

## See the Last Page for a Key to the List of Questions

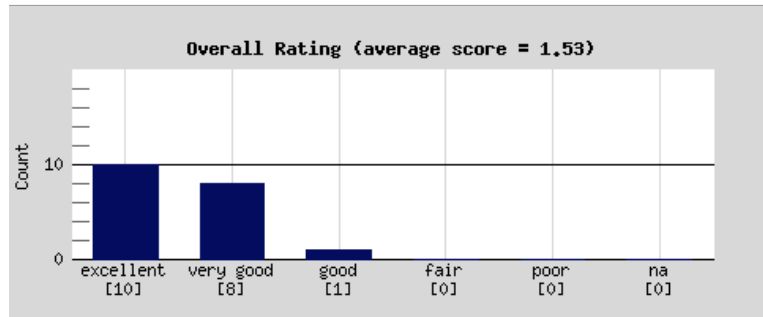
BIOL1470 - Fall - 2009

EEB - Conservation Biology

Total # of responses: 19

Sax, Dov

Question #	excellent	very good	good	fair	poor	na
1	13 - 68%	5 - 26%	1 - 5%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
2	10 - 53%	9 - 47%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3	12 - 63%	7 - 37%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
4	10 - 53%	8 - 42%	1 - 5%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%



Q1      Q2      Q3      Q4      [hide all](#)

excellent      very\_good      excellent      very\_good

Q5: yes

Q6: readings for discussion section were always relevant for lecture, good amount - maybe more in the future?

Q7: exams were too much rote memorization in my opinion- not enough application

Q8: -

Q9: enjoyed discussion especially because they were TA or professor led, sometimes felt that they were too cursory- didn't really dig in enough

Q10: TA very helpful and wanted us to succeed

Q11: Enjoyed lecture and hearing about Conservation Biology from Dov's perspective

Q12: reduce the ecology review- focus more on the science, ask for more application on the exams

excellent      very\_good      excellent      very\_good

Q5: yes

Q6: readings for discussion section were always relevant for lecture, good amount - maybe more in the future?

Q7: exams were too much rote memorization in my opinion- not enough application

Q8: -

Q9: enjoyed discussion especially because they were TA or professor led, sometimes felt that they were too cursory- didn't really dig in enough

Q10: TA very helpful and wanted us to succeed

Q11: Enjoyed lecture and hearing about Conservation Biology from Dov's perspective

Q12: reduce the ecology review- focus more on the science, ask for more application on the exams

excellent      excellent      excellent      excellent

Q5: yes

Q6: Reading was set at a good level. Chapters from the reading gave a good background, but were not always super relevant. Paper readings were great

Q7: Everything was evaluated pretty fairly.

Q8: No lab

Q9: Discussion sections were great and one of the best parts of the class. The professor and TA were great discussion leaders

Q10: The teaching assistance was very effective and capable. Added a lot to the class.

Q11: Great professor and interesting topic/lectures.

Q12: Rework the final paper schedule to have students develop a more concise topic/question earlier.

very\_good      very\_good      very\_good      very\_good

Q5: yes

Q6: A large volume, but all was relevant and helpful in understanding the class

Q7: The course required two midterms, a final, and a group term paper; I recommend omitting one of the evaluations

Q8:

Q9: Relevant/helpful.

Q10:

Q11:

