

Response to 2E03 Feedback: iBioMed Perspective

If you're reading this, it probably means you filled out the HTHSCI 2E03 (Biochemistry inquiry) course feedback form! Firstly, I'd like to say thank you for sending in any feedback you had, while sometimes it might feel pointless to share how 1 person feels, all of your cumulative responses did have a tremendous impact.

The feedback responses followed 3 common major themes of what was wrong with the course, from the iBioMed perspective.

1. Students feel that they are lacking the skills and prior knowledge required to be successful in the course
2. Having groups of 9 people, with very different schedules, makes it near impossible to schedule group meetings, not to mention group process meetings which are MANDATORY.
3. Specifically, the iBioMed Biomedical Engineering stream students expressed that they did not have enough time to dive into medical journals, articles and other literature to be able to find answers for these progress presentations. The HESE students mentioned they did have the opportunity to do this, but could sympathize with their peers who did not have similar schedules.

The feedback that followed was taken to the program co-director from the Faculty of Health Sciences, [Dr. Michelle MacDonald](#) - who also happens to be an associate chair and professor in the Biochemistry and Biomedical Sciences department. Dr. Macdonald also happened to be a facilitator of the 2E03 course in the past, and was able to immediately understand the feedback. Here are the discussions/outcomes of the feedback submitted.

1. Students every single year, even in the Faculty of Health Sciences complain that they are not equipped with the skills or prior knowledge required to be successful in the course. The BHSc students in the past have also expressed that they weren't taught enough in cell bio or psychobio to be able to dive so deep into these biochemical pathways. The course coordinators choose to not give in and start providing lectures for this course in particular because of the unique learning style that is inquiry. If lectures were added to this course, there may not be additional opportunities for iBioMed students to gain exposure to how inquiry works and reap these benefits. However, what will be done using the feedback you have all submitted is that in HTHSCI 1106, scientific journals/articles will be introduced more thoroughly and students will be given a **more expansive lesson** (you may remember we only had 1 lesson on western blot) outlining experimental methods which are integral parts of interpreting outcomes of biochemical pathway.
2. The department agrees that 9 people was not ideal. There is literature to support the optimized number for group learning is about 6 people - and given your feedback, this verified their suspicions. Next year, there will be more facilitators, meaning cores, and group sizes will be capped at about 6 people. As well as, some feedback expressed

mentioned frustration about how group process meetings were not introduced until 1 month into the course, this feedback has also been noted. The Health Sciences tutoring course which runs the group process meetings will be starting sooner to allow groups to function with better dynamics from the start.

3. There was a lot of outrage about how the iBioMed engineers don't have enough time to dive into extensive research bi-weekly for progress presentations, and then on top of it, memorize the entire thing. This feedback was noted, and we discussed exploring the option of changing biochemistry from being presentations to an informal discussion with the facilitator - where you could still research a part and be taught other parts by both the facilitators as well as your peers. The McMaster medical school students have tutorials where the facilitator gives a prompt and some sort of indication as to what to look into, perhaps this ideology will be adopted for inquire. We explored the possibility of the facilitator prompting you on what to research, and the following week you gain marks by your participation in answering the prompt-related questions - however the final will still be a presentation as its important to educate your peers on what you have spent the semester exploring.

I apologize for these changes not being possible to implement this far into the semester, but your feedback will be used to change the experience for future incoming students!