

ATTENDING COURSE AT UIO

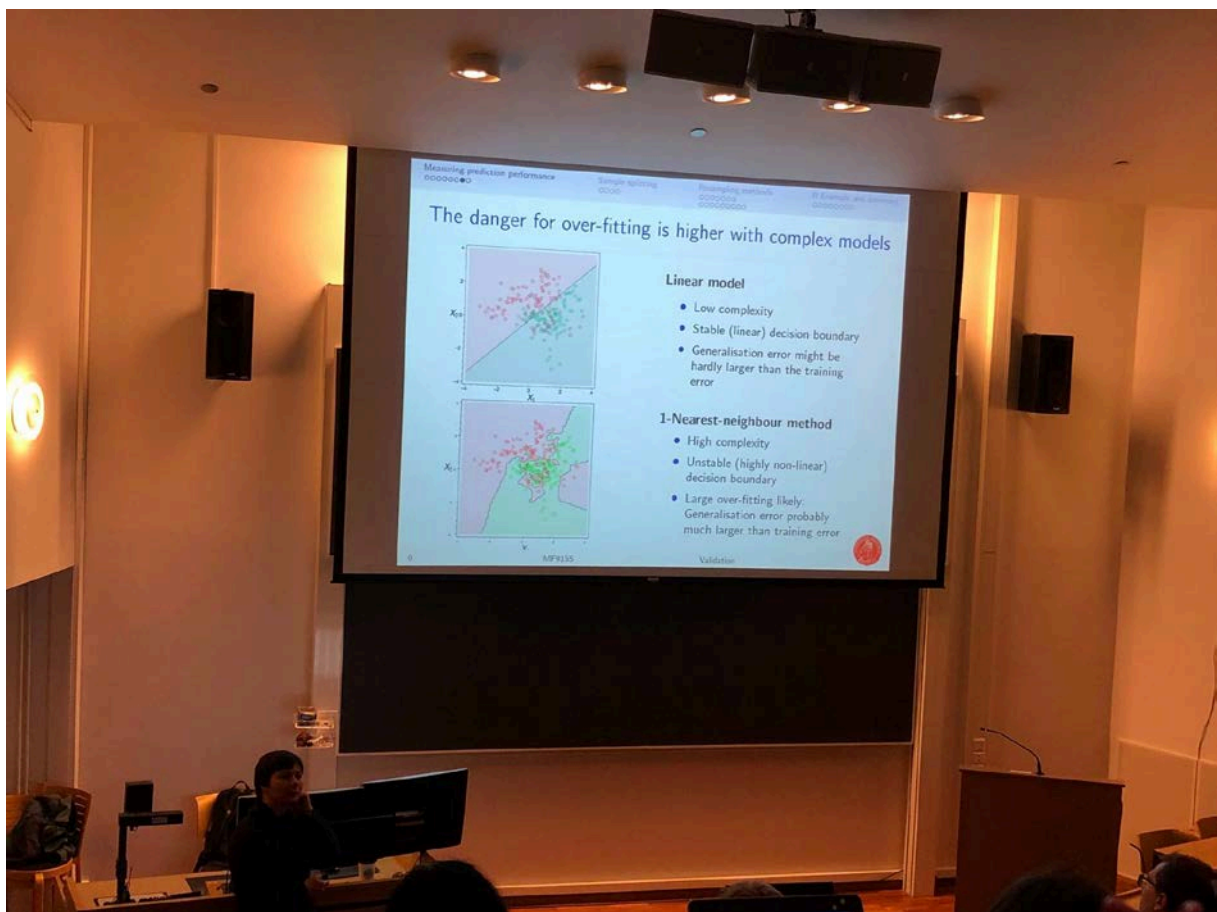
By Nikita Baiju, 19th Dec, 2018

From 3rd to 7th of December 2018, I attended the course «**Introduction to statistics and bioinformatics for the analysis of large-scale biological data (MF9155)** » at the University of Oslo (UiO).

The UiO offers many PhD courses in different fields. This course introduced methods that are integral to data analysis in modern molecular medical research. I am working on gene expression data from NOWAC (The Norwegian Women and Cancer Study) and I am doing my data analysis in R. Therefore, I was willing to take this course, as it seemed to be a perfect fit for my project.

In this course, we were about 35 students comprising of PhD students, mostly from University of Oslo, but also from different Universities of Norway such as The Innland University of Applied Sciences (INN), University of Tromsø (UiT) etc., and also from other countries such as Finland. It was an intense, five-day course held at Domus Odontologica, Oslo. Each day, it started at 9:00 AM and ended 4:30 PM. The course sessions contained lectures in different topics and practice sessions in R related to the topics taught each day. It will have a home-exam that will result in five ECTS points.

The instructors of the course were **Simon Rayner**, Professor II Biostatistics at UiO, and **Manuela Zucknick**, Associate Professor Biostatistics at UiO. Both have many years of experience working with Big Data analysis. They were outstanding lecturers with great skills in the topic and excellent command in R.



In the modern world, high-throughput techniques are becoming increasingly more prevalent in research in life sciences and the clinic. To make effective use of the resulting large datasets, it is necessary to understand and apply advanced statistical methods. In the course, we learned important statistical and bioinformatics concepts for analyzing molecular data and got to know specific statistical challenges associated with the analysis of high-throughput biological data. Further, we also learned about important biological databases and relevant statistical/bioinformatics software tools and we were introduced to challenges we will face while applying these. Further, we performed basic analyses of high-throughput biological data using R and Bioconductor. Likewise, we critically evaluated the data analysis procedures in publications in molecular biology/ molecular medicine.

The idea of taking this course was very useful, as it will add great value for my project. I am grateful for this experience to be a part of University of Oslo, although for a short time. Additionally, it is always interesting to know people from different places, who are working in the same field. It is always good to share our knowledge, challenges we face while working, and to know how to overcome such challenges. Beside the course, it was wonderful to be in the capital city when Christmas was approaching. The weather was kind –no snow and wonderful sunny days. It was a nice escape from the Polar Night in Tromsø. The city was full of Christmas lights in the streets and Julemarkets.







Overall, we gained relevant knowledge in the field. The practical arrangement of the course was satisfactory and the teaching methods used promoted active participation in the course. Hence, I am satisfied with the course and I recommend this course for researchers who need to analyze large-scale molecular data in R or interpret results and understand publications in the molecular life sciences.

I would like to thank **EPINOR** for giving me this opportunity!