



# SOSC 18500 2 - Democracy: Equality, Liberty, and the Dilemmas of Self-Government II - Instructor(s): Andrew Brandel

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

Number Enrolled: **18**

Number of Responses: **10**

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## 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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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
it helped me think critically about the important revolutions and concerns of the early modern and modern period
Some of the most important things I learned were about how we define the mechanisms of our society, how to follow and/or build the logic of an argument, and how democracy works and evolves through different contexts.
I now have in-depth knowledge of multiple revolutions, including the Haitian Revolution, Glorious Revolution, American, French, Russian, Weimar Republic, and India, and their democratic (or non-democratic) natures.
This class facilitated highly interesting and insightful debates on the ideas of democracy in revolutions throughout history and through many different power dynamics. I also greatly improved my analytical, argumentative, and writing skills through class debates and essays on the "democratic" nature of revolutions.
How to make an effective argument and formulate better ideas/thoughts
We learned how to evaluate primary sources in regards to their democratic character
Nothing is actually a democracy, how to determine the fault line sinea. government based on historical examples/within historical examples, how to dissect primary sources to draw conclusions about their contemporary democracies
I learned a lot more about the fundamental ideas and thought processes behind the French, American, and Haitian Revolution. Although I was somewhat familiar with these revolutions prior to taking this course, I had never delved into the primary sources in the way we did throughout the quarter.
All different types of democratic revolutions and how they came about
Improved writing skills, working on library research, and, of course, read many important authors. Most interesting were our discussions on the Glorious Revolution, Hobbes and Locke, the Haitian Revolution, and Weimar Germany. I definitely got better at reading complicated texts for their main ideas.

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

Comments
discussions were interesting and funny, and i really enjoyed the professor's style
The class discussions are a majority of the curriculum, and they stimulate open participation as well as the ability to challenge and/or expand ideas. In other words, the professor encourages students to bring their perspective to the conversation, but he also questions their logic. This helped me to understand how to speak about and defend my ideas with more clarity.
The lectures helped me understand what I was reading in the primary documents. My professor's explanation of what we had read and the context he would give contributed to my learning.
Mainly class discussions, very insightful/rewarding readings
The discussion were very supportive of the readings we did.
the classes are AWESOME I look forward to them every time. He's hilariously social media fluent and cracks jokes that are still somehow academic, and is super understanding and available to talk outside of class (about assignments or about twitter happenings of the day). He's great. I'll be sad when this class ends in the spring ad I didn't think I even would like it. Now I'm thinking I'm not meant to major in a STEM thing and I should be doing more of this.
Discussions were the most helpful for my learning. Some of the texts are dense, and Brandel does a good job of breaking them down in class.
Discussions made me understand the material better
The in-class discussions were the core component of the course and helped us learn how to think about these authors and their ideas more clearly. Dr. Brandel also provided us with much-needed historical context. The assignments, one essay and one project, were both alright. We could have used a little more clarification on the final project, but researching a revolution was fun nonetheless.

## Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.60	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	40.00%	60.00%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.70	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	30.00%	70.00%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.30	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	70.00%	30.00%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.70	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	30.00%	70.00%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.40	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	40.00%	50.00%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.60	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	40.00%	60.00%
I felt respected in this class.	4.90	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	90.00%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

## Additional comments about the course:

Comments
great prof
I cannot stress enough how enlightening and exciting this course is. Even though I have been really challenged by it, it is my favorite course so far. There's something in it for everyone.
Dr. Brandel was a great professor. I felt he fostered a great environment for discussion within our cohort.

## 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
he was really funny and engaging and made me want to go to class
The context given to everything that was happening in the revolution we were looking at contributed to my learning.
Professor Brandel made a big difference in my understanding of different aspects of revolutions when he would contextualize the different foreign powers and dynamics at play in each situation. This allowed me to better understand why and to what purpose these works were created.
Personability combined with immense knowledgeability.
He was very willing to answer questions and made sure we understood the material.
Guided class discussions
In-class discussions.
Topic introductions
Dr. Brandel's balance between encouraging discussion and providing context when needed was well done.

## What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
idk, u were rly good
Nothing. Outstanding proffessor who cares about making his students better members of society.
The discussions on Canvas were pretty much busy work, I feel like they took away from my learning personally and we didn't talk about them in class either so idk. I preferred first quarter when that wasn't a thing.
N/A
Introducing the topic prior to the readings
Giving an overview of the main points would be great before we dive into the details.

## The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.80	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	80.00%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	80.00%	20.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.90	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	90.00%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.80	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	80.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	30.00%	60.00%	0.00%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.80	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	80.00%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.90	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	90.00%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	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
Emma Adler – The help given on essays in the workshop was helpful.
Emma Adler
Emma Adler – Did not know requirements of the course and was unable to answer basic questions. Hosted mandatory workshops in which we discussed elementary–school level thesis formulation. Actively a poor use of our collective time and only served to enhance confusion and frustration. She is very nice though, we more had an issue with the Writing Advisor program as a whole rather than any individual participating in it.