Q12:

excellent      excellent      very\_good      very\_good

Q5: yes			
Q6: textbook was not very helpful; discussion readings were very useful			
Q7: good; group paper needs improvement			
Q8: N/A			
Q9: great! my particular section was wonderful and everyone participated. our TA, matt, was extremely knowledgeable and led sections very well.			
Q10: extremely effective!			
Q11: TA; discussion of current topics; working with others			
Q12: improving group paper assignment; changing due dates			
excellent	very_good	very_good	good
Q5: yes			
Q6: I thought the textbook was bad -- presented information simplistically and showed pervasive bias. Primary readings were generally excellent.			
Q7: Quizzes were silly. Particularly lecture quizzes I thought were totally unnecessary. The textbook readings were not useful or important enough to warrant quizzes, and anyway I think in an upper-level course whether I read the textbook should be my prerogative. I can understand discussion quizzes, to make sure everyone prepares -- I think it did have a positive impact on discussions. Exams were disappointing. I think the material potentially lends itself to really interesting questions that demand integrative, critical thinking, but exams disproportionately focused on recall of what to me seemed like minutiae. Grading on exams seemed somewhat arbitrary and was not explained - i.e. correct answer was not given when points taken off for wrong answer. Group term paper is a cool idea, and I think you should do it again, but need to provide more explicit instructions up front about how to best go about assignment.			
Q8: n/a			
Q9: Generally quite good. Quizzes meant that everyone was generally prepared to discuss. Sometimes we got very off topic, which was unfortunate. I think we would have benefited from having more concrete discussion questions to focus our conversation ... a potential alternative to quizzes could be requirement to email 2 discussion questions to section leader, who then chooses most interesting ones to bring to discussion.			
Q10: effective, available			
Q11: discussion readings, lectures on nonnative species			
Q12: In theory I like the idea of small group discussions during lecture, but I frequently felt like they were pretty irrelevant. Maybe rethink. Get a different textbook.			
excellent	very_good	excellent	excellent
Q5: yes			
Q6: Sometimes heavy reading on days of both lecture and class. Class readings did not usually exceed three hours, but section readings could tack on another couple. Overall, readings were usually relevant, and always quite interesting.			
Q7: 2 mid terms, one final group paper (worked on throughout the semester) and a final exam.			
Q8: n/a			
Q9: In class discussions every lecture proved to break up the class well and make students think for themselves rather than being asked to regurgitate information without much thought.			
Q10: Matt was an engaging TA who led very thought provoking sections. He knows a great deal of the relevant subject material.			
Q11: lectures and sections were great, but also getting to know classmates outside of the allotted course time due to the group project.			
Q12: With the amount of time put towards the group project, should have been one less exam. Or just a less broadly defined group project, spent much of time debated the question our group would answer. Also, use critical review evals!			
excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent
Q5: yes			
Q6: From textbook and primary literature. Relevant and Useful			
Q7: 2 Exams. 1 Final. Many quizzes. 1 giant group review paper (good idea; could be more clearly guided with instructions given in a more timely manner).			
Q8:			
Q9: Every week. Relevant and Interesting.			
Q10: Amazing TA (very available and effective)			
Q11: Professor was very articulate and knowledgeable. Multiple sides of the issues were presented in the class.			
Q12: Keep the group term paper but give clearer instructions from the beginning and more structured guidance for the writing process.			
excellent	excellent	very_good	excellent
Q5: yes			
Q6: Readings from the textbook could be spread out over the weeks more evenly; at times, too much dense reading for discussion sections			
Q7: Make expectations about group review paper clearer earlier on; more assistance in narrowing topic from the get-go Exams were very fair and appropriate in length/content			
Q8:			
Q9: Mostly good Very well integrated with the lectures Sometimes too much reading			
Q10: Excellent			
Q11: A good survey of the field of Conservation Biology; good mix of theoretical and applied knowledge			
Q12: Group term paper can work (though I would still be less than thrilled at the prospect) if more guidance was provided, and probably smaller groups. Valuable to have a group work on a review together to increase the breadth of studies included in review, exchange of ideas, etc. but it is vital that everyone in the group get on the same footing from the beginning, or else everyone does a lot of wasted work.			

excellent	excellent	excellent	very_good
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Q5: yes

Q6: There was a lot of reading. Textbook was particularly long and tedious--there were often important points within the readings, but they seemed rare compared to the volume of text. Discussion articles were usually more interesting and more reasonable length-wise--overall more helpful for thinking critically about the subject.

