Course and Teacher Evaluation Summary for Instructors

Subject: BIOL_SCI Biological Sciences
Academic Term: Winter 2015
Class Number: 23956

Enrollment: 30
Responses: 23
% Responses 76.67

Class: 378-0-20 Functional Genomics
Instructor: Norman Wickett

Demographic Questions

	Education & SP	Communication	Graduate School	KGSM	McCormick	Medill	Music	Summer	SCS	WCAS
Your School	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	14

	a. Freshman	b. Sophomore	c. Junior	d. Senior	e. Graduate	f. Other
Your Class	0	2	7	7	6	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	8	1	9	3	5

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Response	Average Response
Interest in subject before taking course.	0	1	4	9	6	3	23	4.26

Core Questions

	Total Response	1 Very Low	2	3	4	5	6 Very High	Average Response
1. Provide an overall rating of the instruction	22	0	0	1	2	11	8	5.18
2. Provide an overall rating of the course.	21	0	0	0	9	9	3	4.71
3. Estimate how much you learned in the course.	22	0	0	1	4	9	8	5.09
4. Rate the effectiveness of the course in challenging you intellectually.	23	0	0	3	4	9	7	4.87
5. Rate the effectiveness of the instructor(s) in stimulating your interest in the subject.	23	0	1	1	3	11	7	4.96

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.	23	4	13	4	0	1	1

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.	23	0	0	1	6	3	13	5.22
8. Rate the effectiveness with which the instructor communicated course content and ideas.	23	0	0	1	3	9	10	5.22
9. Rate the instructional materials (texts, audiovisual materials, etc.) used in this course.	23	0	2	1	4	9	7	4.78
10. Rate the instructor's enthusiasm in teaching this class.	22	0	0	0	0	4	18	5.82
11. Rate how well the instructor answered students' questions.	22	0	0	0	3	5	14	5.50
12. Rate the clarity with which the grading criteria were defined.	23	0	0	5	4	11	3	4.52
13. Rate how consistently the instructor returned assignments and tests promptly.	22	0	1	6	3	8	4	4.36

Essay Questions

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

He's approachable and enthusiastic about the topic. Most of his lecture slides include helpful diagrams/visuals./Great job reviewing fundamental genetics ideas and building from there. Great at building up my understanding of how genomic data is created and processed./Enthusiasm/Enthusiastic. Explains complex concepts very well, often much clearer than the book or papers. Papers assigned are interesting, and he is clearly keeping on top of relevant literature - even beyond his own research subject. Puts in extra time when he feels the class does not understand a subject./Professor Wickett is amazing and this class would have been terrible if he didn't teach it. He's an amazing professor one of the best I've had at NU and definitely the best for any Bio class I've ever taken./The lecture slides were excellent. I thought the illustrations that were put in the lecture slides were very helpful for understanding the material from the readings./Prof. Wickett teaches the material in an engaging manner. He is also helpful and approachable./Norm is a very nice guy who takes the time to make sure everyone learns the course material. Very passionate about the class./Enthusiasm. Knowledge of the subject. He really cares about the quality of the class. Great lectures and supporting paper selection.

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

Not very many "interactive" lectures. The instructor seems to think we have more knowledge of genomics than we actually do. It seems more geared towards the grad students./The room was too hot with no ventilation, so it was easy to fall asleep in lecture :(. Also....varying the tone of your voice may help people stay awake? >.< That sounds strange but it seemed that your voice was good at making me sleepy! So that would help.... It would have helped to have the study guides posted earlier. And to check that the right papers were posted (coelecanth)!/hard to keep up with the papers/Would tell us we didn't need to understand parts of papers after we read them - this is fine for the vast majority of the class who didn't seem to read them, but if I spent a lot of time trying to understand a concept and then the Prof tells me "you don't need to know that," it kind of sucks. Second half of the class was a little unorganized overall. I know you were trying to get us to read and understand the papers on our own, but a well-explained summary by you would have given us more knowledge than the question/answer student-led sessions that spent a lot of time explaining little./The class seemed somewhat geared towards graduate students. the workload/reading was excessive. Norm would assign crazy amounts of reading that was somewhat hard to get through and then when no one would read/feel comfortable answering questions - the class would go really slowly. I think by having one paper per class, and maybe assigning questions beforehand, class can be much more productive./Norm could probably could push the students a little harder to start - people were clearly slacking by the end of the course. Whatever the command line stuff was supposed to be for the class, it didn't work out at all./With the large class, it was difficult to grade in a timely manner. A solution would be to provide the professor with a TA. **Hint, Hint administration**

