



PERS 20103 1, PERS 20103 1 - Intermediate Persian III - Instructor(s) - Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi

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

Number Enrolled: **9**

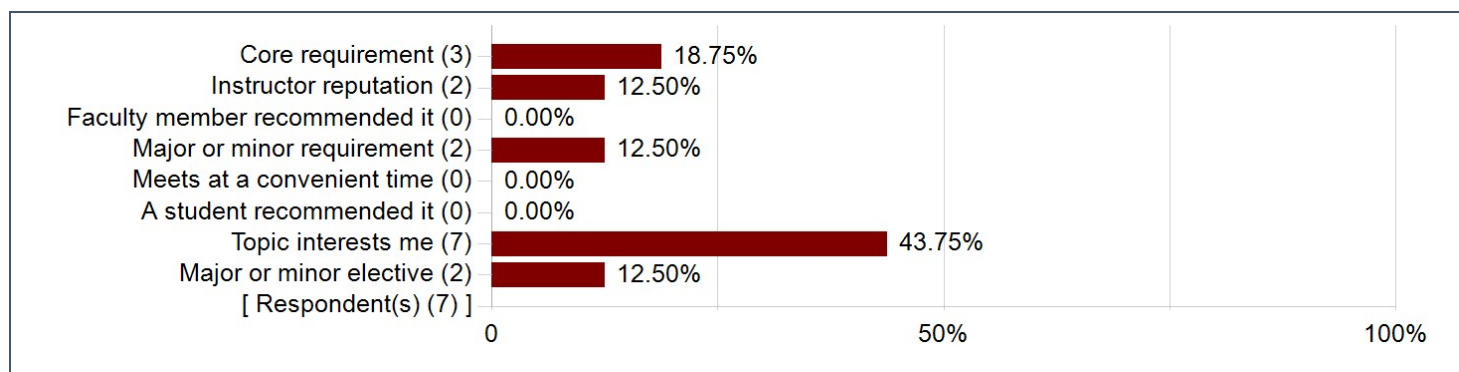
Number of Responses: **7**

Report Comments

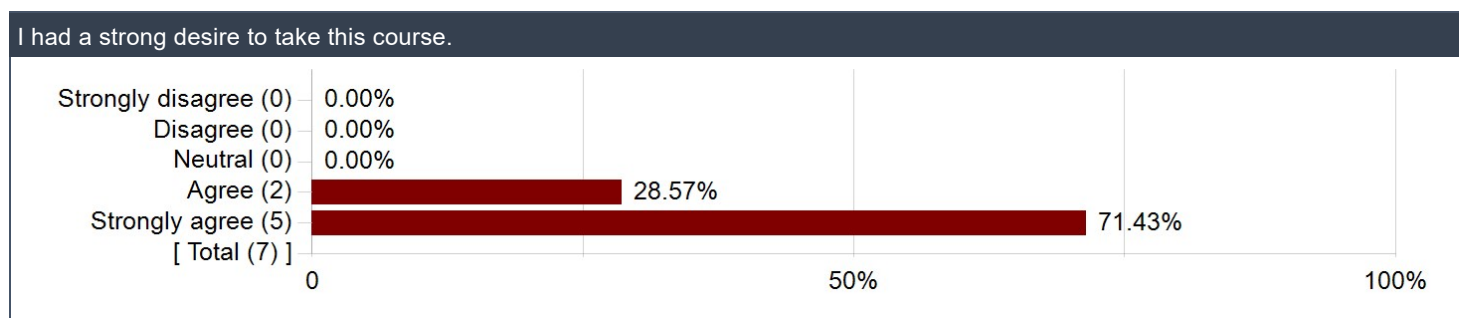
Opinions expressed in these evaluations are those of students enrolled in the specific course and do not represent the University.

Creation Date: **Thursday, July 11, 2024**

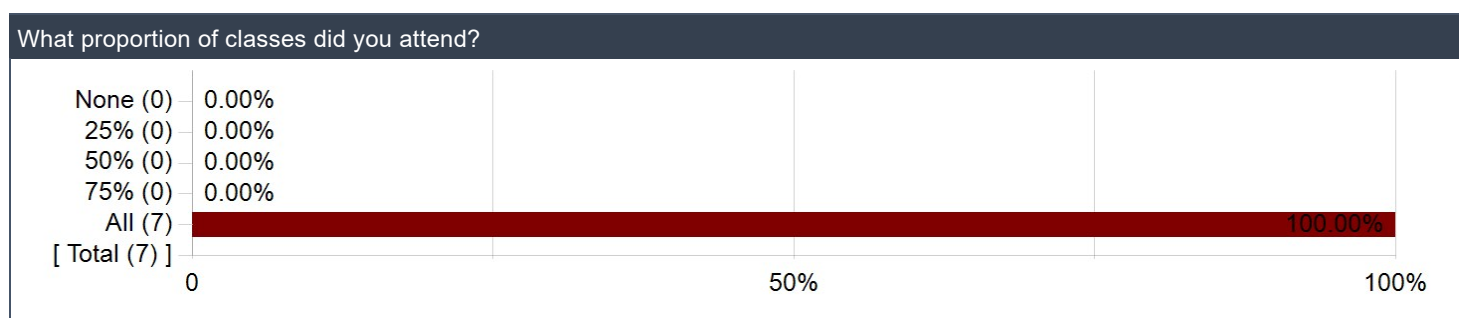
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



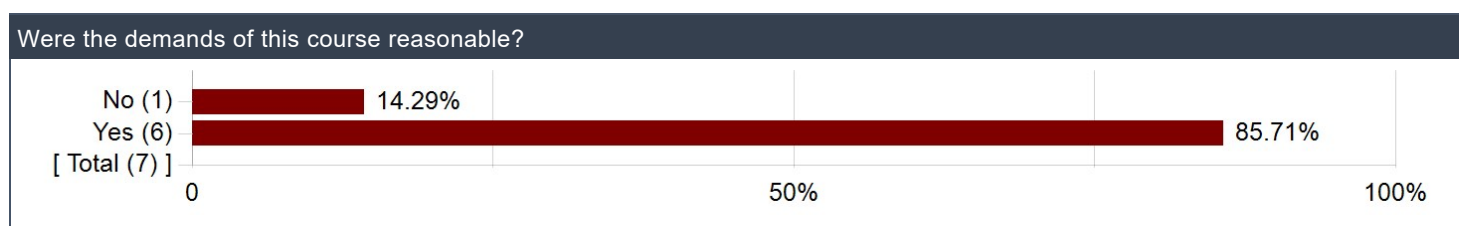
I had a strong desire to take this course.



