

Spring 2020 – CHEM 2440 – Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors

In the Spring 2020 semester, I taught the organic chemistry class for chemistry, biochemistry, and chemical biology majors. Three evaluation reports were generated:

Report #1: Instructor Evaluation

Report #2: Course Evaluation for Section 01 – Main Lecture

Report #3: Course Evaluation for Section 101 – Friday Problem Sessions

The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on this course. After 6 March 2020, the university campus was closed and class transitioned to a remote/online format taught over the Zoom application. Correspondingly, while Lectures 01–22 were traditional lectures accompanied by weekly problem sessions on Fridays, following Spring Break, all lectures were recorded in small fragments and posted to Blackboard for asynchronous consumption by students. Normal class time was devoted to problem solving, and Friday problem sessions (Section 101) were cancelled. The closure of campus and difficulty of accessing a high-volume printer and sheet-feed scanner resulted in a delay in grading assessments and returning them to students.



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Instructor Evaluation Report for Paul Bracher - Spring 2020

Project Title: ***Spring 2020 Course Evaluations**

Course Audience: **50**

Responses Received: **13**

Response Rate: **26.00%**

Creation Date: **Friday, August 14, 2020**

Technology powered by **BLUE**

I took this course (check all that apply)...

Options	Count	Percentage
to meet a requirement of an undergraduate academic major or minor	13	92.86%
to meet a requirement of a graduate/professional program or minor	1	7.14%
to meet an undergraduate core/general education requirement	0	0.00%
as an elective (not part of any major/minor/program or core/general education requirement)	0	0.00%
Please explain	0	0.00%
Respondent(s)	13	

In thinking about the course when it was conducted face-to-face, what aspects do you feel were particularly effective for helping you learn the course material?

Comments
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Having the class lecture slides outside of class was extremely helpful for me. I used those to study by far more than any other course material, and I believe it helped a bunch.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: I really liked the style of lecture, it made it easy to take notes and listen at the same time. Having posted practice exams was also really helpful to study.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Being able to interact and ask questions in person so my professor can work out the problem in front of me
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: The amount of practice questions available and the lecture slides were effective.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: This is probably the only class where I felt like I was truly learning something. Everything other course I've taken has been mostly focused on speed and memorization purely for the sake of getting good grades on tests with no regard to whether the student is actually internalizing the information they are being "taught". In Orgo, I never felt any of the stresses of succeeding on my transcript and instead felt truly engaged with material which helped me to actually learn instead of simply retaining information for as long as it is relevant. I believe that the best way to learn is through mistakes and trial and error and because this course is so forgiving of mistakes with grading and offers enough time on tests to think thoroughly it creates the perfect environment for learning. I wish other courses followed in this example.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: The slide decks and practice problems were very helpful, as well as office hours
SP2020 CHEM-2440-101-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: It was fine
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: I liked how all of the classes were recorded on top of not being mandatory. It was very helpful for the few occasions that I couldn't attend class I was able to hear what we talked about instead of just relying on the powerpoint. I also liked how class attendance wasn't mandatory because sometimes you aren't able to make class but still learn the material, so it shouldn't affect your grade.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-101-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: I think it was good. I liked how it was set up to be able to see the types of questions that would be potentially asked on a test.

In thinking about the course when it was conducted face-to-face, what suggestions do you have for improving the learning experience in this course?

Comments
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Nothing to say here, sorry!
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: None
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Posting quizzes ahead of time
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: More practice during lecture, so it is more engaging.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Nothing really, in my opinion it was taught extremely well and it is one of the best courses I've ever taken
SP2020 CHEM-2440-101-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Not much wrong with it
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: I think the notecard for tests was helpful, but I don't think in the future an entire page should be used. I think it was helpful for me and it was nice, however I felt at a disadvantage for the final when I had to go back and learn all the material I had on the sheet for the final. If the notecard is smaller it would put a little more pressure on students to learn more at the time of the test so the days up to the final is review instead of cramming to learn material.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-101-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: I liked how first semester had the worksheets we were able to work on. As it was nice to sit down and do those and have those worksheets to refer to when you were stuck on similar problems.

