



SOSC 15200 4 - Classics of Social and Political Thought II - Instructor(s): William Levine

Project Title: **College Course Feedback - Winter 2024**

Number Enrolled: **19**

Number of Responses: **11**

Report Comments

Opinions expressed in these evaluations are those of students enrolled in the specific course and do not represent the University.

Creation Date: **Thursday, March 28, 2024**

What are the most important things that you learned in this course? Please reflect on the knowledge and skills you gained.

| Comments |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| How to analyze and write about texts that suggest different systems of rule and political philosophy. |
| The varying perspectives on the state of nature. |
| How to analyze critically difficult texts. |
| We read Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Wollstonecraft. The core takeaway was different perspectives on social contract theory, and a more modern (compared to Fall) way of thinking about political philosophy. |
| My writing skills have improved dramatically as a result of Levine's class |
| 1) Trying to find what the problem can be before outright answering the prompt is a useful strategy. 2) How you organize your notes about the text plays a vital role in how effective your writing becomes. |
| Political thought from the beginning of the liberal tradition |
| Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Wollstonecraft, some Kant. Social contract theory, how each reader argues for the formation of the commonwealth and the types of sociopolitical structures within based on their conceptions of human nature and the state of nature. |
| Philosophy and various form of government. |

Describe how aspects of this course (lectures, discussions, labs, assignments, etc.) contributed to your learning.

| Comments |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Classes consisted of discussions led by Professor Levine; these were great in discussing and unpacking the text into a more understandable format. |
| engaging and great lectures |
| Instructor feedback on papers greatly helped me improve my writing skills. |
| Readings were typically 30–40 pages, and discussions were generally pretty insightful/interesting. They definitely helped contextualize the texts and how they are responding to each other. |
| Lectures and discussion are important, its easy to do the short reading before class each week. Meeting with Prof. Levine (and revising your papers) is a great way to improve your papers. |
| The writing seminars made me rethink about how to approach my essays, specifically what I would look for in texts and in my notes before starting them. The lectures/discussions in class helped me understand the text better, but the question assignments were a notable help whenever I needed to find certain pieces of evidence or new topics to write for my essay structure. |
| only discussion |
| Discussions were great. Everyone brought their own interpretations of the text and their questions about the text to class, and Levine would try to understand everyone's points and synthesize them with other ideas in the class. Levine values everyone's opinions, which I really appreciate. |
| Lectures and readings. |

Please respond to the following:

| | Mean | Median | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|
| This course challenged me intellectually. | 4.45 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 9.09% | 36.36% | 54.55% |
| I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it. | 4.55 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 9.09% | 27.27% | 63.64% |
| I understood the standards for success on assignments. | 4.45 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 9.09% | 36.36% | 54.55% |
| Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments. | 4.64 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 36.36% | 63.64% |
| I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work. | 4.64 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 36.36% | 63.64% |
| My work was evaluated fairly. | 4.73 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 27.27% | 72.73% |
| I felt respected in this class. | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| Overall, this was an excellent course. | 4.82 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 18.18% | 81.82% |

Additional comments about the course:

| Comments |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Take this course if you can. Prof. Levine is one of the greatest professors I have had in a humanities class. You will be challenged slightly, but the course is more than fair, and anyone who is willing to put in the (reasonable) work expected can get an A. |
| N/A |
| Levine is great! Super chill and fun |

I would recommend this course to:

| | No | Yes |
|---------------------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Highly-motivated and well-prepared students | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| Anyone interested in the topic | 0.00% | 100.00% |

Thinking about your time in the class, what aspect of the instructor's teaching contributed most to your learning?

| Comments |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| In-class discussions, with some explanations and guidance from Professor Levine, were quite helpful in parsing the text. |
| Will Levine was a great professor who brought a lot of charisma and humor |
| Very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the course. |
| Levine was good at guiding discussions, especially because he frequently posed challenging questions that often forced us to think about the text, its assumptions, and its goals in a new light. Feedback on essays was generally useful, and he was pretty clear about what he was looking for in an essay, which made writing them much easier. It was even more useful because of his policy of allowing revisions for essays that score below an A-. Overall I highly recommend, truly a goated SOSC prof. |
| In class discussions and meeting one-on-one to revise and critique papers |
| The professor would provide helpful information when comparing the ideologies/ beliefs of the authors against one another, and when he explained the historical context that each text built upon. This provided some clarity into the meaning and intentions of the books we read. |
| When he gives mini-lectures |
| Levine was great, I liked how he listens to everyone. He also directs our attention to specific parts of the text, we often focus only on a few sentences for an entire class and how it illuminates bigger things about the text. Levine lectures quite a bit each class too in the middle of discussion to link ideas together. He's also super understanding and chill, and is quite helpful in office hours if you ask for help on specific essays/texts etc |
| As with every other SOSC class, you get out as much of the class as you put effort into it. |
| Love the instructor, he is very flexible and covers all the topics we want to talk about. |