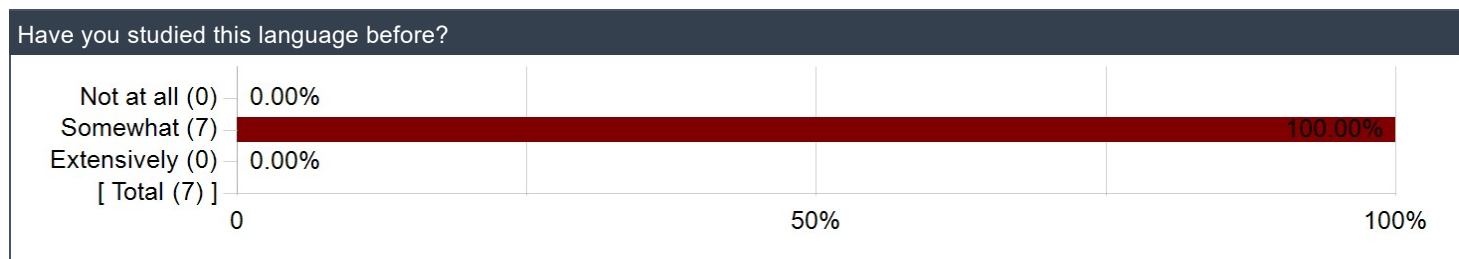
What proportion of classes did you attend?



Were the demands of this course reasonable?



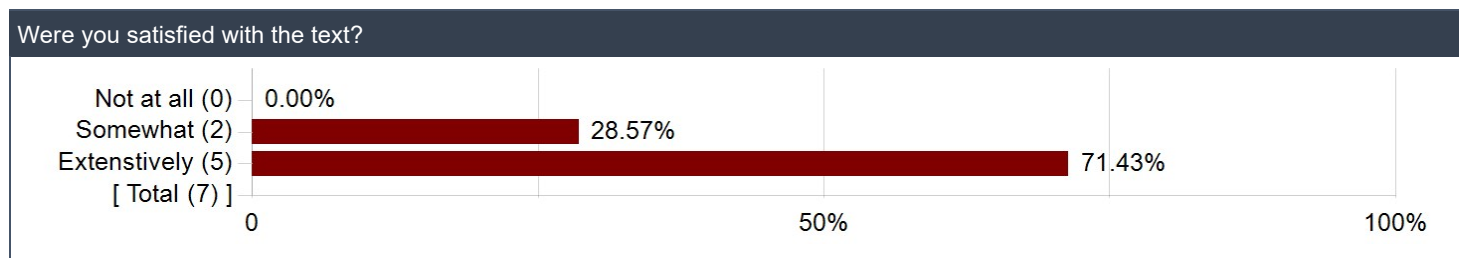
Have you studied this language before?



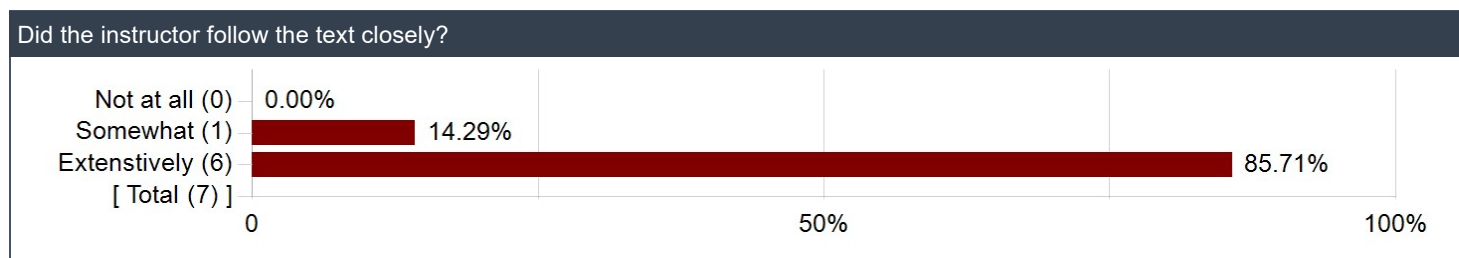
Rate the extent to which different aspects of the language were stressed:

	Mean	Median	Not At All	A Little	Some	A Lot	Extremely	Vigorously
Speaking	4.57	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	42.86%	14.29%	28.57%
Spelling	4.00	4.00	14.29%	14.29%	0.00%	28.57%	14.29%	28.57%
Reading	4.86	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	28.57%	28.57%
Writing	4.86	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	28.57%	28.57%
Grammar	4.43	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	28.57%	28.57%	14.29%	28.57%
Vocabulary	4.14	4.00	0.00%	14.29%	14.29%	28.57%	28.57%	14.29%

Were you satisfied with the text?



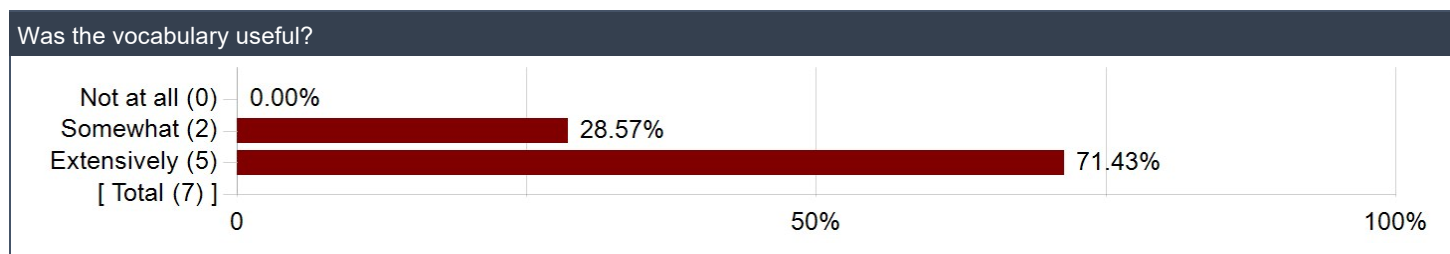
Did the instructor follow the text closely?