3. Can you offer suggestions for improvement?

Break up lectures with group work. Give us practice problems to think through so we can practice for the exam. Post the review sheet earlier so we have time to work on it. Assign fewer papers for the second half of the class so we can go more in depth./See above./Don't do the programming assignment. Have more group work where students read the papers and then answer questions and then teach other students. Way more productive. Lecturing at us for 120mins gets boring./give brief discussion of paper prior to discussion elements/Have that sheet of paper of what you want us to know from each paper available before we read them rather than right before the test. Let us know the class before if there is a concept we don't need to know from a paper, so we can focus on understanding the relevant ones. In addition, if you want more reading paper compliance, have students write periodic short summaries of the papers, while still emphasizing the relevant concepts in your lectures, instead of only having questions on the lecture slides and trying to have students teach each other./One thing that I think would be helpful is to provide a guide similar to the one before each midterm for the papers before class. I think it would have been very beneficial to know what things to focus on in the readings the first time and I think I would have been able to participate more in class./I think it would be really great to incorporate a discussion

board on canvas for each of the papers. It would be helpful to discuss the papers and answer each others questions./Come up with something other than the command line stuff. Have more written response questions./Provide a TA

4. Did the course help you learn? Why or why not?
Yep! I actually learned a ton. I knew the basic concepts of genetics, but I didn't know much about how the field of study works, so a lot of the course was new material. And it was taught in a good way that stimulated a lot of thinking on my part./yes, I learned many new techniques, methods, and ways of thinking about genomics. Learned how to read genomics papers effectively and keep up-to-date with the literature./Yes. Overall it was a well-taught course that taught me a lot about a subject I was unfamiliar with. Nicely focused on bio-tech with a lot of relevant literature./I definitely learned how to better read those papers. Initially they were really challenging to read, but the more of them I read and the more we discussed them in class, they started to make sense./It did! I would not have known about this topic if not for the course. The beginning was a bit of a review, but now I have a much better understanding of genomics./Yes. The course was a perfect combination of lecture, reading papers on the lecture material, and preforming actual genomics. I learned a lot and it was apparent as my comprehension of genomic papers grew.

5. Please summarize your reaction to this course focusing on the aspects that were most important to you.
Good class. Fun teacher./This course isn't too bad for a bio elective. There's a group project that focuses on computational biology and there's a learning curve if you don't have experience with working in the terminal/computer programming. The lectures are about interesting topics, but they are dry sometimes. Wickett is approachable and willing to answer questions. You have to read lots of scientific papers./Topic was interesting and Wickett is a really engaging professor. Not too much work and the exams were do-able/This course was great! I came into the course not knowing much about genomics, and frankly, not caring. It was like a black box of voodoo. However, I know how important the stuff is for biology, so I wanted to learn more. And I did....I learned a lot about how genomic data is created, processed, and analyzed. Norm really wants you to think, so while the tests seem daunting, just understand how to apply concepts and you'll be fine. He's not big on memorization. We had two midterms, two written assignments (very short, discussing papers), and 1 programming thing. I think he plans to make this a bigger part of the course though, so keep that in mind. I didn't find it hard./Professor Wickett is a grade person and very entertaining to talk to. He is really great at teaching one on one. This class overall was a little boring. Wickett was not always clear on how he was going to test therefore often the exams took people off guard. I wish there was more collaboration. If we had to do the reading assignments before class and work in groups to answer questions that would of been very helpful. The textbook is a waste of time don't buy. All you need for this class is to review the lecture slides and read all the papers. Wickett is still working out the kinks of this class so it was not that great./Wickett was a very funny lecturer, and obviously enjoyed teaching us each topic of the course. The exams were definitely challenging, and were hard even for the graduate students in the class, but you do learn a lot of information./Learned many cool things, felt that my notions of interesting phenomena has broadened past just mammals - looking to fish, birds, plants, bacteria, and fungi. Especially learning more about "living fossils"/Great class overall/First half of the course you learn the concepts, second half of the course you read and discuss relevant papers. He knew that nobody did the readings and the course kind of disintegrated when he kind of just accepted that nobody did the readings...Makes a lot of 80s jokes, TAKE THIS CLASS if you are Canadian./Prof Wickett is great -- he's always looking for ways to make the course & his teaching better, which I really appreciated. Ended up being a really interesting class./Norm is a good teacher - but I found a lot of the content somewhat dry. It's a solid bio elective to take though./Professor Wicket was extremely entheusiastic and you can tell he loves what he is teaching. However, the course was made up up 50% masters students and he taught the class as though all of us were post-graduates. His expectations were, plain and simple, way too high. His powerpoints rarely had the information and instead had questions that he would then attempt to answer in class. This means that the majority of the information was not actually on the powerpoints, but had to be in your personal notes, which was hard because he went so fast. I would not recommend taking this class. I felt lost throughout the entire quarter and I don't think Professor Wicket is good at explaining difficult concepts to non-experts in his field/Prof. Wickett is great---He is very approachable and helpful! This class is really interesting, and I learned so much about genomics and became so much better at reading the papers. The midterms are fair, but they are also challenging. I would recommend staying on top of the papers, especially in the second half of the class when they become more important and asking lots of questions. Overall, I highly recommend taking this course!/This class was on the easier side, but I still got a lot out of it. Norm is a good, passionate professor who explained concepts clearly

and made his expectations clear from the beginning./Great course. Fair grading. Interesting material. Great instructor.