NEHC 20004 1 - Ancient Near Eastern Thought and Literature I: Mesopotamian Literature - Instructor(s): Susanne Paulus

Project Title: **College Course Feedback - Autumn 2023**

Number Enrolled: **23**
Number of Responses: **14**

Report Comments

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

Creation Date: **Friday, February 2, 2024**

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

Comments
I got very elementary understandings of Mesopotamian literature and was expected to write very basic papers. I came to this class extremely interested in learning about ancient Mesopotamian culture and literature, and instead found that I might as well have just read the texts on my own time for all that I learned.
history of ancient mesopotamian literature, sumerian stories, we read gilgamesh, spoke about translation and adaptation.
I learned about languages and writing styles of Ancient mesopotamia. We analyzed literature and prereligious stories about gods.
All about the Ancient Near Eastern and its Literature
Mesopotamian historical background while reading and discussing primary sources.
Mesopotamian literature
I learned about different epics and myth written in Ancient Mesopotamian times, I also learned a lot about the language/type of text that they used.
Very interesting stuff on ancient Mesopotamia!
The major characters and plotlines of Mesopotamian epics, cuneiform writing, Mesopotamian religion and culture
Mesopotamian literary texts; how to interpret ancient works of literature; how to adapt ancient works of literature
How to make adaptations of texts.
Honestly I don't know... I guess ancient literature but we didn't "learn" that much about them.

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

Comments
Lectures were few and far between and simply did not cover information that would actually provide a helpful background in Mesopotamian history/culture/religion/etc. Course discussion featured only very surface–level discussions of the plot of the texts, without any real consideration of anything deeper. One class every week was dedicated to group work that, while fun, did little to contribute to anybody's learning. Papers were extremely easy; the expectations were not that high, and you could basically write about whatever you wanted. The final project, to create an adaptation of a Mesopotamian text, is interesting and open–ended; you can kind of put whatever you want to into it. We also had individual tasks (a discussion question, reading a secondary paper, and annotating one of the primary readings) that we signed up for at the beginning of the quarter, but the due dates for these were not well–communicated at all.
everything contributed
Lectures were occasional and helped solidify knowledge from the reading. We sometimes went to the ISAC museum, which was very interesting in how it related to the class material. We had frequent discussions and creative group work, which was fun and engaging.
loved class Thurs mostly lecture and loved going to the ISAC museum to discussion artifacts we had read about. Thursday's are for group work which kept things engaging.
The class had a solid balance of discussions, group work, and lecture.
The lecture is interesting, and I learned a lot.
I enjoyed the lectures and discussions very much, I thought that everyone in the course was very engaged in the material and so there was always a lot of good thoughts/ideas presented during discussions and during the question time of lectures.
Everything did – very manageable and cool stuff to learn.
Lectures were separated into standard lectures and interactive activities. Prof. Paulus is a great lecturer (and often led the lectures in the ISAC museum), and the activities were always educational and entertaining!
The lectures were good; I really enjoyed the creative group work
Discussions were hit or miss. Sometimes they were interesting but sometimes extremely boring.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	3.71	4.00	7.14%	7.14%	7.14%	64.29%	14.29%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.14	4.00	0.00%	7.14%	14.29%	35.71%	42.86%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.50	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.29	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	21.43%	28.57%	50.00%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	7.14%	35.71%	57.14%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.29	5.00	7.14%	0.00%	7.14%	28.57%	57.14%
I felt respected in this class.	4.64	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	35.71%	64.29%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.36	5.00	0.00%	7.14%	7.14%	28.57%	57.14%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
This is a very easy course if you're just looking to fill your Civ requirement, but I would definitely look elsewhere if you want to actually learn about the topic.
this is an incredible course for civ — prof. paulus is amazing and class is always a great time. class was usually group work or discussions about the readings, and we had lots of opportunity to be creative with group work and in final project.
TAKE FOR CIV!
I'm overall very happy I decided to take Mesopotamian Civ, especially with Dr. Paulus.
This is an excellent course! Absolutely worth taking for an interesting and insightful look into Mesopotamian lit (without being too challenging in terms of deadlines or projects)!
I was pretty disappointed in the course. There didn't seem to be any clear idea or goal of the course. It was in between a literature and history class and ended up doing neither very well. There was also no effort to explain or justify why learning about these texts was important. I would have expected discussion about what we can gain from reading Gilgamesh, etc. but there was none of that. I was also somewhat disappointed that we didn't even read all of Gilgamesh. We didn't read any of the flood tablets which seems kinda weird considering they seem to be very relevant and arguably influential to future epics.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	28.57%	71.43%
Anyone interested in the topic	0.00%	100.00%