Explain:

Comments
I found the textbook challenging, but the key is to look at it before class. Every time I did that, I benefited tremendously. When I didn't, I benefited moderately.
We made sure to study the entire book and cover all exercises and passages.
The instructor wrote the text so it was helpful to go through a text that she was deeply familiar with. The class was generally structured around the text. The text itself was clear, provided helpful reading passages and an audio recording of each of the passages in the text.
Overall I find this to be the best textbook for Persian learning and the amount of vocabulary available in it is very helpful. I also really enjoyed the themes that we covered in class from it such as the poetry by Khayyam and the supplemental videos we watch at the beginning of the class. Regarding the video Baraye, I liked that we rewatched it after a year had passed and see how much my vocabulary expanded.
The professor wrote the textbook and follow it closely. It is easy to follow along.
The textbook had drills that were helpful, but I would have liked more classroom discussion outside of the textbook

Was the vocabulary useful?



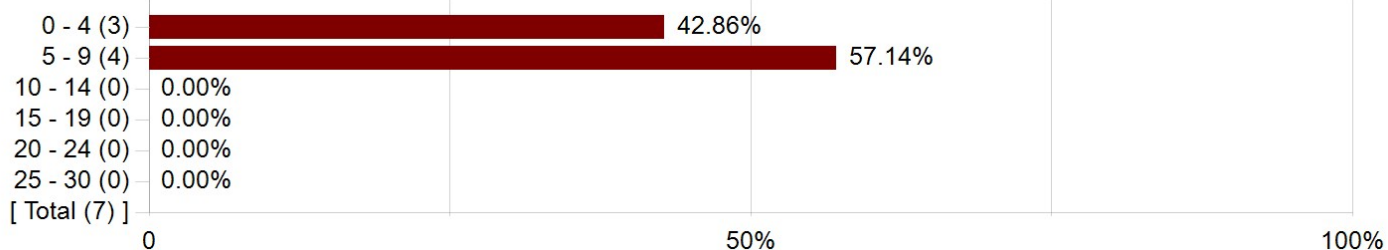
Why?

Comments
Some was obscure, but it was for the purpose of reading important texts of the Persian literary canon, never just obscurity for obscurity's sake.
The vocabulary was useful but I think having vocabulary quizzes would be helpful, and having the vowels indicated when the vocabulary is first listed would be beneficial
Gave me a vocabulary to use in diverse situations.
The vocabulary toggles between standard persian, colloquial persian and classical persian exposing me to all of the various registers of the language. The textbook has lists associated with each and translations between the various types of the language.
More than the previous book, this textbook had more vocab that I would use more regularly and it supplemented alot of the vocab learned previously in order to write and speak about complex topics. I enjoyed the themes of nowruz, commercial centers, and clothing in particular as they are topics I speak about more often and relate to everyday life.
The vocab is a nice mix of modern and classical/literary Persian.
We did not discuss the vocabulary or activate it in class

Describe the format of the class (lecture, drills, etc.). Was this format productive? Please be specific.

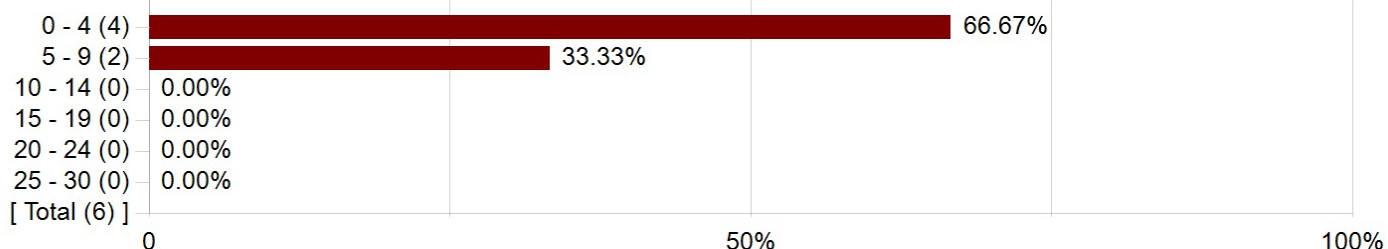
Comments
Class time was split into five or six different activities, I would estimate, and it was always quite stimulating of all four skill areas. I finish the spring quarter feeling uniquely energized re: Persian, ready to jump into a grammar book and try to polish things up further this summer. But yes, re: the format, Dr. Shabani–Jadidi always makes very effective use of class time, while accommodating questions and never seeming in an undue rush. Class moves along at a brisk pace.
we mostly read from the text and translated together. this is helpful, but i think having some other exercises/games/roleplays would help as well. we also always take out time reading together sentence by sentence with vocabulary assistance, which means that when it is time for the exam and we are asked to skim a huge text in a limited amount of time with no vocabulary assistance we have never practiced that skill. i think the kind of reading we do in class and the kind we are asked to do on our exams are just two different skills that need different kinds of practice
Yes, there were a variety of means through which we improved our Persian.
Textbook: The textbook was very useful as the exercises reinforced each other and was a medium connecting our work in class and at home.
Music videos and other media used in class: These were a great addition to the course. They allowed us to learn Persian culture through other resources and were a nice way to learn the language.
your assigned final projects, paper and presentation: These were definitely the most intense parts of the class. I would recommend everyone starts these earlier in the quarter. However, these were very relevant parts of the class as well. They allowed us to go beyond just learning a language and to really research a topic, related to the language, that interested us.
weekly writing assignments: These were very useful and covered vocabulary, structure, prose, and grammar. My favorite part was the word modifications where we were given the adjective, verb, noun, and/or adverb version of the word and had to fill out the missing type. This helped me a lot when writing/reading because I was able to derive meanings of the word I had not encountered before based on other forms of the word.
weekly speaking assignments: I enjoyed how the speaking topics allowed us to use the vocabulary we were learning in class. They were relevant to our lives and felt natural to talk about, given what we had learned in class.
weekly diary writing: This allowed me to strengthen my vocabulary used in everyday life situations which is probably the most common use of Persian for me.
The class was broken into three sessions. Within each week we would generally go through 50 to 75% of chapter. We would read each of the passages, discuss with various classmates based on the topic of the chapter, and be expected to explain ourselves and translate what we read.
The format of three assignments a week covering reading, speaking, and writing has severely grown on me. While it felt overwhelming last year, this year this format of assignments helped tremendously with improving in the language and I found myself wanting to do the writing/diary and speaking assignments. In particular, i really enjoyed the one page essay assignments as they were on relevant topics and gave more writing practice than the diaries. While the diaries are great at practicing describing events, my thoughts, and day–to–day, the essays help me to organize my thoughts better as I write and speak about more complex ideas. Overall this homework format creates an incredible balance to cover all the major areas of language study which I think is unique to professor Pouneh's instruction and makes the persian program at uchicago so effective.
There are a lot of discussion in Persian with classmates. Listening to relevant audio and video in Persian.
Class took the form of conducting textbook drills. While this format was helpful at times, because the drills were confusing, it didn't contribute much beyond homework