In thinking about the course when it was conducted via remote learning, what aspects do you feel were particularly effective for helping you learn the course material?

Comments
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Same goes for the face-to-face answer. Dr. Bracher has been an incredible professor through this whole experience! He was clearly passionate about the material and made it fun for us too. He obviously cared about his students and would oftentimes put us first in his list of priorities.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Being asynchronous was really nice for making the class fit into our new home routines. I also really liked how lectures were broken into several short topics, as it's pretty painful to watch a 50+ minute lecture in one sitting. Being able to click on a new video made it feel faster.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Being motivated to attend all meetings because all I have to do is open up my laptop
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: The lecture slides were helpful and the zoom problem sessions.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: This class transferred almost seamlessly into remote learning, it felt no different than in person class.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Again, practice problems, slides, lecture videos, and online office hours.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-101-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: see above
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Making each class a problem session was very helpful to practice exam type problems.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: I liked how the videos for lectures were all on panopto and the class time was solely for discussion and practice problems. I think it gave us a lot more opportunities to ask questions and to see what type of problems would have been asked on a test. I think this set up was really well done and the lecture video lengths were easier to take breaks, watch at your own pace, and didn't go too long (stayed within the time frame we would have had in person).
SP2020 CHEM-2440-101-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: I think it was beneficial to have the archived tests and quizzes to look at. I also liked how every class problem was a discussion session because it really allowed us to hone in on what was expected and what the type of questions would be asked.

In thinking about the course when it was conducted via remote learning, what suggestions do you have for improving the learning experience in this course?

Comments
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Nothing. Everything went well for me regarding this course going online.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Before we left campus, I did all of my quizzes/post chapter/etc with other students. Being remote made me have to do a lot more on my own, which made it much harder. Another thing, not being able to get tests/quizzes back to see grades was frustrating.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Having grade updates after each test
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Grade updates
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Nothing it was still just as great and helpful online for me
SP2020 CHEM-2440-101-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: see above
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: More prompt grades would have helped me to focus my studying on things I struggled in, especially when preparing for the final exam.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: For the grading system, it would have been much easier to use blackboard submission links to be able to have a pdf copy for your own usage and then being able to mark the comments directly so we could see them as well. This would be so much faster and easier on both ends in order to expedite the grading process and to be able to uphold the promise of regular grade checks.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-101-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: I think there need to be a little bit more of variety on the questions asked. During the sessions, the problems were all the same type, most specifically for the last exam 4, but when asked for different mechanisms of syntheses those weren't reviewed as much. It made it seem as if a specific type of question was 90% going to be on the test, so more variety would have been beneficial.

Please share any other comments you have about your experience in this course this semester.

Comments
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Once again, Dr. Bracher did an incredible job at sharing the course material in an effective and fun way! Thank you, Dr. Bracher!
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Orgo was much less painful than I expected from all the horror stories I heard. It was a hard class, but Dr. Bracher did everything he could to help us succeed, and we had very clear expectations. Overall, I ended up actually enjoying the class.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: Overall, I loved my professor and the way he taught. He made Orgo less stressful and made me want to learn more and understand the material. The only thing I'm not happy with is not receiving any type of grades back on my exams or quizzes in over 2 months now. I want to be able to know how I am doing along the way, not when the course is over. This is the longest I've ever had to wait for my grades to be posted and I'm still waiting even after taking 2 exams and about to take a 3rd one soon.
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: I enjoyed the course. Thank you
SP2020 CHEM-2440-01-Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors - Paul Bracher: I absolutely hated the fact that almost nothing was graded for the entirety of the semester. It was understandable at first, you do have a lot going on, but it was getting to the point of being ridiculous. I don't mean to be rude but it having nothing graded even from the first half the semester, Tara was 8 months pregnant then (which is a main reason why you couldn't stay on top of grading at home). I did not like the fact that I could have an A or an F and have no idea at all. Theoretically, yes, it shouldn't matter and I studied as hard as I could either way but it should matter and did so I could improve my study skills or to see if I was making the same mistakes over and over again.