Q7: Midterm exams were difficult, but appropriately so--my biggest problem with them was that they seemed to induce grading disparities. They were probably difficult to grade, and that's why it seemed like grading was too subjective. Final term paper was a group project--good idea in theory, but very difficult in practice. I'm mixed on this issue because I think I got a lot out of working with my group--collaboration, learned more in depth on my topic because of the group, better-quality result--and liked the process even though it was frustrating. But at the same time, the project took up so much of my time--unnecessarily, I think, especially considering the small % of the grade the paper is worth.

Q8: N/A

Q9: Once/week discussion. One of the best parts of the class--discussions were interesting and often fun. TA and Professor were very knowledgeable and engaging. Discussion quizzes were a good way of ensuring critical reading of the discussion articles--although they were definitely an extra stress that sometimes seemed unnecessary.

Q10: Matt was great! Very accessible, very knowledgeable, very approachable.

Q11: Dov's lectures were usually very interesting and engaging--especially for a 9am class! My discussion was a great group, and topics were arresting and usually presented ideas I hadn't heard of before. Getting to know the people in my term paper group.

Q12: Tweaking the term paper project--making guidelines much more clear...If the nature of the project really requires as much time as it took us, it should be worth more of the final grade (but I don't think the idea should be trashed...I got a lot out of it). Less textbook reading--i realize it's important background, but maybe sections could be chosen rather than the whole chapter--which seemed unnecessary at times. Quizzes were a bit too much. Dropping the lowest scores (or few scores) definitely helps, but the problem I encountered was that i really did read the reading every time, but could not always recall the details of a definition/example so quickly on a quiz...I'm not sure how this could be made better, but I definitely feel that my quiz scores did not always reflect my effort on the readings (I would have to read the book the night before class, take notes, and go over them in the morning in order to remember the specifics the quizzes often asked for).

excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Q5: yes

Q6: Lots of interesting primary literature. Text book reading was a bit elementary.

Q7: Two exams, one final, one term paper, quizzes in section, quizzes in lecture. Exams were fair. There were an excessive amount of quizzes, but it made me keep up with the reading.

Q8: No lab. Weekly required discussion sections.

Q9: Discussion happened in section which was usually quite interesting. They were led well, but also the other students in the class were well-informed and interesting to talk to.

Q10: Always available in office hours, before/after class, by email.

Q11: The material was very interesting. This class also gave me a better idea of the scientific world through Dov's experiences and primary literature readings.

Q12: The term paper could be improved. Group size could be changed to four students per group. My topic (conservation of farmland) was FAR too broad although it was very interesting. I was not crazy about the summaries because I don't know how well they actually informed our review. We needed more guidance of how to put it together (tables, writing style, etc.) sooner in the process, but overall, I liked doing the paper and liked that it was in a group.

very_good	excellent	excellent	excellent
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Q5: yes

Q6: Reasonable amount of reading - original literature which was good, as well as some out of the textbook

Q7: 3 exams and one final group term paper - thought the term paper was a really cool idea, could be improved though (smaller groups, etc)

Q8: none

Q9: discussion section was great - complemented well, TA was intelligent

Q10: Great teaching assistance, available a lot and ready and willing to help out even with subject matter beyond the course

Q11: subject matter, professor/TA were great

Q12:

very_good	excellent	very_good	excellent
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Q5: yes

Q6: There was a reasonable amount of reading. Overall I found the article readings more engaging than the textbook. Also in the future I might make the textbook readings optional since they were fairly basic background material

Q7: I thought the midterm exams were fair. The term paper is a good idea but I think a lot of changes should be made for it to be a worthwhile assignment.

Q8: N/A

Q9: Weekly discussion sections were good. I enjoyed them a lot. I wish they had been longer than 50 minutes.

Q10: Matt Heard is awesome! He was always available and really approachable.