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

| Comments |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Feedback on papers did take quite a long time to be returned; Professor Levine is very self-aware of this, though, and modifies his deadlines accordingly so that students don't have to bear the burden of delayed feedback. Still, seeing feedback sooner would be useful in writing future papers. |
| nothing |
| Perhaps add a bit more structure to the class discussion. Though the freeform discussion can be nice, I think it would be nice if we tried to (collectively) understand a specific set of topics by the end of each class. |
| N/A |
| Agenda setting doesn't feel super productive, since it's most a list of keywords and not a list of lines of inquiry. |
| Levine is very aware of this and it is not his fault, but he could be more organized and on top of giving feedback/replying to emails etc. |

The Instructor . . .

| | Mean | Median | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree | N/A |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|-------|
| Organized the course clearly. | 4.45 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 9.09% | 36.36% | 54.55% | 0.00% |
| Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding. | 4.80 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 18.18% | 72.73% | 9.09% |
| Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful. | 4.73 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 27.27% | 72.73% | 0.00% |
| Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course. | 4.64 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 36.36% | 63.64% | 0.00% |
| Challenged you to learn. | 4.73 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 27.27% | 72.73% | 0.00% |
| Helped you gain significant learning from the course content. | 4.64 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 36.36% | 63.64% | 0.00% |
| Was available and helpful outside of class. | 4.64 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 9.09% | 18.18% | 72.73% | 0.00% |
| Motivated you to think independently. | 4.91 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 9.09% | 90.91% | 0.00% |
| Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment. | 4.91 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 9.09% | 90.91% | 0.00% |
| Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning. | 4.73 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 27.27% | 72.73% | 0.00% |

Please include the name of the TA/CA/Intern you are evaluating. What aspects of the TA's teaching contributed most to your learning? What could the TA modify to help you learn more? Please include any additional feedback for the TA/CA/Intern.

| Comments |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Justin was very flexible and informative |
| Justin Smolin |
| Justin |
| Justin Smolin – He was fantastic. Great way to improve your writing is to sit down and meet with him, he is very available and always willing to do so. |
| Justin Smolin. This quarter, I very much appreciated the differing approaches about how we should prepare for writing as that made it easier for me to know what to write about and how to start a paper. Beyond doing more of that, I have no more recommendations. |

The TA/CA or Intern. . .

| | Mean | Median | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree | N/A |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|-------|
| Facilitated discussions that supported your learning. | 4.80 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 20.00% | 80.00% | 0.00% |
| Gave you useful feedback on your work. | 4.60 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 40.00% | 60.00% | 0.00% |
| Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class. | 4.80 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 20.00% | 80.00% | 0.00% |
| Challenged you to learn. | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% | 0.00% |
| Helped you succeed in the class. | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% | 0.00% |
| Was available and helpful outside of class. | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% | 0.00% |
| Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning. | 4.80 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 20.00% | 80.00% | 0.00% |

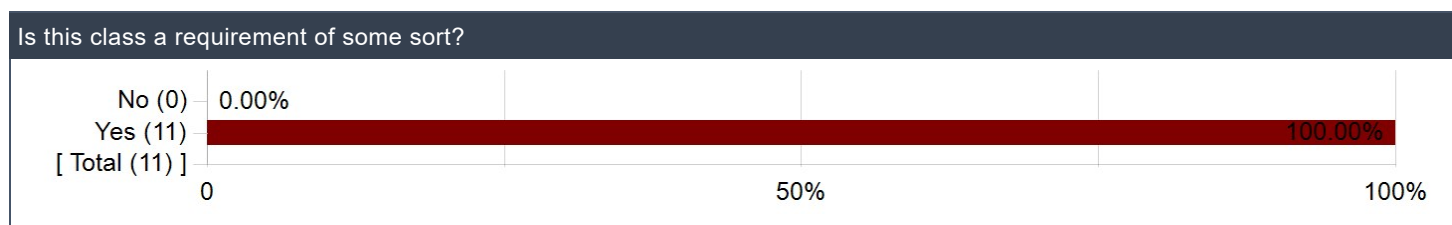
How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

| | Mean | Median | No Gain | A Little Gain | Moderate Gain | Good Gain | Great Gain | N/A |
|-----------------------|------|--------|---------|---------------|---------------|-----------|------------|--------|
| Laboratory Experience | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 20.00% | 80.00% |
| Field Trips | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 20.00% | 80.00% |
| Library Sessions | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 20.00% | 80.00% |
| Review Sessions | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 20.00% | 80.00% |
| Writing Seminars | 4.43 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 57.14% | 42.86% | 0.00% |

