

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

Strengths

- Warm and approachable. Lectures were interesting and easy to follow.
- Lipsick is cheerful and involved.
- He was a great lecturer with clear powerpoint slides.
- great attitude; funny; lectures were extremely interesting; awesome to talk to; genuinely interested in his students
- Dr. Lipsick is obviously quite knowledgeable of the subject matter and did a good job of presenting the material such that we could understand. He also brought in good supplementary speakers for special topics.
- interesting topics
- great lecturer
- Very student-friendly
- Effective lecturer who treated students with respect.
- Definitely wanted us to learn. Because it was the first time this class was offered, he made a huge effort to make sure things were going well.
- Students did not talk much, but he always tried to engage them
- He had great knowledge of the course material and seemed concerned with our learning.
- He is a great lecturer. He explains tough concepts clearly, and he uses humor to keep the class entertained. I never missed a lecture since I thought that it was the most interesting hour of class I have had all year.
- The professor always asked questions to his students to challenge them and encourage critical thinking.
- Pretty good attitude
- Professor Lipsick was very enthusiastic about the topic. He was very straightforward with his lectures.
- very open and welcoming
- good knowledge of topic
- Instructor is a good teacher, cares about the students, wants to hear their stories. knows about the material well enough, has past experience, and personal experience.
- The lectures were very knowledgeable and effective
- Dr. Lipsick knew his material.
- Very passionate, but not very motivating. Not a very dynamic lecturer.
- Comic strips and jokes! Didn't take himself or us too seriously.
- Definitely a really knowledgeable guy, and seems pretty cool!
- He was really passionate about the material and encouraged people to participate and ask questions.
- Awesome lecturer!! Very clear with lots of interesting information in each lecture.
- good supplemental reading list guest lecturers were awesome
- Yes, his lectures were great. I enjoyed his enthusiasm and the general validity of his arguments and claims.
- Prof. Lipsick was an engaging speaker. He made a difficult subject easy and enjoyable to learn.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Did not promote office hours very widely.
- Sometimes Dr. Lipsick asks us questions and no one really wants to answer. This is likely because we are too tired in the morning to come up with a worthy response. It would be better if Dr. Lipsick simply continued on rather than waiting for someone to answer.
- make more engaging lectures
- keep up the good work
- Needs to be more engaging during lecture and explain/elaborate more.
- None.
- nope
- I think he could have been more vibrant in his speaking style.
- He doesn't always seem very approachable, except for the lunches
- Lectures were sometimes a bit dry and hard to focus during.
- none
- maybe make lectures a bit more exciting
- Could make lecture more interesting. Lecture can get boring, make it more exciting.
- Material in lecture was never tested on. Rather the whole course was based on a book prompt. It made lectures worthless.

- Perhaps could seem more engaged, less dry during lecture.
- Be less scripted.
- Had trouble holding my attention at times, but the times he did hav it were quite interesting! I have to say though, making the lecture slides available before lecture made me less likely to pay attention during lecture...
- Professor needs to employ it in a fashion that engages students and holds their interests
- Pick better guest speakers. Did not enjoy Hank Greely's lecture
- Often felt like I was being talked at, rather than to. Also, while the course content was interesting, it wasn't presented interestingly.

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 Emperor book was incredible and perfectly matched the course. The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks also offered a great look at the ethical aspects of cancer research. I think it'd be great if the course could go into the healthcare system a little further next year.
- Really liked the HeLa book and the Emperor book.
- Readings were so interesting; I loved choosing an additional text to read
- The Emperor book was very good and related very well to the course. The supplementary readings also tended to be interesting.
- a wide range of information and stories
- Emperor was a good text as well as all the additional readings
- Engaging
- Mukherjee reading was very useful; the rest of the readings were hit and miss.
- All the readings were great. I loved both books and the weekly readings were short and informative.
- Readings were insightful and very relevant
- The readings were somewhat useful, especially when we discussed them in section.
- The Emperor textbook was amazing. My favorite required reading of the year. I learned so much from just this book. I also loved reading the Henrietta Lack's book. I liked it so much I finished it in a day. The articles were also very interesting.
- I felt that the central text of the class was very interesting and realistic.
- Good readings
- I really enjoyed reading The Emperor of All Maladies. It was very informative and interesting. The readings were usually fun and interesting to read as well.
- the readings were a great choice, very relevant
- emperor was very good
- Textbook - emperor was a good textbook, provided a nice backdrop to all taht we were learning. Readings were not required - rarely did them after the first week.
- Interesting
- The main course reading is great, albeit a bit difficult to finish. It should be kept.
- The textbook was a fantastic mix of information and personal anecdote.
- Maladies is such a great book! I even recommended it to my mom who is a doctor. All of the readings were valuable though.
- The Emperor textbook was great! So was the optional (The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks) book! Probably the most engaging required text I've had.
- The readings were all great! I think they were all insightful and helpful. Each different source added new perspective.
- main textbook readings not interesting outside readings and books are well written and interesting
- The textbooks were good. Enjoyed the readings that he assigned.
- While Maladies was long, it did coincide with the course nicely
- Some readings were really helpful in solidifying understanding! I really enjoyed the Emperor of All Maladies and The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks.
- The assigned reading was very interesting

