



SOSC 11600 9 - Power, Identity, Resistance III - Instructor(s) - Nicole Whalen

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

Number Enrolled: **19**

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.

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
How we can think about our relationships to others and how oppressed groups can achieve equality and freedom. I further developed my argumentative and writing skills.
I loved the third quarter of Power because of its focus on paths toward liberation. The texts from this quarter were outstanding. I think that reading The Second Sex and Black Skin, White Masks in a discussion-based class is fantastic because it allows for a multitude of experiences and lets you process this highly impactful content with peers. Both of these texts especially required me to think about my own place in the social order and the ways in which I experience and perpetuate oppression. Power also really forced me to think and write in a way I am less comfortable with and I think that it has improved my writing and ability to explicate argument tremendously.
Texts Read: Nietzsche's GoM, Beauvoir's Second Sex, Fanon's BSWM, and Korsgaard's Fellow Creatures. Basic Ideas: Read about how Nietzsche, Beauvoir, and Fanon made sense of how naturalized power relations between moral systems (Nietzsche), sexes (Beauvoir), and races (Fanon) cause psychological harm; Beauvoir, Fanon, and Korsgaard sought to question the naturalization of male, white, and anthropocentric centers of power; Nietzsche was questioning the very emergence and value of slave morality itself. Skills: how to engage in a productive conversation about texts on moral philosophy, existentialism, feminism, etc; how to read these texts, examine their ideas, and put different readers in conversation
This quarter, we learned about the practical application of philosophical concepts. It's really fun to read more about the theories in practice — especially in situations I am personally involved with!
Reading philosophical texts, having academic discussions, writing academic essays.
The theme of recognition throughout the Power sequence. In this particular quarter, we read Nietzsche, de Beauvoir, Fanon and Korsgaard.
Was very philosophy heavy — learned I do not like philosophy
Nietzsche's ideas; master-slave morality, will to power, perspectivism.
skills in interpreting complex texts about identity; critical thinking and writing skills

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

Comments
The in-class discussions were helpful to understand the texts most of the time.
Discussions were very fruitful and served as a great place to grapple with the material. I also really appreciated when Professor Whalen would give a mini-lecture, they were always very helpful in understanding complex topics.
Presentations gave students a chance to focus on particular passages of a text, understand it thoroughly in context, present an interpretation of its meaning, and provide questions for the class and be, at least for a portion of class time, leading discussion.
Discussion posts seemed to just make sure the readings were being completed and understood.
The discussions are really interesting and helpful. Professor Whalen is such a good instructor in facilitating and guiding discussions. From time to time, she explains other philosophical concepts that are not explicitly in the texts but useful in tandem with our materials.
Writing advisor meetings were very helpful for essays, the class discussion only sometimes helped clarify understanding of the text, but usually the most important part about it was getting to know what the instructor wants you to focus on in an essay.
Discussions were fine
Discussions barely covered most content
Discussions were by far the predominant way class was run — it was helpful when we did small group discussions just to mix up the framework/structure of each class. It always helped when Professor Whalen gave us background on a thinker or text, but I get why she was hesitant to take up too much class time doing this.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.64	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.36%	63.64%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.18	4.00	0.00%	9.09%	0.00%	54.55%	36.36%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.09	4.00	0.00%	9.09%	9.09%	45.45%	36.36%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.09	4.00	0.00%	9.09%	9.09%	45.45%	36.36%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.09	4.00	0.00%	9.09%	9.09%	45.45%	36.36%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.27	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	54.55%	36.36%
I felt respected in this class.	4.27	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	54.55%	36.36%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.27	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	36.36%	45.45%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
Beauvoir and Fanon made sense together, but I still have no idea why we read Nietzsche. I would suggest replacing him by Sartre, that would make an amazing course.
A lot of reading, but manageable!
Professor Whalen's essay grading is not for the faint of heart.
I am grateful to have been introduced to Nietzsche's ideas before the other texts we read as they helped inoculate me from what was to follow. In constructing the curriculum, please consider keeping Genealogy of Morality as the first text of the quarter.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	0.00%	100.00%
Anyone interested in the topic	18.18%	81.82%

