

ESRM 453 A
Biology And Ecology Of Mammals
Course type: Face-to-Face

Evaluation Delivery: Online
Evaluation Form: X
Responses: 21/24 (88% very high)

Taught by: Laura Prugh
Instructor Evaluated: Laura Prugh-Assoc Prof

Overall Summative Rating represents the combined responses of students to the four global summative items and is presented to provide an overall index of the class's quality:

Combined Median	Adjusted Combined Median
3.9	4.2
(0=lowest; 5=highest)	

Challenge and Engagement Index (CEI) combines student responses to several *IASystem* items relating to how academically challenging students found the course to be and how engaged they were:

CEI: 5.5
(1=lowest; 7=highest)

SUMMATIVE ITEMS

	N	Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	Very Poor (0)	Median	Adjusted Median
The course as a whole was:	21	24%	33%	24%	14%	5%		3.7	4.1
The course content was:	20	30%	25%	30%	10%	5%		3.7	4.0
The instructor's contribution to the course was:	21	24%	52%	14%	10%			4.0	4.3
The instructor's effectiveness in teaching the subject matter was:	21	24%	48%	14%	10%	5%		4.0	4.3

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

	N	Much Higher (7)	(6)	(5)	Average (4)	(3)	(2)	Much Lower (1)	Median
Relative to other college courses you have taken:									
Do you expect your grade in this course to be:	21	5%	10%	10%	24%	24%	19%	10%	3.4
The intellectual challenge presented was:	21	24%	43%	24%	5%		5%		5.9
The amount of effort you put into this course was:	21	38%	24%	14%	19%			5%	6.0
The amount of effort to succeed in this course was:	21	48%	29%	5%	14%			5%	6.4
Your involvement in course (doing assignments, attending classes, etc.) was:	21	29%	38%	5%	24%	5%			5.9

On average, how many hours per week have you spent on this course, including attending classes, doing readings, reviewing notes, writing papers and any other course related work?

Class median: 6.8 Hours per credit: 2.2 (N=21)

Under 2	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10-11	12-13	14-15	16-17	18-19	20-21	22 or more
	14%	24%	19%	10%	29%		5%				

From the total average hours above, how many do you consider were valuable in advancing your education?

Class median: 4.7 Hours per credit: 1.6 (N=21)

Under 2	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10-11	12-13	14-15	16-17	18-19	20-21	22 or more
5%	29%	29%	14%	14%	10%						

What grade do you expect in this course?

Class median: 3.2 (N=21)

A (3.9-4.0)	A- (3.5-3.8)	B+ (3.2-3.4)	B (2.9-3.1)	B- (2.5-2.8)	C+ (2.2-2.4)	C (1.9-2.1)	C- (1.5-1.8)	D+ (1.2-1.4)	D (0.9-1.1)	D- (0.7-0.8)	F (0.0)	Pass	Credit	No Credit
10%	24%	19%	14%	19%	5%	5%	5%							

In regard to your academic program, is this course best described as:

(N=21)

In your major	A core/distribution requirement	An elective	In your minor	A program requirement	Other
90%	5%	5%			

STANDARD FORMATIVE ITEMS

How frequently was each of the following a true description of this course?	N	Always (7)	(6)	(5)	About Half (4)	(3)	(2)	Never (1)	Median	Relative Rank
The instructor gave very clear explanations.	21	43%	24%	29%		5%			6.2	3
The instructor successfully rephrased explanations to clear up confusion.	21	48%	29%	19%	5%				6.4	2
Class sessions were interesting and engaging.	21	38%	29%	24%	5%	5%			6.1	4
Class sessions were well organized.	21	62%	14%	24%					6.7	1
Student participation was encouraged.	21	43%	43%	5%	10%				6.3	5
Students were aware of what was expected of them.	21	29%	43%	19%	5%		5%		6.0	6
Extra help was readily available.	21	29%	29%	19%	19%	5%			5.8	11
Assigned readings and other out-of-class work were valuable.	21	33%	24%	19%	10%	5%	5%	5%	5.8	8
Grades were assigned fairly.	21	38%	24%	19%	14%	5%			6.0	10
Meaningful feedback on tests and other work was provided.	21	38%	24%	19%	10%	10%			6.0	7
Evaluation of student performance was related to important course goals.	21	33%	24%	24%	14%	5%			5.8	9

