JWSC 12001 2, NEHC 22011 2, RLST 22011 2, HIST 11702 2 - Jewish Civilization II: Early Modern Period to 21st Century - Instructor(s): Larisa Reznik

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

Number Enrolled: **26**
Number of Responses: **12**

Report Comments

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

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

Comments
Jewish History
How to better evaluate and make use of historical sources (and to expand my understanding of what types of sources 'count', so to speak, as historical sources).   I also feel as though I gained some skills at reading sources in comparison to one another.
Enlightenment, the Jewish Question, Hasidism, Mass Migration, Zionism, Holocaust, 1948 War, Creation of the State of Israel, American Judaism
I learned a lot about contemporary Judaism, both in the context of Israel and the diaspora.
We read and discussed sources on Jewish civilization from the enlightenment to modern times. I learned a significant amount about the structure of European and Sephardic Jewish society and how it evolved over time.
I learned about the development of Jewish Civilization from around 1500 to the modern day. Specifically, much of the course focused on the development of Zionism, the emergence of Israel, and Jews today in Israel and in the diaspora. I learned how to read and discuss historical documents.
I got an excellent survey of Jewish communities and cultures in the past three centuries. I also strengthened my reading and oral exam skills.

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

Comments
Mostly from the assignments
I appreciated how discussions often helped me better understand sources which I may have initially found confusing / difficult to parse through on first read (or first watch).   The occasional office hour meeting was also pretty helpful if I was struggling even a little bit with certain aspects of an assignment (be it reading or writing).
great discussions
They helped me build an echoing chamber for the prof's confirmation bias.
Lectures and discussions were both really helpful
Weekly writing assignments helped us to prepare for discussions, and the discussions focused on reading contemporary sources.
Lectures and discussions were great. Dr. Reznik's lecture's are always interesting, and she does a great job facilitating insightful conversations about the material.
I loved the reflection papers, the oral exam, and Prof. Reznik's lecturing.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.18	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	63.64%	27.27%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.18	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	0.00%	45.45%	45.45%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.27	4.00	0.00%	9.09%	0.00%	45.45%	45.45%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.36	5.00	0.00%	9.09%	9.09%	18.18%	63.64%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.73	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27%	72.73%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.45	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	18.18%	63.64%
I felt respected in this class.	4.55	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	9.09%	72.73%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.18	5.00	9.09%	0.00%	9.09%	27.27%	54.55%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
The Professor (Larisa Reznik) and TA (Miriam Bilsker) were both reasonably accommodating when it came to participation and illness. At one point, I was sick such that it would have been a bad idea to expose myself to my classmates, and I was still able to participate in the discussion through Zoom in a way that expanded my understanding of the readings that week.
If you were hoping for a fair, unbiased view of modern Judaism and Israel, you've come to the wrong place. This class is an echoing chamber for the professor's feminist, Reconstructionist, anti–Israelist views of modern Judaism. If I had never been to Israel or knew anything about it, I would think, based purely on this course, that Israel is a militant hellscape filled with blood, death, and suffering. Well, I'm here now, and I can say with 100% sincerity that I feel far safer than I have ever felt in Chicago. The College should be ashamed that this is a course on offer; it's a course that takes the school's "academic freedom of inquiry," beats it to a pulp, kicks it into a corner, and tells it to shut up and stop crying. Shameful. The curriculum should be completely revised from the ground up, and the professors given a lesson on "freedom of inquiry."
This was a great class. Dr. Reznik is a great professor, who clearly knows a lot and is passionate about the material.
This is an absolutely excellent course with a kind and intellectually stimulating professor.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	9.09%	90.91%
Anyone interested in the topic	9.09%	90.91%

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

Comments
Here feedback on assignments
I think the instructor managed to strike a fairly useful balance between letting us / the class talk and work through some things and giving bits of lecture (as well as sometimes cutting in to clarify points of confusion or tension).
Professor Reznik was such a wonderful professor! She facilitated great discussions during class and was always happy to meet outside of class as well. She is very knowledgeable, kind, and patient. One of the best professors at UChicago!
The professor is extremely nice, and helpful in teaching what she wants you to learn. The issue is, she has an agenda for showing you the sources she wants you to see and painting a picture of an evil Israeli superconspiracy that is built on the evil lies of European colonists.
Professor Reznik had really interesting comments that directed class discussions in a good direction. The comments on my writing assignments were also very useful.
The mini lectures before discussion helped me to develop my understanding of Jewish civilization, and the discussions always led to interesting conversations.
Lectures and discussions were great!
Prof. Reznik's ability to digest what students were saying and frame it usefully for the rest of us.

