



Course and Teacher Evaluation Summary for Instructors

Subject: BIOL_SCI Biological Sciences
Academic Term: Spring 2012
Class Number: 33044

Enrollment: 89
Responses: 65
% Responses 73.03

Class: 109-0-20 The Nature of Plants
Instructor: Norman Wickett

Demographic Questions

	Education & SP	Communication	Graduate School	KGSM	McCormick	Medill	Music	Summer	SCS	WCAS
Your School	6	10	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	43

	a. Freshman	b. Sophomore	c. Junior	d. Senior	e. Graduate	f. Other
Your Class	12	31	17	3	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).	49	4	0	2	1	9

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Response	Average Response
Interest in subject before taking course.	8	12	20	12	5	3	60	3.05

Core Questions

	Total Response	1 Very Low	2	3	4	5	6 Very High	Average Response
1. Provide an overall rating of the instruction	53	0	1	3	8	19	22	5.09
2. Provide an overall rating of the course.	53	1	2	3	14	21	12	4.66
3. Estimate how much you learned in the course.	55	2	2	4	15	17	15	4.60
4. Rate the effectiveness of the course in challenging you intellectually.	56	1	5	12	17	13	8	4.07
5. Rate the effectiveness of the instructor(s) in stimulating your interest in the subject.	56	0	3	4	13	11	25	4.91

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.	53	37	14	2	0	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.	54	0	0	0	7	14	33	5.48
8. Rate the effectiveness with which the instructor communicated course content and ideas.	53	0	0	0	14	14	25	5.21
9. Rate the instructional materials (texts, audiovisual materials, etc.) used in this course.	53	1	2	3	17	19	11	4.58
10. Rate the instructor's enthusiasm in teaching this class.	52	0	0	0	2	10	40	5.73
11. Rate how well the instructor answered students' questions.	52	0	0	2	7	14	29	5.35
12. Rate the clarity with which the grading criteria were defined.	52	2	5	3	10	16	16	4.56
13. Rate how consistently the instructor returned assignments and tests promptly.	53	1	4	7	22	10	9	4.19

Essay Questions

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

Really enthusiastic/Norm was really great at communicating the course work and material. What made the class so great was his understanding of his students and their interest in the course./The professor was really good at keeping the class enthused and interested, despite the fact that most of the class was there for requirements and not necessarily interested in the material originally. Great professor!/loved the subject. always had good powerpoints. understood his students and catered to what we needed/Wickett is HILARIOUS, take this class with him./The professor's enthusiasm and exuberance encouraged both intellectual engagement and a relaxed, friendly learning environment that made the class interesting, informative, and enjoyable./Dr. Wickett is very helpful. If you don't understand a concept, go talk to him! He is very knowledgeable and passionate about plants. His lectures are engaging and the tests are straight-forward. /Professor Wickett was a great instructor. I really enjoyed his lectures and his enthusiasm and sense of humor made the early morning lectures more enjoyable. His knowledge and presentation of the content allowed me to better learn and digest the material./Very enthusiastic/Enthusiasm & true interests in students/He is very enthusiastic and tries to make his lectures interesting./Norm is really enthusiastic, interested in plants, and wants students to have a good understanding of the material, not just memorize it. He also tries to keep the mood light and relates the material back to the real world to help establish context and relevance, which was helpful and interesting./Wonderful teacher, very understanding and relatable. As challenging as it was, he was there to help us every step of the way/He knew what he was talking about/He was very nice teacher. He provided a lot of information to the students and he was very informative./Norman Wickett is awesome. He makes the material interesting and makes it somewhat relevant to the student./He was engaging and funny. I appreciated how available for and adaptable to his students. He was invested in the class and ensuring that the students not only learned the material, but enjoyed the lectures. The slides were very helpful, the videos entertaining, and the lectures engaging. The expectations for the students and the tests were very reasonable./Norm is the sweetest guy. He is so helpful always and is really psyched about the course and subject matter/Professor Wickett is very enthusiastic about his field, and his enthusiasm is always delivered to his students./Prof Wickett is an extremely engaging, interesting, and funny lecturer. He likes to include students in the class and tell anecdotes, which makes it even more interesting. I really enjoyed coming to lectures! He also made sure to review and not rush ahead if he sensed we weren't understanding things completely./He was very enthusiastic while teaching making the class even more interesting. He also knew A LOT about plants/The instructor is extremely passionate about the subject he is teaching, and he is a fantastic lecturer. Not to mention, he has a great sense of humor. He definitely increased my interest in plants and plant science./I wish I could have given Wickett a 10 for enthusiasm in this course. I honestly was not looking forward to this class and ended up being really interested. He's really funny too./Down to earth! Very engaging and provided information clearly on slides./very passionate, very sweet, very willing to help students/Clear, use of powerpoints to articulate ideas./The powerpoints were extremely helpful in studying./Professor Wickett has a true passion for the subject and desire to share that with the class, while making learning the material engaging and fun./passionate about the subject and wants his students to succeed. he's a good teacher because he teaches you information and wants you to combine and apply it in written situations - but like that sucks if you want to take a multiple choice quiz.

