



SOSC 12600 28 - Self, Culture, and Society III - Instructor(s) - Anirban Karak

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

Number Enrolled: **15**

Number of Responses: **10**

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, July 11, 2024**

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

Comments
Beyond the course content, I learned a lot about what it means to be in a high level discussion class. This class definitely taught me about how to navigate long and dense readings, and to streamline that process.
How to think critical, how to understand social theory in the context of the contemporary world, yourself, and others
I definitely improved on my essay writing skills, and also improved on my reading analytical skills
Social theories related to culture in the society. we read a lot of authors like Kuhn, Manuel, Adorno, Harvey etc. All of them were great and really gave different perspectives on postmodernism.
My professor helped me a lot improve my writing
the difference between modernism and postmodernism, key postmodern thinkers like Foucault and David Harvey
I learned about how culture and society constantly influence each other, and how power structures play a role in our reality

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

Comments
In the winter and spring quarters we had presentations. Preparing for these presentations definitely required me to dive deep into the text and think critically about what I wanted to share in front of the class.
Lectures, discussions, and essay feedback were the main aspects of the course and really helpful. Though the content is complex and the discussions are far from easy, Prof. Karak does a really good job at engaging you in the course and the content as well as setting you up for success!
Although the lectures were long, they were very useful when it come to content since I learned a lot about the readings
The lectures were amazing and the slides really helped for essays.
Discussions were engaging and very helpful
The lectures were well prepared and engaging, reading assignments were relevant to essay questions, Professor Karak offered very good advice during office hours
Lectures helped emphasize key points of a reading, but student presentations mostly felt like a long-ish summary of the readings and didn't really help.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.67	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	11.11%	77.78%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.44	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	33.33%	55.56%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.67	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	11.11%	77.78%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.67	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	11.11%	77.78%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%
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.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
Key to doing well in this class is writing long papers. Go over the word count and use what is talked about in class and you will do well.
I highly recommend this class and Professor Karak. He is highly motivated and made the class really interesting and fun to attend. Probably my only core class that i paid attention in.
Amazing professor
Highly recommend for anyone interested in how culture affects art, music and dailiy life
Though written assignments received clear and helpful feedback, presentations did not, which was a bit confusing. The final prompt was also open-ended, which was great, but lacked any rubric. This made it a bit difficult to understand what I was supposed to be doing.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	0.00%	100.00%
Anyone interested in the topic	25.00%	75.00%

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

Comments
I liked when we would read passages in class and then discuss them. It was nice to noy have to rely on what we read at home ALL of the time because sometimes it is difficult to figure out exactly what is important in the readings. But if we read them in class, then it is clear.
Prof. Karak contributed the most to my learning. The way that he articulates concepts, connects them to ideas and culture outside of the classroom, and encourages critical thinking is amazing! This was the class I looked forward to (not a normal occurrence for me) and there wasn't a class I didn't leave feeling intellectually stimulated.
His passion towards the class
Engaging us with the readings and having us discuss with other students in class
Detailed lecture notes, engaging lectures, class discussions and questions, student run presentations
The way Anirban started discussions was helpful, and direct engagement definitely helped enhance understanding

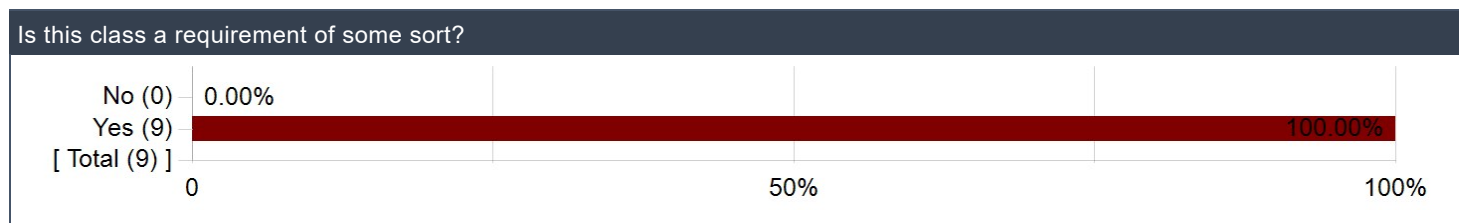
What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Possibly have discussion posts be defining our understanding of critical terms we learned from the reading instead of citing quotes, that way we engage with important definitions/concepts before class!
N/A
Nothing
more class discussions and more engagement with student questions
During the first two quarters most discussions/questions seemed to have a "right" answer, which was very stressful and difficult to engage with. Being able to discuss and apply the readings definitely helps more than understanding the specific meanings of a specific paragraph.

