

Teaching Evaluation Summary (2010-2011 Winter)

Comment Summary

Instructor: Lipsick, Joseph
Subject: CBIO
Catalog & Section: 101, 01

Course Title: **CANCER BIOLOGY**
Enrollment: **34** Responses Incl Declines: **30**
(Declined: 7)
Same as: **PATH10101**

1. Please comment on the individual instructors with regard to effectiveness and attitude toward students:

Strengths

- Joe was great. He kept lectures upbeat and was very knowledgeable about the course content. Probably my favorite course taken at Stanford up to now.
- Prof. Lipsick is a very effective lecturer; his informal tone and historical & scientific anecdotes made lecture quite engaging. I also greatly appreciated his willingness to take questions throughout the lecture.
- Dr. Lipsick is an effective presenter whose sense of humor comes through and is definitely appreciated during what can be dense material. The emphasis on research methods and applications is great.
- Good attitude always willing to take questions
- Great lecturer, very engaging and very accessible.
- I loved Professor Lipsick's teaching style. He threw little jokes into his lectures, which I always appreciated, and his lecture slides were clear and easy to follow. Additionally, I loved that he asked questions during lecture to get us thinking and talking in class.
- Prof. Lipsick is awesome! I really appreciated the effort put in to ensure that we'd understand the reasons why we think we know what we know; it was so much more educational and fun than just memorizing facts.
- Lipsick is an amazing story teller and very approachable. He is one of the best lecturers that I have had at Stanford.
- really great, personable, loved the references
- Loved the lectures. Professor was very approachable.
- The class content was AMAZING and the lectures were incredibly well organized.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Prof. Lipsick occasionally moves a bit too quickly through his slides; we're studying very complex pathways and experiments and could often use a bit more time to take notes & understand what's happening.
- NA

2. Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses, if any, of the textbook(s) and reading(s). What materials were most and least valuable? Why?

Strengths

- The Weinberg book is very thorough and actually fun to read. The papers posted online were relevant to what was covered in class and offered greater detail, which was at times useful and interesting.
- I appreciated the variety of topics covered by the assigned journal articles, and found the majority of them very helpful in understanding cancer research.
- Discussion papers, helped to emphasize important techniques, helpful
- I really liked the Weinberg textbook. It really enforced what I learned in class. Additionally, I thought all of the papers Professor Lipsick chose for discussion section were really good to go over, and really helped me understand what we were learning in lecture.
- Textbook was very good, and so were the paper readings.
- The textbook was a great supplementary resource and the weekly discussion reading were always interesting
- Cancer Biology textbook was great! I borrowed it but it would have been a good investment if I had spent the money.
- I really liked the readings we had for section!
- -The Weinberg book has been one of the best biology textbooks I've used, and I find myself consulting it for other classes as well. -Lecture slides and presenter notes are very helpful. -Lipsick provides a really comprehensive reading list for each week, although it's difficult to do all the readings because there are so many of them.
- Really enjoyed the material and the papers that were assigned.
- Thought the reading was very well selected and helped clarify course materials

Suggestions for Improvement

- I wish that the textbook hadn't been recommended or listed in the Bookstore- I literally never used it. I was also disappointed that so many of the early journal articles were "classics" from the 70s, 80s, and early 90s. While I acknowledge the usefulness of a historical perspective & the ground-breaking nature of these papers, I found their often obsolete methods irrelevant to modern cancer research, which is particularly disappointing given Prof. Lipsick's admirable focus on developing a "toolbox" of research methods.
- I would like to see one or two modern cancer papers in discussion.
- Sometimes all the reading posted was a bit overwhelming.... It was hard to know how to prioritize if I couldn't do all of it.
- Possibly connect the papers that were read for section much better.

3. Please comment on assignments and exams (difficulty, length, frequency, usefulness, and their success at testing conceptual understanding rather than recall):

Strengths

- I liked the fact that the exam tested critical thinking as opposed to memorization.
- I found the exam(s) quite reasonable in terms of length and difficulty.
- Fine length, don't like word limit.
- The exams were tough, but I really appreciated it. They definitely got me thinking about designing experiments, and really made sure I understood the material well.
- Exams were fun and useful.
- The exams in this classes were another opportunity to learn and internalize the material.
- Good at testing critical thinking. I used many resources (mostly on Pubmed) outside of the text/readings, so I really got to practice searching to find specific methods, genes, etc.
- The exams were difficult, but I liked that I learned from them.
- midterm was somewhat vague but graded fairly I think

Suggestions for Improvement

- No word limit or higher word limit.
- I would have liked some homework, or something regular that would make us constantly revise the material (and perhaps read the textbook). Something half as long as the midterm every week or two would be nice and would reinforce learning! Felt that this course took too little time outside of class.
- If you are only going to give 4 days for the midterm, I would make the test shorter.
- I spent about a day and a half out of the four days on the midterm and final, because I had other tests embedded. So, I think you could make it a shorter time period if you wanted, but I suppose the 4 days gives flexibility.

4. Do you have any additional comments on the course over-all?

Strengths

- Fantastic. I wish I could repeat this class next year.
- Interesting course
- This was the best class I have taken at Stanford. I am so sorry that it is over. I thoroughly enjoyed this class. Thank you!
- There doesn't seem to be a section evaluation form on Axess, so I'm writing this here: sections are a great help in understanding the material, and my TA (Brook) was extremely patient, well-prepared and helpful! The sections really pulled the class together. The lectures were very good and all in all, I learnt a tremendous amount from this!
- definitely one of the best classes I have taken at Stanford. Learned a bit about cancer pathways - learned a lot about the research methodology.
- Wonderful class.
- This was one of the best classes I've ever taken.
- One of my favorite courses of the quarter.
- Very interesting course overall
- Loved the course. Took it out of pure interest and on a recommendation from a friend. Thanks!
- This has been one of the most relevant classes I've taken so far. After taking this class, I see so many references to cancer and other cellular pathways mentioned all over the place. A great class I would recommend to others.
- Thank you professor lipsick for the wonderful class. I learned so much about cancer bio and I think you were very understanding with extenuating circumstances. It is really appreciated.

Suggestions for Improvement

- NA
- Sometimes moved a bit fast. I had little recollection of virus biology so was a bit lost in the first week.
- The pace of lectures was simply too fast. I understand there is a LOT of material to cover, but I think it would be extremely helpful to shave down some of the material presented in lecture and focus more in depth on the most relevant topics and issues in cancer biology.