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

Not really any for this class/None!/Sometimes it was a bit unclear what was most important to know for the exams, but overall the class was pretty great./I was a little sad that we didn't get to cover everything on the syllabus (though I really appreciate the professor modifying the schedule after gauging student responses to the material and determining that more time was needed to review a subject)/None./Could use more video examples/It doesn't always match up with the exams; the exams seemed to be graded very hard./Sometimes the material became a little dry, but that's not really the fault of the instructor./Sometimes a harsher grader than necessary. Most people in the class are not Biological Science majors and soemtimes it seemed like the grading expected that/The tests were extremely unfair. They did not test how well you understood the material. They were just purely random facts from the slides chosen in no particular way. Even the easy questions were graded in a way that always gave partial credit even ffor answers that were exactly what the slides said/There was none/Can be unclear sometimes, but rare./This course might be better if grade distribution isn't too focused on three exams./Can't really think of any. We didn't get to everything that was on the syllabus, which I was disappointed about, but I'm glad that he slowed down and went over things with us when we needed it, like the plant lifecycles,

which were pretty confusing at first./He stutters):/The instructor is not consistent with grading and effectively preparing us for the type of questions on exams. Tests are inconsistent in structure and questions are not consistent in level of difficulty, which can be somewhat confusing and cause problems in a short time frame (eg. hour-long test session). Also, there were a few lectures in which the professor went through the slides too quickly, and it was difficult to really grasp the information... so maybe pay attention to pacing, consistently?/Not enough extra credit./tests were graded very harshly - too harshly, in my opinion./Slow grader, includes too many irrelevant details and references that aren't necessary to the understanding of the material/There are only three exams, so there is no other way to help get a boost on your grade./I'm not a fan of the three-exam structure. The Stanley Cup was a great way to get students motivated, but I would have liked more hands-on or participatory activities earlier in the quarter./tests don't always accurately show your knowledge.

3. Can you offer suggestions for improvement?

If possible, return tests sooner/I don't think the book was necessary for the class since the majority of the exam material was covered in class./maybe provide a roadmap at the beginning of each powerpoint because the organization of each lecture got a little confusing and I wasn't totally clear about the point/topic of each slide/No, the course was great./I think the exams were a bit too detailed for this type of a class. I felt like I was taking more of an upper bio class. However, the grading was very reasonable so it evened out I suppose. I've heard other classes like this are largely just multiple choice./Offer exams with more straightforwardness, so as to not lose so many points./Definitely continue bringing in real world references that would pique the interest of non-science students, like myself./More forgiving on short answers for the three midterms/Make the tests fair. Also, the tests take WAY too long to be graded/None, keep on doing the same thing. great professor/no./I thoroughly enjoyed the class and have no suggestions for improvement./Maybe some homework questions in grade criterion so that messing up one exam doesn't hurt the grade/Can't think of any./More videos would be awesome/More straightforward tests. Most people are not botany majors and took this class as a distribution requirement because the syllabus stated that this was an introductory course. Even so, the tests expected a level of attention to detail that demands a lot of time and effort, which unfortunately, does not parallel the expectations that many had for this course. Tests were not always representative of how much time and effort people spent preparing. At times, grading seemed inconsistent and arbitrary. Last, but not least, grading exams shouldn't be focused on how well an individual structures his or her replies to short answer questions. This isn't a writing course. Grading should focus on the amount and depth of knowledge an individual has attained by going to lectures, studying slides, reading, or understanding the subject./test questions could be more direct/Focus more on the syllabus, and utilize the required textbook which was expensive and that I barely cracked open/Some sort of extra credit options/nope

