



SOSC 18400 4 - Democracy: Equality, Liberty, and the Dilemmas of Self-Government I - Instructor(s): Giovanni Giorgini

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

Number Enrolled: **18**

Number of Responses: **14**

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 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I learned about what ancient democracy looked like in Athens and Rome and how are the basis for later democracies such as Florence and even contemporary democracies. |
| I learned about the foundations of where the idea of and the values of self-rule come from while learning the intricacies of what makes a tyrant and what the four main types of government (monarchy, oligarchy, democracy, and republic/mixed form of government). |
| Knowledge on the history of democracy, as well as how different societies throughout history have viewed democracy and other systems of government. |
| N/A |
| Reading and writing skills |
| The founding of democracy. What democracy means and how it develops. Relationship between the people and government. |
| The key characteristics of Athenian democracy and the mechanisms of Roman republicanism; the Florentine republic is discussed briefly towards the end. |
| Democracy elements, Athenian Democracy, Florence, Venice |
| Overall, I learned about the founding, history, and political philosophy behind Athenian democracy, the Roman Republic, and the Florentine Commune. I learned about the various systems of checks and balances that comprised these states. I learned that a tyrant was initially just a word that described a leader that gained their power unconstitutionally and not through a normal royal lineage. It didn't necessarily mean a government that overly harsh or that ruled poorly. However, it turned pejorative through various political movements. I learning about the interesting history of various political words including politia, demos, demagogue, and dictator. I learned that Sparta had 2 kings and that the Roman Republic had 2 consuls. I learned that Machiavelli did not only stand for cunning and morally ambiguous political maneuvers. |
| Ancient greek democracy, the roman republic, and florentine republic during Renaissance |
| I learned how to do synthesis arguments. |
| At least in the way it was taught, this class is a history class about democracy. It was a really good look at what democracy really means, how it can be created and protected, and how it falls. We also talked a lot about whether it's really the best form of government. |

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

| Comments |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The readings were insightful and had a lot of information that helped with essays. Also, presentations were helpful because they made the texts (that were sometimes pretty complicated) more succinct and easier to grasp. Lectures were interesting too, but they kind of reiterated the readings. |
| Professor Giorgini's lectures/discussions were the most helpful. The readings were interesting, but he definitely helped put them into their historical contexts. |
| Discussions were helpful in understanding the text. Lectures by the professor helped fill in gaps in understanding. Reading was essential to success in this course. |
| N/A |
| Long long lectures from a very intelligent individual |
| The discussions were helpful and Prof. Giorgini had very interesting points and comments to make. |
| The discussions with Professor Giorgini were immensely helpful in understanding dense material. |
| Discussions were awesome |
| The discussion in class were very helpful. Prof. Giorgini explained concepts very well and was able to identify the most important information to take forward. He was very knowledgeable about history and political philosophy. It was also helpful that he wrote key concepts on the board. It was also helpful that other students presented. |
| discussions were so helpful in talking about the material |
| The writing seminars were useful for crafting arguments |
| The discussions weren't extremely helpful; I think the best part of the class was listening to Giorgini talk, which was most of class, so that's good. :) |

Please respond to the following:

| | Mean | Median | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|
| This course challenged me intellectually. | 4.31 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 69.23% | 30.77% |
| I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it. | 4.31 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 69.23% | 30.77% |
| I understood the standards for success on assignments. | 4.23 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 7.69% | 7.69% | 38.46% | 46.15% |
| Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments. | 4.38 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 61.54% | 38.46% |
| I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work. | 4.38 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 7.69% | 46.15% | 46.15% |
| My work was evaluated fairly. | 4.54 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 46.15% | 53.85% |
| I felt respected in this class. | 4.62 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 38.46% | 61.54% |
| Overall, this was an excellent course. | 4.46 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 53.85% | 46.15% |