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

Comments
The few lectures that actually gave background information were helpful and interesting; I just wish there had been more of them.
lectures, office hours, feedback on assignments
Group assignments and lecture helped me solidify my knowledge the most.
Engaged, excited, and the museum visits in class
When we went to the ISAC museum, it was very clear how much Dr. Paulus knew about the subject matter while she lectured. I also enjoyed the reading setup (annotating one source and reading one secondary source).
The lectures are great, the group projects are interesting, and the field trip to the ISAC museum is inspiring.
I enjoyed how Professor moderated our discussion, she always came up with good questions and was always able to help drive the conversation and topic. I also enjoyed that Professor incorporated a lot of creative elements into our class, I think it made all of the content I learned more memorable and enjoyable.
Museum Visits!
The group projects Prof. Paulus came up with were not only a great way to shake the lecture fatigue, but also gave a reason to engage with the material beyond just "I will have to write an essay on this".
I loved when professor Paulus read in Akkadian; it was so cool
Her knowledge and background on Mesopotamia
Prof Paulus was fine. Nothing bad but certainly wasn't the most engaging instructor.

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
I really just wish she had taught more. She clearly knows a lot about Mesopotamian history and culture, but that just was not covered in the course. More extensive lectures, and perhaps more assigned secondary readings, would have helped to enable much more learning in the course.
absolutely nothing, it was great
A clearer outline for the course and the materials covered would make the information more organized and easier to absorb.
N/A
Not much. I sometimes felt like there could have been more time alloted when we did groupwork in class.
N/A. Very great course, and Professor Paulus is great!
I think the organization of the canvas is a bit confusing. At the beginning of the course we are asked to sign up for tasks throughout the course and it was hard to keep track of when things were due just because there are so many assignments under Canvas.
Not much — the course is excellent as is! As a minor gripe, paper grading was a bit inconsistent between Prof. Paulus and the TA — the latter was somewhat harsher.
Nothing
Determine if the class is a history or literature course and try to do more of one, rather than I vague middle ground.

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.29	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	28.57%	14.29%	57.14%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.57	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	57.14%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.43	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	21.43%	14.29%	64.29%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.43	5.00	0.00%	7.14%	7.14%	21.43%	64.29%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.29	5.00	0.00%	14.29%	7.14%	14.29%	64.29%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	21.43%	64.29%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.71	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	28.57%	71.43%	0.00%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.64	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	7.14%	21.43%	71.43%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.71	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	28.57%	71.43%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	21.43%	64.29%	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
Carter Rote. He didn't have to do much besides grading, but he seemed fine and engaged with the course.
carter rote — great person, very helpful with paper writing and feedback, etc. also a great presence in class in general
Carter – he was awesome! Would read over my outlines and drafts and provide feedback quickly after.
Carter
Carter
Carter – Carter was really kind and easy to talk to and ask questions which I appreciated, he graded a lot of our essays and left comments which I thought were fair and were helpful for my essay writing the next time around. I felt like Carter played more of a behind the scenes role in the course, but I think it could be nice if Carter also talked a little bit more in class about his own thoughts on the readings or help facilitate our discussions a little as well.
Carter Rote– provided very useful feedback on section papers such that I improved across each essay I wrote by using his comments on the previous essays.
Carter Rote
Carter. Was cool and knowledgeable.
Cater rote.

The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.25	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	25.00%	50.00%	0.00%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	4.33	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	8.33%	50.00%	41.67%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	4.25	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	25.00%	50.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.25	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	25.00%	50.00%	0.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	4.33	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	33.33%	50.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.58	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	41.67%	58.33%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.33	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	33.33%	50.00%	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	NRP	NRP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Field Trips	4.33	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	66.67%	0.00%
Library Sessions	NRP	NRP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Review Sessions	NRP	NRP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Writing Seminars	NRP	NRP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Is this class a requirement of some sort?