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

Yes - good overview of plants' role in the world/Yes! This was my third and final science class at Northwestern and I thought it was the best. I didn't feel as though he was teaching a distro to students who didn't care about the subject, but instead he understood that the majority of the class was taking the class as a distro and made sure he provided interesting material and really engaged the students./Yes, because I was a beginner in this subject matter, it went deep enough for me to learn valuable information, and yet didn't push me too hard so that I couldn't retain it./yes--he simplified the material for our needs, recognizing that most of us were taking it as a distribution requirement/Yes! It was engaging because scattered in among the important, big picture, test-question-material facts were numerous factoids and interesting quirks that don't usually show up in a general survey course./Yes! As a non-science major, I often avoid taking anything that relates to sciences. This class, however, offers practical knowledge that one could use everyday. Dr. Wickett teaches in way that helps information stick without having to spend hours doing the reading or reviewing the notes./Yes, as I mentioned before, the way Professor Wickett structured the course-- the readings and the lectures/ PowerPoints really enabled me to better learn. Although I'm not a science person (no one in the class really is), I was able to learn and enjoy learning about plants./Yes. Interesting subject with good material./Yes. Most of the things I will remember are small, insignificant fun facts about plants, but that means I learned something!/VERY MUCH! Became interested and informed about all thigns plants!/No the book was pointless and the lectures were boring. The class was just purely memorization and the dumping it onto a test/Yes, I had no interest in plants and the course got me interested in the class/Yes, well organized and articulated./Absolutely. Professor Wickett effectively communicated a lot of new and different information to the class. The slides were helpful, the videos enjoyable, and the lectures engaging./Yes, I learned a lot about plants/It definitely did - the lectures were full of really fascinating info, which was pretty easy to

remember just because Prof Wickett did such a good job of communicating it and keeping us interested./Yes, the course helped me learn a ton because the professor was a great lecturer./I actually learned a lot and retained a lot of the information about a subject I'm not very familiar with./Yes the information was clear/yes, i learned a lot about plants/Not really. The material is very basic, seems like a HS class./Yes. The professor is very enthusiastic and makes you interested in the material. The material is actually quite interesting as well./Yes, Wickett does a good job of making the material concept-based, even though there is quite a bit of memorization./yes, I learned a lot.

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

No matter how low your interest in biology is, Norman Wickett will inspire you to care./Good distro - very interesting/Norm was very excited about plants. Just memorize everything on the lecture slides and you will get an A. Also go to class so you can get the extra credit questions on the midterms./This class was suprisingly more difficult than I expected but i LOVEDDDDD Professor Wickett./BEST SCIENCE DISTRO AND THE BEST PROFESSOR. The exams were fair and all of the powerpoints were posted on blackboard. It's really important to go to class, but the professor made the class interesting and he's funny./This class is a good requirement course. I'm not usually very interested in this subject matter, but the professor kept it interesting. That exams were not terribly difficult but I still had to put in effort studying for them. I recommend this class./Wickett is HILARIOUS, take this class with him. Be careful though, tests are harder than they may seem./Such a fun course! The professor's earnest love of plants and ever-present sense of humor made every lecture enjoyable and informative./Dr. Wickett is the best! He's always willing to answer questions and he makes himself available for office hours. I never thought I could enjoy a Biology class, but I was mistaken! This class is practical and entertaining. A must take if you need a science distro!/This was a great science distribution. Professor Wickett was a very engaging, knowledgeable professor and I enjoyed taking his course. I would highly recommend it to anyone looking for a science class to take./Professor Wickett is truly interested in the subject. He's always very enthusiastic about the topics and make extra efforts to stimulate students' interests and facilitate learning. For someone who hated anything related to plants, I actually greatly enjoyed this class. The materials and examples in class are fascinating. The exams and grading are fair. If you attend lectures and make an effort to study for the exams, getting an A is very manageable. Great class!/Good class, overall. NOT AN EASY A! The exams are graded very picky, so even if you think you did well, you might do worse. 3 exams total./Norm is a great professor. He is super funny and a really nice person. He is really helpful in office hours and is really accessible. He has great powerpoints, plays games, and tells funny jokes. There is no outside work required and don't have to do the reading, but the tests were graded very harshly. Much harder than previous nature of plants course. Most found not an "easy" A. Caused a lot of stress for a distro class but Norm is the BEST/Tests were more difficult then they needed to be./If you're going to take this course, take it with Norm. He's funny and really wants everyone to learn. The tests are straightforward but sometimes tricky, so don't expect to skip lecture and still get an A. If you're taking this for a distro, I'd definitely recommend it. After this class, I can't eat beans without picturing tiny plant ovaries/GREAT CLASS! NOT as easy of a science distro as we expected -- we're all hoping for high Bs right now in a class we expected ridiculously easy As but I guess that doesn't exist anymore... NORM IS THE BEST INSTRUCTOR. THE CLASS IS WORTH TAKING SOLELY BECAUSE OF HIM. I came in with no interest in plants and left informed and HAPPY. CHALLENGING tests tho. No work outside of class besides studying for the three midterms/Easy. Professor is awesome. Great distro./Pretty simple intro class. The exams are most straight memorization of powerpoints and the professors lectures are interesting and awkwardly fun. There is a curve depending on how people do./THIS CLASS SUCKS. ITS TOTALLY UNFAIR. DO NOT TAKE WITH THIS PROF/I believe this class is the best class you can take for a distribution. The teacher is very friendly and it was a very good experience./great class! the teacher is really really nice, and he makes the class interesting!/It was a great distro. always have been interested in plants. very clear grading criteria. just enjoy the lecture and memorize all the slides afterwards/AWESOME CLASS. Not difficult, but you do you have to study. Norman Wickett is the man, he doesnt try to trick or confuse you. He just makes sure you know the material. Tests are straightforward./Boring lectures. ALL memorization of the slides. Not a huge fan./Professor Wickett was great!! He is a great lecturer, funny, approachable, and super nice!!! I strongly recommend this class to anyone who needs a distribution requirement./MAKE SURE YOU TAKE THIS CLASS! I am not a big fan of biology but I had so much fun. Professor Wickett is very enthusiastic, understanding and supportive of his students./I took this class because I heard it was an easy distro. Since I took AP Bio in high school, I believed that Nature of Plants would come easily. Wickett was a different teacher than who taught it last year, and unfortunately the average grades reflect that. In years past, the average exam grades were consistently high-As, and I don't think that has to do with better teaching. Wickett is an extremely nice and interesting man who clearly shows passion for his class. Unfortunately, the grading in this class has become much tougher and it is no longer the easy A class that the reputation leads you to believe. If you put in a LOT of hard work, you can get an A, but NU has officially eliminated another joke of a distro, rendering the

