

## Evaluations Results Viewer

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Spring 2012 BIOL Summary   
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### Evaluation Template: BIOL.COURSE\_AND\_TEACHING\_EVAL

#### Evaluation Section Number 1: Student Information

Question Number 1: Please indicate your reason(s) for taking this course (check all that apply).

Course Section	Pre-requisite for other course(s)	Requirement for concentration	Elective within a concentration	Elective outside concentration	Reputation of instructor	Interest in topic
BIOL1475-S01	0( .0%)	4( 29.0%)	13( 93.0%)	0( .0%)	10( 71.0%)	9( 64.0%)
Group Total	0( .0%)	4( 29.0%)	13( 93.0%)	0( .0%)	10( 71.0%)	9( 64.0%)

Question Number 2: Please indicate how often you attended class.

Course Section	Always(1)	Frequently(2)	Less than half of the time(3)	Average
BIOL1475-S01	14( 100.0%)	0( .0%)	0( .0%)	1.00
Group Total	14( 100.0%)	0( .0%)	0( .0%)	1.00

Question Number 3: Please indicate the number of hours per week you spent on this course outside of class.

Course Section	0-2 hours(1)	3-4 hours(2)	5-6 hours(3)	7-8 hours(4)	9+ hours(5)	Average
BIOL1475-S01	0( .0%)	2( 14.0%)	4( 29.0%)	7( 50.0%)	1( 7.0%)	3.50
Group Total	0( .0%)	2( 14.0%)	4( 29.0%)	7( 50.0%)	1( 7.0%)	3.50

**Evaluation Section Number 2: Effectiveness of Course**

Question Number 1: Please comment on your own learning in this course. What knowledge or skills did the course help you develop?

Responses
Show/Hide Answers
BIOL1475-S01: Interesting, but a bit too much overlap with conservation biology. I really enjoyed the discussion sections and thought that part was great, but I thought the workload was a little ridiculous. It was very challenging just to keep up with the discussion readings and combined with the lecture reading and term paper, it was impossible. This is especially true because the textbook was a lot denser and harder to read than the conservation textbook. If you teach this again, which I would recommend, I would cut out most or all of the lecture readings. I liked the term paper a lot. Again, I enjoyed the class, but the workload didn't seem worth it, especially since most was a review from conservation biology.
BIOL1475-S01: Knowledge of biogeography
BIOL1475-S01: I learned lots of concepts in biogeography, which involved integrating concepts and knowledge in geology, ecology, conservation biology, evolutionary biology, and geography. I learned about the history and current trends in the field. I also learned about its applied relevance. I also learned skills in science communication, both in writing and delivering an oral presentation.
BIOL1475-S01: This course was amazing! We explored different topics in biogeography, which spans much of ecology and evolution, and to do so, we read many of the papers and works that provided the foundation for modern theories. I had never read any of these papers in another class, and it gave me an insightful peak into the endeavor of science.
BIOL1475-S01: This course helped me tie together a lot of interdisciplinary components of my education, bridging ecology and geology through geography. I developed skills to read scientific papers in this field. I enjoyed the in-class discussions.
BIOL1475-S01: Helped me develop the ability to connect ideas between different papers and use that knowledge to further understand/investigate biogeography.
BIOL1475-S01: I knew nothing about this subject at the beginning of the semester, and since day 1 of class, I've learned buckets about biogeography - through both discussion and lecture.
BIOL1475-S01: Understanding of biogeographic concepts, their origins and development, the direction the field is headed, experience working with species datasets to ask large-scale questions
BIOL1475-S01: I think I really developed a new appreciation of how to read primary literature, how to place it in the context of a scientific dialogue, and how to think about different angles on a broad set of questions. The final project pushed me to articulate an experimental method, and follow through on analyzing data in a cohesive thought pattern. The field of biogeography was a totally new scale to think about biological questions, and one which really stretched what I thought was possible with biological sciences. Learning about these global patterns was awesome.
BIOL1475-S01: This course helped me to think about large-scale trends in ecology, how to analyze data, and how to hypothesize about patterns. Because it was a senior seminar, the discussions were some of the best I've had in biology classes - the discussions were a highlight of my semester. Being able to engage in discussion at such a high level made me able to reflect on what I've learned throughout Brown and made me excited to learn more.
BIOL1475-S01: I became better at reading the scientific literature and synthesizing broad scientific topics. The original research paper really helped develop my writing skills and creative abilities. I also learned about evolutionary biology and range dynamics in depth.
BIOL1475-S01: It helped me synthesize much of what I had learned in introductory ecology courses. It also helped me understand, and attempt to begin answering, questions research scientists are currently tackling now in the field of Biogeography. It gave me the opportunity to critically read and discuss scientific papers and gave me some experience with writing my own scientific article in the format of a journal publication.

BIOL1475-S01: I learned a lot, though not very much of it was tangible—it was more about learning to think about spatial relationships in the environment as being a crucial part of what structures the ecosystems around us, and less about learning lots of facts.

Question Number 2: Please indicate your evaluation of the effectiveness of the course overall.

Course Section	Very effective(1)	Effective(2)	Somewhat effective(3)	Ineffective(4)	Very ineffective(5)	Average
BIOL1475-S01	7( 50.0%)	6( 43.0%)	1( 7.0%)	0( .0%)	0( .0%)	1.57
Group Total	7( 50.0%)	6( 43.0%)	1( 7.0%)	0( .0%)	0( .0%)	1.57

Question Number 3: Please elaborate on your responses above, or on anything else you wish to discuss about the course design and content.

