USC University of Southern California

Individual Report for Instructor Lototsky 39571-20163 : MATH-226 Calculus III (39571)

USC Student Course Evaluations - Fall 2016

Project Audience 46
Responses Received 39
Response Ratio 84.78%

Subject Details	
Name	MATH-226 Calculus III (39571)
Section	39571-20163
Course_ID	MATH-226
Course Type	Lecture
Course Department	MATH
School	LAS
Session	001
First Name	Sergey
Last Name	Lototsky
Email	lototsky@math.usc.edu

Creation Date Tue, Dec 13, 2016

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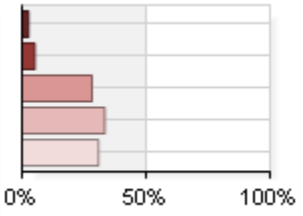
How would you rate the instructor's effectiveness on the following items?

1. Clearly articulated course goals.

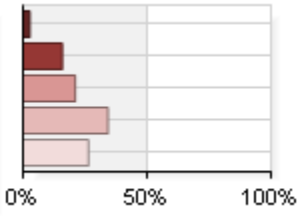
1 Poor	1	2.56%
2 Below Average	2	5.13%
3 Average	11	28.21%
4 Above Average	13	33.33%
5 Excellent	12	30.77%
Total	39	



Statistics	Value
Mean	3.85
Median	4.00
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	+/-1.01

2. Organized course to achieve those goals.

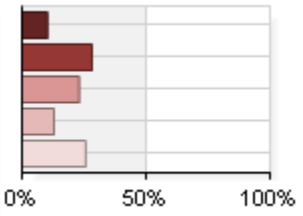
1 Poor	1	2.63%
2 Below Average	6	15.79%
3 Average	8	21.05%
4 Above Average	13	34.21%
5 Excellent	10	26.32%
Total	38	



Statistics	Value
Mean	3.66
Median	4.00
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	+/-1.12

3. Carefully explained difficult concepts, methods, and subject matter.

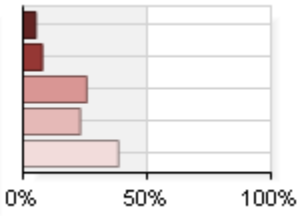
1 Poor	4	10.26%
2 Below Average	11	28.21%
3 Average	9	23.08%
4 Above Average	5	12.82%
5 Excellent	10	25.64%
Total	39	



Statistics	Value
Mean	3.15
Median	3.00
Mode	2
Standard Deviation	+/-1.37

4. Encouraged students to participate in their learning (e.g., through discussion, projects, study groups and other appropriate activities).

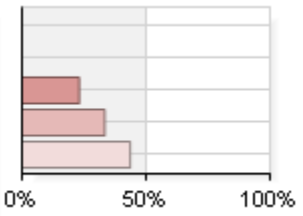
1 Poor	2	5.13%
2 Below Average	3	7.69%
3 Average	10	25.64%
4 Above Average	9	23.08%
5 Excellent	15	38.46%
Total	39	



Statistics	Value
Mean	3.82
Median	4.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	+/-1.19

5. Was accessible to students (e.g., during office hours, before and after class, etc.).

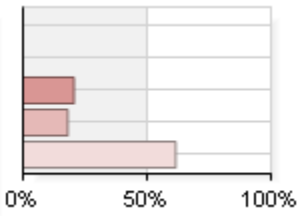
1 Poor	0	0.00%
2 Below Average	0	0.00%
3 Average	9	23.08%
4 Above Average	13	33.33%
5 Excellent	17	43.59%
Total	39	



Statistics	Value
Mean	4.21
Median	4.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	+/-0.80

6. Evaluated student work in fair and appropriate ways.

1 Poor	0	0.00%
2 Below Average	0	0.00%
3 Average	8	20.51%
4 Above Average	7	17.95%
5 Excellent	24	61.54%
Total	39	



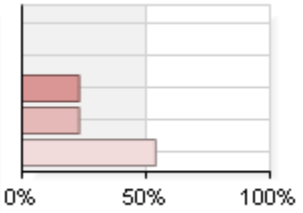
Statistics	Value
Mean	4.41
Median	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	+/-0.82