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Course Evaluation Report for SP2020 CHEM-2440-01- Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors (Paul Bracher) - Spring 2020

Project Title: ***Spring 2020 Course Evaluations**

Course Audience: **25**

Responses Received: **9**

Response Rate: **36.00%**

Creation Date: **Wednesday, May 27, 2020**

Technology powered by BLUE

I took this course (check all that apply)...

Options	Count	Percentage
to meet a requirement of an undergraduate academic major or minor	9	90.00%
to meet a requirement of a graduate/professional program or minor	1	10.00%
to meet an undergraduate core/general education requirement	0	0.00%
as an elective (not part of any major/minor/program or core/general education requirement)	0	0.00%
Please explain	0	0.00%
Respondent(s)	9	

In thinking about the course when it was conducted face-to-face, what aspects do you feel were particularly effective for helping you learn the course material?

Comments
The slide decks and practice problems were very helpful, as well as office hours
I liked how all of the classes were recorded on top of not being mandatory. It was very helpful for the few occasions that I couldn't attend class I was able to hear what we talked about instead of just relying on the powerpoint. I also liked how class attendance wasn't mandatory because sometimes you aren't able to make class but still learn the material, so it shouldn't affect your grade.
Being able to interact and ask questions in person so my professor can work out the problem in front of me
This is probably the only class where I felt like I was truly learning something. Everything other course I've taken has been mostly focused on speed and memorization purely for the sake of getting good grades on tests with no regard to whether the student is actually internalizing the information they are being "taught". In Orgo, I never felt any of the stresses of succeeding on my transcript and instead felt truly engaged with material which helped me to actually learn instead of simply retaining information for as long as it is relevant. I believe that the best way to learn is through mistakes and trial and error and because this course is so forgiving of mistakes with grading and offers enough time on tests to think thoroughly it creates the perfect environment for learning. I wish other courses followed in this example.
The amount of practice questions available and the lecture slides were effective.
I really liked the style of lecture, it made it easy to take notes and listen at the same time. Having posted practice exams was also really helpful to study.
Having the class lecture slides outside of class was extremely helpful for me. I used those to study by far more than any other course material, and I believe it helped a bunch.

In thinking about the course when it was conducted face-to-face, what suggestions do you have for improving the learning experience in this course?

Comments
Nothing really, in my opinion it was taught extremely well and it is one of the best courses I've ever taken
I think the notecard for tests was helpful, but I don't think in the future an entire page should be used. I think it was helpful for me and it was nice, however I felt at a disadvantage for the final when I had to go back and learn all the material I had on the sheet for the final. If the notecard is smaller it would put a little more pressure on students to learn more at the time of the test so the days up to the final is review instead of cramming to learn material.
Posting quizzes ahead of time
More practice during lecture, so it is more engaging.
None
Nothing to say here, sorry!

In thinking about the course when it was conducted via remote learning, what aspects do you feel were particularly effective for helping you learn the course material?

Comments
Again, practice problems, slides, lecture videos, and online office hours.
I liked how the videos for lectures were all on panopto and the class time was solely for discussion and practice problems. I think it gave us a lot more opportunities to ask question and to see what type of problems would have been asked on a test. I think this set up was really well done and the lecture videos lengths were easier to take breaks, watch at your own pace, and didn't go too long (stayed within the time frame we would have had in person).
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Being asynchronous was really nice for making the class fit into our new home routines. I also really liked how lectures were broken into several short topics,as it's pretty painful to watch a 50+ minute lecture in one sitting. Being able to click on a new video made it feel faster.
Same goes for the face-to-face answer. Dr. Bracher has been an incredible professor through this whole experience! He was clearly passionate about the material and made it fun for us too. He obviously cared about his students and would oftentimes put us first in his list of priorities.
Making each class a problem session was very helpful to practice exam type problems.

In thinking about the course when it was conducted via remote learning, what suggestions do you have for improving the learning experience in this course?