Responses
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BIOL1475-S01: I would have preferred more lecture time vs. discussion time
BIOL1475-S01: This was a really great course. I learned so much! Lots of broad concepts, but also balanced with very specific details. The course structure (lectures and discussions on separate days) worked well for me. I also liked the model of having the discussion sections before the lectures on each topic (for example, discussing papers about island biogeography theory before having a lecture on it), as this allowed me to learn through questions and piecing together insights from different articles.
BIOL1475-S01: Biogeography did a great job of teaching me about the evolutionary and ecological processes that determine where critters and plants are, but it also focused on how science worked and many of the unseen dramas of scientists. Plus, Dov kept the class's curriculum plastic, allowing it to adapt to the needs and wants of students.
BIOL1475-S01: My only comment for improvement is that more support in identifying data sources for the final project would have been useful. Also, it would have been really nice if we could have had a group check-in about projects a few weeks before the project proposal was due. If everyone brought in 2 or 3 project ideas they had brainstormed, then the class could have provided comments and suggestions. Hearing so many ideas can be inspiring, and can also help students with similar interests locate each other to talk about possible group project ideas.
BIOL1475-S01: The way the course was both a seminar as well as a lecture course - made more a very effective learning experience.
BIOL1475-S01: Enjoyed the discussion-style of instruction - the addition of brief primers for the readings (implemented near the end) were also helpful in a more thoughtful reading of the papers before discussion. The deadlines for the 2nd exam and the draft of the paper could be spread out a little in future classes (but extensions were offered and given)
BIOL1475-S01: The discussions were very dynamic but could have been more structured. Perhaps with some guiding questions, or more facilitation along the course of the class from the professor. The progression through the semester was really compelling, and the readings were challenging and well-assembled.
BIOL1475-S01: I loved reading journal articles on the same topic through a large time scale - the pieces written in the earlier part of the century had a totally different writing style, and it was great to read articles by famous names and to see what has changed since, and the surprising amount that has not changed.
BIOL1475-S01: The course was very similar to a previous course with the instructor, so I felt like I didn't gain much new knowledge. The many discussion sections and quizzes and the difficulty of the exams basically forced me to keep up with all of the readings.
BIOL1475-S01: I thought the course had an appropriate balance of literature discussions and lectures. However, sometimes I felt a bit lost in the discussions,

and would have appreciated a bit more background on the topics before hand. Overall, both the course content and Dov's teaching convinced me that Biogeography is an integral part of ecological studies and a topic I hope to explore more in the future.

BIOL1475-S01: My only complaint was that there was so much reading that it was difficult to complete all of it in depth—I would have preferred a little less reading that I could actually do all of and think about, because I would have learned more.

### Evaluation Section Number 3: Effectiveness of Instruction

Question Number 1: Please indicate your evaluation of the instructor's overall effectiveness.

Course Section	Very effective(1)	Effective(2)	Somewhat effective(3)	Ineffective(4)	Very ineffective(5)	Average
BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P)	9( 64.0%)	5( 36.0%)	0( .0%)	0( .0%)	0( .0%)	1.36
Group Total	9( 64.0%)	5( 36.0%)	0( .0%)	0( .0%)	0( .0%)	1.36

Question Number 2: Please elaborate on your responses above, or anything else you wish to discuss about the teaching in this course.

Responses
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BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P): Great lectures! The term paper was hard but well paced and very meaningful. I was able to get useful help and advice when I needed it.
BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P): Dov's a great teacher and a spectacular dude. Open, approachable, friendly, smart, insightful, and engaged, he creates a classroom where people can explore and step into different ideas.
BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P): Very comfortable lecture and discussion style. Always well prepared for lecture. Well organized course overall. Available and helpful outside of class.
BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P): Dov Sax is an amazing professor - who is not only incredibly knowledgeable about his field, but is also an amazing mentor. I would love to take more classes with him.
BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P): Helpful feedback given, very available for discussion of projects and other science-related things.
BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P): Lectures were good, but should have been before discussions so everyone was on the same page for the discussion, as opposed to filling in gaps from what we had talked about.
BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P): Professor Sax is very knowledgeable and organized. He also really lets students talk and wants to hear their opinions and thoughts. He is patient, but keeps the discussion on topic. I really liked how he also took the time to share what it is like to be a professor, to publish an article, to be a part of the scientific community, and some background on the scientists whose articles we were reading.

BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P):  
 Professor Sax is very relatable and a great advisor. It was his first time teaching this type of advanced seminar so I have to give him props for being flexible. He never let us slack on the workload, though. That was probably good.

BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P):  
 Dov is a fantastic professor! Its obvious he is both passionate about his area of expertise and committed to passing on this enthusiasm to his students. He is also a great discussion leader/re-director and this upper level course style therefore suits him well. Also, he was always available during office hours, after class or by appointment. He's one of the best teachers Brown has to offer.

BIOL1475-S01: Sax, Dov(P):  
 I didn't really like when he lectured, but he was good at leading discussion section. He also offered some helpful comments on my final paper draft, though more in-depth comments would also have been helpful.

**Evaluation Section Number 4: Effectiveness of Teaching Assistants**

Question Number 1: Please indicate your evaluation of the teaching assistant's overall effectiveness.

Course Section	Very effective(1)	Effective(2)	Somewhat effective(3)	Ineffective(4)	Very ineffective(5)	Average
There were no responses for this question						

Question Number 2: Please elaborate on your responses above, or on anything else you wish to discuss about the TA's teaching.

Responses

Show/Hide Answers