Relative to other college courses you have taken, how would you describe your progress in this course with regards to:	N	Great (7)	(6)	(5)	Average (4)	(3)	(2)	None (1)	Median	Relative Rank
Learning the conceptual and factual knowledge of this course.	21	43%	5%	19%	19%	5%	5%	5%	5.4	4
Developing an appreciation for the field in which this course resides.	21	43%	14%	19%	5%	5%	10%	5%	6.0	1
Understanding written material in this field.	21	38%	10%	19%	14%	14%	5%		5.4	3
Developing an ability to express yourself in writing or orally in this field.	21	24%	14%	24%	24%	10%	5%		5.0	6
Understanding and solving problems in this field.	21	29%	10%	10%	33%	14%	5%		4.4	7
Applying the course material to real world issues or other disciplines.	21	29%	19%	29%	10%	10%	5%		5.4	5
General intellectual development.	21	29%	24%	19%	19%		5%	5%	5.6	2

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STANDARD OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Was this class intellectually stimulating? Did it stretch your thinking? Why or why not?

1. For the most part yes. I don't think the lectures were particularly stimulating, but the research done for the species account and the class discussions were very interesting and fun to do.
2. This class was unrealistically hard. We were expected to know so many details and concepts, which should not need to be memorized. For 3 credits it was an insane amount of work. Either take away the species accounts, readings, or make the exams easier because this was not worth 3 credits. The instructor is very skilled and knows her mammals but cannot expect us to be expert like her for exams. I would recommend putting yourself in your student's shoes and understanding how much content is expected of us. Even providing a notecard for the exams would be very helpful. The class is so difficult it pushes the students away despite us all trying very hard. If the exam average is lower than past classes, maybe consider your own style of teaching and expectations are unrealistic, not that we didn't try as hard.
4. It was intellectually stimulating because it broadened my thinking on a very specific top of mammals.
5. yes, I got the chance to practice memorization and learning how individual species are organized in the large scheme.
6. Yes, but not about the core understandings of mammology.
7. Not really, it was just a bunch of memorization that I crammed and didn't retain much of.
8. This was a great class! It was great to finally have a class solely focused on mammals. I learned an extensive amount of information about mammalian orders and species.
10. yes, I decided to take this class because my main focus in my major is plants, not animals and I wanted to expand my knowledge
11. Yes it was intellectually stimulating. I learned a lot about mammals
12. Yes. The memorization of material was a greater challenge than any other course
13. It was definitely intellectually stimulating. It did not quite stretch my thinking, but I think that the purpose of this course was more to learn facts rather than change your way of thinking, so it was really good in that area.
14. This class was intellectually stimulating and introduced me to studious animal classification.
15. Yes it was very intellectually stimulating.
17. Yes lots of new concepts explained well
18. I thought this class was very interesting and I loved the content, as we began to learn about the different orders of mammalia.
19. Expectations of memorizing course knowledge was too much. Initially, the class was described as being more conceptual than memorization, but the exams felt purely based on memorization of orders, spelling, species, definitions, families, adaptations, even bone structures. Too much content expected out of the course.

What aspects of this class contributed most to your learning?

1. I think doing the research and revisions of the ADW assignment.
2. Studying with other students
3. I liked how the discussions focused on real world conservation issues so I got to learn a lot about things like trophy hunting and fencing which I basically had no knowledge about previously. For the most part, lectures tended to focus on the biology and phylogeny of different animals orders so the discussions were a good balance to the lectures. I think the format of the trophy hunting debate was really good because people spoke more than they would in a regular discussion. The extra credit points to the team that won was helpful too.
4. Having polls and questions to test memory.
5. going to class regularly
6. The lectures were well structured and the study guides were helpful
7. Slideshows
8. Lectures
10. class discussions
11. The lectures and assignments
12. The lectures
13. What mostly contributed to my learning was probably attending lecture and going over the lecture slides, which were really good and had all of the information we needed which is very helpful.
14. The in class instruction contributed most to my memorization of course material and the course discussion preparations edified me most.
15. The lectures.

17. Knowledgeable instructor
18. The poll questions, class discussions, and lectures were what helped me the most. I found that the interactions were great in helping me solidify my knowledge.
19. Studying on my own online.

What aspects of this class detracted from your learning?