How many hours were you expected to study each week for the class?



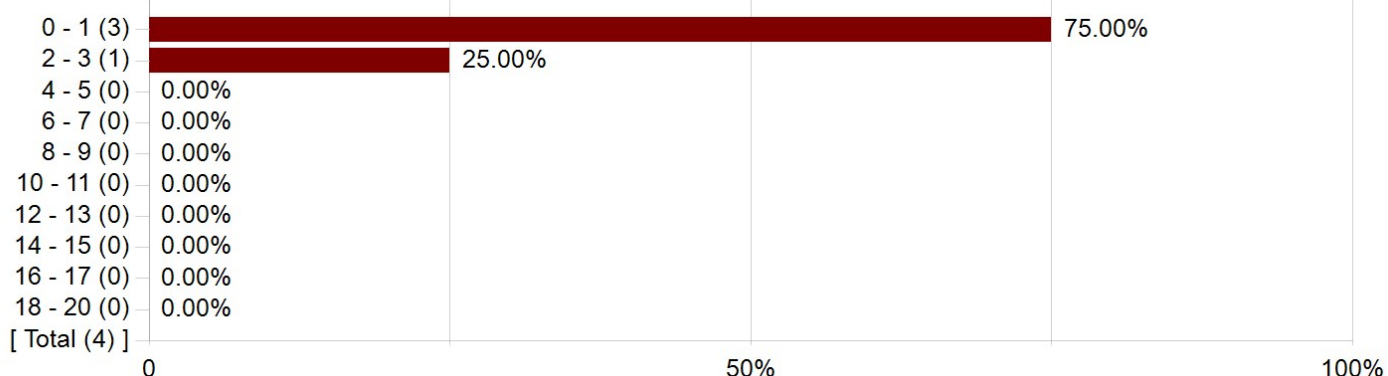
Statistics	Value
Response Count	7
Mean	4.43
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	1.99

How many hours did you spend?



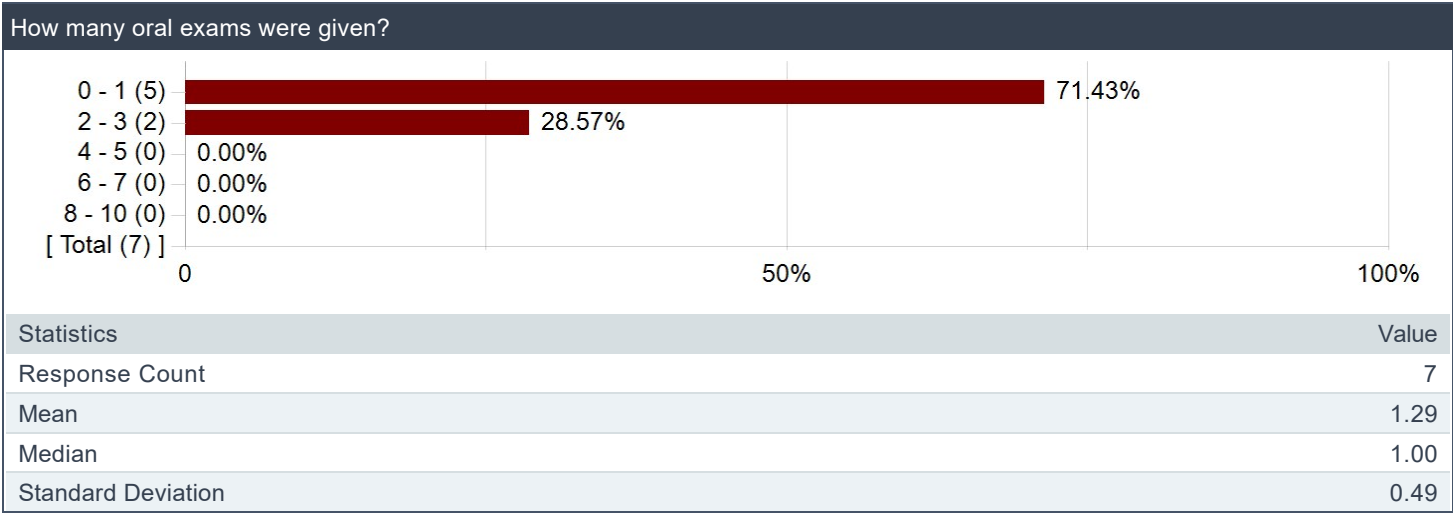
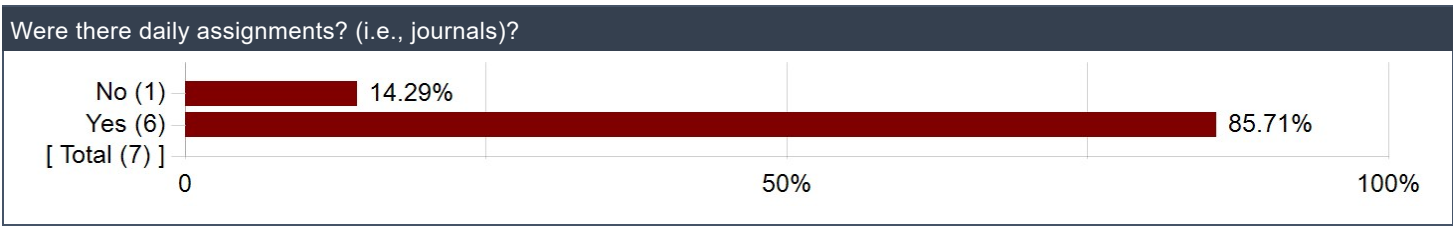
Statistics	Value
Response Count	6
Mean	3.83
Median	3.50
Standard Deviation	1.94

