

Elise Askelsen Course Evaluation Summary

MATH 1460: Calculus for the Biological Sciences (Fall 2021)	Course Mean	Dept. Mean
Organization- The instructor used class time well	5.81	4.84
Clarity- The instructor communicated course material clearly	5.7	4.54
Learning Focused- The instructor's teaching methods helped students learn	5.75	4.49
Learning Materials- The assignments, readings, and activities facilitated student learning	5.52	4.75
Assessment- Assessments (such as quizzes, papers, and exams) aligned with course objectives	5.41	4.87
Support- Help was available for students	5.77	4.93

*The above table gives the mean scores valued out of six that Elise Askelsen received for questions answered by students on the end-of-semester course evaluation forms for courses and discussions taught at The University of Iowa. The right most column provides the department mean scores out of six for comparison.

Forty-five of seventy-eight students completed this survey.

Individual Student Comments:

In response to the question: What aspects of the course were most useful for your learning?

- She was very willing to be flexible with students schedules and conflicts and offered help all the time.
- We would work ahead of the lecture, which made it so much easier to understand the lectures.
- This discussion section is the only time I learned anything in this course.
- I liked that Elise went a little bit ahead of lecture in our discussion because then we were prepared and have already seen some of the problems that Dr. Zhang went over in lecture.
- I really liked how every time we were in class we got to work right away and went over problems. Part of what made it so helpful was that you would work through a problem with us and then let us work through one. Also the work and answer always got written out and that made me really happy because I need to see someone else's work.
- Elise always answered questions until they were completely understood
- The multiple examples per topic.
- You repeated and re-taught the lecture material in a way that students could follow and understand.
- Elise was very good at giving students the ability to learn content which was difficult with the instructor's way of lecturing. She was always on top of responding to emails and made sure to offer as much help as she could to her students in order to help them.
- I really liked how you really encouraged for students to bring questions of their own, so that you can explain it. I also liked how before taking the quiz, you went over questions that were sort of similar to the one on the quiz making it easier to understand. I also liked how you emailed the topics that were going to be on the quiz because then I knew where my focus had to be on.
- I cannot explain how helpful this discussion was. At times I left lecture feeling very lost, Elise made everything make sense.
- Always had great energy which was needed at 7 a.m.
- Working a little bit ahead was helpful for me. By the time class came around, I had found a way to solve the problems that worked for my thought process.
- Each day, you had a great game plan which made class efficient. I found it helpful that we reviewed old materials and learned new material each class time. I also liked that you posted all of your notes on ICON with every step for each problem.
- Elise was always willing to help us when we were confused. I really liked that she would meet with us even if she did not have scheduled office hours during that time. She really did her best to make us all be as successful as we could be.

- Discussion topics related well to lectures and are directly applicable to quizzes.
- Everything! By far the best TA I've had. Thank you so much for going out of your way to help myself and every other student where we were struggling. I really feel like I got a chance to grasp the material we went over in lecture in your class, I definitely would have been lost trying to learn in this class if it wasn't for the way you went over things in class. I always felt comfortable asking questions when I didn't understand something. I really can't thank you enough for all of your help!
- Discussions with my TA saved me. If we didn't have discussions I would have struggled a lot more in the class.
- What I found most useful would have to be that the instructor was constantly asking if we had any questions. She gladly took them and explained it until we understood.
- Visually seeing it be written out on the chalkboard.
- I really appreciated how well Elise broke down problems and explained them in ways that we were better able to understand. She was amazing at coming to class prepared, and genuinely cares about each of her students and their success. She was always in a positive attitude and made math fun for the first time ever.
- I thought the weekly emails about what was on our quizzes were most helpful.
- Elise answered questions that students had with clarity. This helped me understand material much better.
- The many problems worked through were always beneficial and it was also very beneficial to have information explained in different ways.
- I know it sounds weird to say, but I actually found the weekly quizzes given to be very beneficial. I think it was nice because they weren't too lengthy, but they were predictable, and none of the questions were confusing at all. They were also good because they helped me prepare for the exam and also see what things I knew I mastered and what things I knew to practice more often. I think that these quizzes, unlike the pop quizzes were very beneficial checkpoints and helped me understand how to improve on the problems for the exam.
- Literally everything, Elise was amazing in doing anything and everything to help us succeed this semester.
- I really liked how she presented course material in discussion before we covered it in lecture. This preview gave me a pretty solid introduction to the material and made the material easier to understand in lecture when we learned it. It was super helpful!
- Elise came in ready to teach with problems already written down. She addressed the class beautifully, and was ready for whatever the students threw at her.
- This aspect of the Calc for Bio course was extremely useful, and my favorite part of the course. Elise helped us a lot with breaking down the content taught in lectures and being able to answer all our questions with ease. She also would ensure we all understood the content she was reviewing and consistently asked if we had questions, and if we did spent time to break them down for clarification.

In response to the question: When this class is taught again, what changes would you suggest?

- Have a longer discussion, or the option for a student to attend multiple sections a week so they could get an even better understanding.
- Add another day to discussion, whatever you are paying Xiyu Zhang, you should be paying this TA. She did her job 10 times better in half the time. Absolutely amazing TA.
- I did not like the weekly quizzes, I know that Elise is unable to decide this, but I feel like those quizzes is really what impacted my grade in this class.
- I would suggest giving more examples of the quiz questions before the quiz is taken.
- I would suggest that on or before quiz days, you give a couple questions that mimic those to be given on the quiz. This is because the homework sometimes consistently gives problems that are below the actual level of application that the quizzes are. It always felt like I was blindsided during quizzes because I had never seen a question like that or phrased a certain way.
- It may be just me who took longer than others, but maybe giving more time for the quiz.
- Maybe slightly decreasing the amount of content we have every week when we have to learn new units/topics. Sometimes its harder to do good in a certain unit when you're trying to understand other units at the same time.
- maybe change the weekly quizzes to be biweekly and worth 20 points.

