

# Mid-Course Review Report

**Instructor:** Manasi Jayakumar

**Department:** Psychology

**Date of Mid-Course Review:** 11/8/2021

**Course:** PSYC UN1490 Research Methods: Cognition & Decision Making

**Attendance:** 15

**Location:** Zoom

**Observer:** Christopher Chen

## Summary

What is contributing to student learning in this course?

- Seen as truly caring:
  - Many comments by students note how Manasi seems to really care about students in the course and that has been very helpful for their learning and motivation.
  - Some students also commented on how Manasi seems to really care about teaching, as shown by her hard work and how she spends her time with them as her students
- Communication and Accessibility:
  - Manasi was said to be very easy to get in contact with outside of class (and beyond office hours).
  - Emails and announcements were found to be helpful in guiding students
  - Her openness to questions also help foster a feeling of care, and access that led a more positive attitude in the classroom
- Feedback:
  - Students really appreciate feedback on assignments, especially how extensive and applicable the notes were to help their learning.

What is making student learning difficult in this course?

- Overall course timing:
  - Most of the students commented about the sheer length of the course (back to back between the lecture and section) making it very difficult to pay attention.
  - Given the lack of a break, students felt that certain activities in the section were harder to engage with (e.g., lecture followed by lecture was especially difficult)
- Section Length:
  - Because the two hour section follows the two hour lab, most students felt a break was needed or that they would prefer class to end early.
  - A few students felt that lab could be 1 hour instead 2 (with the second part of the class already feeling like an office hours situation)

What, if anything, would students change to improve their learning in this course?

- Take a break:
  - Students would appreciate a short break between the two parts of the course, instead of running 4 hours straight.
- Understanding when to move on
  - Some students mentioned that certain parts of the section felt very repetitive, as if there were topics that could have been shortened so it felt that the time in-class was more meaningful (or so class could get out earlier). Checking for understanding in some way to be able to move on more quickly (be this actively through some sort of activity, or by reading the class's body language) was suggested by students.
  - Some students felt that some parts of the course were interesting but not necessarily relevant to the class. Given that they feel very busy, they felt that making clearer connections to course skills would help.

Additional comments:

During our discussion we talked about how you could try and vary the activities, and the timing of activities to help to try and keep students engaged. For instance, after the lecture, starting with an activity that gets students talking is likely going to be better taken by students than starting off with a lecture for the section/lab. Similarly, giving opportunities for students to take leave from the lab when they feel they would like (or given options for taking a break earlier on or during the class) could help break up the time. You are clearly doing good work with your students, so this small change would help make what is already strong into something stronger.