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

Comments
Professor Whalen's prompts for discussions and explanations when we ran into difficult concepts.
Because the class was so discussion-based, Professor Whalen was largely a moderator but her comments and mini-lectures were always very insightful and helped correct the course of our conversations. I think my time outside of class during office hours was most impactful. Working out ideas one-on-one was really helpful and allowed me to get a better grasp on the material.
Discussion sections were the bulk of teaching
She is really intelligent. Her office hour is very useful as we not only talk about course material, but also go in depth about related concepts!
Office hours
Professor Whalen is very knowledgeable about these texts and it was always helpful when she added her thoughts to class discussion. She was also helpful on giving feedback on your thesis/ideas for a paper while in the drafting process.

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Nothing.
N/A
Maybe a more directed discussion where the instructor gives more direction towards what they want to discuss. It may not be as free flowing as it currently is, but it would help everyone's understanding a lot more. Sometimes the discussions went off course or went on tangents for 10 minutes at a time. I think the instructor should pose questions and students can respond and debate around topics that are what they are looking for us to learn. I also think some more weekly office hours would have been helpful since there was only one day and one time slot.
I think Nicole could have been more active in guiding the discussions in class. There would be pockets of silence during class and that felt unproductive sometimes, and a lot of times post-discussion I don't particularly gain much, because we would be too focused on some teeny points, and often miss out on other parts of the assigned readings.
Response time to emails could've been a bit more prompt; to succeed on a paper (i.e. get an A), you have to very carefully adhere to a specific kind of paper Professor Whalen is looking for, which can be hard to figure out at first, but overall great prof

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	3.91	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	72.73%	9.09%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	3.91	4.00	0.00%	9.09%	9.09%	63.64%	18.18%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.18	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	45.45%	36.36%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.00	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	9.09%	45.45%	36.36%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.64	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.36%	63.64%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.36	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	63.64%	36.36%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	18.18%	0.00%	45.45%	36.36%	0.00%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.27	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	54.55%	36.36%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.45	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55%	45.45%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.45	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55%	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
Avi Waldman
Avi Waldman
Avi was very helpful, if a little unclear on how best to meet with her/expectations for meeting regularity.

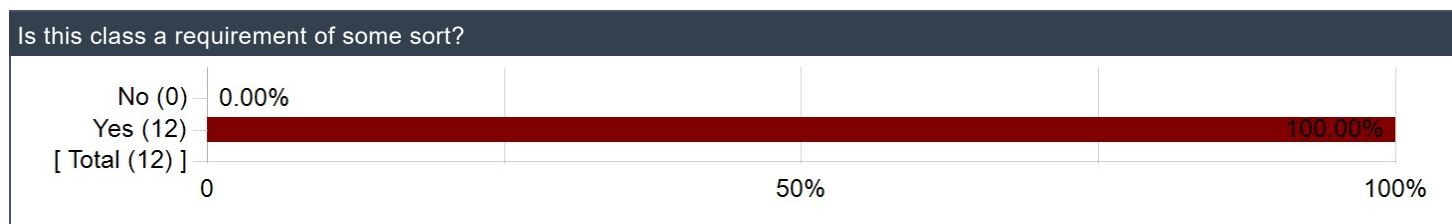
The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	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%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	4.33	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%	33.33%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.67	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.33	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%	33.33%	0.00%