Suggestions for Improvement

- The textbook reading was really redundant with lecture. I enjoyed the material -- either hearing it or reading it -- but didn't need to do so twice. Read Billion Dollar Molecule and didn't think it was as suitable for the paper because it was so dense and difficult to quote.
- They listened to us and shortened the reading guides. I am very grateful for that, because we are still getting the same benefit with less work.
- billion dollar molecule was not interesting and hard to write an essay on
- Unnecessarily drawn out

- None.
- nope
- The textbook reading was just like the lecture slides so was not all that useful.
- but it was A LOT
- Sometimes readings were a bit excessive.
- none
- talking about other readings would be interesting
- Textbook: focus a little more, we started a lot at the beginning and then stopped for a while, before talking about it in the last class. and don't give reading guides.
- Only reading the book was all that was required. The interesting and factual readings had no bearing on the course grade or goal.
- The Bishop book had a good overlap with the main reading and was a bit boring at the beginning, though it became more interesting.
- Shorter reading assignments and reading guides!
- Some of the Maladies readings were quite long.
- The required textbook (Prof. Lipsick's unpublished textbook) readings seemed unnecessary. They were the same thing as lecture.
- Some of the extra readings (especially the textbook) was really repetitive with lecture content.
- Too much reading in a given point of time, so it was very difficult to get the reading done in time

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

Strengths

- Essay project and debate project were very useful.
- All of the assignments and everything were fine with the exception of the textbook/lecture redundancy.
- assignments were great, perfect frequency and useful too; learned a lot from the reading, which was really interesting
- I enjoyed all of the assignments. I especially liked the debate. This class had enough assignments to keep us working without overwhelming us most of the time.
- good content
- paper instead of a final is great
- All reasonable
- Pretty well done.
- Everything was very reasonable and useful.
- Assignments were alright overall
- I liked not having any tests in this class. The final paper was useful and successful at pushing me to apply the knowledge I learned in class. "Think Like a Scientist" was very useful.
- The section assignments were interesting and useful. I think the debate assignment was also good.
- The assignments were fun and stimulated critical thinking.
- Good assignments, for the most part
- The student debates were fantastic. They tested our understanding in a new way. Small projects were fun and interesting as well.
- n/a
- essay was good for tying everything together
- Exams - none Assignments: essay isn't too bad, none of the assignments were bad, all of them were pretty interesting.
- -
- Assignments were ok at testing some understanding
- Numerous section assignments give opportunity to improve one's grade.
- One essay at the very end made so much sense to me! Especially with the outline and 3 separate drafts. Such a helpful way to write. Why don't all my classes do it?
- The paper really helped me learn!
- Assignments were fun and oriented towards learning. The reading guides got a little tedious at times but were still pretty interesting.
- reasonable mix of assignments and section work to determine course grade assignments spaced out final paper divided into segments for grading which is helpful
- not difficult.
- I really enjoyed the midterm/final grading format of this course. I found it far less stressful/more engaging than the written exams I took in my other classes
- They were fair and helpful!