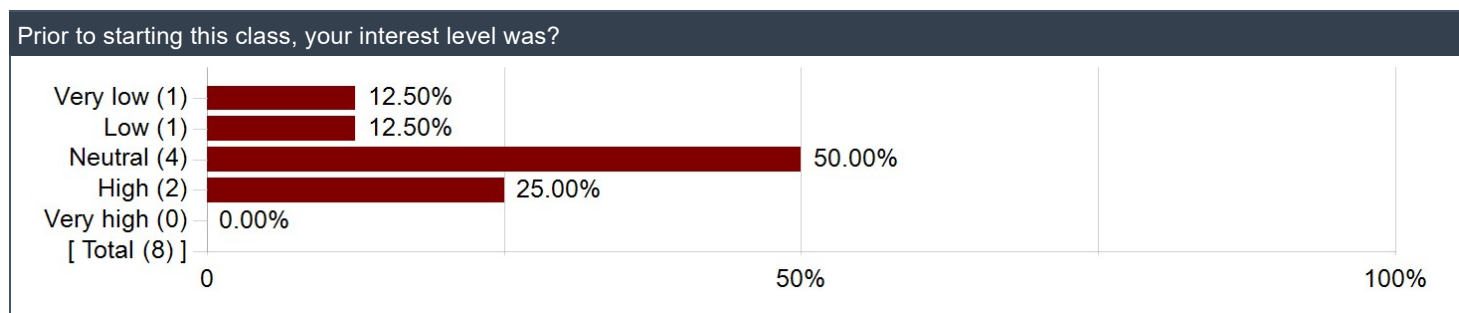
The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.63	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	12.50%	75.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.88	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	87.50%	12.50%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Motivated you to think independently.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	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%

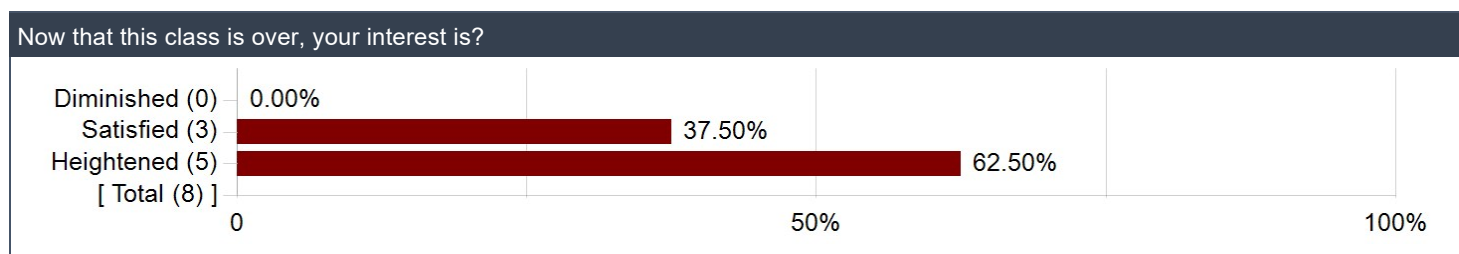
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



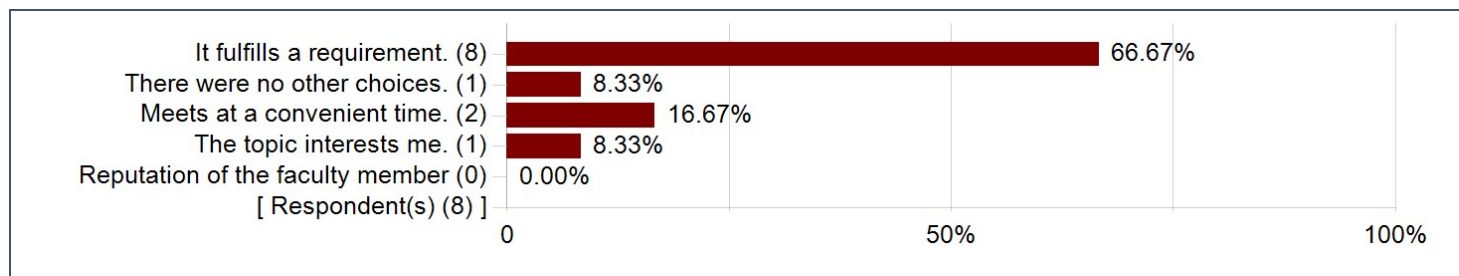
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



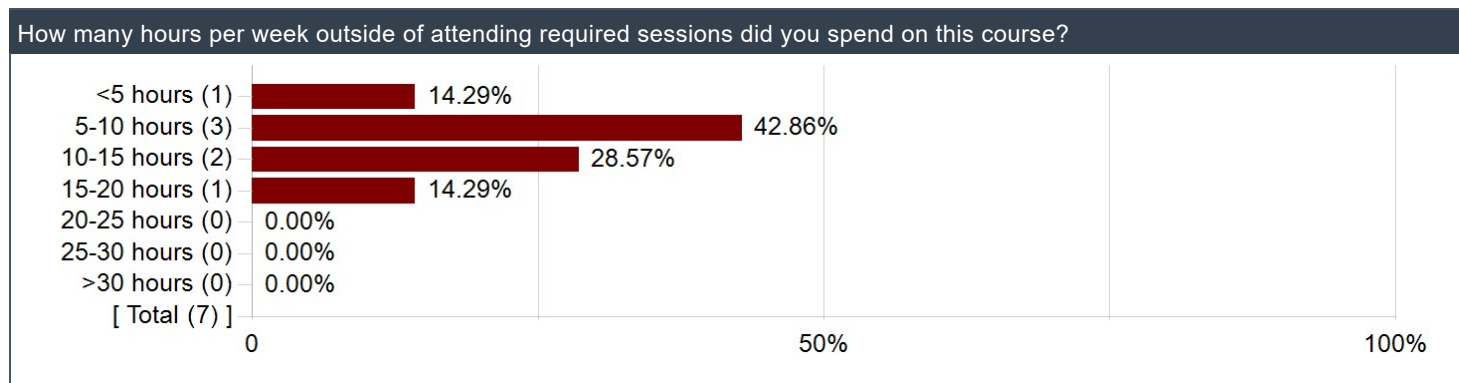
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



