HUMA 11500 3 - Philosophical Perspectives I - Instructor(s): Benjamin Callard

Project Title: **College Course Feedback - Autumn 2023**

Number Enrolled: **18**
Number of Responses: **9**

Report Comments

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

Creation Date: **Friday, February 2, 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 think critically about ideas and arguments.
Numerous philosophical concepts by both Ancient Greek and more modern philosophers. Additionally, how to reconstruct arguments, and how to make a philosophical argument.
How to breakdown Philosophical arguments. Throughout the course you will need to look at what assumptions and reasonings philosophers build their claims on, aswell as how best to attack those areas.
I learned how to think about philosophical topics and how to formulate situational examples that allow us to move toward conclusions.
Learned about principles of classical Greek philosophy, and how to reconstruct and deconstruct arguments and think logically.
How to wrestle with thorny, difficult questions; how to craft coherent and strong arguments; how to *think* philosophically and speak up about your beliefs in class
I learned to critically evaluate concepts in a way I never had before. Often our initial perceptions do not tell the full story and we must look far deeper to understand something such as "good".
I learned to question some of the things we take for granted, like moral values (right and wrong), death, friendship, etc.

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

Comments
The lectures were useful for learning the content. Personally, I found writing essays to be the most helpful since I need to think very critically about one or two ideas.
The discussions in each class were very helpful in explaining and exploring philosophical concepts, even though I often was a step behind.
The discussions were very helpful in breaking down the arguments presented in the readings. At the beginning of every class, Professor Callarad presents one of the arguments in the readings. For the remainder of the class, students attempt to find holds in the argument and Professor Callarad tries to defend it. This is very helpful when working on the essays and thinking about how the writer may respond to an objection you raise.
The lectures were very good and always topical. The readings were always manageable. The papers were one of the most helpful things in my learning since they were in a different style than I am used to.
The discussions were very engaging and many of the discussion points were my main takeaways from the course.
Discussions were phenomenal—I learned so much from my peers and Prof. Callard did a great job of keeping the conversation moving without taking too much control or speaking too much. The writing seminars were a great chance to stress–test my initial arguments for essays and see if they held up under the scrutiny of my peers. I learned a lot from my writing TA about the best way to craft an argument.
I did not fully understand how the discussion would help with my paper writing at the beginning of the quarter, but as time went on, I realized that I was becoming proficient in reasoning and evaluating a concept in ways I never had before. This allowed me to be able to start constructing better and better arguments in my papers, in my own unique way.
The discussions are the best part of the course because of Ben Callard's talent for making philosophy interesting. The readings were more of a background/context for discussion rather than the focus, because we mostly discussed the ideas and how they apply to our lives instead of the actual text. The three essays prompted me to develop my skills in logical reasoning and acknowledging potential counterarguments.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.63	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	37.50%	62.50%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	12.50%	12.50%	37.50%	37.50%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	3.75	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	37.50%	50.00%	12.50%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.13	4.50	0.00%	12.50%	12.50%	25.00%	50.00%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.25	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	50.00%	37.50%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.88	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%
I felt respected in this class.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.63	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	12.50%	75.00%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
It was just quite fantastic.

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
Clarifying the reading and pushing back/arguing again Ben.
Example situations were helpful in fleshing out ideas.
Professor Callards general approach to the discussion portion of the class is very good. It allows you to present your arguments and think about how they will be challenged.
The lectures were the most important aspect of my instructor's teaching that contributed to my learning. He challenged us to think of responses to everything he said.
Professor Callard's discussion prompts and the overall structure of the discussion sections were very helpful in engaging with the course.
Prof. Callard did an excellent job managing discussions and throwing in the right questions to spur discussion. I had so many mind–blowing moments during this class (which was my first philosophy class), mostly through Prof. Callard's initial lecutres and points.
His constant pressure for us to dive deeper and deeper into the arguments we were making.
Ben Callard's discussions are phenomenal because he gets you to actually think about what you're saying. He seems to genuinely consider/address your opinion and offers views that both agree and disagree with you. If you run out of class time to say something, he's available via email to discuss ideas.

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Have a more structured class that focuses more on the readings. It feels like we don't go over the readings as much as we should and the lack of focus makes it difficult to fully understand what we need to be learning.
More information on what a Philosophical Essay should look like. As someone who have never written a philosophical essay before, figuring out the structure of my paper was very difficult initially.
Nothing.
I'm not sure what the point of the readings are, since Prof. Callard will (helpfully) summarize the reading before each discussion. Our discussions were drawn less from the text of the argument and more from our own brains. I think Prof. Callard could ground more of the discussions in the text, which would incentivize more students to do the reading (which, it should be said, was very reasonable—not too long at all). But these are minor quibbles—overall I really, really enjoyed the class.
Not too much.
Not sure, Ben seems to be doing everything right.