1. I may just not understand the reason for it, but I felt like the need to memorize all of the latin names for every order + a lot of families was not a good use of my time. I spend a lot of time studying just trying to remember what species belong to each latin name when I feel like I could've spent more time understanding the characteristics of the species/order.
2. The lecture polls and readings
3. Having to memorize all of the animal orders and families was really stressful and it made it harder to learn the actual content itself. It was especially hard for me because I took this class for 400 level credit, not because I am interested in pursuing wildlife conservation in the future. The class definitely expanding my knowledge on animals but knowing that I won't actually be pursuing this field in the future made it harder to memorize the orders because I lacked motivation.
4. I feel like a lot of information that isn't necessarily important were thrown at me and I wasn't sure what was to most important to know.
5. not having recorded lectures for when I had to miss class due to illness
6. The sheer workload for a three credit class was completely unreasonable. The large bulk of memorization was not intuitive and often had nothing to do with the takeaway concepts of the class. If the course intended to make students memorize this plethora of minute details, names, and latin spelling, it should've been coined an identification class rather than a study of mammals. The amount of information we were expected to take down in notes each class, let alone memorize for exams, was impossible to fit within the suggested time requirements for a 3 credit class. If I was to set a credit load for this course, it would be a rigorous 5 unit class.
7. Lectures weren't very helpful.
8. --
10. memorization and exam content was much greater than I expected for a 3 credit class.
11. Nothing
12. Nothing really
13. I think what mainly detracted from my learning was the fact that there was so much content to memorize that I did not really focus on actually absorbing it long term, but memorizing it for tests.
14. None outstanding.
15. None.
17. Pretty lecture based
18. I think that the exams were kind of intense. I think that I could have studied more effectively and done better, but I felt that it was over all a lot for a three credit class. Also, I didn't really like the final project not being connected to the rest of the class. I think it would have been more engaging if we had done a presentation in conjunction, or at least connected it to any of the content we discussed in lecture. It felt like shocking to remember that I had to do the species account because it was like a random assignment completely detached from the rest of the quarter, I am excited at the possibility of being published on the website though and I think that this does give an interesting opportunity for students to say that they are published on the website.
19. All the work required for preparing for the exams.

What suggestions do you have for improving the class?

1. I think the only thing that would make me feel better about this class is putting less emphasis on memorization, and more on application. Other than that I loved this class.
2. As said above, ease up the workload or boost it to 5 credits
3. This is not related to the actual content of the class but is it possible to change this course to 5 credits? I think the class being 3 credits is kind of misleading because the amount of work you have to do for this class is equivalent to a 5 credit class. I also think that students should be able to bring a notecard to the exams, especially for the second exam since it is focused on the animal orders and characteristics whereas the first exam is a bit more conceptual. Memorizing the animal orders takes a long time and its difficult to prioritize studying for the second exam when there are also other exams/finals taking place at around the same time so you also have to study for them. Giving students the option of the notecard relieves some stress and anxiety regarding the exam. (I am writing this before the decision has been made to allow notecards or not so its possible that students have already been given permission to bring them)
4. No suggestions, it was fun!
5. adding recorded lectures maybe?
6. Cut down the workload for the love of god, I'm sure you've gotten this note a million times.
7. Quizzes should have a longer time frame to take them, like until the next lecture.
8. Discussions-- I think they were helpful, but I think the debate that we did was more involved and increased active participation. Having a discussion after the debate was great to reflect on the ideas we had just discussed. I think it would be helpful to host discussions in a form where the class does a mini debate and then reflects.
9. The exams were unrealistically hard with way too much content. This should NOT be a 3 credit course, it should be 5, no question. Extremely challenging, expected to memorize hundreds of scientific terms
10. Advertise this class to reflect the time and effort needed to succeed. I originally chose this class because the topic was new to me and it was only 3 credits. Because I'm taking a heavy class load with over 15 credits I wanted to balance my classes out however, the work needed for this class was way more than I expected, it has also negatively impacted my grades for other classes I'm taking this quarter.

