



SOSC 17300 1 - Religion: Cosmos, Conscience, and Community III - Instructor(s) - Russell Johnson

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

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: **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
Various religious narratives— religion origins, practices, politics, psychology, etc. Society, social life, community, justice, injustice
We learned about religion's role in politics and how religion in some instances perpetuates the status quo and in others is a tool for activism
Religion and politics aren't as separate as you think, and some people have tried to unify them over the years, especially in regards to activism.
The most important things that I learned this course were the different theories of Marx, Weber, Day, Gandhi and all the others. I also really learned how to read these types of books, since I had been having trouble understanding them throughout this entire year because of how dense and layered they are, but I finally got my mind to work in the correct way to read these.
Our readings were about the relationship between religion and politics, especially political activism. I learned to write comparative papers where I would analyze one text through the lens of another.
How religion impacts society, civilization, politics, etc.

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

Comments
Texts were amazing. I enjoyed reading for this class so much— there's not a single reading I really disliked. You really get what you put out. if you invest in the readings the class will be very fulfilling/meaningful.
The lectures were pretty clear, and were structured to give a significant amount of time to discussion but not too much to make it unstructured
The class was mostly discussion, with short presentations summarizing the text from students at the beginning of each class and short lectures from him at the end about our next reading. Discussions were really well—structured and we had really fun activities and thought experiments throughout. Russell Johnson is just the goat
The discussions really contributed to my learning. We were able to describe off of the main points of each philosopher/author and talk about it in a more creative way—ex: if you were building a society after the zombie apocalypse using this book, what would you do—and it really helped me understand the main points. This helped me see similarities in the readings.
The discussions were about as helpful as they always are in discussion-based courses. We were assigned two papers, each approximately 5 pages, and writing them helped me think more deeply about a few of the readings.
Class seminars really help you delve deeper into the texts, especially if the reading was dense/confusing. Professor Johnson has a great understanding of the texts, but also pushes us for our interpretations as well.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.67	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.67	5.00	0.00%	11.11%	0.00%	0.00%	88.89%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.56	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	22.22%	66.67%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%
I felt respected in this class.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	0.00%	88.89%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
Russell Johnson is one of the best professors I have had here. His familiarity with the course and the texts, and with how to make them actually accessible to us, made me feel like I could participate more than I have in other soc quarters with other professors. This was a hard quarter because everyone's done with soc at this point but it was still interesting material.
This course was excellent! It really helped me understand different religions, perspectives, as well as how they all tied together or contradicted each other.
This was my least favorite quarter of the religion sequence because I'm not particularly interested in political ideologies. Not the fault of the professor. I liked most readings from the last two quarters but none from this quarter.
If Professor Johnson is teaching, take the class. He's a great professor.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	0.00%	100.00%
Anyone interested in the topic	11.11%	88.89%

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

Comments
I liked when we talked with other students before talking as a group– it helped solidify ideas/what I wanted to say. I liked that we had a note-taker and text summarizer every class, it helped me follow along easier.
Johnson's direct discussion questions helped me think about the texts
Short lectures about readings and leading discussions
The interactiveness of Professor Martin's teaching really helped. That he ensured that we were able to do more than quote the book really helped me fully understand what was going on with each philosopher.
writing notes on the board
Professor Johnson kept the seminars on topic while also keeping the discussion fun.

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Nothing else was needed
Basically nothing except for maybe more essays to balance out bad grades
I don't have any notes, I learned and understood far more than I was expecting.
Personally, I didn't find that having a designated note-taker and a text summarizer was all that helpful, but it didn't cause too much stress either. I also thought the trip to the Smart Museum was less helpful than it could have been because we didn't really discuss the ideas from the Malcolm X readings while we looked at the artwork. Our discussion was very surface-level.

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.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	88.89%	11.11%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	0.00%	88.89%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%	0.00%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.67	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	11.11%	77.78%	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.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	0.00%	88.89%	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
Justin Smolin. Not really a TA, but he was a writing advisor. He was very helpful in talking through different topics for an essay, and established a good baseline for writing techniques. I just had my HUM sequence, so that writing advisor's tools were fresh in my head, but if they weren't he would have provided an excellent refresher.