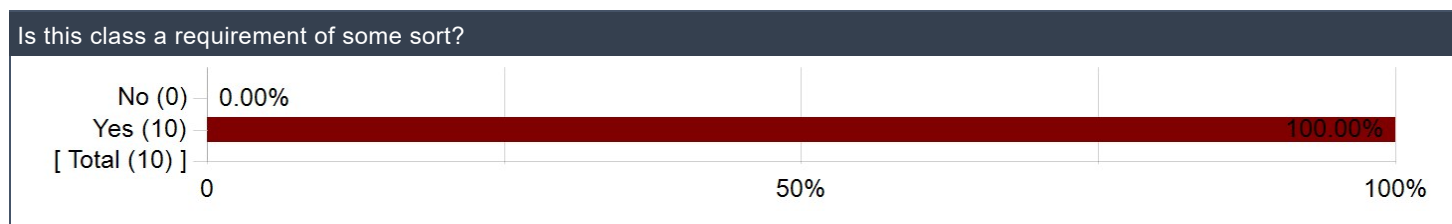
## The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	3.50	3.50	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	3.00	3.00	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	3.00	3.00	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%
Challenged you to learn.	3.50	3.50	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%
Helped you succeed in the class.	3.33	3.00	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.00	5.00	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	3.33	3.00	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%

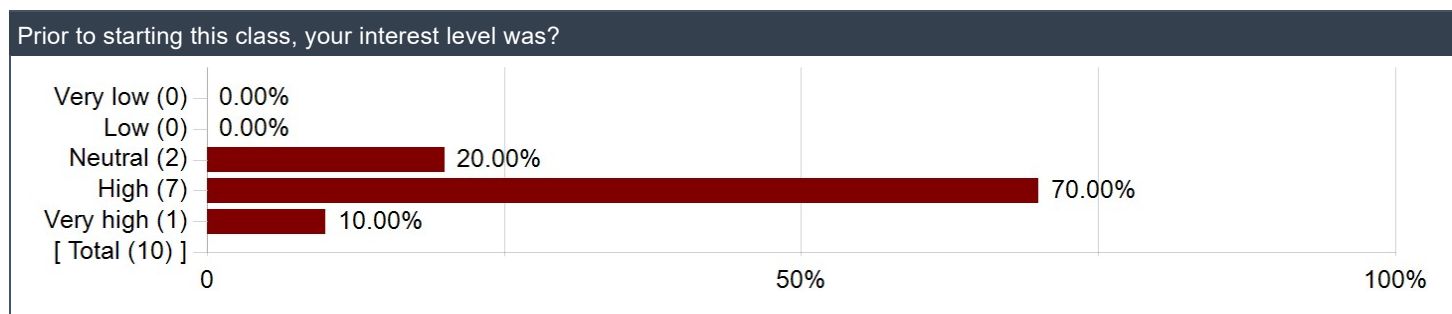
## How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	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	3.00	3.00	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%
Review Sessions	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Writing Seminars	3.00	3.00	0.00%	25.00%	50.00%	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%

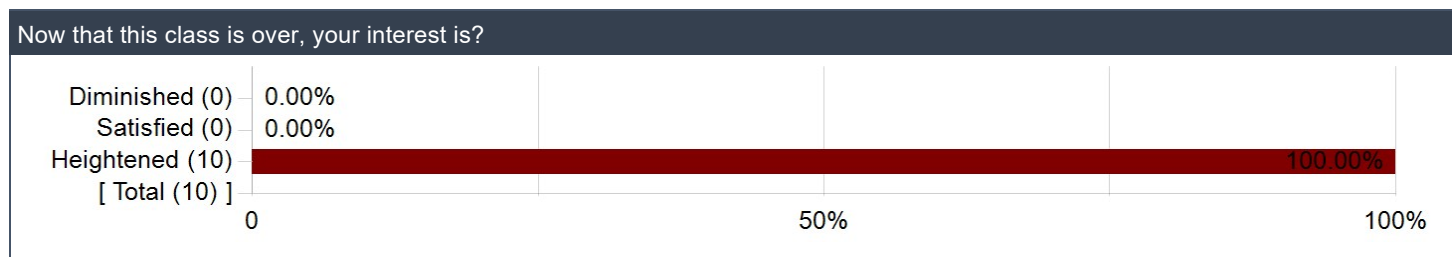
## Is this class a requirement of some sort?