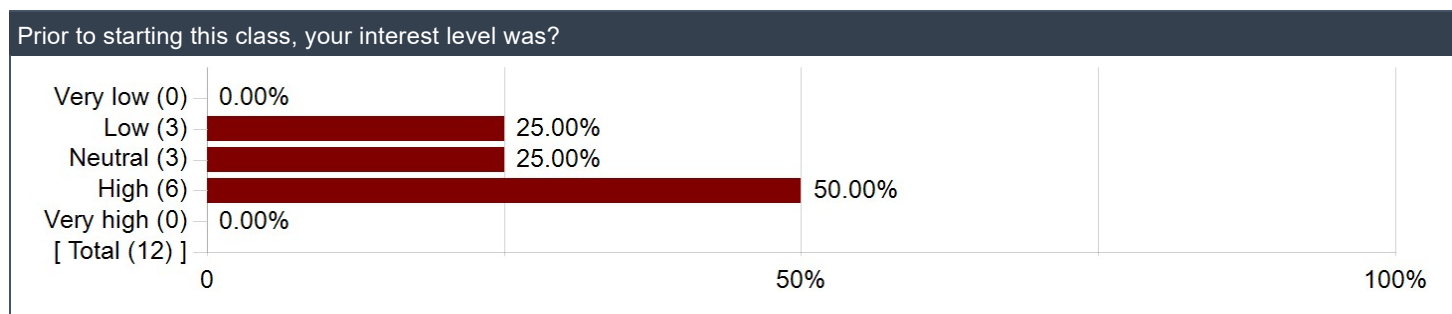
How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	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	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	3.67	4.00	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%

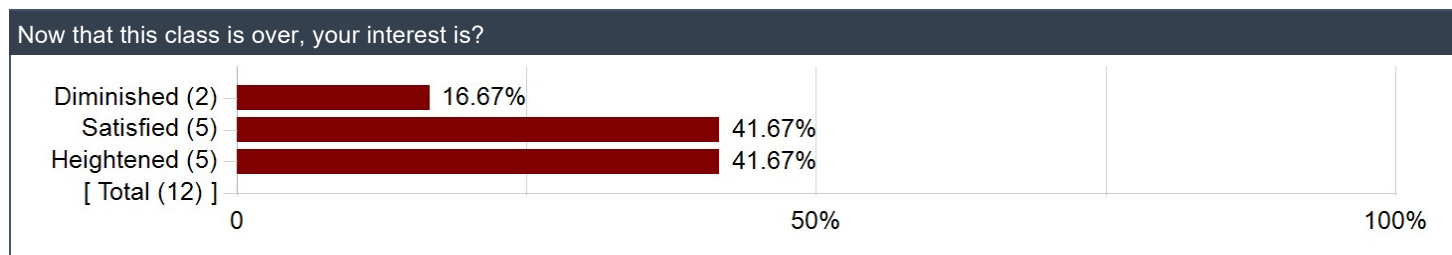
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



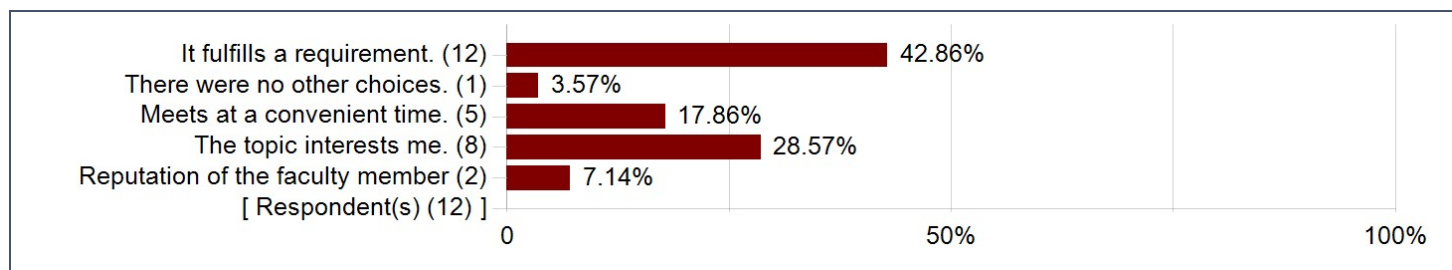
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



