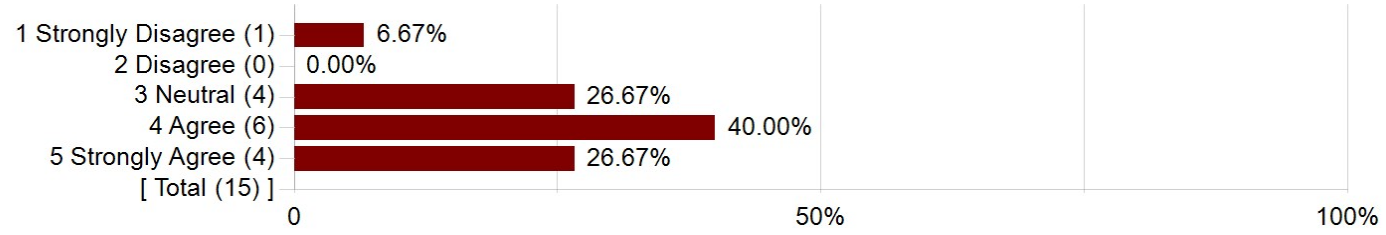
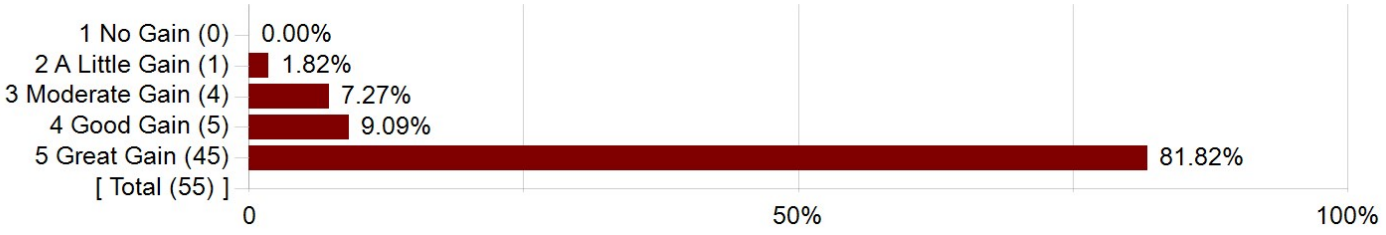


Statistics	Value
Response Count	15
Mean	3.80
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	1.08

How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

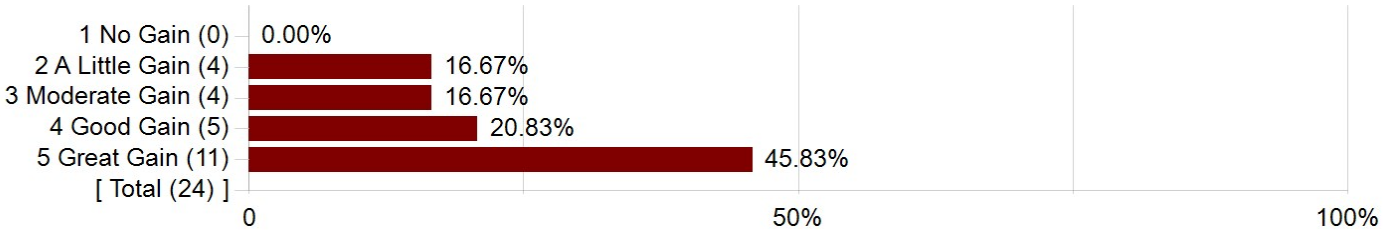
1. Classroom Lectures



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
No Gain	1	0	0.00%
A Little Gain	2	1	1.82%
Moderate Gain	3	4	7.27%
Good Gain	4	5	9.09%
Great Gain	5	45	81.82%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	55
Mean	4.71
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.69

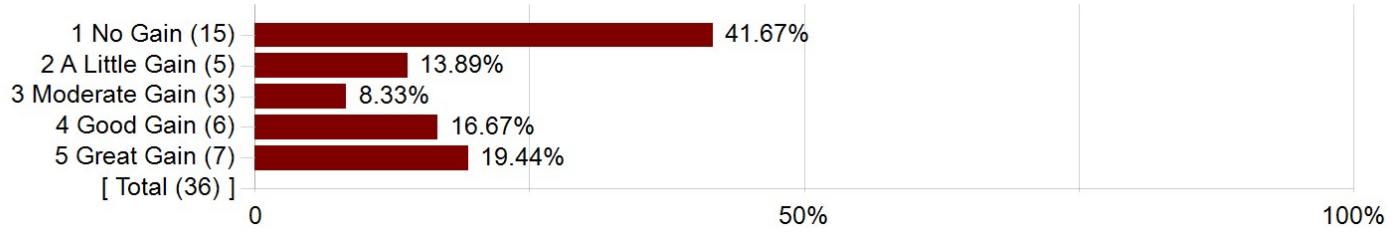
2. Classroom Discussions



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
No Gain	1	0	0.00%
A Little Gain	2	4	16.67%
Moderate Gain	3	4	16.67%
Good Gain	4	5	20.83%
Great Gain	5	11	45.83%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	24
Mean	3.96
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	1.16

