



## Course and Teacher Evaluation Summary for Instructors

**Subject:** BIOL\_SCI Biological Sciences  
**Academic Term:** Fall 2014  
**Class Number:** 12478

**Enrollment:** 16  
**Responses:** 13  
**% Responses** 81.25

**Class:** 101-6-20 First-Year Seminar Understanding Evolution, from Seaweed to Salad  
**Instructor:** Norman Wickett

### Demographic Questions

	Education & SP	Communication	Graduate School	KGSM	McCormick	Medill	Music	Summer	SCS	WCAS
Your School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13

	a. Freshman	b. Sophomore	c. Junior	d. Senior	e. Graduate	f. Other
Your Class	13	0	0	0	0	0

	a. Distribution requirement	b. Major requirement	c. Minor requirement	d. Elective requirement	e. Other requirement	f. No requirement
Your reason for taking course (mark all that apply).	1	0	0	0	11	0

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Response	Average Response
Interest in subject before taking course.	0	0	1	3	6	3	13	4.85

### ***Core Questions***

	Total Response	1 Very Low	2	3	4	5	6 Very High	Average Response
1. Provide an overall rating of the instruction	13	0	0	0	0	7	6	5.46
2. Provide an overall rating of the course.	12	0	0	0	0	6	6	5.50
3. Estimate how much you learned in the course.	13	0	0	0	3	6	4	5.08
4. Rate the effectiveness of the course in challenging you intellectually.	13	0	1	3	5	3	1	4.00
5. Rate the effectiveness of the instructor(s) in stimulating your interest in the subject.	12	0	0	0	2	2	8	5.50

### ***Time-Survey Question***

	Total Response	a. 3 or fewer	b. 4 - 7	c. 8 - 11	d. 12 - 15	e. 16 - 19	f. 20 or more
6. Estimate the average number of hours per week you spent on this course outside of class and lab time.	13	5	7	0	1	0	0

### ***School and Department Questions***

	Total Response	1 Very Low	2	3	4	5	6 Very High	Average Response
7. Rate how well prepared the instructor was for the class.	13	0	0	0	2	5	6	5.31
8. Rate the effectiveness with which the instructor communicated course content and ideas.	13	0	0	1	2	3	7	5.23
9. Rate the instructional materials (texts, audiovisual materials, etc.) used in this course.	13	0	0	1	3	6	3	4.85
10. Rate the instructor's enthusiasm in teaching this class.	12	0	0	0	0	1	11	5.92
11. Rate how well the instructor answered students' questions.	13	0	0	0	2	2	9	5.54
12. Rate the clarity with which the grading criteria were defined.	12	0	1	2	3	4	2	4.33
13. Rate how consistently the instructor returned assignments and tests promptly.	13	0	0	5	5	2	1	3.92

## **Essay Questions**

### **1. What are the primary teaching strengths of the instructor(s)?**

Professor Wickett ("Norm") is extremely knowledgeable about evolutionary biology, and his passion for the subject really comes through in his teaching./Norm likes to have a long discussion filled with tangents, so you learn a lot about the subject as well as random things that are just good to know./The discussion sessions were interesting and insightful./Norm is really interested in the material, and even if you don't care about plants at all in September, by the end of the course, you will have a whole new perspective on the world. Norm's enthusiasm really spikes student interest./He was very passionate about the subject, and always encouraged students to think for themselves and be independent/Norm was a great professor and advisor, and consistently made this class one to look forward to each week./Easy to talk to, able to teach the material in an accessible way without watering it down, able to create a relaxed atmosphere which made learning easier/Norm is really knowledgeable about the subject and is great at connecting with the students, he makes class interesting even when the subject matter was dull/The relaxed, conversational classes were very enjoyable. Even though I learned a lot in class, it didn't feel like learning because it was so fun.