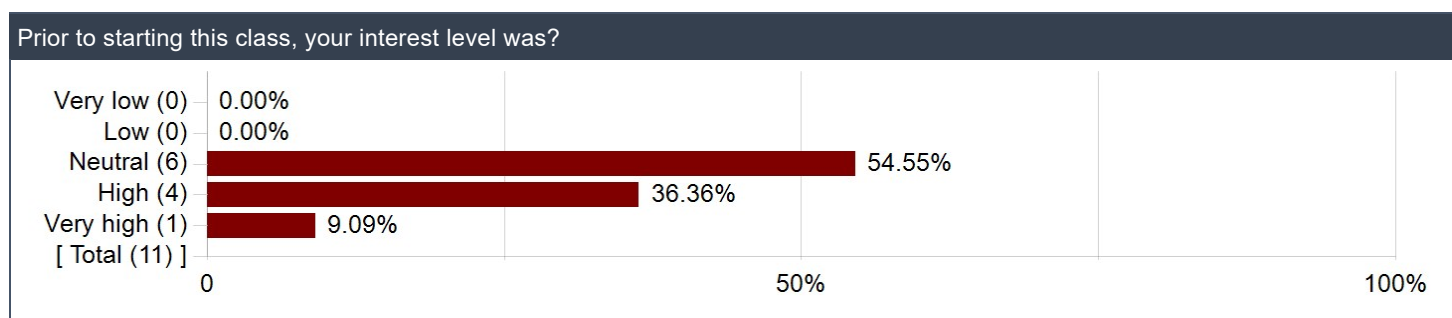
Other course elements not mentioned above:

| Comments |
|----------|
| N/A |

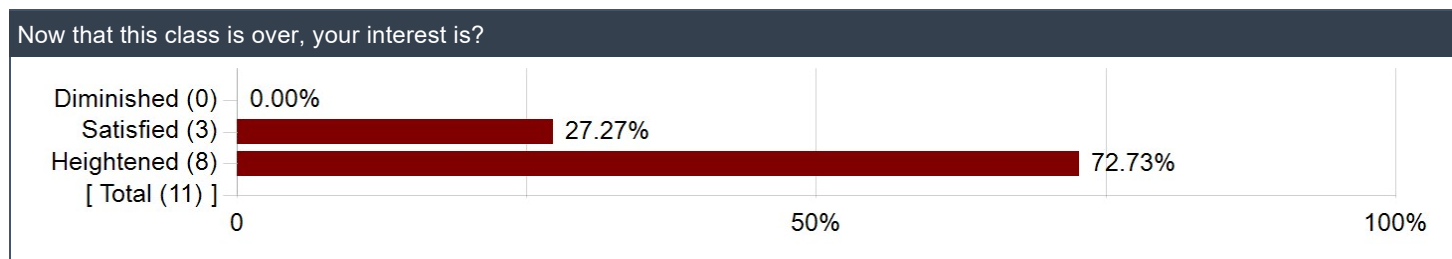
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



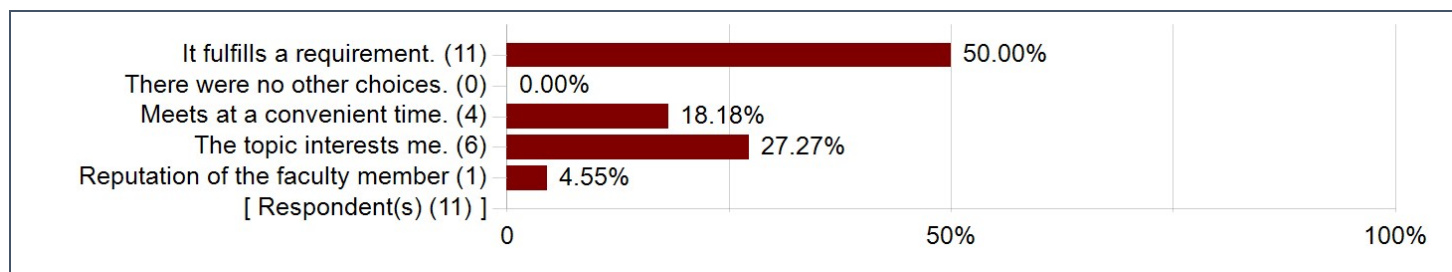
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