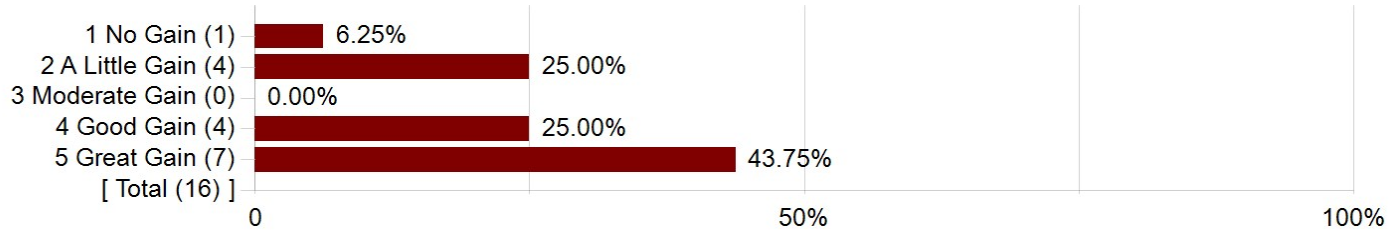
3. Assigned Readings



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
No Gain	1	15	41.67%
A Little Gain	2	5	13.89%
Moderate Gain	3	3	8.33%
Good Gain	4	6	16.67%
Great Gain	5	7	19.44%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	36
Mean	2.58
Median	2.00
Standard Deviation	1.63

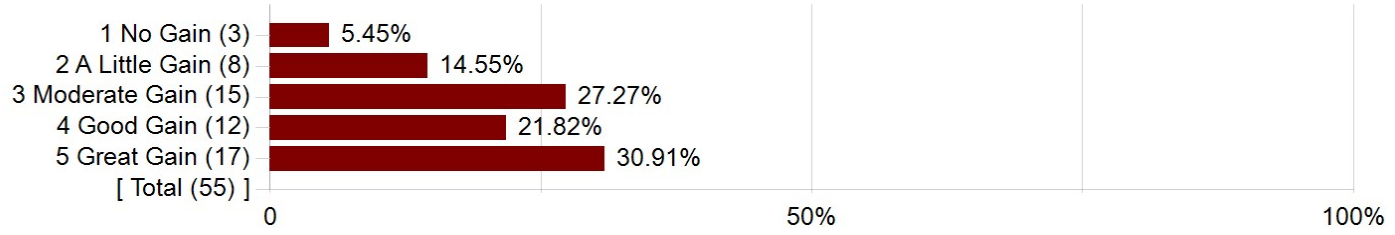
4. Homework Exercises



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
No Gain	1	1	6.25%
A Little Gain	2	4	25.00%
Moderate Gain	3	0	0.00%
Good Gain	4	4	25.00%
Great Gain	5	7	43.75%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	16
Mean	3.75
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	1.44

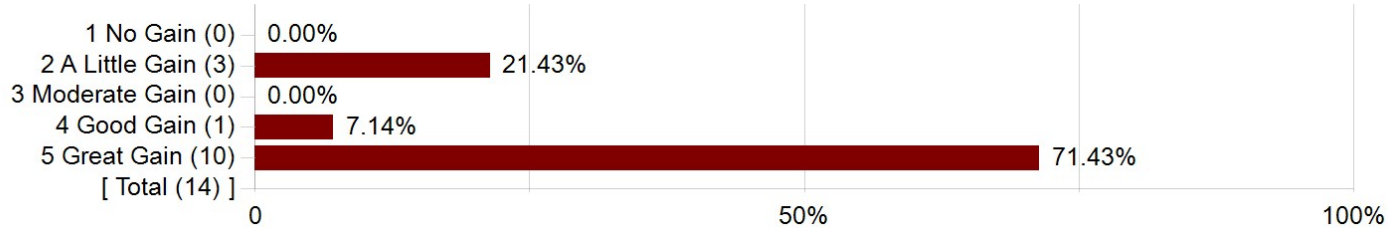
5. Lab Experiences



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
No Gain	1	3	5.45%
A Little Gain	2	8	14.55%
Moderate Gain	3	15	27.27%
Good Gain	4	12	21.82%
Great Gain	5	17	30.91%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	55
Mean	3.58
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	1.23