Additional comments about the course:

| Comments |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| N/A |
| Prof. Giorgini was great!!! He was incredibly nice and knew a lot about the topics. He was very happy to answer as many questions as we had and he really enjoyed sharing his knowledge . |
| He is ana amzing professor! Truly cares about your thoughts and opinions! Would have loved to have him again. |
| Take this class. Prof. Giorgini is great. |

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 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| always willing to answer student questions, and answered very clearly |
| Dr. Giorgini's lectures were really interesting. He's from Italy so he had a lot to say about the Roman Republic and Florence. He also is super knowledgeable about Ancient Greek Democratic thought, so his lectures were always surprising and fun to listen to. |
| His lectures gave the historical contexts of the readings that made the philosophy behind the readings clearer. |
| Instructor was extremely knowledgeable in subject area. |
| N/A |
| He was so knowledgeable we could literally ask anything |
| The discussions were very helpful in understanding the readings and the importance of them. |
| Professor Giorgini's willingness to answer questions and open-minded nature in discussions made the complex topic of political thought much less daunting. He actively encourages students to produce original ideas and celebrates creativity over a necessarily "correct" opinion. |
| Discussions and his explanations |
| When he wrote key terms, figures, dates, or politicians on the board and explained them, it was very helpful. His deliberate way of speaking aided my learning. I felt that I could take notes and pay attention. He was also very nice, approachable, and flexible. |
| Professor Giorgini would give us a lot of context about the history and time period with which our readings took place and he would raise some very interesting points when discussing the topics. |
| The presentations were insightful. |
| Giorgini draws on a VAST bank of knowledge, and he's intimately acquainted with the sources. On the first day of class, he described himself as a "world expert on tyranny," so having him teach a class about democracy was really unique. When he talks, take notes. |

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

| Comments |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I think having rubrics for essays and presentations would be helpful. I felt like I went into the 7–10 page assignment with very little idea about what was expected of me which was difficult because I had never written a Sosc paper before. |
| I think he could give more chances for the conversation to open to discussion. Class time felt like a q-and-a over the readings. |
| The instructor could clarify what he means by some of the things he says in his lectures and discussions. |
| N/A |
| being more available outside of class |
| N/A |
| Nothing. |
| nothing. absolutely wonderful |
| I feel like he could write more on the board or provide us with slides that distill some of the long readings down to the most important concepts and ideas. However, overall, I thought he did a great job. |
| nothing he was great |
| More clarification on the readings would help. |
| Our discussions did tend to devolve into Q and A sessions with Giorgini, which meant we didn't benefit as much from each other beyond the questions we asked him. Honestly though, I enjoyed that, because it meant that participation wasn't absolutely necessary. |
| Also, don't expect to get any of your grades back before the end of the quarter. We only had three grades all quarter, two finals and one ten-minute presentation. I got my first essay grade back right before thanksgiving, having turned it in two or three weeks earlier. I have yet to get a grade back for the presentation I did (with a friend btw) a few weeks before thanksgiving, and I'm home for winter break now. |

The Instructor . . .

| | Mean | Median | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree | N/A |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|-------|
| Organized the course clearly. | 4.23 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 7.69% | 61.54% | 30.77% | 0.00% |
| Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding. | 4.54 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 46.15% | 53.85% | 0.00% |
| Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful. | 4.08 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 15.38% | 7.69% | 30.77% | 46.15% | 0.00% |
| Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course. | 4.62 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 38.46% | 61.54% | 0.00% |
| Challenged you to learn. | 4.62 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 38.46% | 61.54% | 0.00% |
| Helped you gain significant learning from the course content. | 4.46 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 53.85% | 46.15% | 0.00% |
| Was available and helpful outside of class. | 3.92 | 4.00 | 7.69% | 7.69% | 7.69% | 30.77% | 38.46% | 7.69% |
| 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. | 4.31 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 7.69% | 0.00% | 46.15% | 46.15% | 0.00% |
| Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning. | 4.54 | 5.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 46.15% | 53.85% | 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 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Elena Schafer. There were two writing seminars both weren't that helpful in preparation for the essays. The activities weren't very beneficial or clearly applicable to the writing we were doing for the essay. |
| Elena Schafer |
| Elena Schafer was really helpful with editing the two papers we wrote for the quarter. She was really flexible about meeting times and gave great advice. I don't remember much from the writing seminars though... |