- I would suggest the option for another day of discussion! The class is quite beneficial to my learning, and I wish I had more time.
- Personally, I would like to know what will be taught prior to the lecture.
- I seriously can't think of anything. You made class such a positive experience. I feel so lucky that I got you as my TA.
- Use colored chalk, perhaps?
- The only thing I would suggest would be to make the tests more random like not always having them on Tuesdays. I did not always go to my classes but I always went to the Tuesday ones to take the quiz. If it were random then I would have to go to both every week.
- Do the quiz at the beginning of class.
- I would want extra practice and/or practice sheets for quizzes. I know that other TAs gave their students practice sheets for their quizzes and they found that very beneficial. I also think it is just nice to have in general outside of the homework.
- Go over previous week's quiz in class.
- I think it might be helpful for the teachers to go over the Pearson homework questions more in class, because some of the problems given were very confusing, but that's just a minor thing to me. For the most part, I think everything the TA did in class should be redone the exact same way because it was very beneficial for me! Maybe it would be nice to do more group work? I like comparing my answers with others, and I felt like group work would allow us to be able to interact more with the other people in the class.
- I would suggest maybe having students work in groups for some of the problems in class. I noticed over the course of the semester that many students in the class solved problems differently than myself or Elise did and I feel like getting the chance to talk to them and work out problems with them would be super helpful!
- TAs have more say in quizzes and exams.
- None, great teaching technique, very engaging.
- othing, very good and effective discussion section. Felt like I benefited more from the discussion than the lecture.

In response to the question: What else would you like your instructor to know about your experience in this course?

- This class was one of my favorites and I looked forward to learning in this class each week. Made it easy to understand the material.
- Thank you for being an awesome TA, you are the only reason I passed this class. The frustration I had with the woman that lectured us is matched only by the gratitude I feel for your teaching methods. You did a fantastic job and I wish you the best.
- I really liked how responsive Elise was in regards to her email. I have emailed her lots of questions while I was studying for tests or working on homework and she was always really helpful. I really liked going to discussion just because Elise was my TA and a very sweet and knowledgeable person!
- I really enjoyed being in your discussion section. I know you helped me remember how to do the problems and it was really comforting to know that I could count on going to discuss and have things be clarified.
- It was a really good class and I liked all the quizzes because they provided good mini study guides.
- You were a very helpful instructor in understanding the lectures.
- I loved having her as a TA and she made math enjoyable for me again
- I absolutely loved having Elise as my instructor and I think she is a great teacher. She's very passionate about the subject and she has a great way of explaining solutions and content.
- Elise did a great job at teaching. She always had a great attitude and helped students understand the challenging material.
- I really appreciated how you made connections with each of your students. You made coming to class at 7:30am twice a week a lot more enjoyable!! Thank you for everything!!
- You did such an amazing job teaching our class! You communicate very clearly and all of your students appreciate your lively teaching style and clear love and enjoyment of your subject. Thank you for always answering our questions and being happy to elaborate and explain answers to subjects that can be quite complicated. You genuinely care about us and we appreciate everything you do to help us learn. You are the benchmark that I compare other TA's to and, frankly, they just don't compare. Stay gold, Elise!

- At first, I was genuinely terrified of taking this class. Everyone said that you were going to need a good TA to pass otherwise it was going to be very hard to break down what was taught in lecture in a way that was understandable. Thankfully, I had a fantastic TA.
- I loved how much you cared about your students and the material you taught.
- I would like them to know that the class was super easy to follow. She was super helpful when it comes to understanding the material.
- Elise is my absolute hero. She inspires me to keep working toward my dream, and she is also a lady boss. Her positive attitude and encouragement carried me through the semester, and I can not express enough how grateful I am to have met her and learned from her. If I was a lesbian I would marry her, but, alas, I am not, so I am proud to consider her both my teacher and my friend. I hope that everyone has an Elise in their life. Thank you so much for teaching me :)
- Although I found this course to be a little difficult I enjoyed her as my TA, she was very accommodating for me when I was sick. I tried very hard in this class and tried my best to get support/help but unfortunately I was unable to attend office hours.
- I loved how understanding and patient Elise was. She was always in a positive, bright mood no matter what which is always a great thing. She always went through a variety of examples during class which were very similar to exams and homework questions usually. I have nothing negative to say about my experiences with Elise!
- Great great job. Only reason I learned a single thing this year. What you said just made sense and it was fun to be able to learn new things that are more complex than I ever have. Thank you.
- By far the best TA I've ever had. She was always in a good mood and cared about her students. She was always helpful when you reached out. All around a fantastic TA!
- I started this class a few weeks late, but nonetheless, I did not feel behind at all in the class. Having taken calculus in high school, I felt confident in the class but if anything was confusing, I think my TA did an amazing job at explaining it in a new way. I love my TA so much. I think she was so kind, understanding, and good with communication. I never felt hesitant to reach out to her if I had any problems. I also found her office hours really helpful too. She was really good at helping us study and prepare for everything on the tests. I wish the times for office hours were offered more days in the week, but that's not her fault obviously. I honestly felt like her teaching style of the topics was better than the professors, and that says a lot. I would 100% recommend her to anyone who's taking the class again-I think having her as a TA is what made the class a million times better than if she wasn't my TA. Cannot say enough good things about her.
- I really liked her positivity! You could tell she really loved math and that made class pretty fun to attend. I didn't feel like I was being forced to sit through something boring cause her energy rubbed off on the class a little bit and even made the material a little more interesting! I don't think I would have been able to get through a whole semester of discussion twice a week with a TA who was boring and didn't want to be there!