

Teaching Observation

Instructor: Dr. Camerron Crowder

Observer: Dr. Kellie Carter, Co-Director for Teaching Instruction, IRACDA-MERIT Postdoctoral Scholar Program

Class: GGS 690 & 490 cross-listed with STH 299

Dates: 9/05/2018 and 11/26/2018

Institution: University of Alabama at Birmingham

On September 5 and November 26, 2018, I observed **Dr. Camerron Crowder** teach an interdisciplinary course on Model Systems of Genetic Disorders. Dr. Crowder's teaching style included lecture with supportive visuals, open-ended questions, and active learning, which helped to keep students engaged and interested in the material.

During the introduction for both class meetings, Dr. Crowder established rapport and gained student attention by speaking with students as they walked into class. This helps to put students at ease and provides a social connection between students and instructor. Dr. Crowder provided an outline for the class meeting, reminders about what was coming up in future class meetings, and had an encouraging manner when discussing journal club.

During class instruction, Dr. Crowder used slides that were supportive and clear and she activated prior learning/understanding when she introduced concepts. For example, she reminded the students about the sequencing technologies they learned from a prior class in order to help explain a concept, which scaffolds the learning experience. She also explained concepts in a way students could understand. For example, when discussing an osteoblast, she provided a definition, but went further by explaining that blast=build, not destroy.

Dr. Crowder provides a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. She used humor to encourage students to speak up saying, "Say it loud and proud." She encouraged students to interact in class using think-pair-share activities and when the students reported out after the activities, she would validate their answers, which gives the student a positive learning experience. Although some concepts were difficult, Dr. Crowder would encourage students to stay with her through the explanation, checking for understanding before moving on. She handled questions from the students well because she knows the course content and seems to have a genuine enthusiasm for teaching stating, "Because this particular content is challenging, don't worry if you get something wrong. We're all learning."

Dr. Crowder impressed me with her instructional style. She used a clinical case example and compared mutation in a human patient to a zebrafish using protein alignment, continued to discuss the class content, then brought what was learned during the discussion back to the sick patient at the end of the lecture. This is an effective way of showing students how to apply what is learned to real world scenarios. I also noticed an improvement with pacing the instruction to student needs and the volume of her voice when comparing the September and November classes.

In summary, **Dr. Crowder** is an excellent teacher and her enthusiasm for student learning is inspiring.