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	50.00%	25.00%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.50	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	37.50%	37.50%	25.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.88	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	25.00%	62.50%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.38	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	12.50%	62.50%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	25.00%	62.50%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.43	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	37.50%	12.50%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.50	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.50	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.63	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	37.50%	62.50%	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
Nick Nurre. Nick brought up interesting topics and ways of thinking during class. During the writing seminars, he was critical of our writing and pushed us to create a plan with a concrete foundation. Also, Nick was very responsive over email.
Nick Nurre
Nick Nurre
Nick Nurre
Nick Nurre was the writing specialist for my section. He helped me develop my ideas for the essays in the right direction during the writing seminars, and he gave detailed feedback on the essay he graded.

The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.40	5.00	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%	0.00%	80.00%	0.00%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	4.20	5.00	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%	20.00%	60.00%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	3.80	4.00	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%	60.00%	20.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.40	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	20.00%	60.00%	0.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	4.20	5.00	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%	20.00%	60.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.60	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%	80.00%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.20	5.00	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%	20.00%	60.00%	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	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Field Trips	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Library Sessions	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Review Sessions	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Writing Seminars	3.88	4.00	0.00%	12.50%	12.50%	50.00%	25.00%	0.00%

Is this class a requirement of some sort?

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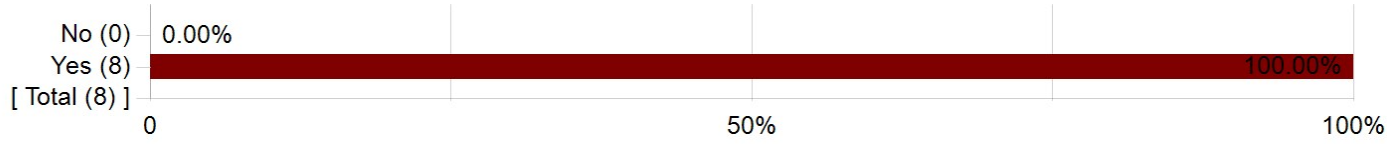

Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?

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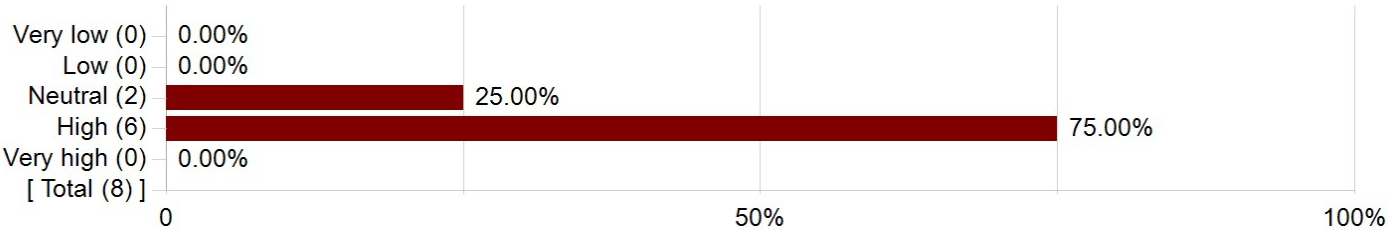
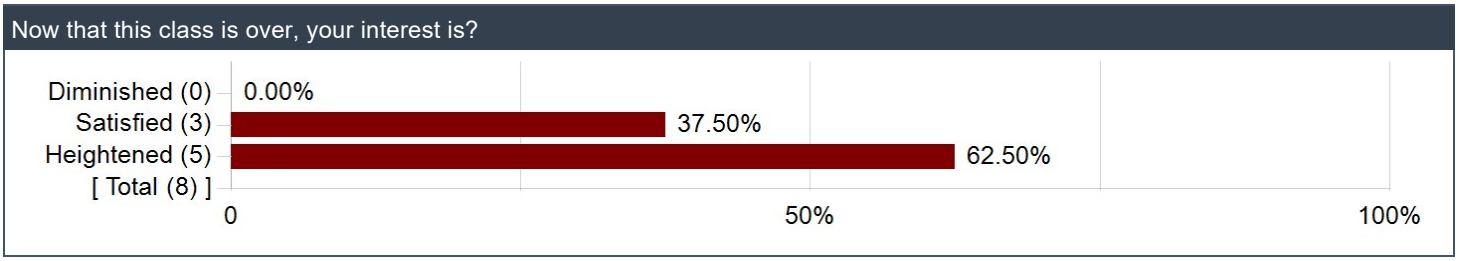
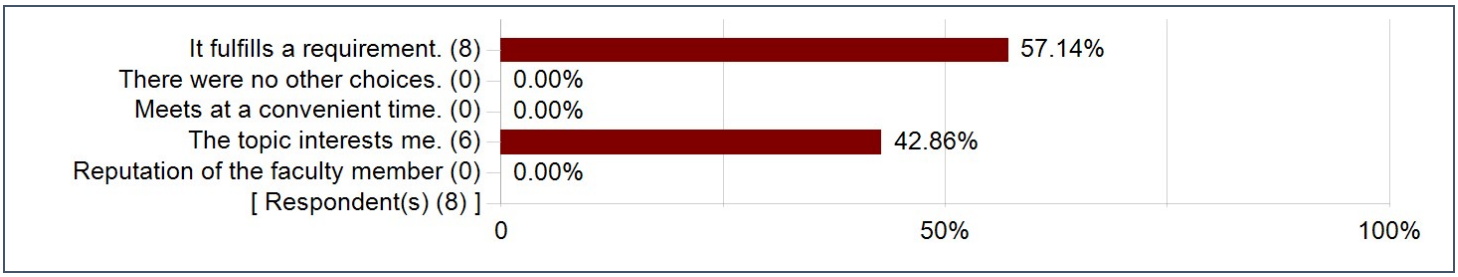