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
not much
I am honestly not sure. Professor Reznik, keep doing what you're doing!
Include more sources that show exactly what Israel is dealing with, rather than simply those describing the reactions of the unfortunate casualties of war. Where was the Hamas Covenant? What we read were poems decrying the unfortunate state of constant war that Israel is always at odds with. We read sources decrying the "Nakba" (=catastrophe, Arabic) that was the founding of the state of Israel. It was not a fair look at the current state of international politics that Israel must deal with based on the historical circumstances from which it arose.
I think we could've moved through some of the sources a bit faster to get more breadth, but overall I really enjoyed the class.
Nothing.
Nothing.

The Instructor . . .

|	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.64	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.36%	63.64%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.45	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55%	45.45%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.18	5.00	9.09%	9.09%	0.00%	18.18%	63.64%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.18	5.00	0.00%	9.09%	18.18%	18.18%	54.55%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.18	4.00	0.00%	9.09%	9.09%	36.36%	45.45%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.18	5.00	0.00%	9.09%	18.18%	18.18%	54.55%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.64	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.36%	63.64%	0.00%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.27	5.00	9.09%	0.00%	0.00%	36.36%	54.55%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.27	5.00	9.09%	0.00%	9.09%	18.18%	63.64%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.27	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	36.36%	45.45%	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.

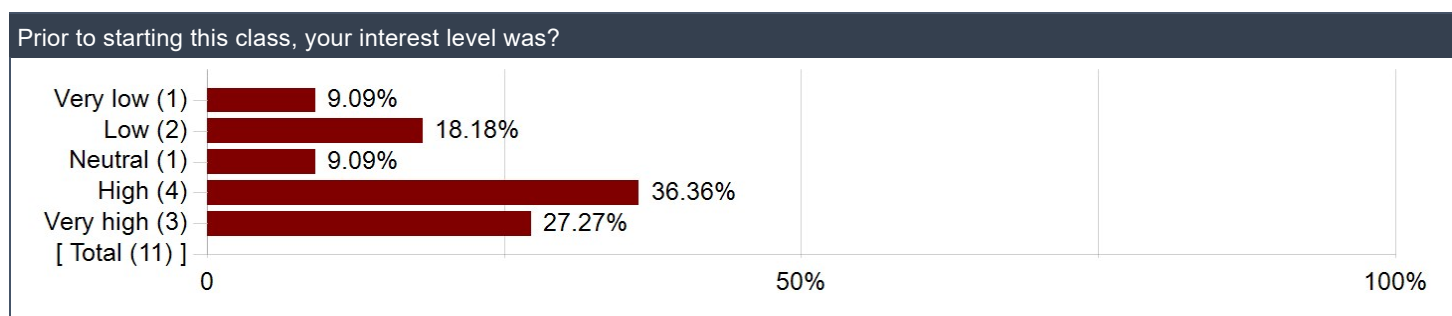| Comments |
|---|
| Miriam |
| Miriam |
| Miriam Bilsker. |
| Miriam was an amazing TA! She was very helpful during office hours and always offered great feedback on my work. She helped me to have a stronger understanding of the course material, and I really enjoyed talking with her about the readings. |
| Miriam |
| Miriam Bilsker should not be a TA. She said the most out–left–field, irrelevant statements that added absolutely nothing to class discussion or my understanding of the material; some of her comments were often factually incorrect. I don't know who she thinks she is, but baiting me into giving my views by point–blank asking my opinions on a controversial text during a final (oral) exam is simply unprofessional. |
| Miriam Bilzker |
| Miriam Bilsker |
| Miriam Bilsker |

The TA/CA or Intern. . .