7. Was enthusiastic about communicating the

8. Stimulated student interest in the subject matter.

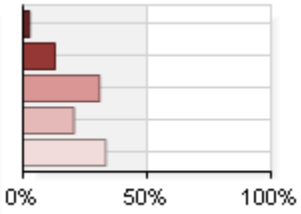
subject matter.

1 Poor	0	0.00%
2 Below Average	0	0.00%
3 Average	9	23.08%
4 Above Average	9	23.08%
5 Excellent	21	53.85%
Total	39	



Statistics	Value
Mean	4.31
Median	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	+/-0.83

1 Poor	1	2.56%
2 Below Average	5	12.82%
3 Average	12	30.77%
4 Above Average	8	20.51%
5 Excellent	13	33.33%
Total	39	

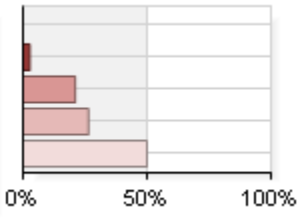


Statistics	Value
Mean	3.69
Median	4.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	+/-1.15

How would you rate the instructor's effectiveness on the following items? (continued)

9. Presented subject matter in ways that were academically challenging.

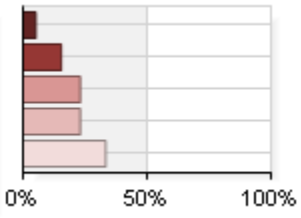
1 Poor	0	0.00%
2 Below Average	1	2.63%
3 Average	8	21.05%
4 Above Average	10	26.32%
5 Excellent	19	50.00%
Total	38	



Statistics	Value
Mean	4.24
Median	4.50
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	+/-0.88

10. Provided students a valuable learning experience.

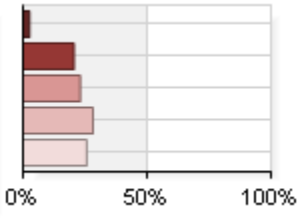
1 Poor	2	5.13%
2 Below Average	6	15.38%
3 Average	9	23.08%
4 Above Average	9	23.08%
5 Excellent	13	33.33%
Total	39	



Statistics	Value
Mean	3.64
Median	4.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	+/-1.25

Overall, how would you rate this instructor?

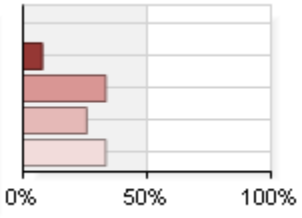
1 Poor	1	2.56%
2 Below Average	8	20.51%
3 Average	9	23.08%
4 Above Average	11	28.21%
5 Excellent	10	25.64%
Total	39	



Statistics	Value
Mean	3.54
Median	4.00
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	+/-1.17

Overall, how would you rate this course?

1 Poor	0	0.00%
2 Below Average	3	7.69%
3 Average	13	33.33%
4 Above Average	10	25.64%
5 Excellent	13	33.33%
Total	39	



Statistics	Value
Mean	3.85
Median	4.00
Mode	3, 5
Standard Deviation	+/-0.99

What were this instructor's main strengths?