Q11: I found the presentation of material very engaging. Overall my favorite part was lectures. I really enjoyed coming to this class.

Q12: Revise the term paper.

very_good	very_good	excellent	excellent
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Q5: yes

Q6: Textbook readings were important for background info/terms. Section readings were interesting and usually relevant to topics being covered, which was helpful

Q7: Exam 1 was fair, exam 2 was not as fair of an assessment of what we've learned. Term paper goals were not defined well enough for us to be able to pull off what was desired in time.

Q8: n/a

Q9: Weekly discussion, usually relevant material and always enjoyable to attend. Maybe tearing at the papers in a bit more detail would be better.

Q10: Matt is great. Helpful and available and cool.

Q11: Interesting and well-presented lectures, insight into the world of science and its politics, enjoyable discussion sections.

Q12: Define goals more clearly for term paper. Construct exams more carefully to ensure fairness.

good	very_good	very_good	very_good
------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Q5: yes

Q6: The amount of reading was fair, although not always portioned out evenly (that would have been better).

Q7: There were so many quizzes that I always did the reading, but also felt that I wasn't trusted to put the work in.

Q8: n/a

Q9: Discussions were every week, and were relevant to that week's lecture(s). I enjoyed them more towards the end when the group loosened up.

Q10: Matt is great. Very helpful.

Q11: exciting material

Q12: We often needed more guidance and a better understanding of Dov's expectations. Try to help the next class a bit more in maneuvering new subjects, but don't just assume that we don't know anything either.

very_good	very_good	excellent	very_good
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Q5: yes

Q6: Very good - although the textbook did not go into very much depth, I realize this was meant to be an introductory course.

Q7: Very good (term paper needs some modification, however)

Q8: NA

Q9: Discussions are an excellent addition to the course

Q10: Matt is an excellent TA

Q11: Dov's knowledge, and the way he brings his personal research interests into the lectures.

Q12: Modifications to term paper assignment; maybe a better textbook?

excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Q5: yes

Q6: Solid

Q7: Fair

Q8: n/a

Q9: Great!

Q10: Matt was awesome!

Q11: Dov and Matt were great. Relaxed in a beautiful way so that learning was very encouraged and not forced.

Q12:

excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Q5: no

Q6: 2-3 ch/week. They were very helpful and relevant.

Q7: 2 midterms, weekly quizzes on readings, weekly quizzes in discussion section, term paper, final

Q8: n/a

Q9: weekly. Primary literature helped us step away from the theoretical approach of the textbook and learn about current practices.

Q10: Matt Heard- very accessible and open to answering questions, office hours, etc. Well-versed in subject.

Q11: Lectures and discussion sections

Q12: Term paper was not well explained from the start. Most of my group did not agree with the large size, since it was very difficult to find common times that everyone could meet. We also had difficulty depending on one person in our group. It was far too extensive of a project for the percentage it was valued for the final grade. If it remains as it was this year, it should be worth more (possibly equal or beyond the final exam). Individual term papers, or smaller groups, would be a better alternative.

excellent	very_good	very_good	very_good
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

Q5: yes

Q6: The textbook readings were unnecessarily lengthy and wordy for the amount of useful material they conveyed, but were not ineffective. The primarily literature read for section was generally interesting, though sometimes dense and occasionally irrelevant.

Q7: Exams were appropriate. Daily quizzes were sometimes too nitpicky, especially in their emphasis on knowing graph axis labels. The group paper was a tough assignment and required active solicitation of clarification from the professor.

Q8:

Q9: Discussion sections were generally interesting and managed to set up a debate or dichotomy to discuss.

Q10: The TA, Matt, was very helpful and very effective at leading discussion sections.