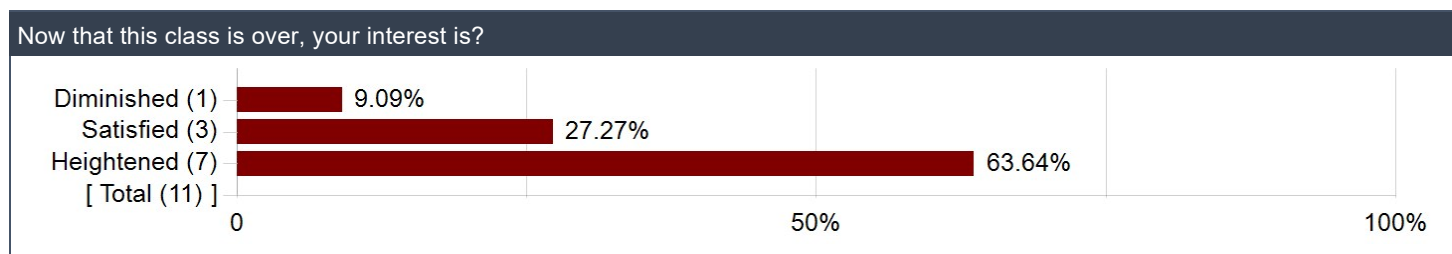|	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	3.56	4.00	10.00%	0.00%	20.00%	50.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	3.63	4.00	10.00%	0.00%	10.00%	50.00%	10.00%	20.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	3.56	4.00	10.00%	0.00%	30.00%	30.00%	20.00%	10.00%
Challenged you to learn.	3.56	4.00	10.00%	0.00%	20.00%	50.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	3.67	4.00	10.00%	0.00%	10.00%	60.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.38	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	30.00%	40.00%	20.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	3.44	4.00	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	50.00%	10.00%	10.00%

Is this class a requirement of some sort?
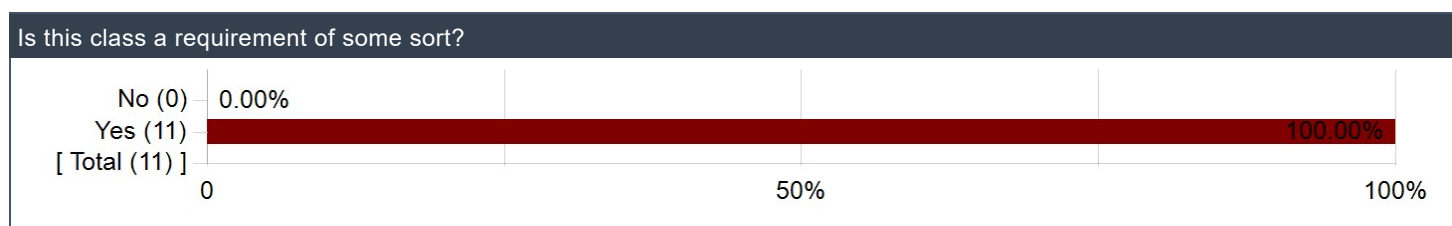
Is this class a requirement of some sort?

- No (0) — 0.00%
- Yes (11) — 100.00%
- [Total (11)]

Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?

Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?

- Very low (1) — 9.09%
- Low (2) — 18.18%
- Neutral (1) — 9.09%
- High (4) — 36.36%
- Very high (3) — 27.27%
- [Total (11)]

Now that this class is over, your interest is?

Now that this class is over, your interest is?

- Diminished (1) — 9.09%
- Satisfied (3) — 27.27%
- Heightened (7) — 63.64%
- [Total (11)]

Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)
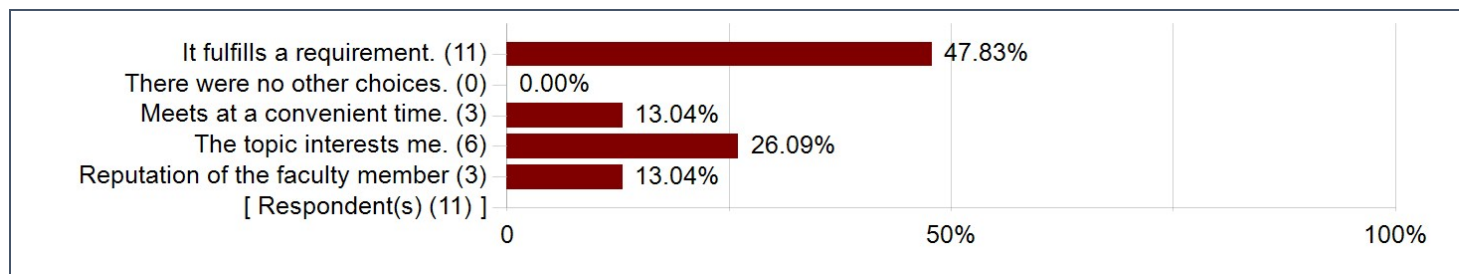
It fulfills a requirement. (11)	47.83%
There were no other choices. (0)	0.00%
Meets at a convenient time. (3)	13.04%
The topic interests me. (6)	26.09%
Reputation of the faculty member (3)	13.04%
[Respondent(s) (11)]	

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

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<5 hours (2)	18.18%
5-10 hours (8)	72.73%
10-15 hours (1)	9.09%
15-20 hours (0)	0.00%
20-25 hours (0)	0.00%
25-30 hours (0)	0.00%
>30 hours (0)	0.00%
[Total (11)]	

What proportion of classes did you attend?