Comments
Nothing it was still just as great and helpful online for me
For the grading system, it would have been much easier to use blackboard submission links to be able to have a pdf copy for your own usage and then being able to mark the comments directly so we could see them as well. This would be so much faster and easier on both ends in order to expedite the grading process and to be able to uphold the promise of regular grade checks.
Having grade updates after each test
Grade updates
Before we left campus, I did all of my quizzes/post chapter/etc with other students. Being remote made me have to do a lot more on my own, which made it much harder. Another thing, not being able to get tests/quizzes back to see grades was frustrating.
Nothing. Everything went well for me regarding this course going online.
More prompt grades would have helped me to focus my studying on things I struggled in, especially when preparing for the final exam.

Please share any other comments you have about your experience in this course this semester.

Comments
I absolutely hated the fact that almost nothing was graded for the entirety of the semester. It was understandable at first, you do have a lot going on, but it was getting to the point of being ridiculous. I don't mean to be rude but it having nothing graded even from the first half the semester, Tara was 8 months pregnant then (which is a main reason why you couldn't stay on top of grading at home). I did not like the fact that I could have an A or an F and have no idea at all. Theoretically, yes, it shouldn't matter and I studied as hard as I could either way but it should matter and did so I could improve my study skills or to see if I was making the same mistakes over and over again.
Overall, I loved my professor and the way he taught. He made Orgo less stressful and made me want to learn more and understand the material. The only thing I'm not happy with is not receiving any type of grades back on my exams or quizzes in over 2 months now. I want to be able to know how I am doing along the way, not when the course is over. This is the longest Ive ever had to wait for my grades to be posted and Im still waiting even after taking 2 exams and about to take a 3rd one soon.
I enjoyed the course. Thank you
Orgo was much less painful than I expected from all the horror stories I heard. It was a hard class, but Dr. Bracher did everything he could to help us succeed, and we had very clear expectations. Overall, I ended up actually enjoying the class.
Once again, Dr. Bracher did an incredible job at sharing the corse material in an effective and fun way! Thank you, Dr. Bracher!



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Course Evaluation Report for SP2020 CHEM-2440-101- Organic Chemistry 2 for Majors (Paul Bracher) - Spring 2020

Project Title: ***Spring 2020 Course Evaluations**

Course Audience: **25**

Responses Received: **4**

Response Rate: **16.00%**

Creation Date: **Wednesday, May 27, 2020**

Technology powered by BLUE

I took this course (check all that apply)...

Options	Count	Percentage
to meet a requirement of an undergraduate academic major or minor	4	100.00%
to meet a requirement of a graduate/professional program or minor	0	0.00%
to meet an undergraduate core/general education requirement	0	0.00%
as an elective (not part of any major/minor/program or core/general education requirement)	0	0.00%
Please explain	0	0.00%
Respondent(s)	4	

In thinking about the course when it was conducted face-to-face, what aspects do you feel were particularly effective for helping you learn the course material?

Comments
I think it was good. I liked how it was set up to be able to see the types of questions that would be potentially asked on a test.
It was fine

In thinking about the course when it was conducted face-to-face, what suggestions do you have for improving the learning experience in this course?

Comments
I liked how first semester had the worksheets we were able to work on. As it was nice to sit down and do those and have those worksheets to refer to when you were stuck on similar problems.
Not much wrong with it

In thinking about the course when it was conducted via remote learning, what aspects do you feel were particularly effective for helping you learn the course material?

Comments
I think it was beneficial to have the archived tests and quizzes to look at. I also liked how every class problem was a discussion session because it really allowed us to hone in on what was expected and what the type of questions would be asked.
see above

In thinking about the course when it was conducted via remote learning, what suggestions do you have for improving the learning experience in this course?

Comments
I think there need to be a little bit more of variety on the questions asked. During the sessions, the problems were all the same type, most specifically for the last exam 4, but when asked for different mechanisms of syntheses those weren't reviewed as much. It made it seem as if a specific type of question was 90% going to be on the test, so more variety would have been beneficial.
see above