Comment
His main strengths were to prepare the class for more than just the test, for example with physics applications and

MATLAB.
His passion for the subject
very funny and passionate about math/marathon
He genuinely loves math and it comes through when teaching. He is always ready and eager to explain any concept and loves to try to help students who have questions. There is also never any doubt that when you ask a question, he has the answer.
He was clearly very enthusiastic about math and very knowledgeable about the subject. I liked the funny stories he would tell during class - they really lightened the mood of a lecture class.
enthusiastic
Good at drawing parallels between mathematicians' work and the class, explained concepts thoroughly
Occasionally when he would cover the material
Lototsky understands calculus and is passionate about mathematics.
Super knowledgeable of the course subject. He's always willing to help you succeed in this course, he wants everyone to do well and encourages collaboration and alternative ways of solving problems which has been valuable.
Fun and organized lectures. Organized homework and midterms. Very helpful with homework. Clearly explained difficult concepts.
Very knowledgable guy Challenging class
Enthusiastic and taught material past what was required.
knows the subject matter well and always teach beyond the textbook
Very enthusiastic about the material
Good organization of the course and assignments
complete professor. Articulate teaching style, balanced teaching between understanding of mathematics and solving problems, introducing interesting topics.
goes beyond the class to connect to larger topics and prepares students well for the midterms and finals by assigning old final exam questions as homework.
Professor Lototsky demonstrated profound passion for math and instilled in us the importance of learning to learn--not learning to get an A on a test.
Knowledge of the topic
Super intelligent professor, enthusiastic about the subject matter, cares about students
Professor Lototsky was passionate about the subject and got through the material quickly to allow for time to review.
Enthusiastic about the material during lecture which spread to the students (something that is difficult to do in a Math 226 class), undeniably fair, and clearly articulated the goal and composition of the course. Gave more than ample time to prepare for the final as well, which was very much appreciated.
exams were fair and we knew what material we needed to study; he pushes students to go beyond the course and learn on their own if they wish
very helpful during office hours, using past exams a lot, interesting computer project
knowledgable about everything
Cares for the success of his students and encourages them to do well on exams.
He was enthusiastic about maths and its application.

How might this instructor improve their teaching effectiveness?

Comment
He could try to explain the concepts in a more relateable way as at first, I had trouble piecing together everything he said in lecture, though I was eventually able to figure everything out as we went through the lecture.
Some of the content was taught in a very confusing matter. Just knowing the limitations of the students would be a good improvement.
the materials are not so organized and logic is confusing sometime
While the tangents he sometimes goes on are interesting, sometimes they are above the skill level of the entire class

and can lead to even more confusion when trying to answer a question. Perhaps making a more clear distinction between the material directly related to the class, and material that higher-level material would help.

I think he should remember that this is our first time learning this material. We need our hands held and concepts to be introduced slowly, and with clear practice problems. I would suggest handing out a sheet with practice problems and a summary of the concepts on it that we could fill out as the lecture progresses.

not sure

WATCH THE MIT CALC 3 COURSE ON MITOPENCOURSEWARE AND BASE YOUR LECTURES OFF OF DENIS AROUX!!!!!!!

Dr. Lototsky does little to actually teach/instruct the course. He will write an initial step and then go to the answer of the problem with little to no explanation of what he is doing and why. This leaves many of us confused, and we end up not learning about the subject. Rather, we just learn how to copy information. In addition, he always goes on tangents that have nothing to do with the material (ie he will talk about his marathon and triathlon times). This wastes time and gives him/us less time to teach/learn. Also, whenever someone asks a question, he gives a sarcastic and almost rude reply, which discourages anyone from asking questions. Overall, he should just learn how to run a classroom and be an actual professor instead of a robot who does research.

Lototsky is great at covering concepts that go above and beyond the material, draw connections to other subjects and fields, bringing in outside knowledge; however, it's difficult to grasp concepts that are very external when the fundamentals of each concept isn't covered very extensively. It would've been more valuable to start at a smaller, more simple scale, and then increase in complexity, learning more of the fundamentals first before being assigned final exam problems over the topic.

Keep doing it.

teach upper division class not math 226

Was a little hard to understand. Moved on to harder topics before addressing easier ones that needed a little more reinforcement. However, when mixed with supplemental instruction, I was able to learn what I needed to achieve.

can change the order of each lecture so the concept will be more clear

Going over more examples during class

Dr. Lototsky was condescending and diverged from course material to that of upper level math classes far too often. He was not approachable and often made demeaning comments towards students.

