

McGill University Course Evaluation



MATH 141 : Calculus 2 - Lecture Section: 1 CRN: 82

Term : Summer 2012

Instructor(s) : Hadi Bigdely

Comments for question 1 : Overall, this is an excellent course.

1. While I do enjoy the teaching of the course, I don't really care for the subject matter (calculus II, specifically).
2. This course is too hard but it is not the professor's fault.
3. Much better than Calculus 2 in the Winter. I found it very interesting to go to classes
4. I think this would be a better course if you were more interested in Math and didn't just have to take it because it is a requirement
5. Nothing against the instructor, but I'm a psych major with linguistics and english minors. There is no reason I should have to take this class just because I'm in Arts/Sci, because it has nothing to do with anything, so while this course might be splendid for the maths or physics kiddies, it is completely useless for me and I resent being forced to take it.
6. Hadi made it understandable and enjoyable.
7. Neutral because I hate math and I have no use for math in the future and am only taking this course as a prerequisite to transfer programs. However, I can see how it is applicable to careers in engineering fields.

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Comments for question 3 : Overall, this instructor is an excellent teacher.

Instructor : Hadi Bigdely

1. Professor Bigdely is the best professor I have had here at McGill, hands down. He truly wants to help his students succeed. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to have him as my professor.
2. Very dynamic, explains everything very well. If there is something that you don't understand he does his best to help you. Excellent teacher.
3. Very intuitive and is able to explain matters in a clear and coherent fashion, ive had tutors for this course but this class was more helpful.
4. Though he is new to teaching it is this fresh and eager mindset with which he approaches teaching calculus which sets him apart from some of his more senior coworkers. The class really benefitted from having a professor that was interested in the success, rather than the failure of his students. He provided lots of examples in class which was an EXCELLENT method of teaching the material and something that not

enough calculus professors do. If the class ever seemed lost or like they didn't understand a given concept he wouldn't hesitate to back track, and to guide the class through the more difficult content rather than speeding through the material. My only advice and my only hope is that Hadi maintains this passion for teaching through the remainder of his career as a professor at McGill

5. I chose to take Math 141 during the summer because of reviews I heard about the class during the winter semester from older students. I knew I would neglect the class during the semester (since I'm usually not a huge fan of math), so I decided to take it during the summer. I could not have asked for more of Hadi! Not only did I learn a great deal of math and actually understand it, but I also enjoyed it very much. The examples done during class were extremely helpful in doing webwork assignments and preparing for the final.
6. Enthusiastic, engaging, organised and patient in his teaching. Dedicated a good amount of time on the hard topics. Incorporated lot of examples during the lecture. Also I liked how he discussed common doubts that he received during the office hours and also went over quizzes in the lecture. It was very clear that he had the best interests of the students at heart, such that he made sure the tutorials were as productive as possible.
7. Mr. Bigdely has to be commended for instructing a very challenging introductory course in a clean, efficient manner. He is very knowledgeable about the subject matter and seems to be very passionate about teaching it. He is always ready to offer help to those who seek it and will often stay after class to answer questions and explain concepts. His notes are easy to follow and he often follows up by making sure everyone understands each process. If I had any constructive criticism, it would be that Mr. Bigdely could benefit from some of his own inputs into the course to alleviate the boredom that often comes from sitting in the classroom for over 2 and half hours at a time. The course, at least for me, was extremely dull and I think that would be greatly helped if the instructor could integrate some jokes, maybe some clever insights about the materials taught. Certainly, Mr. Bigdely has successfully met his duty as a lecturer and is good at what he does. Another thing I would like to point out, hopefully as a potential change to next year, is the difficulty of the materials. I am sure that the curriculum is set and Mr. Bigdely is in no position to make the course any simpler, but a few things that I found challenging was the 1) the grading system and 2) the time allotted for quizzes. Although partial marks are given for problems, I believe the distribution of those marks are not as fair. For example, a simple mistake in the beginning of a problem would cost more than the same mistake at the very end. I believe that a student who clearly demonstrates that he understood the process and has done all the calculations, but merely forgot a small detail, should not be penalized 8 points (for example) out of 10. It is very discouraging for a student to make a small mistake and get the same grade as if he had absolutely no clue how to approach the problem. Touching on that, the time allowed on a quiz, in my opinion, (continued in another comment section)
8. He is very good and clear in his explanations. However, perhaps he relies too much on the TAs to do harder examples... because what happens is that the TAs do not explain very well and we end up lost.
9. He is an amazing instructor. Very clear and thorough but also presented more interesting, challenging problems. Related to the class well. I felt I learned what stuff was in depth instead of just memorizing things without really understanding them.
10. Way better than Drury! The only thing I did not like was he lowered the worth of a quiz after it had been written from 10% of the final grade to 6% and added another quiz. He said he did this because the average of the first quiz was low, I feel that this unfairly punished those that did well on the quiz expecting it to be worth more.

