North Carolina State University - ClassEval Report	
Emplid: 001123529	Name: Jonathan Williams -- Course: Adv Spec Topics
Term: 2024 Fall	ST 790 002 Courses surveyed - ST 790 002
Question	**Response**
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	This course is a great idea! I hope after a few more semesters the slides will be a bit more organized, but besides that the only downside was the time period!
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	This is a useful course. I had no idea that being a professor involved so much grant seeking and maintenance! It was also very cool to hear from Dr. Pomann at Duke about collaborative research. I think the only thing Dr. Williams probably should have done differently is finding graduate students aside from his own to conduct the student panel - some people had questions about how to choose an advisor, and his students didn't have very different experiences to talk about with that.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	The instructor for this course gave a really well-rounded and multi-faceted perspective on being a researcher and a PhD student. He made sure every topic was presented in multiple frames to understand things from a variety of perspectives to tailor to the needs of different people in the course. The ideas were presented in a "brutally honest" kind of way that I feel made us clearly aware of the different things to consider while beginning our research careers.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	While I'm lucky to have had the opportunity to talk a lot with upper-year students, the course material went way beyond the questions I would've thought to ask upper-year students or even professors. The material almost seems "too necessary," as learning the things taught in this course could've led to wasted time or steps taken in the wrong direction for the goals I hope to achieve.
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	I really enjoyed how "informal-ish" it was. The slides served as a guide to motivate discussion and questions which really allowed me to learn more. I wouldn't suggest changing the format at all.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	Dr. Williams is a great teacher. He discussed all important things that a first year Ph.D. student should know. He also invited some guest speakers to deliver some lectures which was helpful. He even had a session wherewe could interact with senior year Ph.D students and get to know more about there experiences and perspectives.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	I personally liked the course material. It really helped me develop a perspective about how should I proceed in my upcoming PhD years. We did a lot of things like creating our own website.
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Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	This course should be *kept* around -- a fun hour during weeks of monotony. :) In all seriousness, the course has made me more informed about how a Ph.D. program operates and what lies ahead during my next three+ years.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	Given the first year of this class, the overall quality is decent. The following are some improvements can be considered by the instructor. 1. Both the instructor and one of his students have a similar statement that, once you have a paper on top 4 stat journals (JASA, Biometrika, JRSSB, AOS), you get job everywhere in the US. I disagree with this and it is a strong, misleading point to future students. The likelihood of getting a job at a US university a student has in minds depends on multiple factors and can be quite complicated, including the name of student's PhD advisor, research fits, and even funding and citizenship. I think the instructor should not bias future students' understanding regarding this and should be more clear. 2. Some contents of the class is unnecessary, such as the academic writing. The related HWs can be drafted by ChatGPT, which is end up a waste of time. Some pieces of this class can be developed as some independent courses, which can be more helpful. I think the instructor should think whether to delete some contents and focus more details on other parts. 3. The class can extend some discussion on different research areas, including some applied areas. I think it would be beneficial to discuss the promising research to do in the next 3-5 years so that can help students being more competitive on the job market. 4. I think we should put more weights on the industry job preparation.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	I could tell he really cared about students.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	I think it was very beneficial to take this course as a PhD student. Dr. Williams taught us a lot about academia fields.
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	I wished the class structure was more organized. Also, I wished he could given us the presentation slides homework earlier so we had more time to prepare.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	Jonathan was an excellent instructor as always
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	This is a super useful course that I hope will continue so more students can benefit from it. I learned so much about navigating the PhD that nobody tells you when you enter the program, from how to transition from coursework to research, how to choose an advisor, what to include in a literature review, what steps to take during the program to prepare for a career in statistics, etc. I also liked hearing advice from other students during the panel. The lecture slides were very informative and I will be referring back to them in future semesters.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	Jon was clearly very motivated in his lecturing and displayed an obvious interest in communicating the information to us in a way that we could understand. He was always receptive to questions and acknowledged the bias of his own experiences in his answers. Jon made this class more than just another lecture, he encouraged as much interaction in the classroom as we were willing to provide and I felt like our experience was all the better for it.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	While the scope of assignments sometimes felt ambitious, it was primarily to expose us to the scale in which these challenges live. In specific, the literature review and presentation had the potential to be quite large assignments, but how they were evaluated made it clear that what we were supposed to gain most was the experience of constructing these things and the effort involved in them. A peek beyond the veil of academia was very welcome as without this class I think not only would it have been hard to find the time and effort from various faculty to explore these topics, but even more I feel it would be hard to know where to start. This class provided a very strong idea of what it means to be research faculty and what is required to pursue it as a career path. The outside speakers were very interesting as well with the perspectives they offered on other career directions, though those directions are of less direct interest to me.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	Sometimes the lectures weren't too productive. The instructor would go off on rants, or explain topics that we've already covered in way too much detail. However, the instructor was very clear in communicating why this course was useful (and it seems to be so).
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	The class was a very nice break from the other challenging courses in the semester. The assignments took 1 hour on average, and there were only 7 of them. We were promised we'd build an academic website before the course started, but we ran out of time, which was kind of disappointing.
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	Once again, spend less time ranting and repeating concepts, and use that extra time to finish the course content. It's a very valuable course, but was clearly hindered in its usefulness by this.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	I think most of us preferred this more laid-back version of Jon -- he seemed a lot less intimidating than he did in 705.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	Great little course! I thought it was very helpful for preparing us for our future as PhD students. I'd recommend keeping this course around for future cohorts.
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	Maybe we could make the course a little earlier in the day -- getting out at 5:20 was a little too late for my liking.