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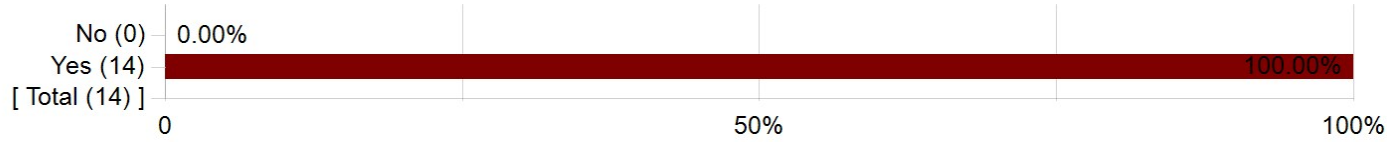

Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?

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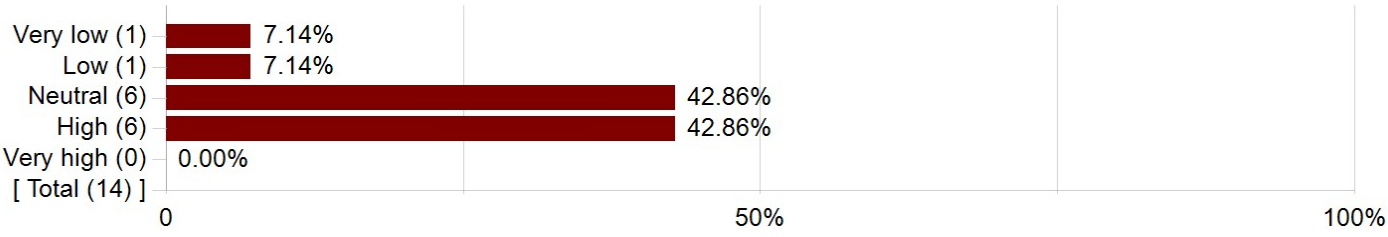
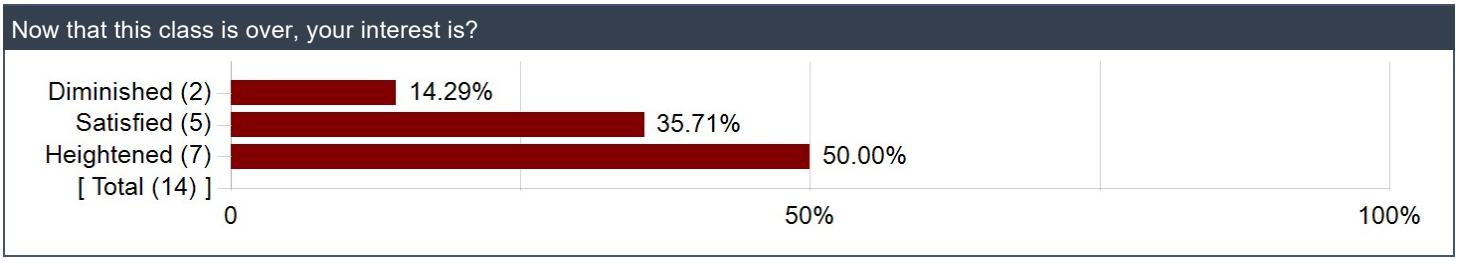
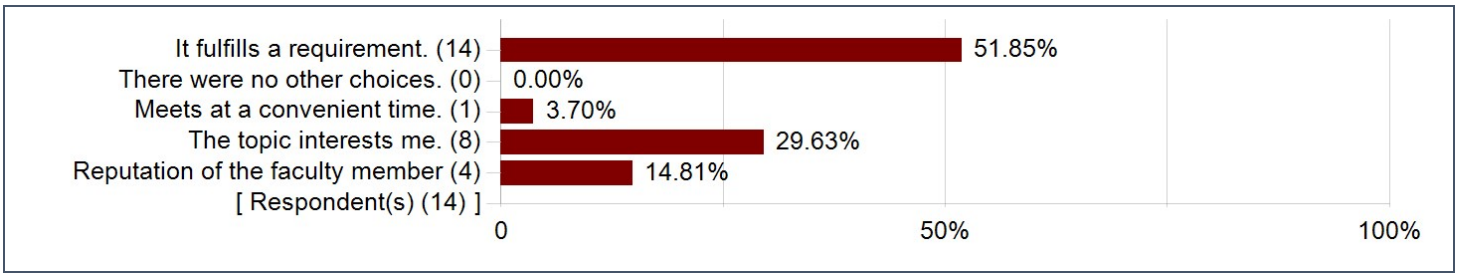