11. None
12. Maybe less discussions
13. This class had a lot of information for a three credit class. It was my hardest class this quarter, and I had other 5 credit classes. I think that reducing the standards of how much information we need to know, or potentially changing the testing style to reflect this, would be effective and more representative of what we are getting out of the class.
14. More canvas assignment self-study and writing (e.g., class discussion preparations).
15. This class needs to be a 5 credit class. The amount of work I had to put in to do well exceeded all of my other 5 credit classes. The work load was extremely intensive.
16. For how much time and effort I put into this class, it should have been definitely worth 5 credits. Not 3.
17. I really liked it,
18. I would do more discussions for interaction. An example of this could be, instead of the quiz after lecture, have people post to the discussion boards with their favorite thing they learned or something. I think this would encourage people to share more of their opinions and create a greater conversation in class when it came time to have discussions. I also think that it would have been helpful to have more discussion boards open as there could have been one about forming study groups for the exam. I think if there had been an online forum, more people would have exchanged information, gotten connected to study, talked more in class, and done better on exams.
19. Make it more conceptual. Don't expect students to memorize hundreds of different concepts, rather, introduce them to the concepts and build exams base off those concepts.

IASystem Course Summary Reports summarize student ratings of a particular course or combination of courses. They provide a rich perspective on student views by reporting responses in three ways: as frequency distributions, average ratings, and either comparative or adjusted ratings. Remember in interpreting results that it is important to keep in mind the number of students who evaluated the course relative to the total course enrollment as shown on the upper right-hand corner of the report.

Frequency distributions. The percentage of students who selected each response choice is displayed for each item. Percentages are based on the number of students who answered the respective item rather than the number of students who evaluated the course because individual item response is optional.

Median ratings. IASystem reports average ratings in the form of item medians. Although means are a more familiar type of average than medians, they are less accurate in summarizing student ratings. This is because ratings distributions tend to be strongly skewed. That is, most of the ratings are at the high end of the scale and trail off to the low end.

The median indicates the point on the rating scale at which half of the students selected higher ratings, and half selected lower. Medians are computed to one decimal place by interpolation.¹ In general, higher medians reflect more favorable ratings. To interpret median ratings, compare the value of each median to the respective response scale: *Very Poor, Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good, Excellent (0-5)*; *Never/None/Much Lower, About Half/Average, Always/Great/Much Higher (1-7)*; *Slight, Moderate, Considerable, Extensive (1-4)*.

Comparative ratings. IASystem provides a normative comparison for each item by reporting the decile rank of the item median. Decile ranks compare the median rating of a particular item to ratings of the same item over the previous two academic years in all classes at the institution and within the college, school, or division. Decile ranks are shown only for items with sufficient normative data.

Decile ranks range from 0 (lowest) to 9 (highest). For all items, higher medians yield higher decile ranks. The 0 decile rank indicates an item median in the lowest 10% of all scores. A decile rank of 1 indicates a median above the bottom 10% and below the top 80%. A decile rank of 9 indicates a median in the top 10% of all scores. Because average ratings tend to be high, a rating of "good" or "average" may have a low decile rank.

Adjusted ratings. Research has shown that student ratings may be somewhat influenced by factors such as class size, expected grade, and reason for enrollment. To correct for this, IASystem reports **adjusted medians** for summative items (items #1-4 and their combined global rating) based on regression analyses of ratings over the previous two academic years in all classes at the respective institution. If large classes at the institution tend to be rated lower than small classes, for example, the adjusted medians for large classes will be slightly higher than their unadjusted medians.

When adjusted ratings are displayed for summative items, **relative rank** is displayed for the more specific (formative) items. Rankings serve as a guide in directing instructional improvement efforts. The top ranked items (1, 2, 3, etc.) represent areas that are going well from a student perspective; whereas the bottom ranked items (18, 17, 16, etc.) represent areas in which the instructor may want to make changes. Relative ranks are computed by first standardizing each item (subtracting the overall institutional average from the item rating for the particular course, then dividing by the standard deviation of the ratings across all courses) and then ranking those standardized scores.

Challenge and Engagement Index (CEI). Several IASystem items ask students how academically challenging they found the course to be. IASystem calculates the average of these items and reports them as a single index. *The Challenge and Engagement Index (CEI)* correlates only modestly with the global rating (median of items 1-4).

Optional Items. Student responses to instructor-supplied items are summarized at the end of the evaluation report. Median responses should be interpreted in light of the specific item text and response scale used (response values 1-6 on paper evaluation forms).

¹ For the specific method, see, for example, Guilford, J.P. (1965). *Fundamental statistics in psychology and education*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, pp. 49-53.