



LACS 16300 1, HIST 36103 1, ANTH 23103 1, LACS 34800 1, SOSC 26300 1, HIST 16103 1, CRES 16103 1, PPHA 39780 1 - Introduction to Latin American Civilization III - Instructor(s) - Brodwyn Fischer

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

Number Enrolled: **57**

Number of Responses: **20**

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
Latin American history from a mostly economic lens from late 19th century to late 90s. Tried its best to be as comprehensive as possible with the large amount of material, and a very well organized course.
The history of Latin America from around the late 19th century to present.
The economic development of Latin American countries and foreign influence.
Latin America in the context of development
Overview of LatAm societies, focused around the social and political repercussions of various economic systems within the region, from ~1870s to present day
Latin american culture
What were the main stages and visions of economic development in Latin America? How did they interact with the rest of Latin America?
Learned about Latin American development. Fantastic introduction to Latin American scholarship.
How to synthesize dense readings. Generally, Latin America from the late 1800s to now.
I learned about the paradox of development that has plagued Latin America from the beginnings of commodity capitalism, to the developmentalist era, and into the modern neoliberal era. In general, I also learned about the swinging of the political pendulum from 1830 to the modern day. I learned a lot about the economics of Latin America and its politics with a good deal of information on more typical "historical" events as well such as the Mexican and Cuban revolutions and the Guatemalan Civil War.
Latin American history from 1890–present. It was great highly eke
Tons of key historical periods and themes, topics in economic and social organization
The economic ebbs and flows of Latin America in the 20th Century, the ideology of development, and the historical precedents and factors behind Latin American racial, gender and class based inequalities.
why Latin America fell behind the US and Europe economically
I really enjoyed what this course taught about racism and social hierarchies in Latin America.

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

Comments
Very good lecturer
The lectures help to explain the key concepts, and reading materials with discussion sections gave us the opportunity to further study into these concepts.
Lectures and discussion were super helpful.
The way this course was structured was very organized and all contributed to my learning (all being the discussion posts, lectures, and discussion section).
Lectures were very good, but sometimes vague – but Prof. Fisher had a huge task in covering an entire continent for more than 100 years in 9 weeks. Discussion sections were also very good, with variance depending on how good the readings for the week were (in particular the last week's reading was dense and altogether not worth the effort it took to read, not to mention somewhat out of step with our previous trajectory, but others were illuminating and led to vigorous discussion)
Relevant
Lectures were stellar, readings were long but relevant, discussion sections were really good.
Great lectures and great readings
Lectures were absolutely fantastic and made me interested in the topic. The discussion posts and discussions kept me on track with my readings as well.
Lectures were very thorough and packed with information. Professor Fischer has a clear mastery over the subject she lectures on, particularly the economic and political aspects, so she is able to describe in great detail the situations in the countries or regions being discussed. Discussions were also good to contextualize the reading that we had done and cement a familiarity with the material. The weekly writing assignments were similarly helpful.
Loved the course and well structured
Professor Fischer is an excellent lecturer. The readings were generally solid too, though I think the Brazil reading at the end of the course should be updated in favor of newer material.
Lectures were fantastic. By far the best civ lecturer I had, and I took the full sequence. The discussion sessions were also very helpful, but I think that's mostly due to my specific TA being exceptional (Kevin Chrisman)
The lectures were very helpful because there isn't really any information written on the slides. So everything we need to learn we learn in class.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.61	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	38.89%	61.11%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%
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.	4.72	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	5.56%	16.67%	77.78%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.72	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.78%	72.22%
I felt respected in this class.	4.83	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	83.33%
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
Loved this course and the professor!
I was pleasantly surprised by the quality of this course and how much I learned about history, economics, and politics.
This course was not what I expected from a typical history course. While I always expect to hear about the economic and political situations of the period, I feel that this class was more of a historical economics class first and a history class second; viz. I often felt that I wanted to learn more about the stories unfolding in these countries rather than the economics that accompanied them. That should not be taken to mean that I found the economic aspects frivolous; I just think it should be noted that the structure of this course differed from my expectations.
This was a really fun and interesting course that I highly recommend to anyone interested.
Like I said, Professor Fischer is an excellent lecturer and clearly knows her stuff. I just wish I took a different class with her to get to know her more one on one.
There is a LOT of reading. Literally 200+ pages some weeks. Usually like 120 pages I think? There were weekly discussion posts, but no midterm, and the final was an in class exam instead of an essay so that's nice.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	5.26%	94.74%
Anyone interested in the topic	5.56%	94.44%