### **2. What are the primary weaknesses, if any, of the instruction?**

Sometimes Norm goes on tangents when he's lecturing, but they always have to do with biology, and you learn something every day regardless./He was busy so he didn't return his edits on the drafts of our second papers on time. He gave us an extension../Sometimes discussions can get somewhat off-topic/No weaknesses in the instruction really. I didn't always feel like I was actively learning because the format of the class was more discussion and less of a lesson... but that was the intention and I realized later that I absorbed a lot of information through that format./None

### **3. Can you offer suggestions for improvement?**

I like the informal feel of the classes so I don't think anything needs to be improved./Having a general idea of how our grades are in class our would be helpful. If grades could be updated quickly on Canvas or be sent out through email more often, that'd work.

### **4. Did the course help you learn? Why or why not?**

I learned a lot about evolution and its mechanics, and Norm really makes you think about and appreciate the natural world around you./Yes/This course made me more interested in biology./I LEARNED SO MUCH IN THIS CLASS. Literally after some lectures, I needed to sit and think about life on earth for a few minutes. You get so much from the books and lectures, and while this is an evolutionary biology class, the material isn't very dense./Yes. Through student presentations, assigned readings, and independent scientific paper studying, I learned a lot./I definitely learned a lot more about the specifics of evolution in a way I don't think I would have outside of the class. I think the most valuable thing from the course was the format of the papers. I may not have been aware of it when I was writing but by having us write about scientific articles in an accessible way, Norm was teaching us to better communicate our ideas in general./Yes! Reading about the various cases/examples of evolution in the books was very informative. Learning how to read scientific papers was also a useful skill to have learned.

### **5. Please summarize your reaction to this course focusing on the aspects that were most important to you.**

This is an awesome seminar regardless of your interest in science, and Norm is an awesome teacher. It really feels like you're just going to talk with a bunch of people about things that you're interested in, not a class./TAKE THIS CLASS! You learn a lot while you're having fun! Norm is the best and I looked forward to going to every class. He likes to have long discussions filled with tangents, so you learn a lot about the main subject as well as random things that are just cool to

know. TAKE IT!!!! #peacelovenorm/#peacelovenorm The instructor is so nice that he let us call him by his first name. He's definitely the nicest professor I had this quarter. Take this class!!/THIS CLASS IS SO GOOD. You learn so much about evolution and ecology and you get a whole new perspective of life on earth. The required books read more like narratives and less like textbooks. You get so much from the lectures, and while this is an evolutionary biology class, the material isn't very dense, nor is the workload too heavy. Norm is super helpful and gives great advice. A great freshman class. TAKE THIS SEMINAR./This was a great course. Norm took the time to get to know us, and help us along where needed. He posed complicated questions to ponder, and gave us relevant reading assignments./Norm is the best, and this class was by far my favorite class I took this quarter. Super interesting material, and Norm made it manageable and easy to stay interested./NORM IS AWESOME. This was a great freshmen seminar and I always enjoyed going to class. The class is mainly discussion-based and can sometimes get off-topic. But I definitely learned a great deal of material that you would never find in a normal textbook. There wasn't an enormous amount of reading and the class only had three papers, so very manageable. If you're interested in science at all, TAKE THIS COURSE #peacelovenorm/This class was the best seminar I could have ever asked for! Such a good way to start my Northwestern experience and I can't recommend it enough. If you have any interest in evolution you will definitely enjoy this class. It is biology based, but you don't have to be a science major to get a ton out of the course. Norm is awesome and created a really comfortable learning environment. The few papers are reasonable and definitely improved the clarity of my writing. I definitely wish I could take more of Norm's classes this year! Great experience, interesting material, fantastic professor. #peacelovenorm/I loved our class discussions, Norm did a really nice job of helping us think and connect ideas. This class was a lot of fun and I definitely learned a lot about writing and evolutionary biology! Peace, love, Norm./TAKE THIS SEMINAR. It's the best one. Norm's a great guy with an awesome sense of humor. I looked forward to going to his classes each week because they were so fun. Classes usually consist of a student presentation and a discussion on the reading for the class. With only three books to read and three papers to write, this class doesn't require too much work. It's laid-back yet informative. If you have any interest in learning about evolution, this class is great!/Norm is amazing. He is super enthusiastic and cares about each of his students. Take this freshman seminar with him!