The TA/CA or Intern. . .

| | Mean | Median | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree | N/A |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|---------|----------------|--------|
| Facilitated discussions that supported your learning. | 4.00 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 75.00% | 0.00% | 25.00% |
| Gave you useful feedback on your work. | 4.00 | 4.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 100.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class. | 3.33 | 3.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 50.00% | 25.00% | 0.00% | 25.00% |
| Challenged you to learn. | 3.33 | 3.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 50.00% | 25.00% | 0.00% | 25.00% |
| Helped you succeed in the class. | 3.50 | 3.50 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 50.00% | 50.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Was available and helpful outside of class. | 4.50 | 4.50 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 50.00% | 50.00% | 0.00% |
| Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning. | 3.25 | 3.00 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 75.00% | 25.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

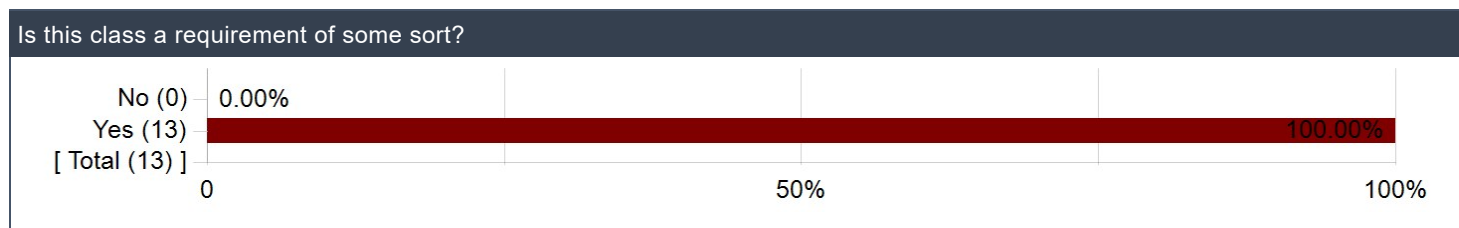
How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

| | 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 | 3.25 | 3.00 | 0.00% | 25.00% | 50.00% | 0.00% | 25.00% | 0.00% |

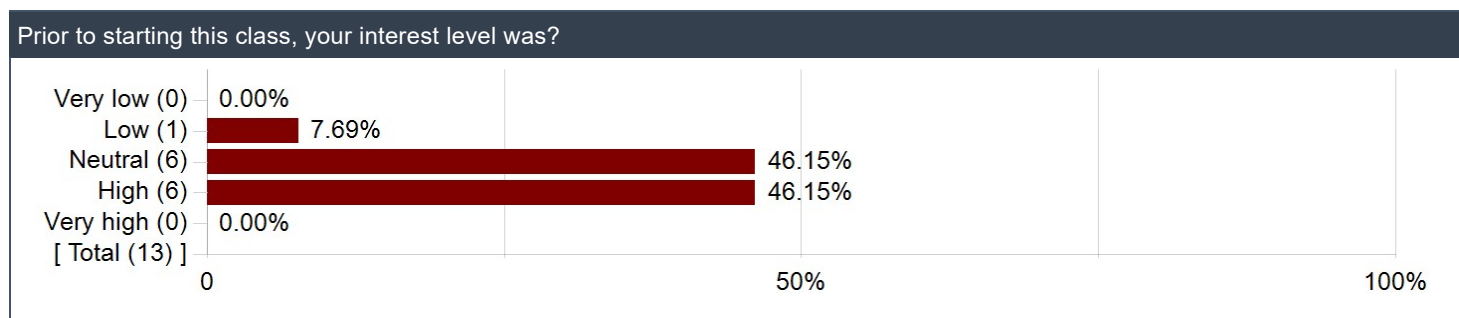
Other course elements not mentioned above:

| Comments |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The writing seminars were not super helpful, but the writing specialist was. She made herself available and was definitely one of the main reasons I did well on my essay. |