Suggestions for Improvement

- Reading guides helped, but were way too long and repetitive in the beginning. New format is much better.
- assignment length was not ideal; reading sections distributed unevenly across the week--we would have some days when we would have one night to read 90 pages but 4 nights to read 20 pages
- The one suggestion has already been taken.
- reading guides are very high school-esque don't grade rough drafts
- Reading guides should be shortened, since they were borderline redundant.
- Space out the Mukherjee reading a bit more; having it all due at once led to long nights staying up reading.
- None.
- Too much weight on grade for the draft of the paper
- The reading assignments seemed a little unnecessary at times.
- It is strange to have fifty percent of the grade be based on an essay on a chosen reading. I like how the outline was ten percent of the grade, but having both the rough and final draft be twenty percent of the grade is not helpful. In PWR, we received feedback on rough drafts but they counted significantly less than the final draft. I felt that no matter how well I did on my first draft I couldn't get a good grade since there was still the final draft.
- The essay is such a huge part of our grade. It seems weird that our draft is worth 20%. And everyone I talked to has said that in their tutorials, the essays were "torn apart" and were graded really hard. It didn't seem very fair.
- Reading logs were very repetitive, difficult, and long.
- n/a
- not make the rough draft and the final draft worth the same amount of our grade. the final should be weighted more heavily.
- na
- The whole course was based around one essay that didn't have anything to do with the course. It was based on one book. The paper could have been written without any lecture material.
- Perhaps they should be a little more complex and nuanced, though at the same time I think concepts were not always well-explained enough to do the assignments.
- More importance placed on additional assignments.
- I didn't find the reading guides very useful except for the main themes part. This part tested more conceptual understanding. Their frequency made sense though and they weren't too difficult.
- Having a rough draft count for 20% (and an outline for 10%) of the grade is a bit much. What's the purpose of a rough draft, if it's graded? The distinction between rough and final was very blurred, and I suggest replacing the rough draft/outline grade with a short midterm to just solidify our understanding of the class.
- numerical grade should match comments: excellent papers should not be given a 90, which is lowest A- possible
- No suggestions. Please keep the multiple draft deadlines though-- it forces students not to procrastinate. Brilliant.
- Reading guides were very unnecessary
- The final exam essay topic was unclear and many students were told they had done the assignment wrong during the third tutorial. In addition, the debates did not contribute to my learning, but were rather a source of stress.

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

Strengths

- I feel like I learned a lot--good class!
- So glad this was my TMAT! Very interesting.
- great course; would recommend it to everyone who is interested in not only the science behind cancer but the hidden ethical issues that we don't think about on a daily basis
- I have learned a lot about cancer and scientific research in general through this course, and I am very happy that that is the case.
- great lecturer, interesting lectures
- Great Thinking Matters course!
- Good job with taking a complex and diverse topic and making a coherent course out of it.
- Loved it!
- nope
- I really liked the course content, especially since I am interested in medicine.
- My favorite class of the year.
- The class was very interesting and furthered my knowledge of cancer.
- Good course, definitely makes you think
- I really enjoyed being in this Thinking Matters class. It was very well organized and structured.
- great topic, loved how it focused not only on the science behind cancer but also the social implications
- good course
- good class, from personal experience, this class helped me understand my own experiences.
-

- The lectures were awesome! Just wished they actually mattered in testing.
- NA
- I don't think it works well in a lecture setting -- section was very good.
- Most interesting TMat class ever in my opinion ;) Overall, I loved it. It was my favorite class this quarter. And having guest lecturers was my favorite! And the lunches!
- Really great course material; not bad at all for a required class!
- I really liked this course. I think it did good job of integrating the societal and biology aspects of cancer. I am now consider doing cancer research in the future. I feel like I learned a lot!!!
- Pretty much loved the course, I learned a lot and it was very fun and enjoyable. I sincerely wish more classes were taught like this one.
- glad I took it
- Really loved this course. Makes me want to study cell biology/cancer biology more than ever
- Good overall

Suggestions for Improvement

- Later lecture times
- keep up the good work
- Improve lecture format, and invite more guest speakers.
- Lectures were a bit slow. Moreover, while this course was well done, I still feel that making this a requirement was unnecessary, and honestly wasted my time. It's unclear what the Thinking Matters requirement is trying to accomplish; I learned about cancer, but I didn't learn any skills that I didn't already know.
- None.
- nope
- More enthusiasm in lecture!
- Instead of having the essay be worth so much, there should be something that would give students incentive to go to lecture. I never missed a lecture, but I had no reason to go since it is posted online and I wasn't being graded on anything in the lecture. Perhaps instead of the rough draft being twenty percent of the grade it could be worth ten percent, and ten percent could be used for a small midterm on lecture material or reflection paragraphs at the end of each lecture.
- There's also not really any incentive to go to lecture/pay attention in lecture. Maybe quizzes in section over the lecture material, or something similar.
- Lectures were not extremely useful because we were never tested on the material presented in lecture.
- none
- lecture.
- Lectures weren't necessary to do well. The whole class was based on a random book which took away the interest of the class.
- NA
- Lectures toward te end, especially about the hard science-y stuff were a little dull and difficult to follow
- make actual lectures more interesting
- Please teach PWR 2!
- make the lecture less repetitive of the reading; many students lost interest quickly in the lectures