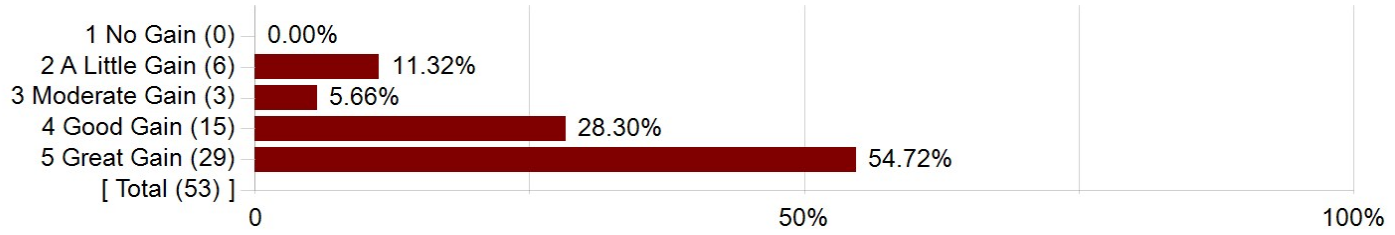
6. Discussion Sessions



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
No Gain	1	0	0.00%
A Little Gain	2	3	21.43%
Moderate Gain	3	0	0.00%
Good Gain	4	1	7.14%
Great Gain	5	10	71.43%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	14
Mean	4.29
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	1.27

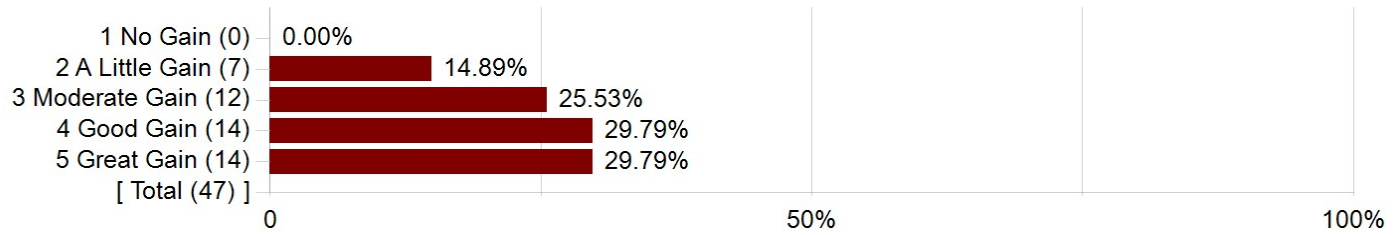
7. Review Sessions



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
No Gain	1	0	0.00%
A Little Gain	2	6	11.32%
Moderate Gain	3	3	5.66%
Good Gain	4	15	28.30%
Great Gain	5	29	54.72%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	53
Mean	4.26
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	1.00

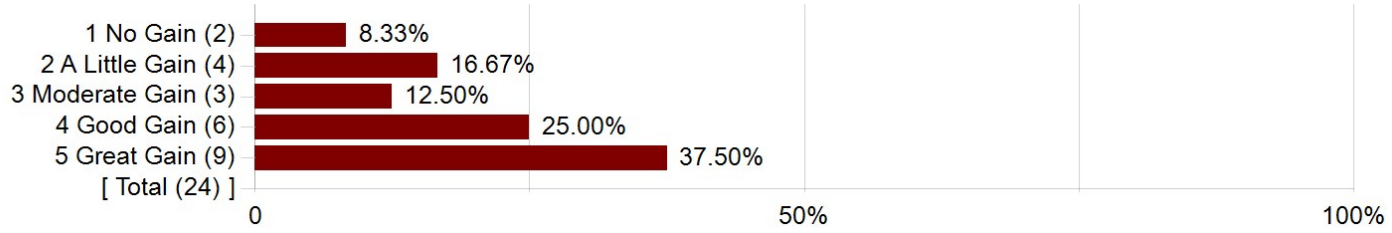
8. Interactions with Other Students



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
No Gain	1	0	0.00%
A Little Gain	2	7	14.89%
Moderate Gain	3	12	25.53%
Good Gain	4	14	29.79%
Great Gain	5	14	29.79%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	47
Mean	3.74
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	1.05

9. Faculty Office Hours

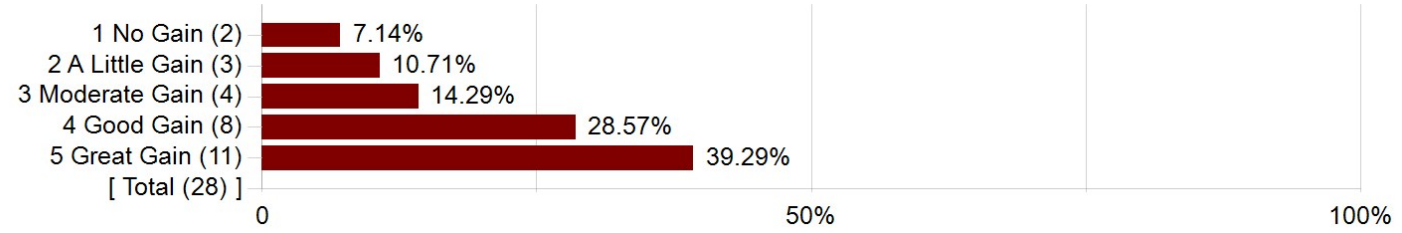


Options	Score	Count	Percentage
No Gain	1	2	8.33%
A Little Gain	2	4	16.67%
Moderate Gain	3	3	12.50%
Good Gain	4	6	25.00%
Great Gain	5	9	37.50%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	24
Mean	3.67
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	1.37