What proportion of classes did you attend?

None (0)	0.00%
25% (0)	0.00%
50% (0)	0.00%
75% (1)	9.09%
All (10)	90.91%
[Total (11)]	
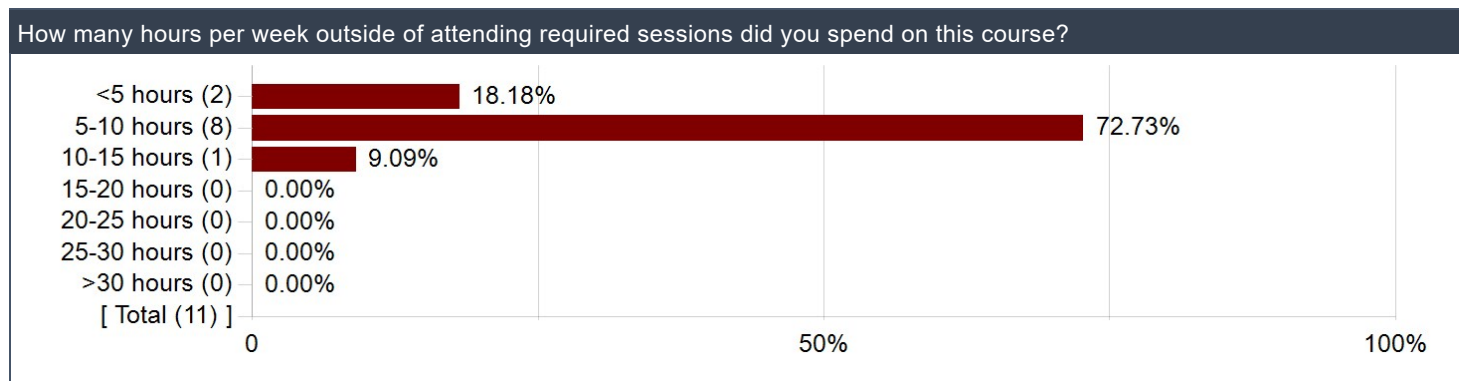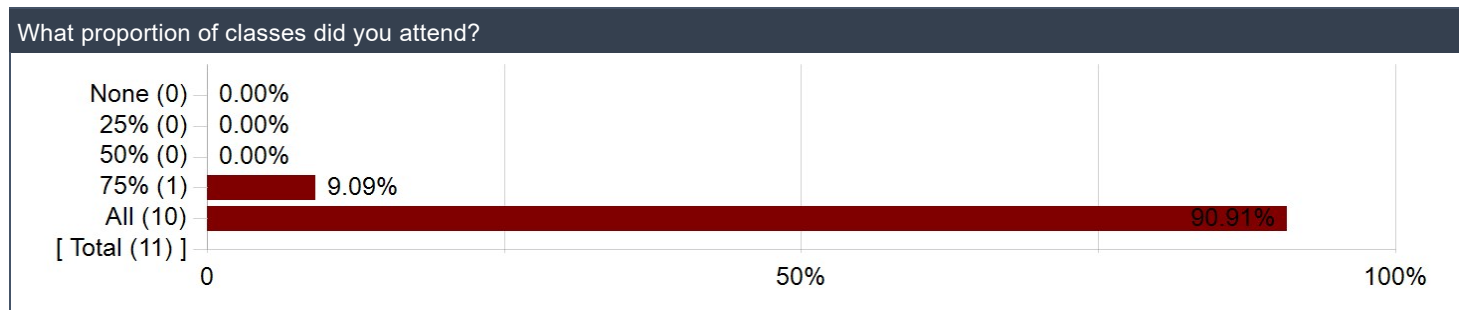
Please comment on the level of difficulty of the course relative to your background and experience.

Comments
Pretty hard honestly, it is a lot of work
reasonably difficult
No thanks.
The class was not particularly difficult
The class doesn't require a significant amount of time, but could be difficult to someone without some prior knowledge
I didn't find this class to be terribly difficult, but it also wasn't terribly easy. The readings were substantially, and the work was interesting.
As a humanities major, it was not difficult but was still intellectually stimulating.