How many written quizzes were given?

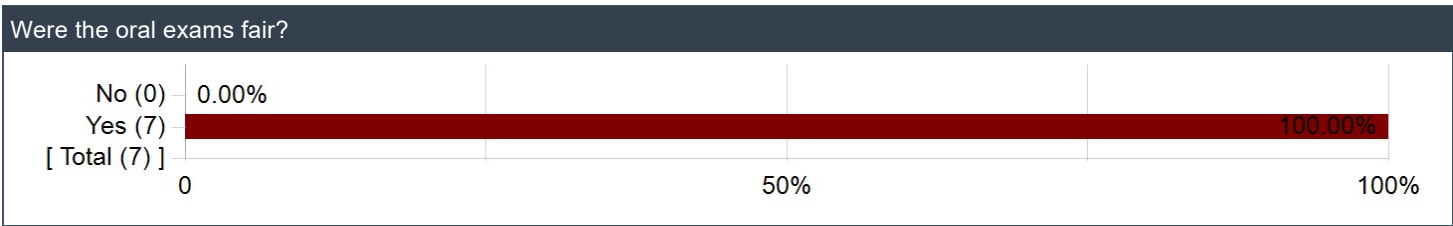


Statistics	Value
Response Count	4
Mean	0.50
Median	0.00
Standard Deviation	1.00

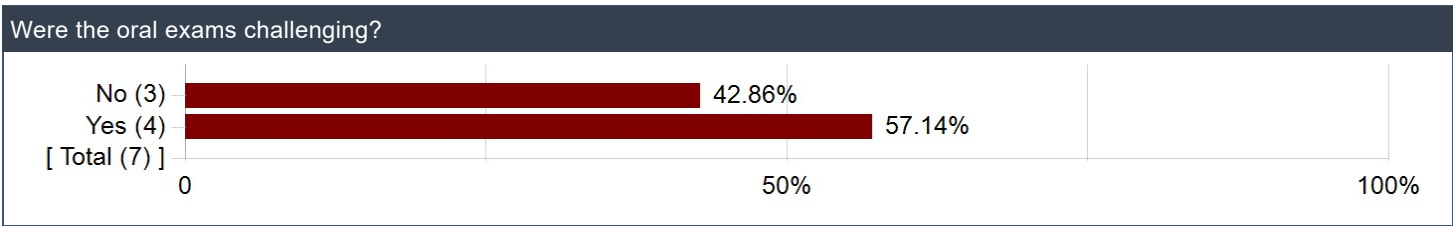
Were there daily assignments? (i.e., journals)?



Were the oral exams fair?

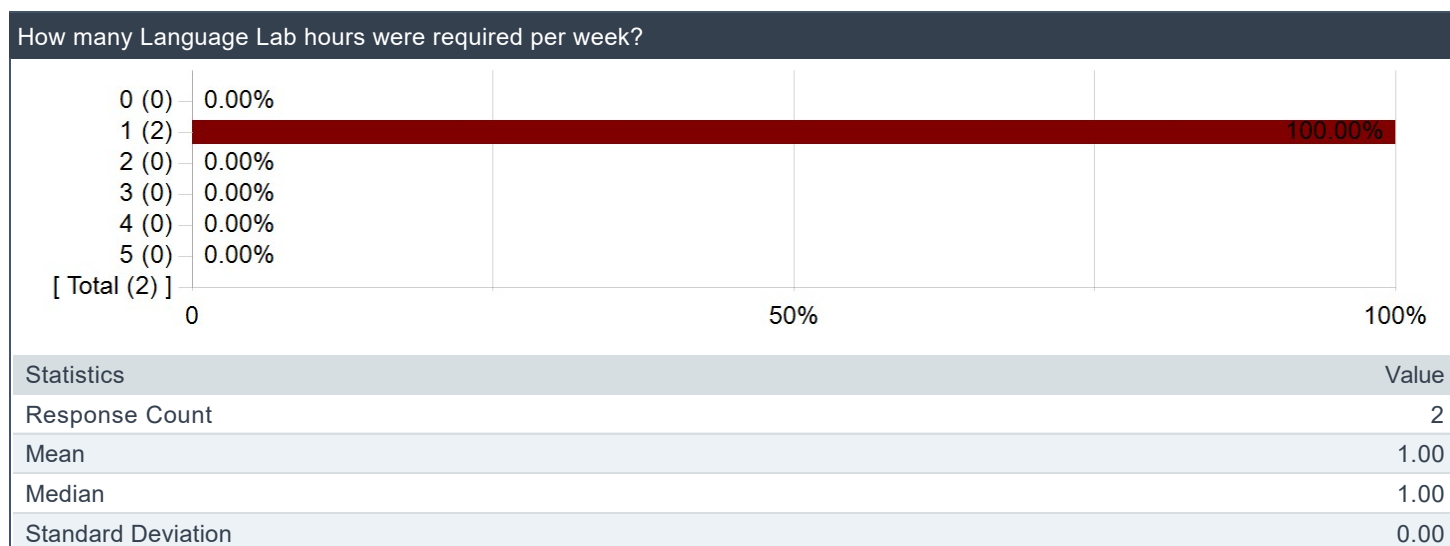


Were the oral exams challenging?