How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains? (continued)

10. Teaching Assistant Office Hours



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
No Gain	1	2	7.14%
A Little Gain	2	3	10.71%
Moderate Gain	3	4	14.29%
Good Gain	4	8	28.57%
Great Gain	5	11	39.29%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	28
Mean	3.82
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	1.28

What was the most important thing (to you) that you learned in this course? What aspect of the material is still unclear for you, that you wish you could have learned better?

Comments
The most important thing to me was just getting an overall better understanding of the human body and why it works the way it does. Something that is unclear to me still is exactly how the kidney functions, but it was a very complex topic.
Digestive system, evolution mechanics, heat/cold stress, how the heart works.
I learned about how aspects of our bodily functions are the result of evolution and how they are used to ensure our survival.
I wish I was more engaged in lectures.
The functioning of the body.
Learned a wide variety of bio from microbiology to evolution at a macro scale. Wish we could've spent more time with evolution.
basics of bio, lots about animals
I think that the most important thing I learned was the mechanics of evolution and how it impacts the morphology of species. I personally just found it interesting. I think that some of the topics on the cellular level are a little unclear to me, but I think that came down to a personal lack of understanding.
I didn't learn that much because most of the topics covered in the course was covered by most general high school bio class.
n/a
I learned some cool facts about animals. There's less of a thread connecting the lectures, they're kind of independent of each other
Out of everything we were taught I think I actually learned the most about the evolution–related topics, which I really enjoyed. I definitely struggled with the more molecular and cellular level stuff at the beginning of the course because I felt like Larsen expected students to be coming in with more background knowledge than I had. However, with some moderate outside of class studying I was able to do well anyway.
I learned a lot of important things, I think. I really enjoyed this class!
Thermoregulation
I learned a lot about evolutionary mechanisms and benefited a lot from the several case studies. I think some of the content from the second quiz about the kidney and digestive system is still a little confusing.
The most important thing I learned is the large amounts of evidence for evolution. The loop of Henle is something I still do not understand.
Honestly, i felt like most of the material was clearly presented, mainly I learned a lot of fun facts about how the bodies of animals are related to each other
The most important thing I learned were the little differences between the different types of selections in the environment.
All the digestive system information as well as cold stress and heat stress responses felt very applicable to my life. I wish we could have focused more on the effects of climate change on species extinction rates – we did on the last day, but after teh quiz, so most people had left.
Probably that I should talk to professors more, but in relation to bio then population growth and the stages of population growth.
N/A
Principles of evolution N/A
Reasonings for specific traits/characteristics on organisms –– everything seems to have a traceable cause
This course taught the basics of biology and filled any gaps in my bio background. The material is all clear.
Biology
Mechanisms and different types of evolution, the basics of cellular respiration, and the digestive system.
Evolution, evidence for evolution and interesting facts
Evolution

How many hours per week outside of attending required sessions did you spend on this course?

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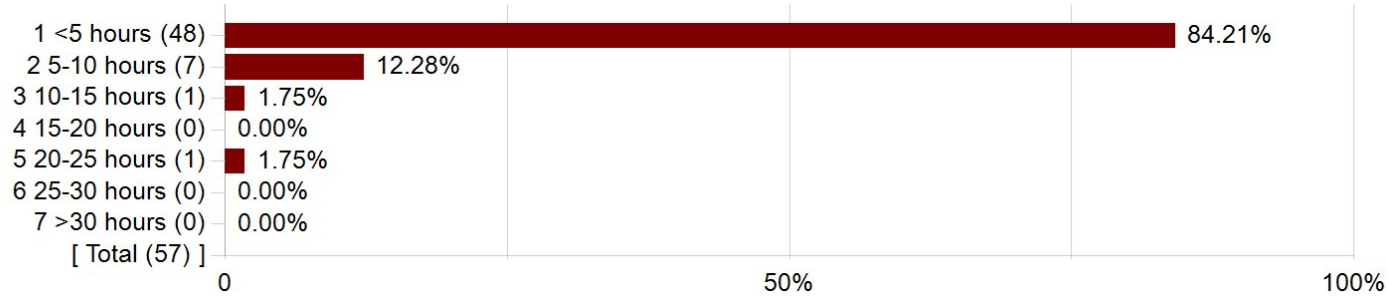
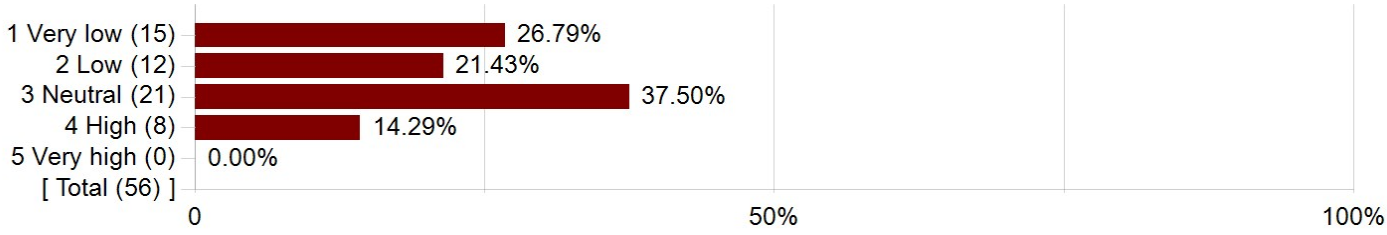