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

Comments
The lecture.
Her lectures were super engaging. Very good professor.
Lectures
Prof Fisher largely had very, very good lectures, especially when she was able to dive in—depth into a specific event or region (e.g. the Cuban Revolution)
Lecture
Lectures.
Great lectures, covering a wide variety of topics but still connecting everything and following a logical progression
She was incredibly passionate about what she was talking about, so I felt like I was getting a very deep understanding of the history even if we only touched on everything on a surface level.
Professor Fischer's swiftness in covering the material was very helpful in moving through all of the material that we needed to. While the 9 week quarter is never enough time to cover all relevant material in any class, Professor Fischer was able to leave us at a satisfying ending in the final lecture by virtue of the constant momentum she maintained throughout the quarter, so I felt that the information I had been learning all tied together at the end. Moreover, I felt that same information worked together all throughout the course, allowing a throughline to be traced from one period to the next. As a result, even major events rarely felt surprising, which, I believe, is a testament to Professor Fischer's level of detail in her lectures.
Music before lecture. Lecture in home
Lectures and slides
She was just fantastic at lecturing. Very concise and clear about themes. She connected topics instead of spewing one fact after the other (like other civ professors)
She explained all of the points very thoroughly and would answer questions in very descriptive ways.

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Post the lecture slides beforehand and also record the lectures.
Condense the readings, have more notes online for students to reference to, and make the connections between lectures and readings more clear
The course was very reading intensive. In some cases this was necessary or understandable, but the book that was assigned ninth week was not worth the effort and I believe it should be taken off the syllabus or only a 20–30 page selection taken from it.
Nothing
I think in general taking questions in a lecture setting is not a good use of time. I much prefer hearing Professor Fischer, who is clearly incredibly well-versed in her field, than some kid.
Professor Fischer relied heavily on tables of data for her lectures that focused particularly on economics. While she would often summarize what these tables show, the slides would have nothing but the table on them, so if you missed what the takeaway was, you would have to ask her to repeat herself. Additionally, these lectures would have 10+ tables of raw data in them, which made them incredibly difficult to actively engage with, in my opinion. Rather than pictures of raw data from a textbook, perhaps compiling the relevant data into a plot would be better to emphasize her points. The same information could be conveyed but in a way that humans can intuitively understand at a glance, and students could devote more attention to the words she is saying rather than trying to parse through a table of ~100 values and follow year and country columns and rows to find certain values.
Honestly Professor Fischer did really well within the confines of the structure of civ courses. I think they should be organized more like SOSC core classes, with smaller sizes and more discussion based rather than lecture based.
The readings were too much. Just way too much. And while I was very interested in latin american history, this was still a core class for me and I could not be spending that much time reading every single week. I could have just done a super easy art class, but I wanted learn more history and ended up somewhat regretting it because of the length of the readings.
I wish she would have posed the terms and concepts before class so I could know how to organize my notes and what information would be most important for the final.