More focus during lectures on teaching towards the final and homeworks

already good

Review the basics of topics quickly before diving in. Much of the confusion from students is because he doesn't start from the beginning.

Oftentimes getting lost in his enthusiasm and knowledge of higher math, Professor Lototsky neglected to explain key course concepts to our class. We spent the majority of class time learning superfluous material that, though some may have found interesting, did not pertain to the final's material.

Explain the class material more thoroughly instead of going off on tangents about higher level math

He might be too smart that sometimes it is hard for us to keep up with his pace... maybe more suitable in teaching upper division classes. Meanwhile, the computer project (10% point) is not closely related to the course.

Professor Lototsky was unapproachable, demeaning to students, difficult to follow, and gave assignments and lectures beyond the scope of the class at the expense of the material that is required to be covered.

When students asked questions he was dismissive and/or insulting, giving responses that included "If you don't understand that, I cannot help you" and "That is really very obvious, I'm not sure why you don't understand." This kept me from feeling comfortable asking questions and seeking help on several occasions.

His lessons were often difficult to follow. He did not use clear definitions, but rather used vague/cryptic descriptions and notations that were difficult to interpret. This made it so that I often found myself doing calculations, but not understanding what my solution really meant. He also did not organize his lectures in ways that made it clear what topic was being covered (this improved slightly as the semester progressed). I usually did not see how the content of the homework problems was related to what was said in lecture until SI sessions.

Finally, he wasted lecture time "teaching" topics that are well beyond the scope of Math 226 (even saying "this is not final exam material" or "this is the material for a 400 level course"). While I do have an interest in taking upper level math courses, I do not find it productive to be vaguely introduced to these ideas (that I will not apply for years) when I am trying to master the material for the course I am currently enrolled in and paying for. This was especially frustrating when the lecture periods that remained after all of the course material had been covered were used for partially

introducing upper level concepts. I really appreciated that we covered the material so much faster than the other classes and would have liked to have spent that extra class time preparing for the final exam. Homework was also affected by this trend. Many homework problems covered topics that were beyond the scope of the course. One of the supposed final exam review problems was even so difficult that our brilliant TA was unable to do it. I think that assigning such problems is unfair and disrespectful as it keeps students from spending that time studying material that they will actually be tested on. Another example is the computer project assigned by Professor Lototsky. It accounts for 10% of our grade and was entirely unrelated to the course. This is ridiculous as it makes up a very substantial portion of our grade and yet the concepts and skills necessary to complete it were not covered in the class.
The only thing I would suggest to improve is that, during lecture, sometimes the theory of the material is explored more than I would have liked. While understandably necessary at times, I always preferred reviewing and doing practice problems in class.
lectures were confusing because sometimes he would discuss a concept in depth and we would not know what information we would be responsible for in this course; help with computer project as many students had no experience with MATLAB or the math involved in the project (it did not reflect the course material)
Add summary of topics
By teaching materials that are relevant only to calculus 3, not calculus 1, 2 or more advance math courses.

Additional comments?

Students
Thank you professor!
Good luck on your next marathon!
no
Please keep your lectures focused on Calc 3 and if you want to go beyond that, keep it close to what we do need to know so we can be further enriched
Learn how to teach.
Keep teaching the hard concepts but reinforce the easier concepts as well to help with learning.
Make the class challenging but manageable
I'm so glad that our homework came from old exams. Super helpful in preparation for midterms
.
Complete professor
Really good person and in some way a really good professor. Knows about the subject matter really well but sometimes simply cannot make students understand
How is the computer project, for people who don't know how to code, fair? Shouldn't it be an extra credit assignment?
I enjoyed your class very much professor, thank you for a helping me during a rough time and for a great semester. Perhaps I'll see you in Probability Theory!
please highlight the most relevant concepts in your lectures so students know what is vital for the final and what is additional information
Thank you so much! You are an amazing professor!!!
Excellent and funny Professor