Statistics	Value
Response Count	57
Mean	1.23
Median	1.00
Standard Deviation	0.66

Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?

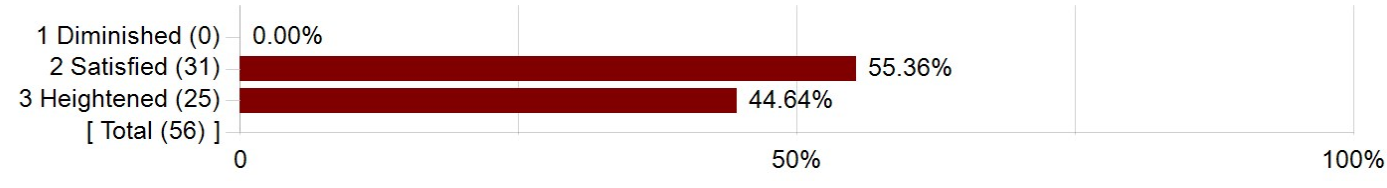
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



Statistics	Value
Response Count	56
Mean	2.39
Median	3.00
Standard Deviation	1.04

Now that this class is over, your interest is?

Now that this class is over, your interest is?



Statistics	Value
Response Count	56
Mean	2.45
Median	2.00
Standard Deviation	0.50

Overall, this was an excellent course.

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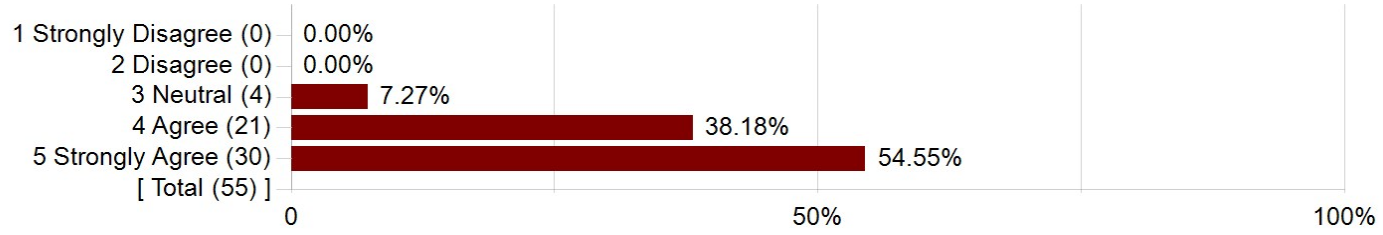


Statistics	Value
Response Count	55
Mean	4.47
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.63

Please share any advice you have for students who are considering taking the course.

