

Interdisciplinary Spring Course on Solar Energy and Photosynthesis:

Student feedback

Several students indicated that the multidisciplinary focus of the course was the most valuable aspect for them. The following student feedback should serve to trigger a collective effort to bring multidisciplinary research and teaching to a new level at UP:

- “There should be more of these multidisciplinary courses every recess.”
- “I think that we should have more lectures from researchers from other departments, presented in a simple manner but which highlights the overlap between the departments. I think this course was a great example how a field of study can be a common one between various departments and that more courses like this should be organised (for example drug discovery).”
- “A basic course on physics and chemistry, especially regarding the techniques which can be used to analyse and visualise some of our results in the biological sciences. An introduction to all the various spectroscopy methods would be particularly beneficial. Perhaps introducing projects which include students from the chemistry and physics department would also be something that would encourage collaboration.”
- “[The course] was intellectually challenging, yet encouraged active participation and ideas moving toward more cohesive science among the departments.”
- “I would recommend that a video should be made indicating that interdepartmental research/innovation is the future, with examples (such as artificial photosynthesis) where physicists, chemists, geneticists, microbiologists, etc. are required. This video should be shown to undergrads already (to let them realise that we are moving in this direction) and then similar projects such as this spring course should be held.”

The following student feedback highlights the importance of pre-classroom activities:

- “Having the compulsory readings, and questions and answers, which were then discussed in the discussion sessions, was a novelty, took effort and discipline, and was one of the most valuable aspects of the course.”
- “Experiencing the lecturers and, in some cases, the authors of the papers discussing possible answers was very interesting. These sessions also were the result of all the work we had to do beforehand, and I enjoyed seeing the fruit of it.”
- “The class discussions were fantastic given that different people from different fields had something meaningful to contribute.”
- “The discussion sessions were very informative and it was a good opportunity to interact with people from different departments towards achieving a common goal”