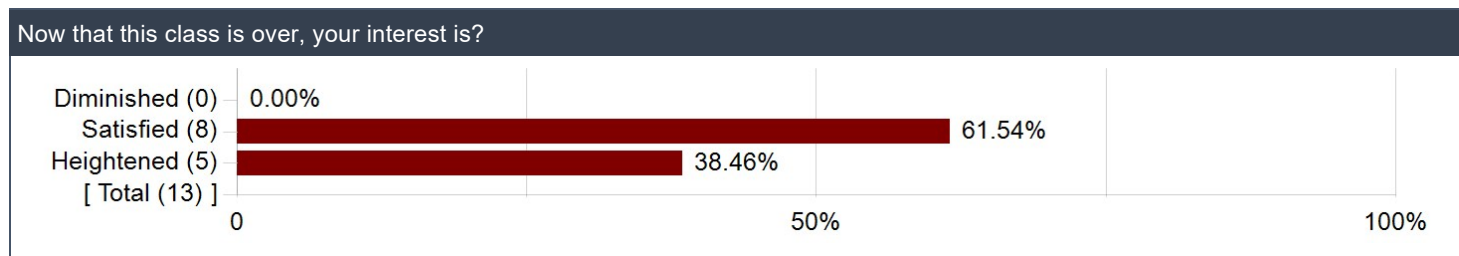
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



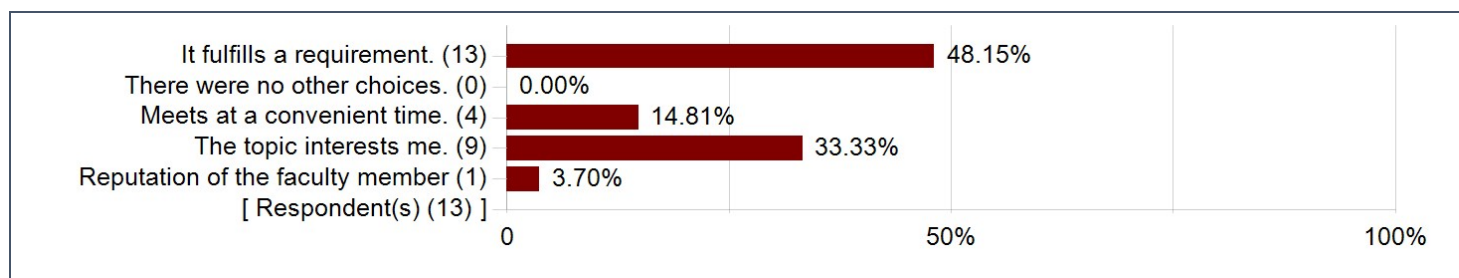
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