school even more difficult than it already is./Wickett was alright for a new professor. He made class interesting and entertaining. I would definitely recommend taking Plants with him./Even though I took this as a distro, I really loved the class! Prof Wickett is an extremely engaging, interesting, and funny lecturer. He likes to include students in the class and tell anecdotes, which makes it even more interesting. There's not much reading, and it's really nice that we just have 3 midterms and no final, makes reading and finals weeks a lot less stressful./GREAT CLASS! LOVED IT!/A pretty good distro class. Hard enough to make you think, but not hard enough to make you regret taking it. This was his first year teaching here, so he was also adapting to the new atmosphere./Professor Wickett is a great guy who loves teaching. His tests are pretty reasonable and he's a pretty good lecturer. Great distro that has reasonable tests. I learned a ton./Do NOT take. Way too hard./wickett was hilarious, and this class was easy. def take it for a distro. you dont ahve to go to class, though you should bc the professor is funny makes plants relatively interesting, but all the slides are online and you dont really have to do any work until right before the exams. just like one of two nights of studying and thats all the work youll have to do/wouldn't say this is an easy A, but it's not that hard. the content is really interesting and Norm is a super nice/funny guy. probably the most fun class i've taken at NU so far!/Norm is a fantastic lecturer and teacher, and he is super passionate about plants and his students. Something to note though is that lectures are deceptively simple in comparison to the complexity of tests. Grading can have ridiculously high standards and are somewhat inconsistent, but you can still do well if you study. Overall, this course is a small time commitment, I learned a lot, Norm made plants interesting, and I would definitely recommend taking this course!!/Wickett is a really funny, enthusiastic teacher who actually made this class really interesting. I learned a lot of cool things and really liked listening to him talk. He's a really great teacher./Norm is a great teacher. It is clear that he is very enthusiastic about the class. He also totally understands that it is meant to be on the easier sides of the science distros, and tries to teach the material so it's easy to learn without dumbing the course down. Definitely a difficult course if you're not at all interested in science, but any experience in any level of bio is definitely helpful. Again, Norm is the best!!!!/Good distro/This was a fun class/The professor is really nice and really there to help you and not hurt you. He is really interested in the idea which is always a plus. Some people might say that it's a really easy class but on the test you really need to know what he's looking for (key terms and etc.)/Wickett tries to make the class fun. Easy course../Norm was a great professor. He has such a genuine enthusiasm for the course and tried his hardest to make the class fun despite relatively boring material to work with. He always tried to include random fun facts and things that were relevant to our everyday life. The tests were extremely fair and graded fairly. Great Class to take for a distro! Take it!/NOT AS EASY AS PEOPLE SAY. but still not at all a bad distro. lots of memorization./Easy class. 3 midterms, no finals, no papers. Exams have bonus questions, so try to go to class as often as possible. Completely unnecessary to go to class though, because Wickett uploads lecture powerpoints that are all that is needed to study for the exams./I enjoyed this course. The professor is AWESOME! So nice and really funny. He will help with any questions or problems you might have. I would recommend this class as for an easy bio distro./Professor Wickett is a great professor with a true passion for the subject and desire to share that with the class, while making learning the material engaging and fun. The material can be memorization-based, but it's a fun distribution requirement and I learned a lot more than I expected./he's a good teacher because he teaches you information and wants you to combine and apply it in written situations - but like that sucks if you want to take a multiple choice quiz. you're not going to get a better science distro.