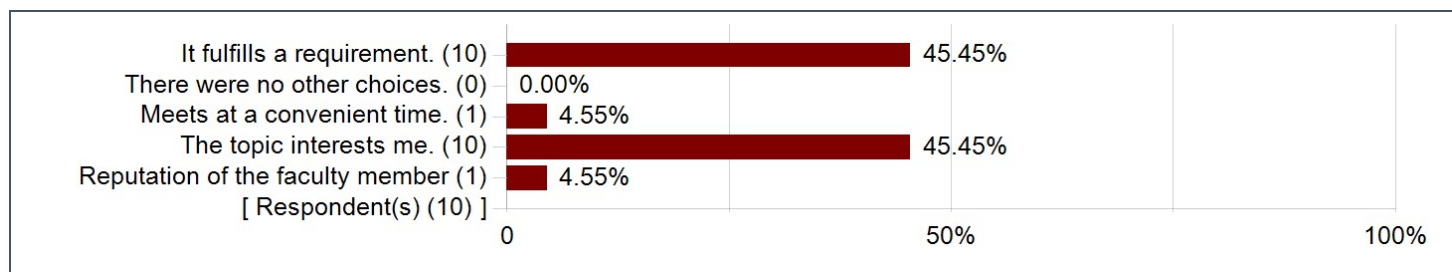
## Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



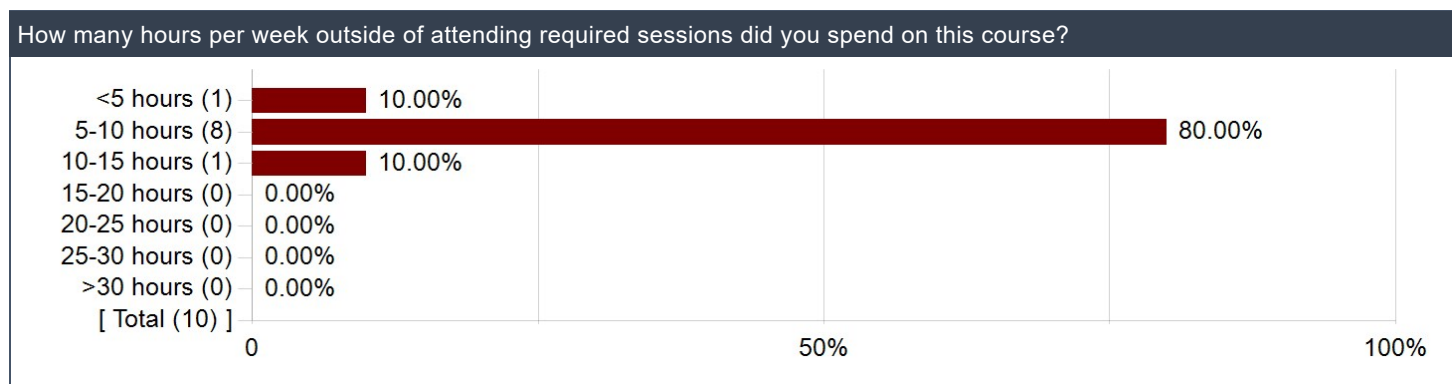
## Now that this class is over, your interest is?



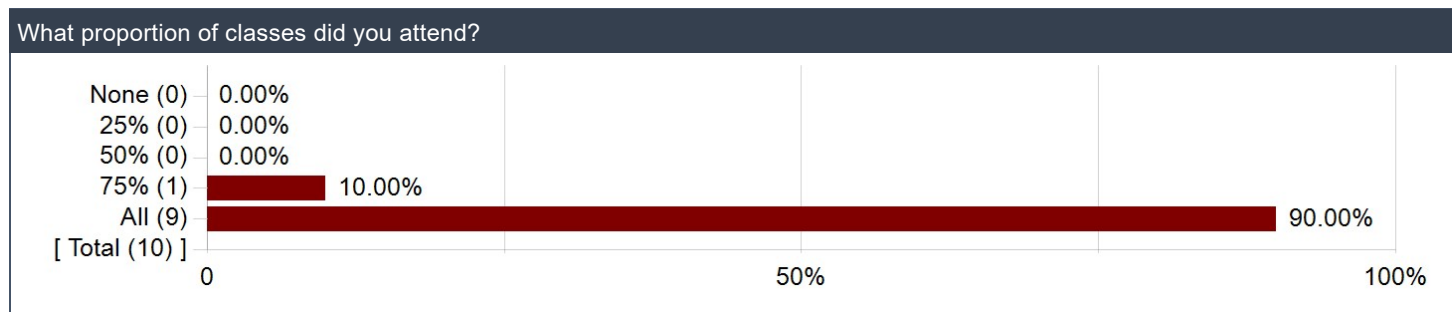
## Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



## 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
managable
I had some knowledge of the revolutions studied this quarter, so it was not difficult.
I came in with little prior knowledge, I felt very up to speed through the readings.
It's not an easy class per se. There's a lot of reading involved and the final assignment asks you to dig deeper into primary source based research than I had previously experienced. All this being said, grades are pretty fair and Brandel's certainly not trying to flunk you out so long as you do the work.
Was more interesting than the first quarter of Democracy, and was perfectly suited to my interests.