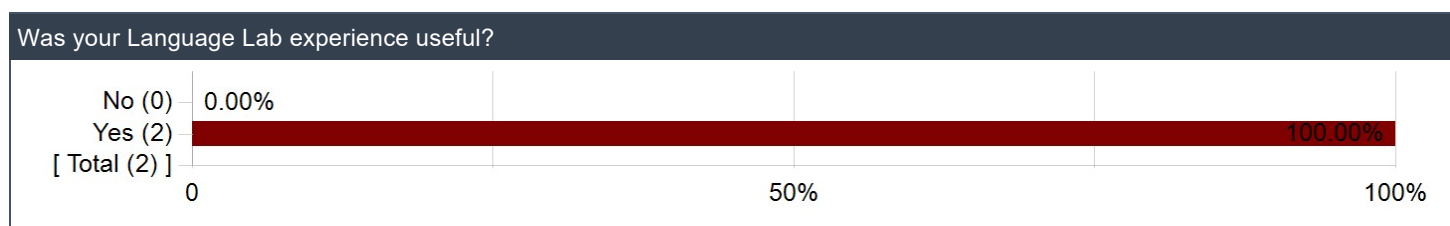


Why? Please be specific.

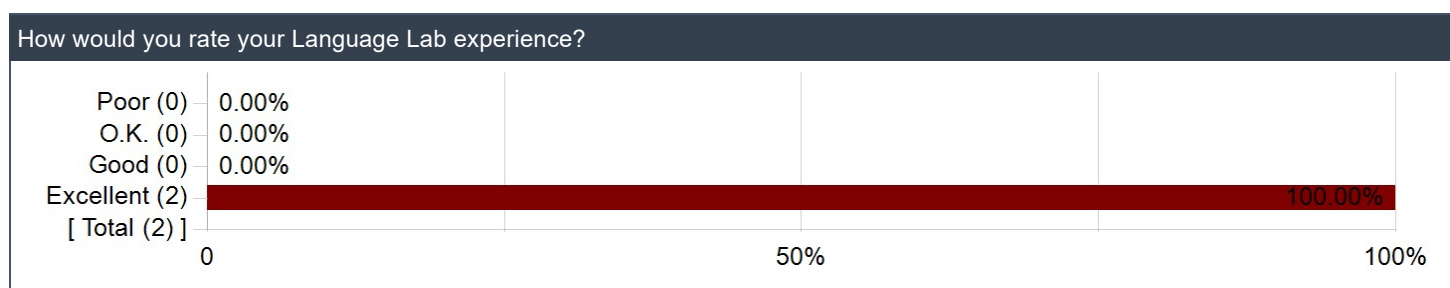
Comments
I found the oral exams easier this quarter than in past quarters, where sometimes we had to talk about specific topics chosen at random from the book. This quarter the exams were more just ordinary conversation, and perhaps the other way would have tested our attention in class more. Anyway, there were plenty of other challenges. Thumbs up re: oral exams this quarter
I appreciated getting the chance to practice conversation skills one-on-one with the professor
I am a heritage speaker. It was definitely a serious exam but not extensively challenging
The oral exam was given at the end of the course, it was a dialogue between the professor and me. I found it to be extremely enjoyable because it was both engaging the use of the language throughout the quarter and topics that I was also familiar with. This led the oral exam to not be stressful but to also be something that helped me push myself with the language.
I expected to speak about a topic covered in the textbook yet I found the final oral exam to be much more relaxed and enjoyable. Having the practice oral exam was an excellent idea because it prepared me more to speak about a complex topic in person.
Last quarter, when we had to speak about a specific topic it was more useful because we had to review that vocab beforehand.
They were engaging and reflected the extent of conversation and engagement of the class itself



Was your Language Lab experience useful?



How would you rate your Language Lab experience?



Why? Please be specific

Comments
Natakallam was fascinating. Each time i just read Sa'eb with Leila. Often it was incredibly obscure, but I'm lucky to have gotten a glimpse into that world.
My language partner was extremely knowledgeable and helpful

If there were required outside activities (i.e. foreign films or SCOLA), describe your experience.

Comments
Yes, Dr. Shabani–Jadidi gives extra credit for outside activity attendance. Films every Friday around lunchtime (great!) and every Wednesday there is Persian Circle, which is fun too. She ensures there is a never–ending stream of supplemental activities. She also puts stuff on the class facebook page regularly (like, many times a day), including information about events related to Persian lang & culture at UChicago and in the broader community. Dr Shabani–Jadidi is tireless.
I found the films to be a wonderful way to listen to more Persian and learn about Persian culture. the weekly lectures were far above my comprehension ability but i appreciated getting exposed to various accents and speakers. the lectures in english on Persian literature are always phenomenal and help give some mid semester motivation to the translation work we do
weekly Persian Circle lectures: these were very fascinating lectures. They had interesting subject matter and allowed me to improve my Persian listening and reading skills
weekly Persian movies: I was introduced to the cinema of Iran and a diverse array of relevant topics I would not have learned otherwise. This was my favorite extracurricular activity.
quarterly lectures on Persian literature: I attended two of these. Very interesting to hear as I got a glimpse of what types of work experts in the field do.
Nowruz event: I was not able to attend.
all the Persian–related events happening in Chicago: This was a great experience. I met other Persian people as well as those interested in the culture and formed good friendships. I also was able to have a leadership role helping organize some events.
Student Persian Essay Award ceremony: This was one of my favorite parts of the class as I got to see what others worked on and how we all improved throughout the year!
There was no required outside activities though there were encouraged activities including Persian circle, which is a persian lecture given by various academics and persian speakers tied to the university of chicago. This was a great activity to work on listening and to better understand various aspects of persian culture. There was also a persian film every week.
The movies, lectures, and Persian events while not required are incredible to go to and give so much depth to learning Persian as it supplements it with the culture so well.
5 hours of Natakallam tutoring sessions were required. They were EXTREMELY beneficial.
Films and Persian circle are recommended and also great.
While not required, weekly lectures and films occurred.