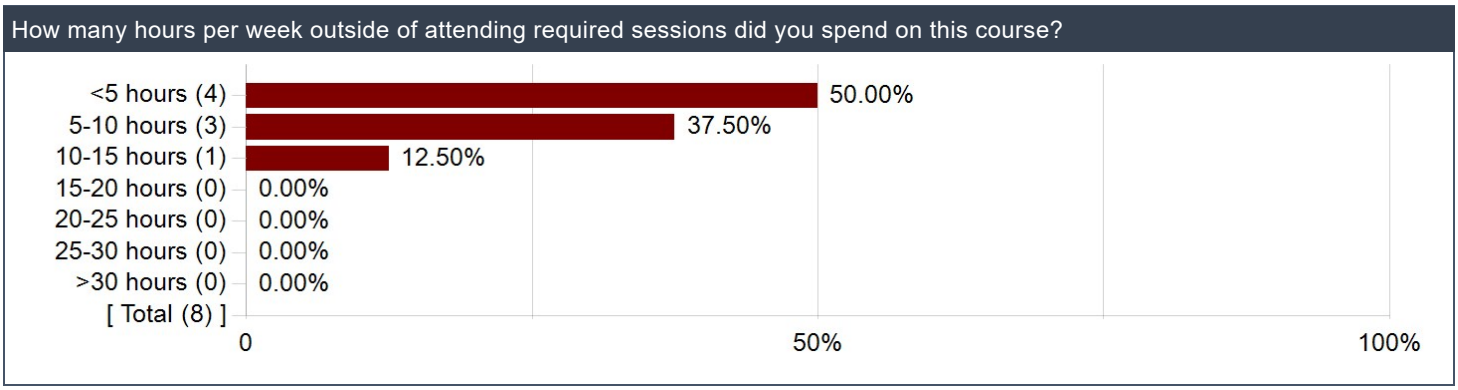
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



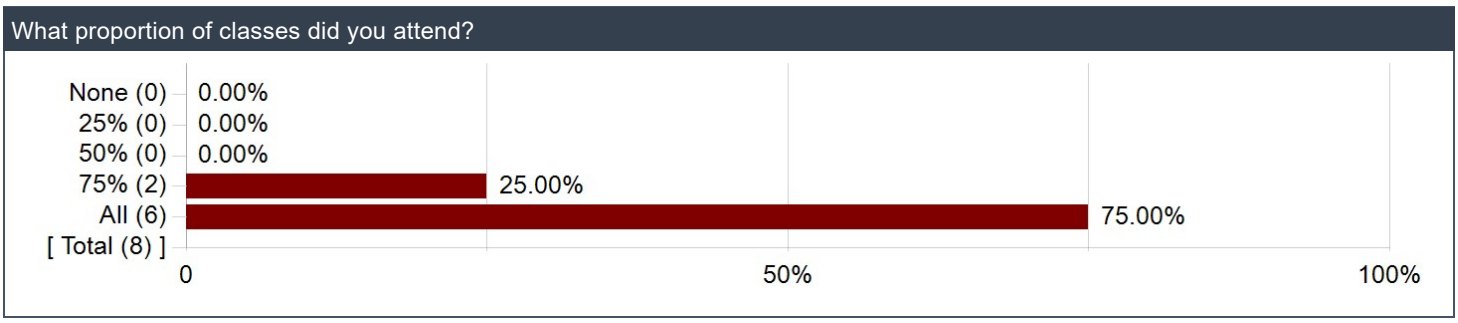
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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
No experience. The expectations for papers aren't clear. You just need to get feedback on one or two in order to grasp expectations. The workload is very manageable, but doing very well on essays (coming from a stem person) is challenging.
Fairly difficult. It's not too reading heavy, not too writing heavy, but very abstract, which makes it more challenging.
Not bad, reading amount is very manageable
I came in with a comparatively rigorous background in writing and reading from English classes, but nothing in philosophy. This course is very different from a traditional English class, so I'm not sure how much of an advantage my background may have given me. Regardless, I found the course fairly easy, with a very low workload.
It was a very good introductory course and we challenging but not overly difficult.
This course's difficulty was relatively consistent with what I experienced in honors high school English.