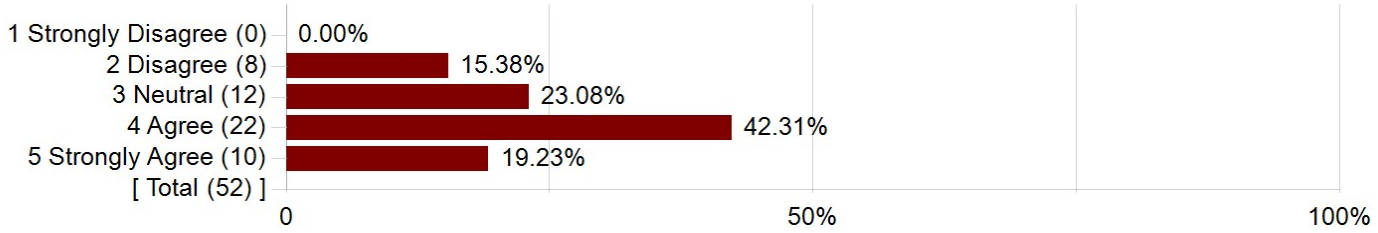
Comments
Definitely attend the quiz review sessions. They greatly improved my performance on the quizzes.
Go to lectures!
best core bio class doable quizzes as long as you study like two days before the tests
Probably the best (and easiest) core biology class to take.
This is a very lecture based class! Larsen and the TA's are pretty lenient with grading, so showing up to every lecture and some minor studying is more than enough for good grades on the quizzes. Overall, this is a pretty easy class to take for a bio requirement, theres not a lot of external effort as a lot of the material has been taught in previous science classes and are pretty straight forward.
Take this course if you are not a bio major and if you have not done bio since the beginning of HS
Write down the examples that are mentioned during lectures and study them for the tests.
Take this course if you want an engaging core bio and if you want to do well. Make sure you lock in during the lectures and you'll be fine.
take any course with larsen
This is the best core bio class possible and prof Larsen is great
memorize everything in the review session the night before the quiz
Attend the lectures. And listen to what he's saying, not just what's on the slides.
the mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell!
One of the best courses to get core bio credit. The slides are minimal so you have to go to lecture, and he's a fun lecturer. Grading is very chill, and I learned some cool animal stuff.
Go to lecture. You can't do well without going.
Most if not all of the quiz content is based on lecture content which is not always on the slides. I felt like actually attending lectures was pretty important for finding success in this class.
If you are taking principles take it with Larson. It was a super forgiving class even if you have no Bio backround.
I would highly recommend it. I found it very interesting and manageable!
Take it!
Great Core Bio Professor! Optional final exam if you're happy with your cumulative grade up to that point (quizzes, labs, canvas discussion)
I found it helpful to study for quizzes/review material by looking at discussion questions that other students posted. If a student misses one of the lectures, these discussion questions, in addition to looking at the slides, were usually helpful for understanding what they may have missed.
Use the discussion board as a tool to study for the quizzes!
Attend every lecture because your quizzes will be based strictly on lecture material. There will usually be one or two quiz questions dealing with something Larsen randomly mentioned in class so only looking at the lecture slides is not a good idea.

Comments
Very engaging lecturer, I would encourage going to every lecture since examples appear on quizzes. But exams are graded very fairly and cover reasonable amounts of content.
If you are considering taking this class for your core bio, place it high on Pre–Reg. There is no homework and there are only 3 quizzes over the course of the quarter and the final is completely optional. The labs are not stressful at all and I usually got out of lab over an hour early. The course is not very strenuous or difficult and if you attend all the lectures many of the topics are pretty straightforward.
Do it! It's chill. The quizzes are difficult if you don't study, but Larsen's lectures are actually really entertaining. He also connects topics to the real world – "when you have kids, do this" lol – which makes it more than worthwhile.
Please take this class. It will be the easiest A you could ever obtain. Just go to lectures and take notes. That's literally all you have to do.
Take notes and go over the lecture ppt.
Attend the review sessions
Pretty fun class I would definitely recommend going to lectures or watching the zoom recordings (however I don't think he posted a single one this quarter so hopefully he does a better job next time) since that's the material that will be on the quizzes
Take it. No homework, 3 quizzes, and an optional final. Only thing you need to do is attend class.
Take Larsen over Fineschi— Larsen's final is optional.
Attend the lectures, they are helpful for quizzes. Spend enough time reviewing to prepare for the quizzes.
Go to class and memorize the lectures, you will be fine for this, basically guaranteed A/A–
Study slides thoroughly

Laboratory Meetings

For each of the following statements, please indicate your level of agreement.

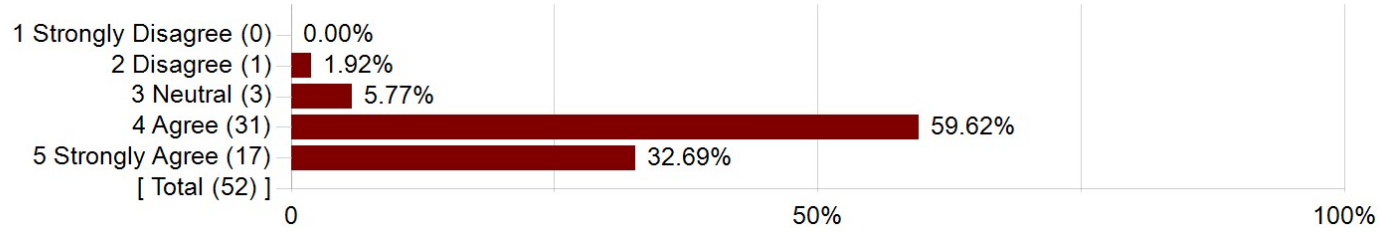
1. The laboratory protocols and instructions were clear and well organized.