11. In my 12 years of grade school and 3 years of university, I can say that Hadi is one of the best math teachers I've ever had. The impression that I get is that he is not just lecturing, but that he really wants the students to understand. He also really seems to understand what it's like to be a student. I would have liked to have seen some more review at the beginning of each class or every other class. We did it once, but more often would have been nice. We could take the first 10 minutes of a class to attempt a question from a previous part of the course and then you could solve it on the board.
12. I found the amount of examples given were extremely helpful in understanding the material
13. Sometimes he tends to go a little bit quickly, but I think that that's a necessity in a summer course, otherwise we won't be able to cover all the material.
14. His pace of delivering the material was good enough that it wasn't overwhelming; or boring. His notes were clear and easy to follow.
15. Explanations are very direct, concrete and clear. Also, his use of examples is excellent and really helps us learn the material.
16. He is probably the best calculus teacher I ever had. His explanations are extremely clear and has a great relation with students. I would definitely like for him to teach more calculus classes.
17. He was very good at giving examples and going over the examples in class in thorough detail. The issue I had was his ability to verbally explain some things which is attributed to the language barrier as English is his second language. However as a whole, he was a great teacher
18. Certainly, he likes teaching unlike other math professors that I have come across at McGill. I would like to specifically point out that he spent a fair amount of time to make the students understand the concepts (especially with volume and polar coordinates) which really helped them in the application of those concepts as well as strengthening their understanding of the questions. However, the professor needs more experience, and should avoid making contradictions like whether we should acknowledge (for instance, a negative sign in series or not or when making up his own examples on the spot-this might seem harsh but its just to give a professional touch which DOES NOT mean that you become one of those profs who just write on their papers and do not interact with the class). He was mostly available whenever needed. He is great guy beside that and his classes were fun.

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Comments for question 5 : The instructor was well prepared for class.

Instructor : Hadi Bigdely

1. Always had a plan and knew what he was doing.
2. Always did examples, something that previous math courses failed to do.
3. Always prepared and able to answer questions outside of syllabus
4. Very prepared for class with concise notes and very organized structure. His lecture processes were not all over the places and it is generally very easy to follow each problem if one pays attention. (continuation of comments from previous section): ...is not nearly enough. It feels as if though a student needs to know exactly the processes

behind each problem well before he/she picks up the pencil in order to solve it in the time allowed. The margin for any error is almost none-existent which gives rise to simple mistakes that cost a lot. Some of the problems do take a while to solve and some of them require some ingenuity that is not apparent upon first view; therefore, if the difficulty of the problems stay constant, I believe students should have adequate time to think and solve the problem without the stress of being rushed or fearful of making a simple mistake (a simple mistake that would have been caught, if he/she has just a few extra minutes to re-check the work) that ends up costing a lot. Just some personal suggestions :)

5. Excellent, easy to follow lessons
6. It was never a problem when he wasn't prepared, because he always made sure to make it work, but I could tell that there were some times when he was sort of doing things on the fly.
7. Virtually always on time; he had his notes ready to go every single day. The only issue that ever arose I think is when he tried to make up an example in class that didn't work out; the uncertainty added confusion about the material.
8. He always knew what he was talking about, he always had at least 10 examples per topic on hand and was very scheduled in his timings throughout.
9. Should avoid making up examples himself if he hasn't done them before. Should not say "I am not sure, let me check/may be/forget about it (after he see a student is confused rather than saying come to my office hours I will explain it to you in detail if you want me to since its outside the scope of this course I will not spend time on it in class)" too often. Surely, he is a human being and its understandable but it would be appreciated if he does not get stuck on the board for too long while solving a question because it just makes the student more apprehensive about the course and think if my prof can't solve it/needs so much time to solve it then how does the examiner expect me to solve this question especially under time constraints. NOTE: This did not happen too many times. Very few. But just to improve.

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Comments for question 6 : The instructor was available to students outside of class.

Instructor : Hadi Bigdely

1. Had office hours everyday and was available for appointments, would stay until he was certain you understood the concept at hand.
2. Had office hours every single day for 2+ hours, and was extremely flexible in terms of meeting outside of his office hours to accommodate to students' schedules
3. Had office hours everyday and made himself approachable anytime during the week if notified through email
4. Has office hours pretty much every single day.
5. Extended office hours. Very much appreciated.
6. Always available for office hours, willing to make appointments.
7. He stayed almost two hours after his office hours answering questions; leaving his door wide open and accommodating students as long as they needed his help. And he replied

to his email almost immediately when ever one was sent.

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Comments for question 7 : The textbook contributed to learning the subject matter.