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.72	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.78%	72.22%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.89	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	88.89%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.93	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.56%	77.78%	16.67%
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.	4.83	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	83.33%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.94	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.56%	94.44%	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.	4.83	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	83.33%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.83	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	83.33%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.83	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	83.33%	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
Benjamin Montaño— good at facilitating discussions, synthesizing the often complex and long readings we had for class
Kevin Chrisman. Kevin has been extremely helpful since the beginning of the class. He is very patient and helpful, encouraging meaningful discussions during discussion sections. Also, the feedbacks of the discussion posts are detailed and useful.
Kevin Chrisman
Kevin Chrisman
Benjamin Montano. He's very knowledgeable about this topic and was always willing to answer questions. A very organized and prepared TA.
Kevin Chrisman – Kevin was an excellent instructional assistant. A number of students, including myself, opted into the discussion sections taught by Kevin, including a 9:30 am section (which should say a lot), because he is very good at fostering a friendly, inclusive environment where students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and at getting students to engage with the course themes in large– and small–group conversations. Discussion sections always went by extremely quickly, and almost always we were still engaged in discussion when we ran out of time,
Benjamin Montaños.
Stellar. Benjamin knew when to intervene and when not to and he's extremely knowledgeable on the topic. Benjamin puts a clear emphasis on quality rather than quantity in section, which made the class more focused on saying things that mattered rather than scoring participation points.
Benjamin. Great discussions, really good command of the material and how the themes all fit together. Led very fluid and interesting discussions. Nothing but praise for him.
Nahomi: very flexible and understanding, and helped facilitate good discussion about the texts.
My discussion sections were run by Nahomi Esquivel, and she did a great job! She made sure to promote discussion between the students while keeping her own opinions as far out of the discussion as possible. This allowed for authentic expression and questioning from the students. She was always able to address any questions or confusion herself but often prompted other students to answer if they felt comfortable. Additionally, I found her feedback each week on the required writing responses to the readings to be well thought–out and helpful in forming my next writings.
Kevin Chrisman
Kevin Chrisman! Great TA. He led discussion well and was patient.
I had Kevin Chrisman as a TA. He was really great and engaged, gave good feedback, and kept a nice atmosphere during discussion!
Kevin Chrisman. Good discussion facilitator for the most part, but 9:30 AM discussion section was tough to create an engaging and free–flowing discussion that didn't make it feel like pulling teeth.
Kevin Chrisman. There is nothing he could have done better. The best TA I've had, no question. He managed to actually connect with all the students and naturally motivate discussion. He encouraged students to engage, and would talk about aspects of the readings and make connections that weren't obvious. Kevin added his own dimension to the course as I think he deliberately talked about things that the professor didn't focus on as much but were still very important to know.
Benjamin Montaño
Nahomi Esquivel – We had discussions with her every Friday. The discussions were good because this is where we discussed the books we read. Nahomi was good at directing our discussions, but she also wouldn't really "give away" things which I think is what we needed. Sometimes it was clear why we read a book, but other times the books were very dense. So I would have appreciated a better understanding of what I should've gotten from the text.

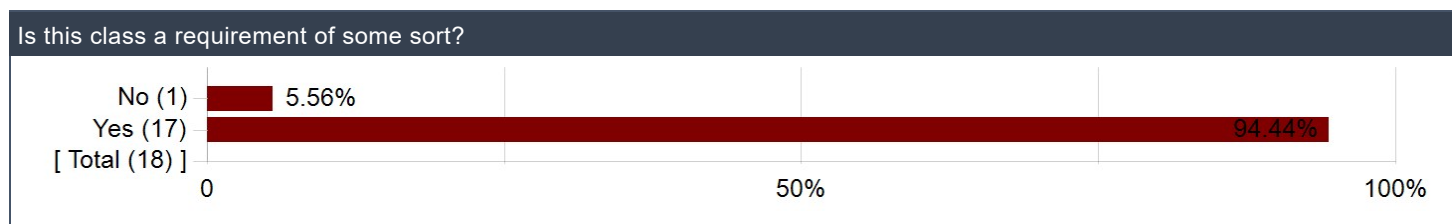
The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.00%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	4.63	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	12.50%	75.00%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	4.81	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.75%	81.25%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	12.50%	81.25%	0.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	12.50%	81.25%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	12.50%	81.25%	0.00%

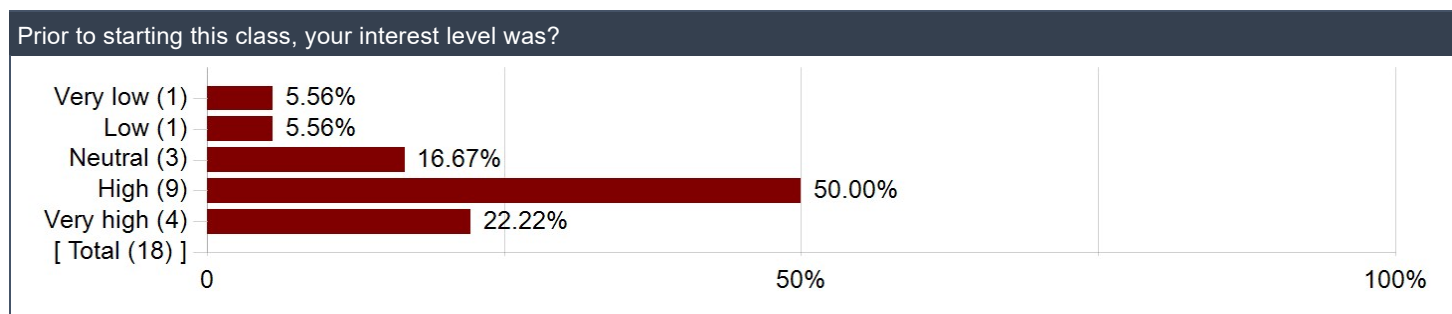
How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	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	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Writing Seminars	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