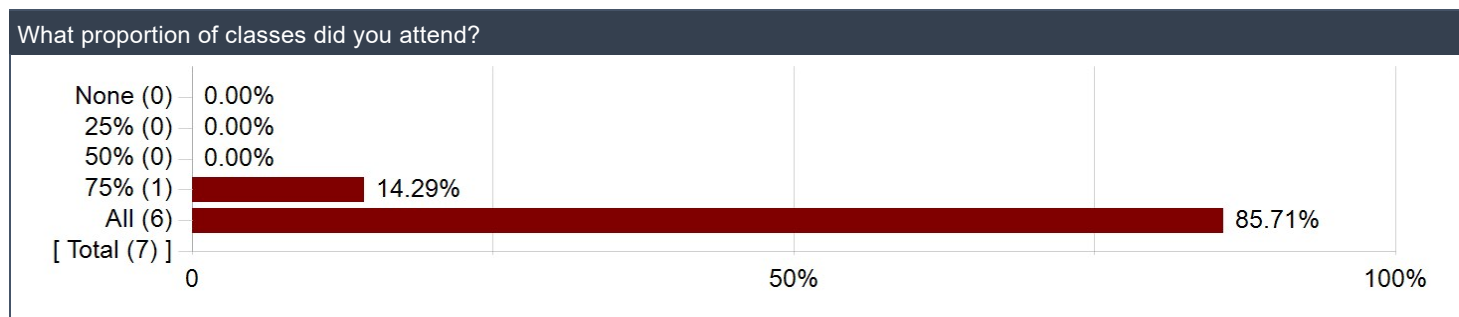
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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 extremely doable if you just write long papers. It is not demanding and Professor Karak wants you to do well.
Content is complex and unfamiliar, but Prof. Karak does an amazing job of mapping out every concept and things end up feeling intuitive and completely understandable
The professor made the class very approachable and helped us whenever we needed it. So, if you actually pay attention in lectures, it makes it significantly easier to do well.
Challenging but not overly difficult

Did you think that the second half of the spring quarter (Week 6 onwards) added to your overall understanding of 'culture,' especially contemporary culture, and its relationship to 'self' and 'society'?

Comments
I think so. Admittedly, the second half of the spring quarter became kind of confusing because learning about postmodernism is inherently unclear. But I definitely learned.
Yes! I think that the last quarter really engaged me the most as the pieces of what we learned began to fit into my understanding of the contemporary world on a scale. This last quarter especially helped me learn to engage with culture critically and see different structures, events, and cultures of society more clearly in regards to their historical contexts and specificities.
Yes. It was more contemporary content and I loved the discussion around postmodernism although it was confusing
Yes
Yes it did
The second part of the quarter definitely added to my understanding of culture. MTV and Kaplan, Manuel, and Bob Dylan added another dimension to understandin the interplay between music, mass culture and expression (whether in a modernist or post modern way). I felt Harvey was especially relevant, since his argument about time space compression revealed many of the feelings one feels under capitalism.
Yes, the articles were especially interesting and felt more relevant to modern society due to their recency (at least compared to most other Sosc books). This made it much easier to connect ideas to the current world

Did you think that all 3 quarters of this course cohered well into a 'sequence' that helped you see the interconnections between different authors and their overall contribution to social science?

Comments
Yes. I think that it is a very well–done sequence.
Before coming to UChicago, I always heard about people taking courses that changed their way of thinking completely. I doubted this would happen, however this course has completely changed my way of thinking in the best way entirely due to Prof. Karak. He does an incredible job of weaving the complex intricacies of each sequence together so that at the end of the year you leave feeling very fulfilled with your understanding of self, culture, and society. I would highly recommend this class with Prof. Karak. He is an incredible professor and the last day of class was something my classmates and I dreaded.
yes
Yes
Yes
the 3 quarters connected coherently. Marx, Weber and Smith were helpful in understanding the superstructure of society (espeically in terms economics, labor relations, and politics/ critical politics). Winter was important in understanding the Self (Freud, De Beauvoir, Fanon), in terms of psychoanalysis, gender identity and racial identity. With the background built up across the last two quarters, the texts of postmodernism (Foucault) felt much more approachable, understandable and relevant. Many of the texts (e.g. Harvey) in the Spring actually feature author's analysis from previous quarters, so the whole sequence definitely felt connected!
Yes, though I think more time should've been given to Fanon due to the importance of race in the third quarter. Maybe could've given Freud one less day....