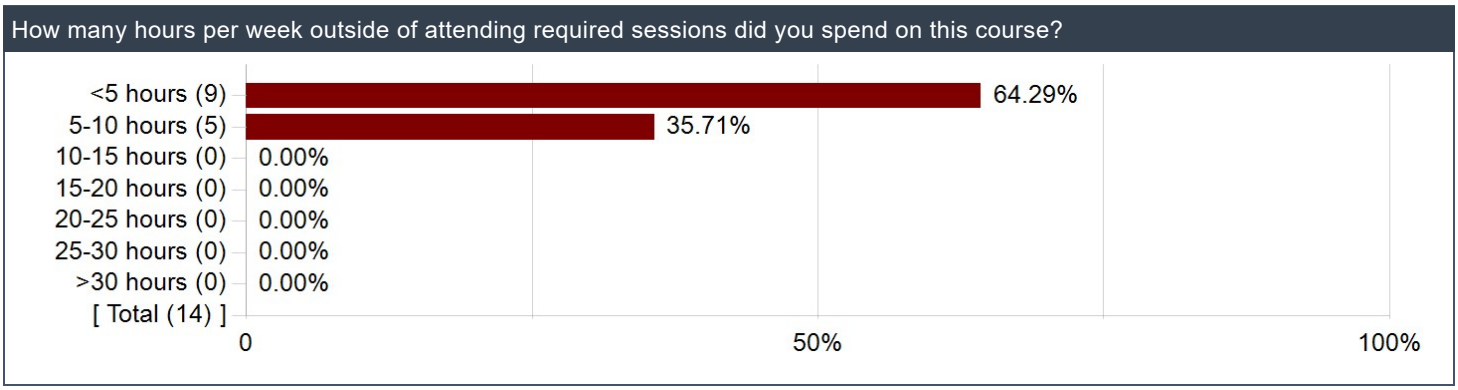
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



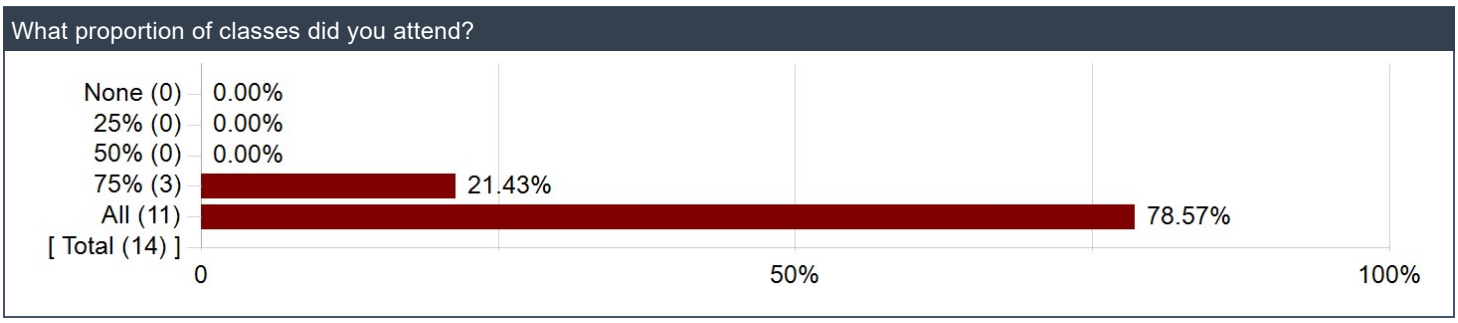
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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 was by far the easiest class I've taken here in terms of expectations for engagement with the content. As long as you have a surface–level understanding of the readings, you'll be fine.
This course was not very difficult
Not difficult as a stem major with little background in the subject.
It doesn't require any background, and it's not very difficult if you do all the readings/attend all the discussions.
The course was easy and really enjoyable, I had a lot of fun taking it.
The course is very straightforward in its assessments and requires the same set of skills as HUMA and SOSC courses (discussion in class and essay writing)
Not too bad of a CIV; if you're interested in the topic and put in a little work, you will get an A
Was a perfect difficulty.
Not too hard, 3 short essays and a final project. Weekly readings are not long.