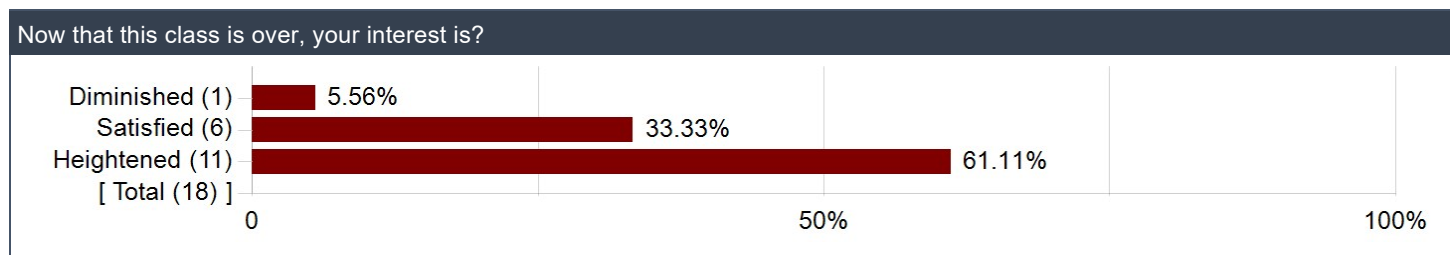
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



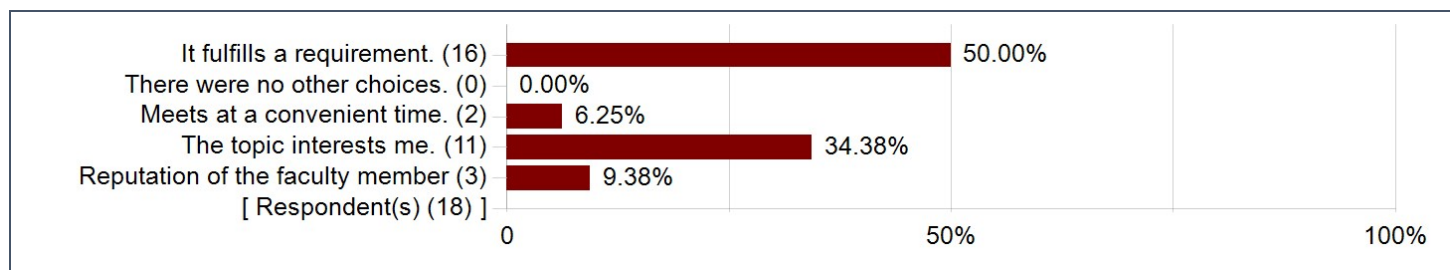
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



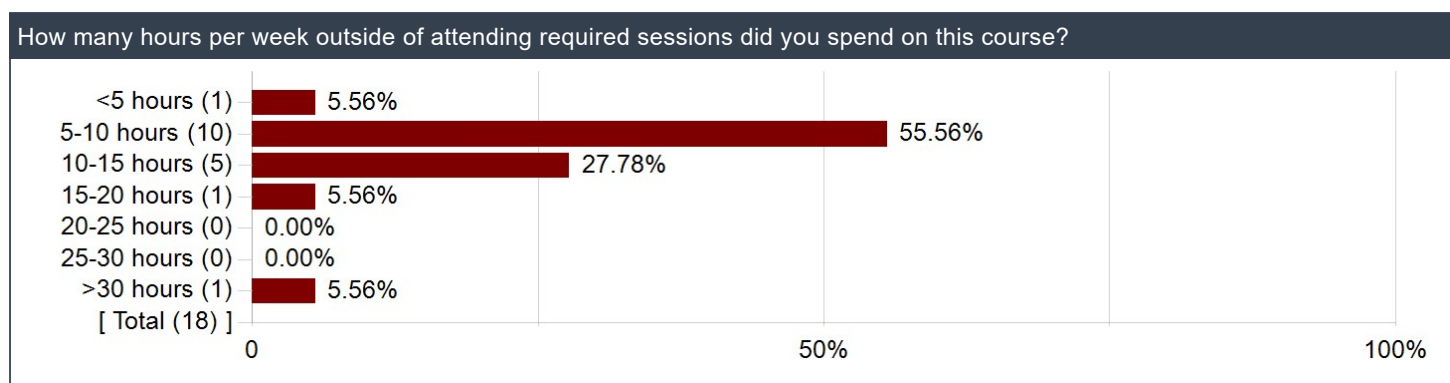
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