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	0	0.00%
Disagree	2	8	15.38%
Neutral	3	12	23.08%
Agree	4	22	42.31%
Strongly Agree	5	10	19.23%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	52
Mean	3.65
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	0.97

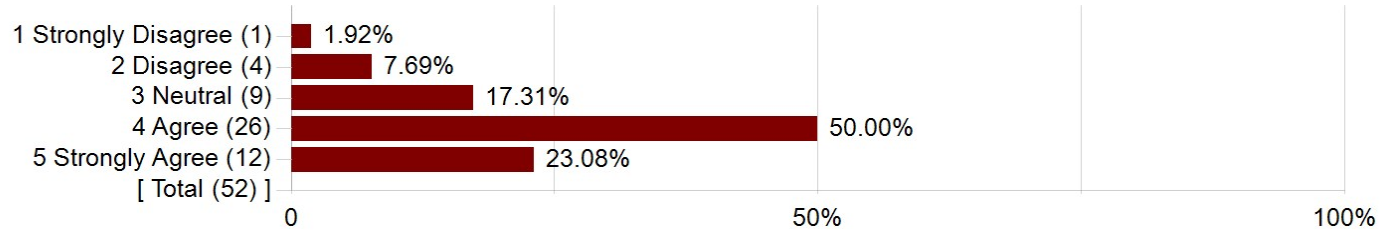
2. Materials and equipment needed for performing the exercises were readily available.



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	0	0.00%
Disagree	2	1	1.92%
Neutral	3	3	5.77%
Agree	4	31	59.62%
Strongly Agree	5	17	32.69%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	52
Mean	4.23
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	0.65

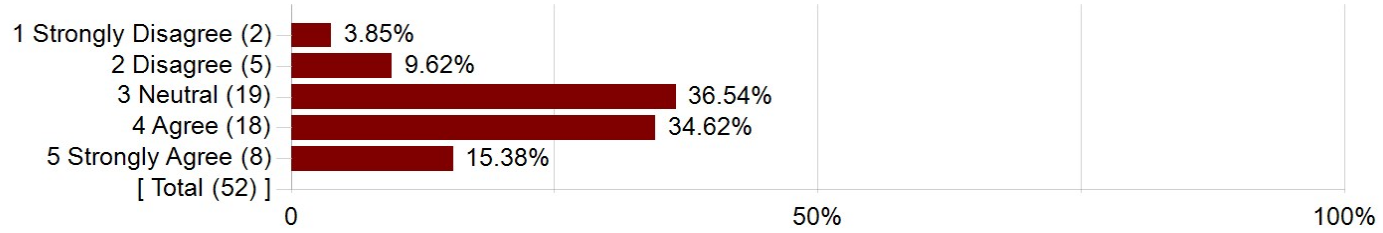
3. The lab exercises had clear educational goals.



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	1	1.92%
Disagree	2	4	7.69%
Neutral	3	9	17.31%
Agree	4	26	50.00%
Strongly Agree	5	12	23.08%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	52
Mean	3.85
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	0.94

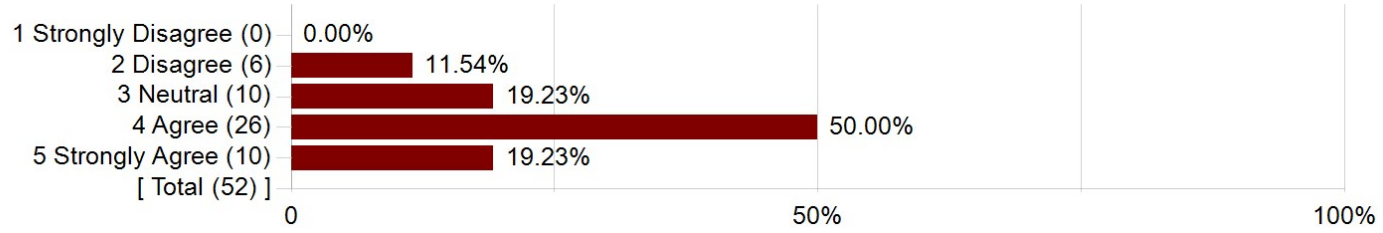
4. The goals of the lab exercises were well integrated with the overall objectives of the course.



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	2	3.85%
Disagree	2	5	9.62%
Neutral	3	19	36.54%
Agree	4	18	34.62%
Strongly Agree	5	8	15.38%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	52
Mean	3.48
Median	3.50
Standard Deviation	1.00

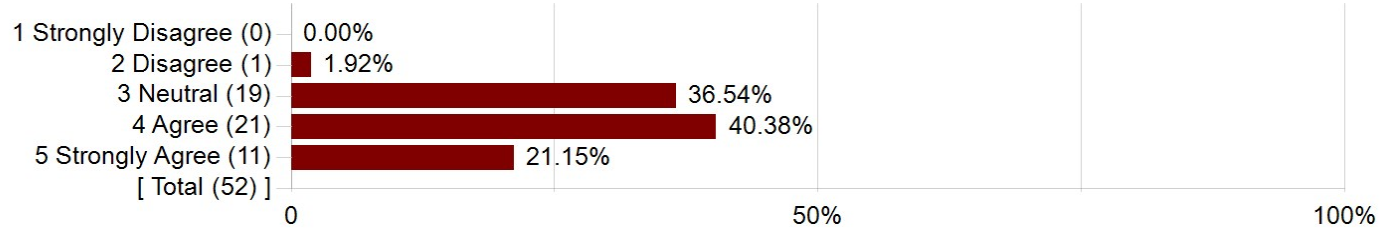
5. The lab exercises explored course topics in ways that could not have been accomplished in lecture or discussion.