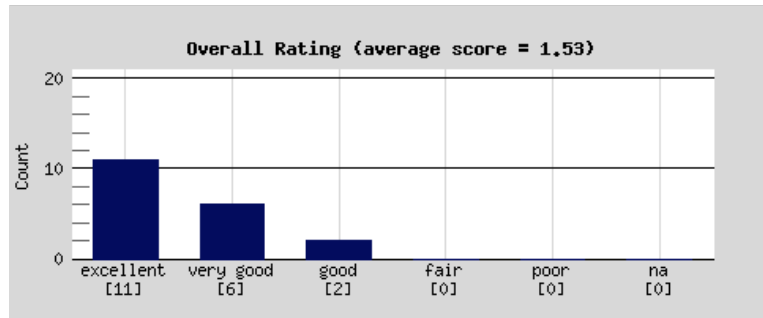
Q11:

Q12: Provide more guidance on the group paper early on.

## Dov Sax - BIOL1470 - Fall - 2009

Total # of responses: 19

Question #	excellent	very good	good	fair	poor	na
1	17 - 89%	1 - 5%	1 - 5%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
2	12 - 63%	6 - 32%	1 - 5%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
3	13 - 68%	4 - 21%	1 - 5%	1 - 5%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
4	13 - 68%	6 - 32%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
5	8 - 42%	9 - 47%	2 - 11%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
6	11 - 58%	6 - 32%	2 - 11%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	<a href="#">hide all</a>
excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	yes	
Q8: very available and willing to accomodate for students schedule- always ready to talk after class							
Q9: very enthusiastic and knowledgable in the field							
Q10: be more challenging							
excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	yes	
Q8: very available and willing to accomodate for students schedule- always ready to talk after class							
Q9: very enthusiastic and knowledgable in the field							
Q10: be more challenging							
excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	yes	
Q8: Very approachable and helpful.							
Q9: Knows the subject material and what is going on in the field. Gave interesting/effective lectures and insights into the scientific world.							
Q10: Don't know. Everything was good.							
excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	yes	
Q8: Very available, had office hours and was willing to schedule other meeting times							
Q9:							
Q10:							
excellent	very_good	good	very_good	very_good	very_good	yes	
Q8: semi-available to set up meetings							
Q9: very knowledgeable of his work - not so much the wider views of the field...e.g. policy							
Q10:							
very_good	very_good	very_good	very_good	good	good	yes	
Q8: very helpful and approachable							
Q9: very approachable, collegial with students. Does a good job of contextualizing science as a human/social endeavor							
Q10: Try to stray from subject matter a little less							
excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	yes	
Q8: Often available, very useful							
Q9: Encouraging of student participation and out of class appointments that were effective in going over class material. Ease in talking and connecting with students.							
Q10: Although metaphors to other non-conservation biology topics proved effective in connecting the scope of our class to similarities in other fields (eg scurvy), sometimes these metaphors were discussed using too much detail and class time. Discussion could have been more cursory.							
excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	yes	
Q8: Very helpful and available.							
Q9: Knowledge of subject matter, enthusiasm, articulate presentation, and willingness to approach issues from different perspectives.							
Q10: Excellent instructor. No major recommendations.							
excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	very_good	excellent	yes	

Q8: Always available. Could have provided more direct guidance -- understandable that Dov wanted to allow groups to have flexibility in terms of the final subject matter of term papers, but allowed groups to flounder a bit too much when they were truly at a loss

Q9: Extremely approachable; directs students to figure things out on their own (both a plus and negative)

Q10:

excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	very_good	very_good	yes
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----

Q8: Available--office hours and appointments by email--he was always willing to find a time. Helpful, although a little intimidating. Help on the group project could have been more clear, but other than that no complaints!

Q9: Able to explain concepts very clearly. Very engaging/interesting as a lecturer. Is very responsive to feedback/concerned about students. Extraordinarily knowledgeable on/invested in the subject.