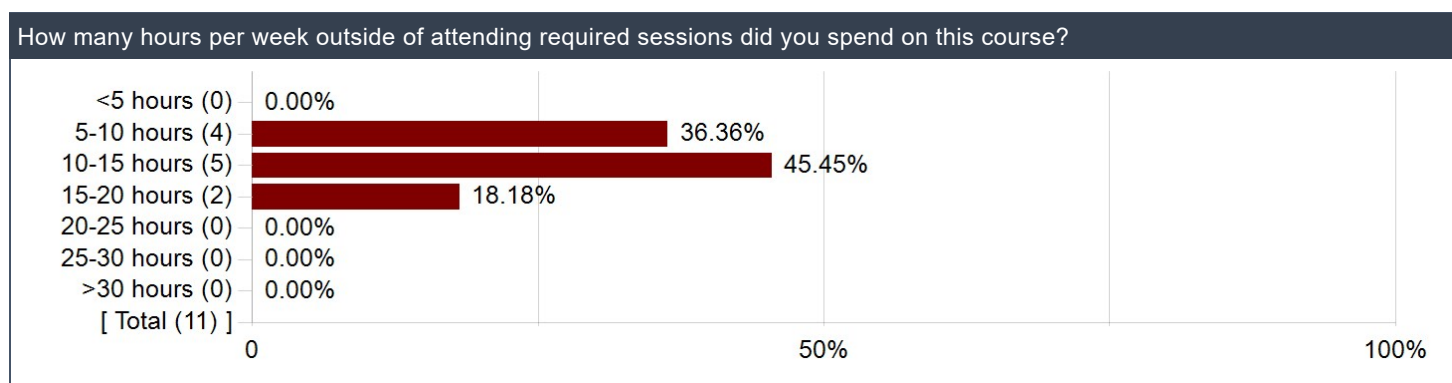
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



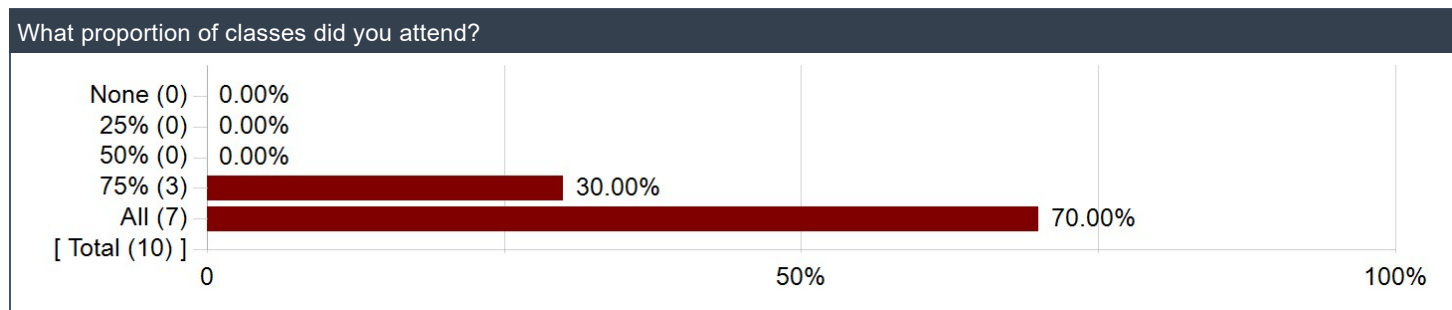
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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
After doing 2 quarters of Power, it was still challenging but manageable. But, I would say this quarter felt a bit less interesting in terms of the syllabus (except Beauvoir) compared to the other quarters.
If you're familiar with existentialist philosophy, you'll be alright. If not, just read thoroughly and carefully and practice writing, and you'll be alright.
A lot of reading. Recommend for people who enjoy political philosophy and interesting discussions!
Same difficulty as previous two quarters of Power
Since this was the third quarter of SOSC, it wasn't as hard to get used to the reading load/paper load. Can be difficult to get a flat A on a paper (lots of B+ or A-) but that's just classic SOSC professor tendencies. This quarter had a lot of philosophy texts which can be hard for people without a background in that area.