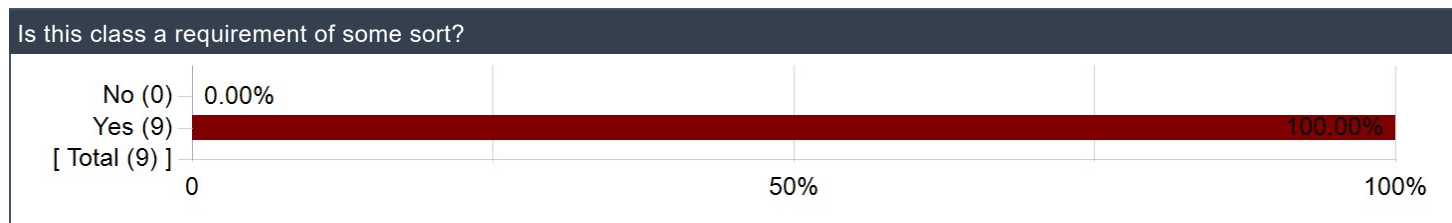
The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	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%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
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.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%

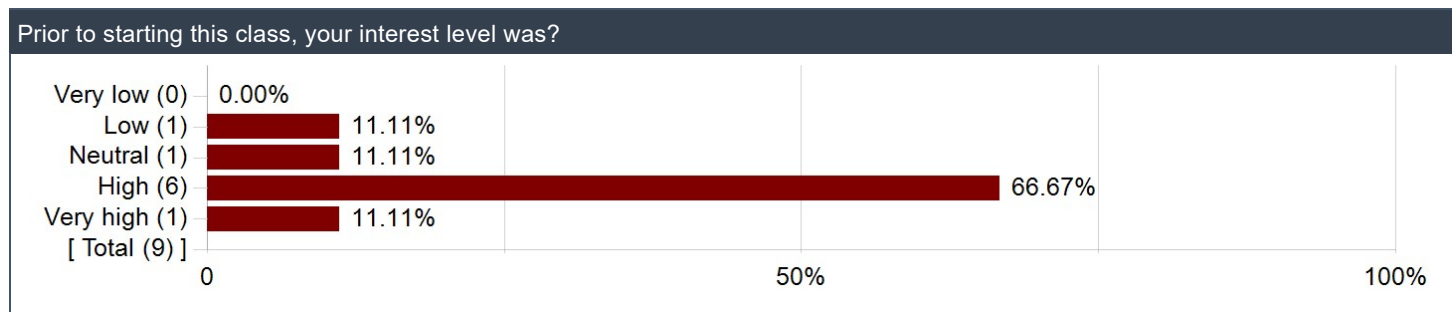
How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	Mean	Median	No Gain	A Little Gain	Moderate Gain	Good Gain	Great Gain	N/A
Laboratory Experience	1.00	1.00	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	75.00%
Field Trips	3.33	4.00	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	25.00%	25.00%
Library Sessions	1.00	1.00	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	75.00%
Review Sessions	1.00	1.00	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	75.00%
Writing Seminars	3.40	4.00	0.00%	16.67%	16.67%	50.00%	0.00%	16.67%

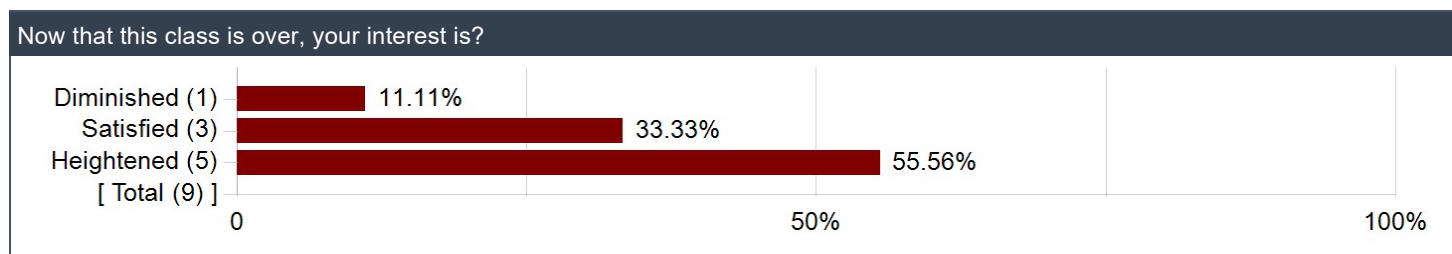
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



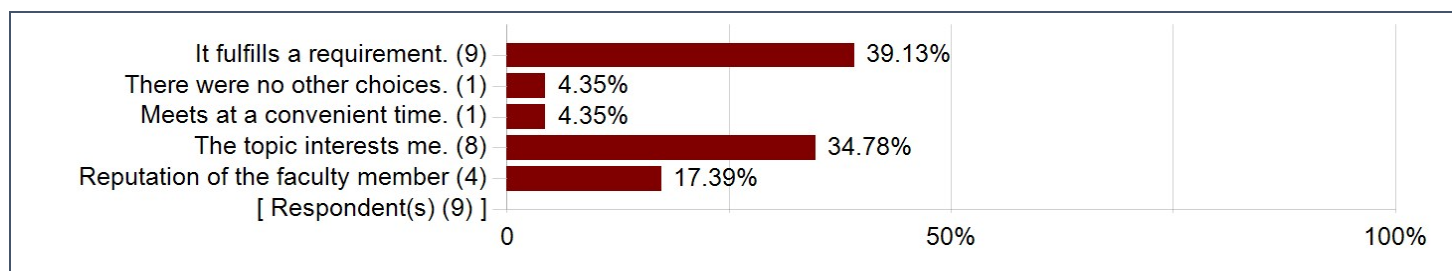
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