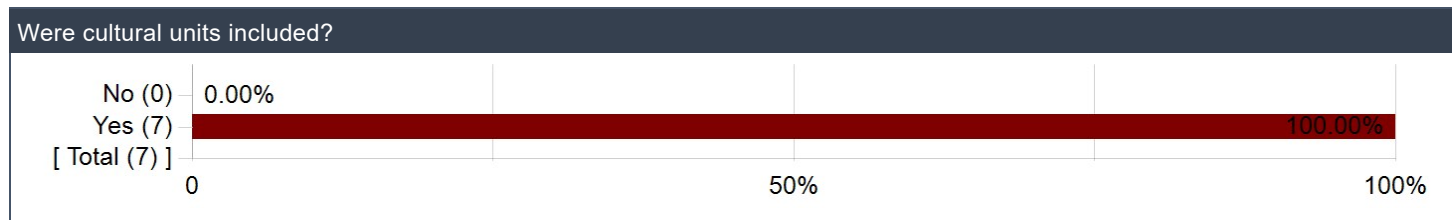
Was your instructor organized?

Mean	Median	Very Unorganized	Somewhat Unorganized	Fairly Organized	Somewhat Organized	Very Organized
4.86	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	85.71%

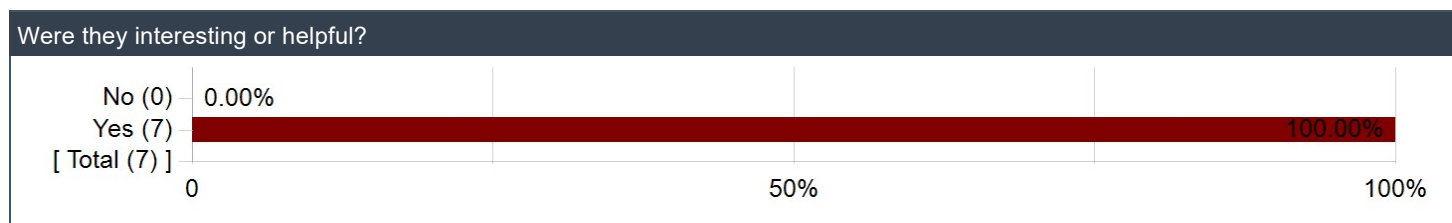
Explain

Comments
If I email her a grammar question in the evening on a weekend, she often sends me back a substantive reply within like 5 minutes. I don't know how anyone can be so hard-working and organized as a teacher while also publishing so much – more power to her
She always had a class plan and organized week by week progression.
The instructor follows a predictable schedule, provides access to all assignments and
The professor follows the syllabus closely and organizes things on Canvas very well. She is clear about deadlines and requirements, but also flexible.
Instructor was organized and conducted class well, but did not develop coursework dynamically to class development.

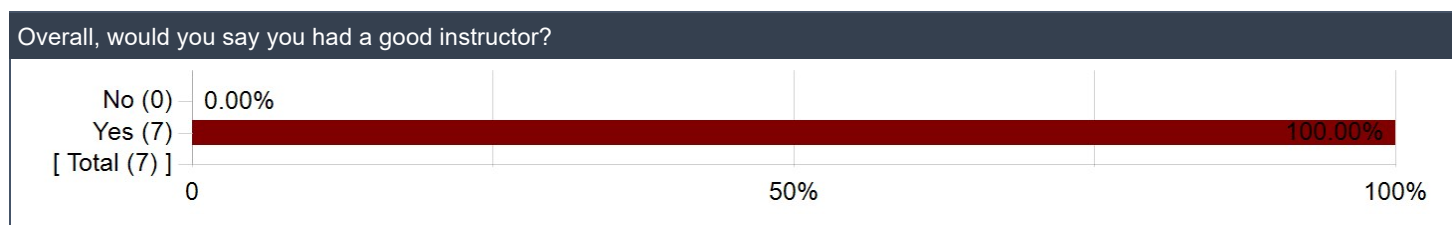
Were cultural units included?



Were they interesting or helpful?



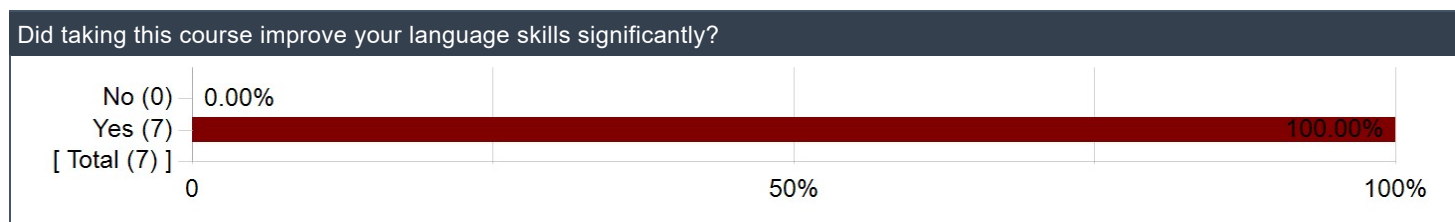
Overall, would you say you had a good instructor?



Why?