1. Never used the textbook during this course apart from for suggested problems
2. Did not aid in understanding of the material as much as providing practice problems.
3. Good for practice questions, but no even numbered solutions.
4. The textbook is not very good at explanations, and I don't find the exercises prepare us well enough for the quizzes or exams.
5. I'm not crazy about the Stewart textbook and feel I learn more from class and other sources
6. You need to practice like mad to succeed at all in this class.
7. Very useful to get the basics under our belt; though the overall difficulty seems to be beneath that of the material being tested
8. The Stewart Textbook is actually an awful book that shouldn't be recommended to anybody. It explains a lot of useless information and shows more complicated ways of going about certain problems.
9. Not that much. I only referred to it for things that were not clear from the lecture or when solving suggested problems and I was impatient to wait for the next morning to ask the prof in class. The professor covered almost all the material quite well in class.

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Comments for question 8 : The assignments contributed to learning the subject matter.

1. Very challenging at times but prepared me for the quiz and hopefully the final
2. Webwork and suggested problems were relevant
3. For calculus, I think written assignments are much better than webwork assignments.
4. The assignments are much easier than the material on the tests/final.
5. Yes and No; webwork especially for series was not useful as it was nowhere near what the series and sequences on the exam will appear. Also it is very easy to complete those assignments with a computer which decreased their effectiveness; but that's ultimately the students fault.
6. I strongly disagree that they contributed to learning the subject matter because of the complexity. However, I put neutral because even though they are very hard, they make you do the subject matter throughout the course and this keeps it all in your thought process throughout the summer month.

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Comments for question 10 : I would like to nominate the instructor for a teaching award.

Instructor : Hadi Bigdely

1. Yes - he has positively influenced my view of math.
2. Yes, you is more than deserving for a teaching award. A great professor, and a fair person.
3. I would like to nominate the instructor for a teaching award.
4. One of the best teachers I have had at McGill. I was never a big fan of calculus mainly due to the fact that always had trouble grasping the concepts and understanding the problems. Mr Bigdely's way of teaching is very concrete; he follows every abstract notion with a easy to understand example. Very dynamic teacher who seems to do more than required to get you to understand. He seems to genuinely care about making you understand and succeed. Great teacher.
5. Definitely would recommend Hadi Bigdely for a teaching award, one of the best calculus professors available at McGill especially for Math 141. I am hoping that Hadi Bigdely teaches calculus 3 so that I can chose him as a professor next semester again!
6. I would surely nominate the instructor. He is always ready for class, provided great examples, and went through the material coherently. It was not hard to keep up and understand the lecture material, on the contrary, it seemed rather too easy. The instructor really puts an effort to actually help us understand and make us most familiar with the course. I found him dedicated and passionate about his work. The lecture would end so fast, given that the material is being easily understood and the fact that he is rather humorous. He is always after us to complete our work and always in touch. Simply, all we had to do is attend class and enjoy, he carries so much weight off our backs! Two thumbs up, I would most certainly attend any course you are teaching.
7. Sure! Im not sure what awards are out there but if there is some sort of nomination to offer new teachers who are performing stellarly at Mcgill, he would be an excellent candidate!
8. Absolutely.
9. Yes
10. great teacher
11. Yes. He is very very good.
12. Definitely. He is a very intelligent and supportive teacher. I've never had a math lecture as interesting as his; he has helped boost my confidence in math and should definitely be teaching more during the semester. I found the problems given to be of a challenging standard but in a good way. During the year I did not feel my math lectures contributed very much to my learning which I did mostly independently, but his lectures make a huge difference and will ensure that the students in his classes do better not because of different summer standards, but because we are better equipped to take on more challenging problems, and a lot of the stress that revolves around math is relieved. It would be wrong not to give him a teaching award. Having him teach will raise the quality of students work. Having an instructor who works towards maximizing students capabilities is refreshing and should be recognized.
13. yes
14. Certainly.

15. Hadi is a really good teacher. He gave a lot of examples in order to make us understand the theories.
16. He did an amazing job of helping everyone to understand. Continually answered questions, gave examples and made sure he was always available to help! Overall an amazing and kind prof.
17. Professor Hadi Bigdely sincerely deserves a teaching award. He shows passion for what he teaches and dedication too. The way he relays information and elaborates on concepts is amazing in that by the end of the class all the doubts that students had are erased. I have never had such a good experience learning Calculus until now.
18. Yes!
19. Yes. He taught a class that I have been told is the most difficult undergraduate class and made it possible to enjoy and understand. He provided support in the classroom; encouraging and allowing questions while providing support outside the classroom through extensive office hours and instantaneous replies to emails. He made something that seemed impossible to do in one month, doable and interesting providing interesting facts where relevant; creating a bigger connection to the material and it's value. He was great! And I am so glad that I chose to do MATH 141 with him.
20. Sure :)
21. I definitely would.
22. Great prof., excellent/clear explanations, always prepared to answer questions, etc. Prof. Hadi is probably one of the best profs that ive had so far.
23. Needs more experience

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