

Last Class of Undergraduate at UNC-Chapel Hill

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Today's my last day of Undergrad here at UNC Chapel Hill and I would have never imagined that my last class of undergraduate would be none other than a math class, a required class to graduate: Math 119. Other than learning about the course's material, I learned something so much more important: that math can be fun. I won't leave my undergraduate career with a bad experience about probably, my last math class ever. Although I still have to study for the GRE for grad school. I just want to say thank you to the Nick Battista for making this experience enjoyable.

At this height of my career, I've never met a mathematics professor who has been as energetic, as caring and as funny as Nick. Since the beginning of class he made sure everybody understood the class material by asking everybody if anyone had questions. When he sensed people weren't participating enough in class, he would often say: if you guys have any questions or want me to go over something, just stop me. Throw an eraser at me."

He studies math modeling for a living and his passion just shows through. It's not like he comes to class to do a chore. For instance, I've met some professors who use PowerPoint presentations, of which (I think) to save time during class and go over as much material as possible. Nick didn't do that. In every single lesson he did, he took his time to write the problem out, worked the problem step by step. Patiently. Everybody wrote what he wrote on the board. He used to go over concepts several times to make sure everybody understood. To make math a little more colorful Nick used colored chalks.

I've never been a math person all my life, but I can say that Nick's teaching style has allowed me to understand that there are some wonderful math teachers out there. I haven't had terrible math teachers in the past but now that I compare his classes to the rest, they seem impersonal and disconnected. I wish my professors would have been like him: interested and actually invested. He always announced his office hours so that people could visit him. When we couldn't turn in our homework on time for whatever reason, he always gave us an extra day to turn it in without penalty.

So this is a small dedication to probably one of the best math teachers. I'm absolutely sure that he'll be one of the best math teachers around. Although I haven't taken any higher level math, I would love to continue taking more math classes with this guy.

For his future students: appreciate him and enjoy an amazing time in class. Your outlook on math will change. Trust me. He makes math as personal as possible often making it a little funny sometimes.

When discussing natural growth formulas, he chose a problem that I won't forget ever: we measured how Quasimodo's bat population would grow overtime given the ratio and other parameters. When discussing discrete dynamical systems and recursive relations, he made silly references to a human-Vs.-zombie's-type-of scenario. Every now and then, he would also incorporate funny small videos about math being used in ways we normal people don't think about: for instance, once he referenced a Jersey Shore's video popularity and its exponential growth rating, as well as the disputable scene in movie where a shark jumps from the middle of the ocean and bites a flying plane from a high altitude, where the shark manages to bring the plane down. Little things like that made Nick's Math 119 math amazing. I hope the UNC-Chapel Hill math department recognizes this man's worth. With his teaching style, I believe anyone could learn any type of math.

Thank you Nick!



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