Comments
Dr. Shabani–Jadidi is easily one of the best instructors I've had in several years of grad school. NELC would be really smart to do whatever possible to keep her here permanently. I think it's hard to overstate how she is not just incredibly bright and hard–working, but so welcoming and friendly, creating a very inclusive, witty and enthusiasm–building classroom environment. She is very charismatic and maintains high expectations of the students in an era where this is not always the case. I think it has to be noted how tedious it must be for her to put so much feedback on all our homework assignments, only to see us repeat the same mistakes the next week, in many cases. But she keeps putting feedback, and even recording videos of herself speaking the feedback to us. Very generous with her time in this regard – I don't think I've seen any other professor show that level of commitment in regard to giving feedback to every individual every week. She seems deeply invested in the students' progress, in part because for her pedagogy seems to be not just a means to an end but an object of interest in its own right.
Professor Pouneh is an incredibly kind professor who cares deeply about her students and her field. I think, at times, the expectations for the course were both too high and too low—we are asked to write extremely long papers with no scaffolding, the final week has a pile up of assignments on top of usual homework meaning in the last week we have an oral exam, a written exam, an oral presentation, a paper and and the usual weekly homework of a video to record, a journal entry, and written hw exercises. But, at the same time, there is no real emphasis on spelling, or vocabulary meaning that if you know Arabic it is easy to just lean on the words/spelling you know, but there is no real help with that in class. The time in class is also entirely devoted to translating from the textbook, which I think allows for a lot of down time for the people not translating, and means that you can get help with translating as you are doing it so you never really have to remember the words yourself.
Dr. Shabani Jadidi was very kind but at the same time pushed us to become better at the language. The course reflected this approach and was fun to go to.
The instructor is extremely passionate about teaching persian and meets students where they are. This allows various students to fulfill there different interests in learning the language and also creates a cohesive class. She provides a ton of support, is very encouraging, takes time to help each individual student, and also provides additional time if any student needs it.
I really liked the professor's instruction style and the way classtime was balanced between the vocab, the drills, speaking, and learning new words.
Professor Shabani–Jadidi cares so much about her students and loves Persian. She puts a lot of time into carefully correcting our mistakes in the HW. For every weekly video HW she records a response with corrections and feedback. She is also very accommodating when students are struggling. She is always on time and in the rare case that she missed any class time due to travel she makes it up. She is always available for office hours and responsive to email.
The instructor was enthusiastic and extremely dedicated to student development. However, it felt as though classes were repetitive and content was not adjusted to meet class needs. The final assignments demanded unreasonable expectations for work that did not feel adequately addressed or prepared for in class. For example, we were expected to write a 10–15 page paper in Persian, despite never writing anywhere close to that amount at any other point in class. While we wrote weekly journal entries and some paragraphs for class, this paper felt like a stretch to submit a paper for the essay prize at the end of the year. Additionally, it was difficult to receive feedback for this particular assignment despite how much work went into it, becuae it was one of the last assignments of the year

Did taking this course improve your language skills significantly?



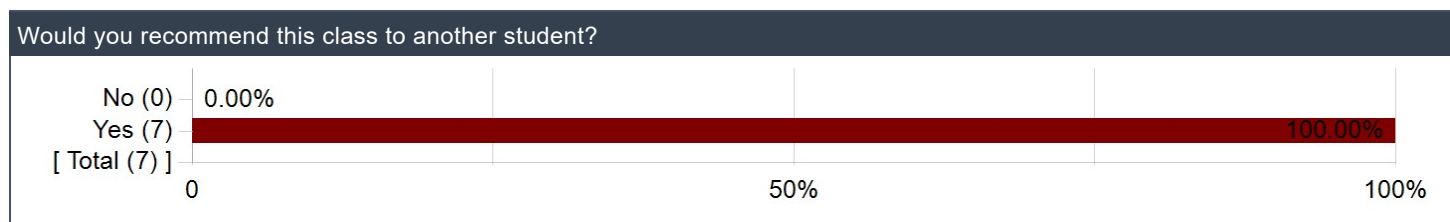
In what way?

Comments
I used to find it tiresome to record videos speaking for class, now it is pretty smooth to do a 15 minute video without prep.
My speaking has improved and my confidence with writing.
I am much more confident in my reading and writing abilities.
I can confidently speak, read, listen, and write significantly better in Persian than at the beginning of this year. I feel that I will be able to continue my study of the language independently and will hopefully be able to use it in my research effectively
This year and the final course in the persian language sequence firmly solidified my persian training. I was able to walk away with a much more grounding in gramma, speaking, comprehension, and writing than a year ago, and really saw an improvement in myself that also makes me want to keep practicing my persian.
In every way
I was able to give a presentation in Persian, which I did not think I would be able to do after only two years of instruction.

How would you improve this course?

Comments
No suggestions come to mind to be honest. I suppose one idea is to be strict about the homework due dates. I feel like I got lazier and more lax with that.
I think there should be a greater emphasis on comprehension—beyond just listening to a song one time and seeing if we understood anything. I think the final paper needs to be shorter—especially when it is typed because typed Persian is much smaller than handwritten meaning the quarter we switch from handwritten to typed, the paper does not just go up from 6 to 8 pages, but in fact goes from about 6 handwritten pages to the equivalent of 12 handwritten pages. I think if you want students to write such long papers at the end of the quarter on top of all the other final assignments it needs to be scaffolded into the quarter: perhaps asking for half a page of the paper each week instead of the journal so that by the end of the quarter the paper is largely drafted, and students have the time to fully edit and proofread the paper and work on the presentation/exam/final homework
None.
I would include a bit more focus on vocabulary and maybe having further accountability with regards to vocab. I felt that I could have used a greater focus on vocab
I think I would personally like to see more translation exercises in the textbook as those were my favorite, even of two or four lines as those really help to build confidence in reading comprehension.
I think a more thorough review of the grammar that we learned in year 1 would be useful. We review concepts every once in a while but sometimes the basics are fuzzy after so long. Ideally after 2 years we show know the basics of Persian grammar and morphology well enough to give someone a crash course in it.
I would update the textbook to include a wider array of skills, and I would also make class time to review vocabulary and current events

Would you recommend this class to another student?



Why?

Comments
Yes, it's really a great sequence. One has to trust the process. the outcome will be solid footing in this very beautiful language and culture.
Persian is a beautiful language and Pouneh is a wonderful professor!
This course does a great job teaching people the language and familiarizing them with the culture.
Because the instructor and the cirriculum. Though this class is alot of work I think you come out of it feeling much more confident in your ability to learn a language
I think people who are interested in solidifying their persian will find that the process really works when they keep at it and don't get discouraged. The final sequence really helped to bring everything we learned together from the last two years.
This class is a great way to expand upon your knowledge of Persian