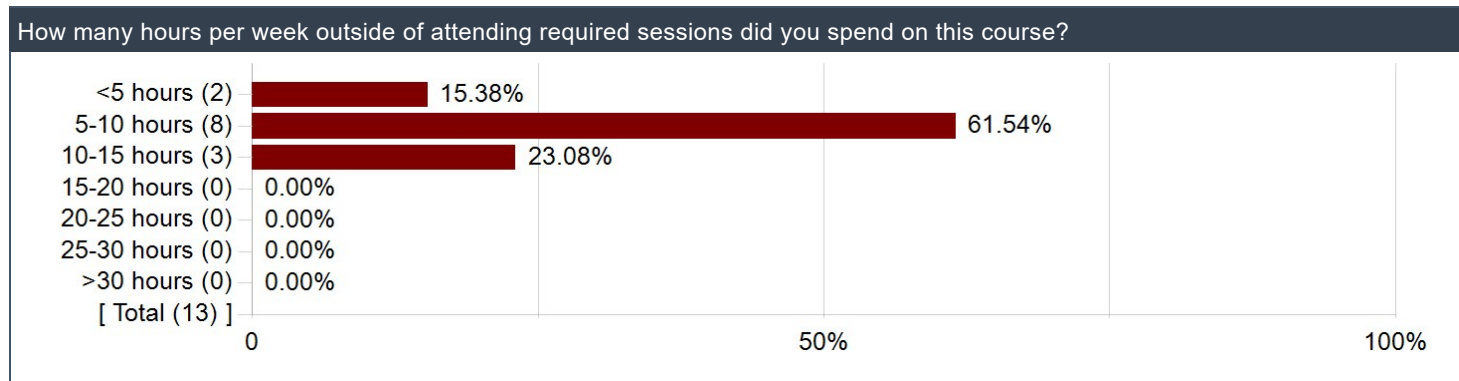
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



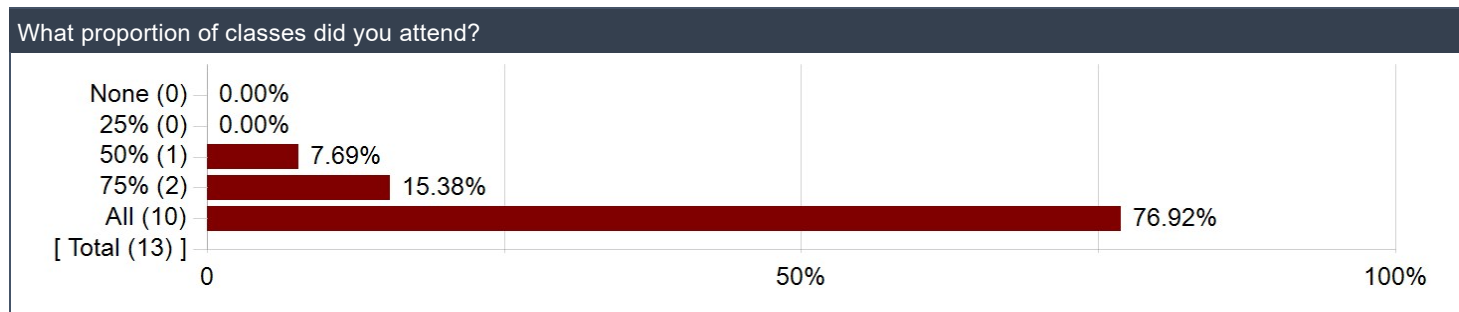
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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 class is very straight forward, and you don't need too much prior knowledge. However, there are a lot of references to ancient history which went completely over my head because I couldn't remember certain aspects about the Peloponnesian war or some other historical event. The class isn't super demanding, it's just a lot of reading. The only hard part is the two 7–10–page papers, but they don't need to be complicated which is nice. |
| There is a lot of reading – not necessarily difficult, but it was just a high volume |
| Appropriate difficulty for anyone knew to this field. Having knowledge and interest in classical civilizations very helpful. |
| N/A |
| This was a information dense course |
| You don't need to know a lot about politics or democracy going into the class. Just make sure to do the readings. |
| This course can present challenging topics, but it is not impossible. You should be prepared to attend classes with your own questions about the text. The best advice I can give for this course is to be brave in asking questions: there is no shame in not understanding what these potentially archaic authors are stating. You will gain so much more from this course if you are willing to interrogate your professors with questions rooted in readings and concepts. |
| It was not too hard. There was 2 essays and a presentation. |
| This class was a good bit of reading, and the reading was more important for having source material to draw on for your essays than it ws for being able to participate in class. Overall, if you can put together good essays and presentations and are interested in the subject, it's not a challenging class. |