

Student feedback on the course 'Biogeochemical Cycles in the Earth System – an Overview' held on February 14–15 & 18–20, 2013

Of the 20 participants, 10 have filled in the short anonymous survey.

1. What is your overall impression of the course?	2. Please name what you liked about the course.	3. Please tell us what can be improved.	4. I have used, or will use the video recordings of the overview course...
Parts of the course were too general, the other parts just what I needed.	Martin's talks were structured and very interesting he managed to give us the most important things out of this brief introduction of a wide field his didactic skills were very impressive	the practical part was not that useful for me, maybe less tasks (within a certain time) and more detailed work on a specific problem Sue's overview was kind of too much since I'm not so familiar with this field, the message often was hard to get better focus on some interesting things and go more into detail and understand the topic	...briefly the video material provided is nice, but the resolution (I know a lot of data) is too low, so you cannot see the slide's content therefore either implement the slides (next to original video) or increase a little bit the resolution
Parts of the course were too complicated/specific for me, other parts were too general. I didn't like Susan's teaching style and slides. The slides (lecture) were not well connected to gether to make a story- line.	The topics and time schedule of the course Having videos and slides available for the courses	The solution to the problems and exercises should be gone through in the class, so that everyone understands it. Part of the solutions were taught in a manner as if everyone knows it and just wants the final number. In other words they were not reaseaned enough. - It would be ideal if we also could have some texts inaddition to the videos and slides.	...briefly I'll watch those video courses that I couldn't concentrate at the class or those parts that were a bit more difficult to understand it in the class
Parts of the course were too complicated/specific for me, the other parts suited my needs.	- Good slides - relation to recent publication	- the exercercies should be improved - less problems, but those problems should be solved together - laptops should only be allowed for the exercises - more concentration achieved	...briefly
Parts of the course were too general, the other parts just what I needed. Martins Einführung am ersten Tag war für mich zu allgemein. Das habe ich alles mittlerweile schon zu oft gehört ;-))	Ich fand vor allem Martins Ausführungen über Klimamodelle gut, eigentlich den ganzen Modelling-Part und ich mochte auch, dass er immer wieder Grenzen des IPCC Reports liegen.	Verbessert werden könnte meiner Meinung nach vor allem der Übungsteil von Sue. Da habe ich, ehrlich gesagt, größtenteils nicht mal die Problemstellung verstanden.	...not at all

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I have another opinion. the course had a good overview level, sometimes too fast through specific topics	i liked the simple and easy way of explanation (during the lecture)	the exercises were not really helpful, while on the one side they were too less explained in case that we can understand them, and on the other side they were too much calculation. the models were nice but also not inspiring to me. i would have a problem to have a longer lecture which explains the models without handling them by ourselves. a afternoon lecture instead of exercise would be ok	...briefly i have made notes on a printout, so the video is not really necessary
The course provided the breadth and depth I needed.	- Introduction in many different topics	Improvements would be: - Making shorter talks (10-20 Minutes - similar to Massive Open Online Courses) - Differentiate between explanation of basic principles and application to Earth system. (For example: Teaching about greenhouse effect and radiation balance as basics and present model results and measurements as application separately. Or explain isotopic fractionation and different forms of it in one 10 minute talk and present conclusion that can be made from it for Earth's history in a second one.) - More interactivity. (Shorter talks would help with that. :-)) Apart from structure the exercises, would need most improvement: - It is often not clear how exercises are meant (terms are ambiguous), necessary assumptions are not specified, needed numbers from slides are not highlighted. - Maybe it is possible to do exercises on different levels? First simple understanding questions like in textbooks (multiple choice, true-false). Afterwards easy project work in groups, that is presented from students. - Exercises could be made with different focuses / difficulty levels: For biologists, chemists, physicists, ecologists,...	...not at all They may help people who could not be present, but they are awkward to navigate. Making talks shorter / shorter subparts could help.
Parts of the course were too complicated/specific for me, the other parts suited my needs.	the good explanations of processes in the atmosphere, biological systems, paleoclimate, the linkage of findings in earth system science with global change issues, overall the exchange between the other students and the lecturers	the slides were for my impression in parts overloaded which made it hard to follow sometimes	...briefly
Parts of the course were too complicated/specific for me, the other parts suited my needs. This would be applied to most students because everyone has different backgrounds.	- Lecture in the morning, some practice in the afternoon - It was also very good to learn something that I have not known before (overview of various topics)	It has been always discussed and I know that it is not possible for practical reasons, but still all-day-long lecture for 5 days in a row is too much. There should be some time for us to review the materials after the class, then we can ask more questions next days and learn more from the lecture.	...several times It was really good idea to videotape the lecture. As it was suggested during the retreat, students who could not register for the class because of the restricted number of participants can also get some credits out of it.

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Parts of the course were too complicated/specific for me, the other parts suited my needs.	see below	Martins lectures were great, well organized and structured and very interesting. Sues parts were sometimes hard to follow as the structure was difficult to understand. Hence it was easy to get lost in the middle of the lecture. Sues presentation contained (in my eyes) far too many slides which were sometimes hard to understand in the amount of time given. The exesises form Sues part should all contain the problem in a written sentence. In that way one can get back onto the problem even if one has missed the actual (oral) quatsion in the beginning or misunderstood it.	...not at all
The course provided the breadth and depth I needed.	The course was very nice and provided a good overview of the overall scientific questions, workfields and the philosophy of the MPI-gBGC. In my opinion both parts (Sue`s and Martin`s) gave a good insight into problems and the state of the art in global environmental sciences.	In the last part of the course (sustainability and geo engineering), there was to little discussion, regarding the big importance of this topics in politics, economics and society.	...briefly