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	0	0.00%
Disagree	2	6	11.54%
Neutral	3	10	19.23%
Agree	4	26	50.00%
Strongly Agree	5	10	19.23%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	52
Mean	3.77
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	0.90

6. Overall, this was an excellent laboratory experience.



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	0	0.00%
Disagree	2	1	1.92%
Neutral	3	19	36.54%
Agree	4	21	40.38%
Strongly Agree	5	11	21.15%

Statistics	Value
Response Count	52
Mean	3.81
Median	4.00
Standard Deviation	0.79

The time allocated for completing the lab was:

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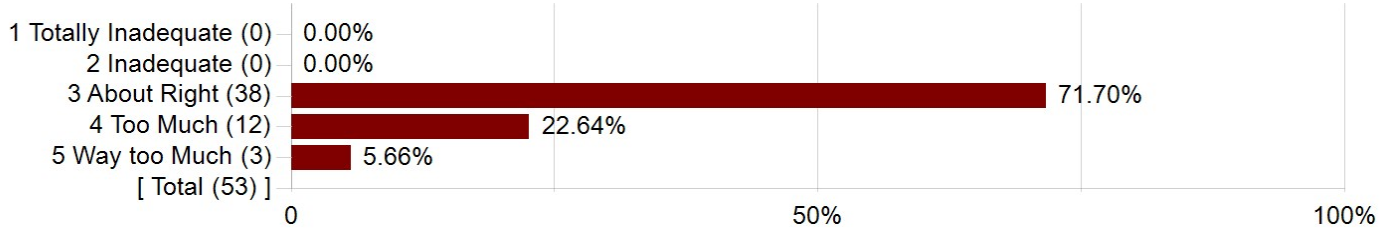

Statistics	Value
Response Count	53
Mean	3.34
Median	3.00
Standard Deviation	0.59

What observational, analytical, or technical skills did you gain during the laboratory exercises that enhanced your understanding of how biologists answer questions in this particular field?

Comments
I learned how to use a syringe.
I learned technical skills in the wet lab, such as pipetting and developing e.coli cultures. this was beneficial in seeing how scientist use this methods to answer questions about diseases and creating treatments for them.
I gained knowledge on how to use equipments in lab and I also learnt how to analyze results efficiently and in depth, something that I have previously not done before.
Improved at being able to just figure it out without relying on help from TA.
scientific tools
I think I learned more technical things about biology, like common processes used in laboratories.
n/a
n/a
I learned how to use a pipet for measuring very small amounts, and also learned how to grow/count colonies of bacteria.
I learned a lot from the Rifampicin resistance labs—I felt like they demonstrated the aspects of the scientific method we learned about in Week 1.
I did not gain any skills besides technical ones during the PCR labs.
Learned how to use pipettes and other lab material, elementary data analysis on excel, and to write clear responses to questions.
how to use a pipette and adjust it, how to manage E coli and antibiotic mixtures, how to analyze DNA sequences, how sexual selection works
N/A
Morphological analysis
How to use pipettes properly and making sure you prevent any contamination
The morphology lab on animal skull sorting helped me better understand how animals are classified; using PCR and growing out the colonies helped me understand how biologists conduct their research.
Learn basic scientific methods
How DNA is sequenced.

Please share any recommendations to improve the laboratory learning experience.

Comments
Clearer instructions would definitely help make the experience better. I have almost no experience in hands–on science and so the instructions were unclear and confusing. The TA helped a lot to understand the directions but I would not have been able to understand the instructions without the TA's help.
Didn't feel like substantive work most of the time. Doris was amazing, and really helpful at understanding the lab when the protocols weren't clear.
I think that the labs sometimes felt disconnected from the actual stuff we were learning in the course, which could sometimes make them feel pointless.
n/a
n/a
The first few SimBio exercises on DNA were very different content–wise from our lectures. They were, however, helpful for our labs later on, so I wish that connection could've been clearer.
Instructions and reason for the labs can be clearer.
connect the labs to the topics in the discussion, and provide clearer instructions for the TA
Very good lab overall, especially the week where we analyzed the morphological characteristics of different animals and tried to group them together. The game for lab 8 (sexual selection in flies) was a bit too complicated, however.
Make the labs more related to the content discussed during lecture
The SimUText modules were cool but not necessarily conducive to learning especially once it is clear only the graded questions count.
N/A
N/A
More lab content specifically on the topic of ecology and evolution would be very helpful
N/A
Make instructions more clear.