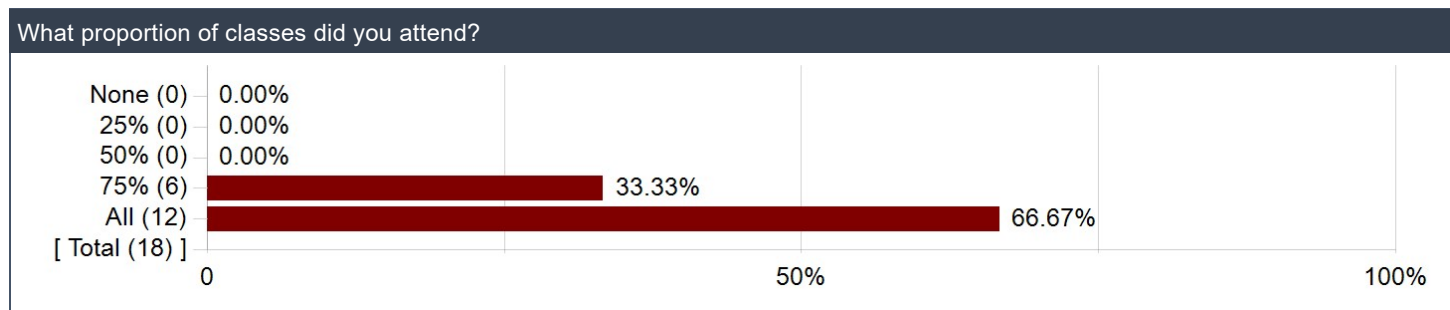
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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
not too difficult, a lot of reading though
Having taken the first couple Civ classes helps but not needed.
Not difficult as long as you put in the time and effort. The workload is very reasonable, but the readings can be a lot.
Not difficult, but more difficult than LatAmCiv I, just because of the sheer amount of reading – full books were assigned for the week five times, and our lightest week of reading was about eighty pages. Because of the weekly discussion sections and writing assignments, it is really not doable to skate by without doing the readings in this class, at least not if you want to perform well.
Way harder than i expected
challenging, especially due to the amount of information one must take in.
Good
It is very dense, and as someone who has not taken CIV and doesn't know any Latin American history beyond the basics, it was pretty difficult. However, the class was structured in a way that as long as you understood class material, you would do good.
I am a STEM major who had taken the previous 2 quarters of this civ sequence leading up to this class and found this class to be of similar difficulty. As with each of the classes, the professor tends to believe that you have far more time (or perhaps, motivation) to do the readings than you actually do, so either start reading early or get good at gleaning information from excerpts you do choose to read. We were often assigned entire books or upwards of 120 pages a week, which was surmountable when the texts were novels or narratives, but quite difficult when you reach page 80 about the coffee economy of Brazil and how the value of its exports changed year by year in the 19th century. However, the writing assignments and participation was not difficult, and the final test (consisting of a identifying terms that had been heavily used in class and 2 fair essays) was only of moderate difficulty. Overall, 5.5/10 difficulty if you're comfortable abridging some of the readings, 7.4/10 difficulty if you actually read everything.
Regular. Do the work and must go to lectures.
About the same as previous quarters. More readings, but no midterm
It's an introductory course so it wasn't hard at all. In fact, we went into depth on a lot of things and the final was much more relaxed than a lot of us expected.