Q10: My biggest issue/worry was the work load (see course eval above)--I am afraid that the amount of effort I put into this class (the most of any class I've ever taken) may not be reflected in the final grade. Teaching methods were good, however. Issues I had were small and more about the course specifics, as explained above (grading, quizzes, group project). I think Dov is a really talented scientist and teacher--he has the rare gift of being able to translate real science into sense/clear language in a classroom setting. Thanks Dov!

excellent	excellent	very_good	excellent	very_good	very_good	yes
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----

Q8: Available in office hours or by appointment

Q9: Passion, experience, enthusiasm. He was able to connect with us because he is still quite young. Powerpoint lectures were very clear and engaging.

Q10: I think we could have gone more in depth on more technical topics.

excellent	very_good	excellent	excellent	very_good	very_good	yes
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----

Q8: Very available and useful in meetings outside class - encouraged us to come meet outside of class

Q9: Somewhat informal, so it was easy to connect and understand the points he would make

Q10:

excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	very_good	excellent	yes
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----

Q8: He was very available and his advice was usually helpful although sometimes it raised more questions than answers which could be a bit frustrating.

Q9: Open mindedness and willingness to recognize his own biases in the course material as well as amazing overall enthusiasm.

Q10: Keep on doing what you're doing :)

excellent	very_good	excellent	very_good	very_good	excellent	yes
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----

Q8: Helpful, available.

Q9: Open-minded, experienced, aware of our level of knowledge and willing to explain anything unclear

Q10: Lectures can be very graph-heavy sometimes, and not all seem essential. Perhaps relaying some less-important relationships in words rather than graphs will make for less confusion. Also, more bribing with food.

good	good	fair	very_good	good	good	yes
------	------	------	-----------	------	------	-----

Q8: He was available for help, although not entirely approachable.

Q9: Dov is passionate about the subjects that he studies, and he teaches those parts of the class very well.

Q10: Give the class a little more credit by trusting us to study the material without the threat of a quiz twice a week. Also, it would have been great to have had more guidance early on about your expectations for the review papers (including statistical analysis).

excellent	very_good	very_good	very_good	very_good	very_good	yes
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----

Q8: Not super available, but somewhat.

Q9: He is very active in the immediate field and is a proponent of the science/policy interface, which is something I sometimes find lacking in other ecology courses.

Q10: None; he was a great lecturer. Although it was evident when he was sleepy in class, I can't blame him since he has a toddler.

excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	yes
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----

Q8:

Q9:

Q10:

excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent	yes
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----

Q8: Very useful and was aware and open to working with the stresses and problems due to tough schedules and other classes' work.

Q9: engaging and well-versed in the subject matter. great perspective through his work with invasive species

Q10: n/a

excellent	very_good	very_good	very_good	very_good	very_good	yes
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----

Q8: He was generally helpful and eager to make sure we understood the material and the assignments.

Q9: He was a clear lecturer, had a balanced view of conservation biology, and was very eager to improve the course and make sure his assignments were useful for us.

Q10:

## Sample Course

Please evaluate the above course by selecting the appropriate option

The objectives of the course were made clear:

The objectives of the course were met by the course:

The various aspects of the course

(e.g. reading, labs, discussion were well integrated)

Overall Course Rating:

Were the prerequisites appropriate?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please, comment on the following:

The assigned reading

(volume, relevance, level)

Means of evaluation

(e.g. exams, papers, student presentations, etc)

Labs

(relevance, frequency, quality)

Discussions

(relevance, frequency, quality)

Teaching Assistance

(effectiveness, availability)

What were the best aspects of the course?

What are your recommendations for improving the course?

Please evaluate the instructor

???, ???

Ability to present ideas clearly:

Command of the subject matter:

Willingness to present or entertain different opinions:

Enthusiasm for the subject matter:

Organization:

Overall effectiveness:

Did you seek help from this instructor?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If "yes" how available was he/she? How useful it was? If "no", why?

What do you feel are the instructor's positive attributes as a teacher?

What are your recommendations to this instructor for improving his/her presentation and teaching effectiveness?