

Action plan based on the student feedback regarding the 2nd semester of the 2020/2021 academic year

Department: Department of Molecular Biology

Faculty: Faculty of Medicine

Courses: Molecular Biology 2 and Medical Chemistry CV

1. Our feedback on general comments by the students:

We are pleased to see that the scores obtained from more than a third of students of Molecular Cell Biology II exceeded the average scores of the Faculty on ALL specific items of the subject questionnaire. Thank you for your positive feedback providing further support to our efforts in making Molecular Cell Biology an essential, up-to-date and comprehensive pillar of the preclinical medicine module.

Feedback on the practical teaching was largely in line with the average scores of the faculty with a few items receiving scores significantly superior to the average (lab infrastructure, practice-oriented and interactive learning). The only below-average evaluation regarded item #K07 (to what extent managed the tutor to shed light on the medical implications of the experiment). We definitely need to pay more attention to this issue, to better highlight and emphasize the medical correlations. There are actually quite a lot of them, e.g., selection of proper antibiotics (Induction of beta-galactosidase lab); genotyping genetic mutations and polymorphisms (taste receptor genotyping); recombinant protein based therapies (production of YFP in *E. coli*); gene therapy (molecular cloning), just to mention a few.

Scores obtained from six out of 30 students in the Medical Chemistry CV course cannot be considered representative. As this was an exam course with no active teaching in this semester, it is pointless to draw any conclusions from these data. We cannot help assuming that the evaluation might be influenced significantly by the possible frustration of those who failed to complete the subject in a timely manner.

2. Our feedback on specific comments on mandatory subjects:

We are grateful for your positive comments acknowledging the high-quality teaching activities of the department and appreciating the preparedness and proficiency of some lecturers and lab teachers alike. Your criticism was mostly centered around the following issues:

a. „we could have written tests as well for exemption parts of the exam”

We are convinced that understanding the fundamental principles and correlations in molecular biology (which we consider far more important than a mere lexical knowledge) can be evaluated best in interactive oral exams. Our policy is that an exemption from a certain part of the exam should be achievable at evaluations that match the method of the exam, i.e. as though they were preliminary parts of the exam. This is the reason for holding oral midterms in our department.

b. „Please keep uploading recordings even though the university goes off-line, it is really helpful.” „The recordings of lectures are really really helpful to prepare for the exam. I hope it is going to be recorded even not under the normal situation as well.”

They have been, are and will be recorded. Full video recordings as well as the slides of all lectures are available through the Moodle platform of the subject.

c. „but the labs via zoom were less understandable...”

We totally agree that watching the experiments on your display, and not being able to pipette reagents etc. must have been frustrating and boring, but it was the most we could do amidst the severe pandemic restrictions. Hopefully, we will not have to switch to distance or hybrid education any more.

d. „the lab midtem is very different from teacher to teacher, some students get the questions before the test, some students have a "kahoot" test, and some have a 8 paper, 1,5 hour written test. THIS IS UNFAIR, and results in some classes getting exemption based on which teacher they have. make the lab test the same for everyone, so its not unfair for the students with a teacher that holds 1,5 hour lab tests.”

We got the point of this message, and from this year on, the format of the MCB2 lab midterm test will be uniform for all students: prepared and marked by a board of independent tutors of the departments.

e. „Some weeks there were prerecorded lectures uploaded”

It happened during the pandemic that some lecturers had contracted a COVID-19 infection and quickly recorded and uploaded their lectures prior to their scheduled time, well before the onset of more severe symptoms, which later might have prevented them from holding the lectures in due course. We apologize for that but also reckon that this ad hoc scenario was far better than simply cancelling the lecture on account of the illness. On the other hand, some lecturers had no proper high-speed internet connection to deliver online lectures from their homes, so they recorded the presentation in the EOK building in advance. In summary, uploading pre-recorded lectures was a *vis maior* measure for the benefit of our students, and we do not intend to implement it under normal conditions.

3. Our feedback on specific comments on elective subjects:

No feedback was received on elective subjects.

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