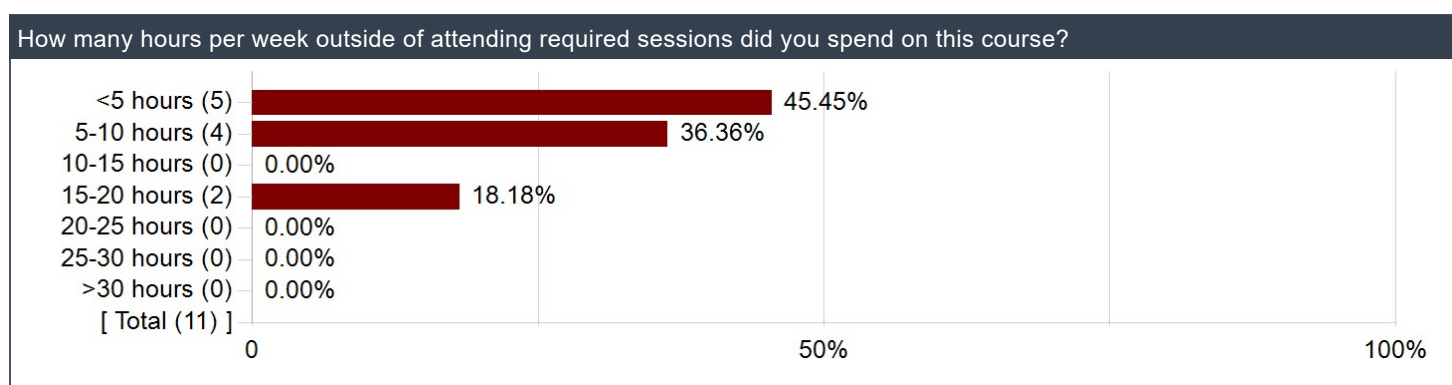
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



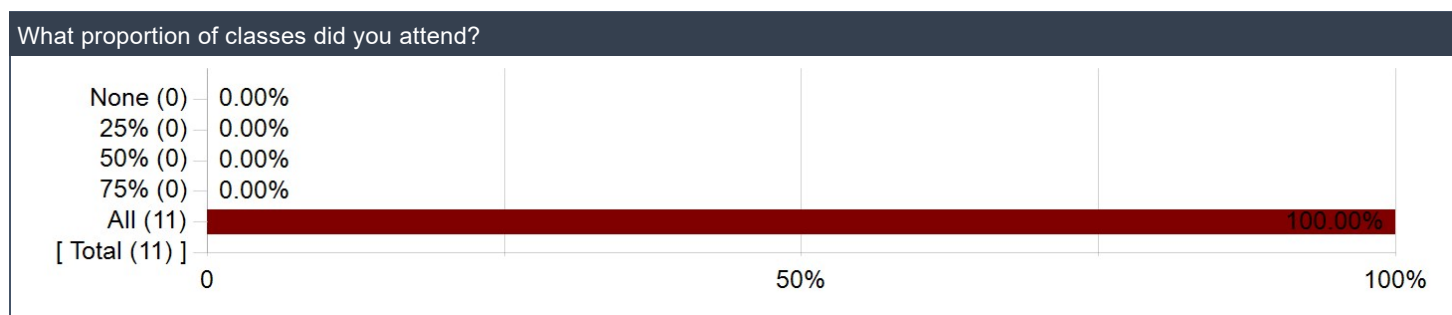
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



How many hours per week outside of attending required sessions did you spend on this course?



What proportion of classes did you attend?



Please comment on the level of difficulty of the course relative to your background and experience.

| Comments |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| This course is fairly doable, so long as you're willing to pay attention and participate. There are plenty of opportunities to rewrite papers for a higher grade, as well, so as long as you put in the time, it's smooth sailing. |
| I don't have any particular experience with political philosophy or this kind of essay writing (STEM major), but Prof. Levine's comments were direct and useful, and the revision policy is generous, so it shouldn't be too hard to get an A– or A. Participation is also almost half the grade, and you can get some extra credit for going the Classics lecture that happens every quarter. |
| Not very difficult. Just do the readings and short question assignments, write your essays on time, revise them (if necessary) and you will do fine. |
| As this was the second class of the SOSC sequence, it was somewhat easier as I knew how I should approach and be more direct in my essays. While I believe that I am a great reader, these texts were very complex at times, which made it difficult to understand the purpose of the author's writing before clarifying it in class. |
| Not difficult |