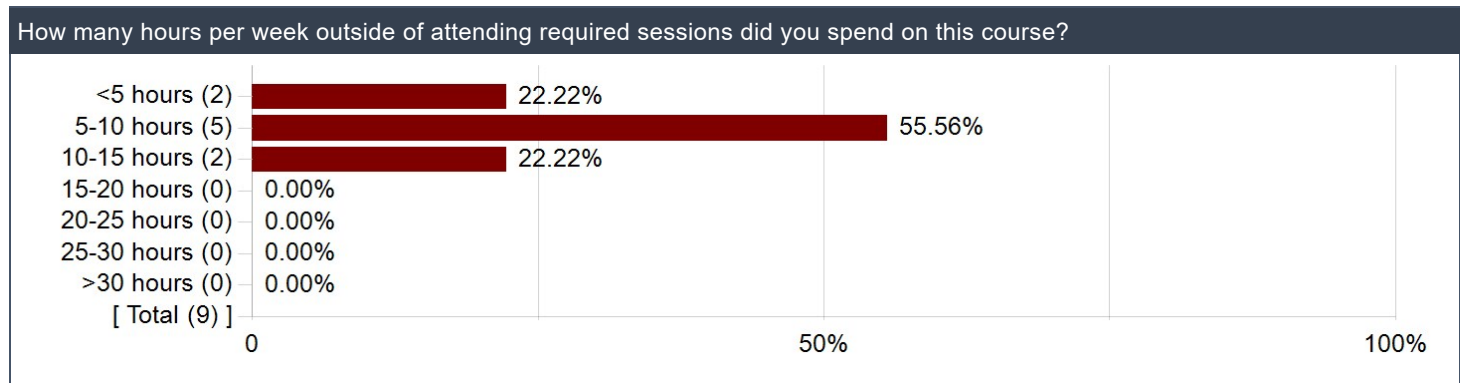
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



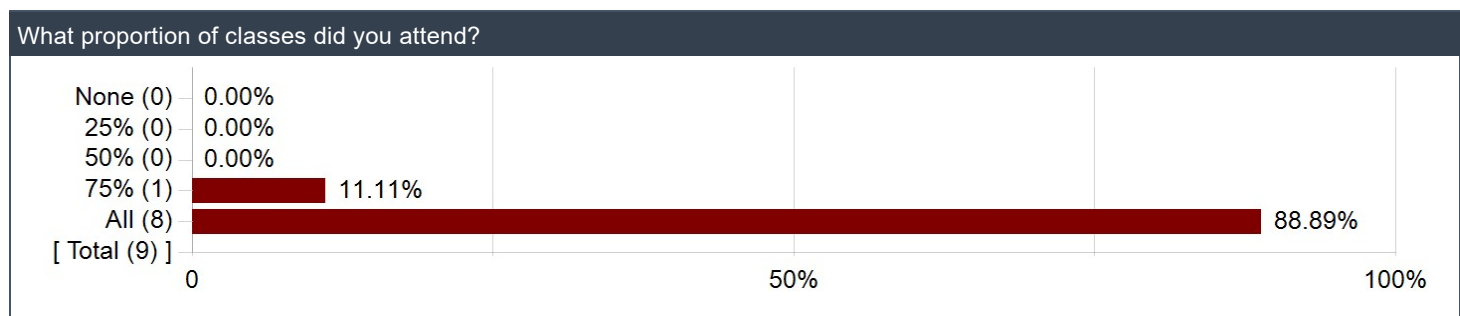
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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
Some readings are dense.
Some of the readings were dense, but most were short enough to keep up with
With the other two quarters of sosc, it was ok, but I will say that those with a poli sci or philosophy background had often more to contribute/reference.
I didn't have a background in philosophy or religion before starting this sequence. There is a lot of reading, but the material is very well explained, and all of the professor are extremely passionate about this topic and are very willing to explain anything that is confusing.
It was more difficult for me to think of things to say about the readings from this quarter (in papers and discussions) because they were less interesting to me than what we had for the past two quarters, but other than that there's no real change in difficulty.
As long as you read and participate you will be fine.