

Course Evaluation: Mid-course feedback

This is YOUR chance to play an active role in course development and to enhance your own learning experience and the experience of future students. I encourage you to be **frank and constructive**. I will give your feedback careful consideration and although I might not always be able to implement suggestions, I am ready to consider making changes that help enhance your learning experience.

SAMPLE ANSWERS FROM STUDENTS:

1. What have been the best aspects of this class so far?

- “(Guest speakers) give us good examples of what we can do our future research with the added bonus of being able to ask them questions in person.”
- “I feel like there are many interesting case studies presented in the lecture and sometime even videos can explain much more than words.”
- “The case studies are particularly interesting, they are engaging and have been well fitted to the material.”
- “I like the case study portion of class and visual aids such as videos and photos.”
- “It’s nice to not just learn about theories and mechanisms but to actually see them in action.”
- “Many great visual examples for the topics/concepts covered”
- “I also find our book really intriguing to read and it draws me into a thinking mode.”
- “I like that the class is so straightforward! You go over what we should really know multiple times”
- “I really enjoy the format of the class → lecture, examples/case study, speaker, summary. I think we make very good use of time in this class.”
- “I have really enjoyed the presentation of the course material and the creative take it has on evolution”
- “(...) there is a lot of variability from class to class so it stays interesting.”

2. What aspects of this class have you liked the least so far? How could this be improved?

- “I have found this course to be more difficult than expected”
- “Though I appreciate having a flexible lesson based on student interest (...) sometimes a decent foundation of knowledge is needed to understand the topics”
- “Homework assignments could be more brief but still stimulate the same amount of thought”
- “It is fast paced”
- “Slides are passed too quickly”
- “(...) give us a little more time to take notes”
- “You go through slides really fast which is fine but inconvenient when the slides aren’t available in any other way.”

3. Do you usually understand what is expected of you in preparing for and participating in this class? If not, please explain why not.

- “Yes. I think that the website is very clear. Your emails and in-class reminders are very helpful too.”

- “Yes, I believe you are straightforward using your website & emails regarding what is expected of us by each class period.”

4. What aspects of this course and your instructor's teaching help you learn best?

- “The emails help me keep track of my responsibilities” and what is expected of me.”
- “Detailed explanation of topics”
- “Well-organized/structured summary and concepts”
- “I believe her teaching style of a relaxed open conversation technique helps students better converse the issues they aren’t understanding”
- “You go into detail with your descriptions and provide a lot of examples/case studies. That helps to really make sure we understand the content in an applicable sense.”
- “The use of examples/case studies after most topics allows students to remember concepts much better.”
- “Case studies and general excitement/interest in the topic”
- “I love that you allow us (...) to connect what we have gone over in lecture with something real (*comm.: referring to guest speakers*).”
- “(The book) is a good supplement to the content of the course lectures.”
- “The book gives great examples on specific topics.”
- “The small group activities help me connect the material we learn to real life applications. I think that group discussions always help me start thinking critically.”
- “ORGANIZATION & DETAIL (...) I am highly impressed by your slides and website. The organization of the actual time of the class session is also very helpful.”
- “The desire to optimize learning.”
- “Course flexibility based on student needs.”
- “I think having a summary at the end of class is effective in that it helps me backtrack the topics that we learned over the entire lecture.”

5. What specific advice would you give to help your instructor improve your learning in this course?

- “Set up PowerPoint with note-taking in mind”
- “If we could get back to previous slides we missed to finish writing, that would be great.”
- “Either slow down during lecture or make the slides (...) available.”
- “Just overall go a little slower during lectures.”
- “Possibly try to tie in the examples & studies given in the book a bit more to increase interest in the book & the topics mentioned in it.”
- “(...) making lectures more engaging and encouraging the class to think critically.”
- “I think for your first time teaching everything is moving smoothly so far.”
- “As a student it is nice to have feedback to see if we are doing what you expect as well so maybe posting grades between classes?”
- “Maybe using more examples of current research at NC State (preferably examples that are looking for summer undergrad research assistants)

- “Be more specific about what is expected of the homework assignments. For example, what does a sample answer look like?”
- “Be clear about how much detail is needed for the quizzes and exam.”
- “Maybe slowing down the slides a bit would help me getting more lectures written down.”

6. What steps could you take to improve your own learning in this course?

- “Set aside more time for preparation”
- “Do things on time”
- “I could review notes after class to keep up with the material”
- “Do my homework/not forget about readings and when things are due.”
- “I need to go over notes after classes so I can ask any outstanding question to better understand the material (...)”
- “Finding additional papers to read after reading the required ones (...)”
- “(...) take better notes when it comes to *The Beak of the Finch (comm.: book)*”
- “I may start reading the text when I miss a couple slides in class or try recording.”
- “I’m learning pretty well in this course.”
- “Pick up the reference textbook to gain the necessary background knowledge I need to properly learn the concepts we cover in class.”
- “I will also try to participate more in discussions by raising my hand.”

Room for additional comments:

- “Thank you for the hard work you put into this course! We really do appreciate it.”
- “I appreciate how much you care about this course and your students and want them to learn.”
- “I really enjoy the content of the class and *The Beak of the Finch (comm.: book)*.”