



# HUMA 17000 9 - Language and the Human I - Instructor(s): Alan Yu

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

Number Enrolled: **19**

Number of Responses: **15**

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## Report Comments

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

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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
About how language truly equals power and how there are many different types of language.
Relationship between language and power in different contexts, with some aspects of sociolinguistics touched upon as well.
The tangible connections between linguistic expression and imposition of power. We learned to analyze texts through a vernacular lens—examining how power imbalances are expressed through the spoken and written language. if
How to write a strong essay for college and how to read critically.
We learned about the intricacies of certain dialects and speech and how and why they came to be
A lot of different ways that language is related to power dynamics between groups/people. Ex) colonialism, accents, racism/sexism/discrimination, control, literacy. The texts and content were pretty interesting and directly applicable to the real world, so it didn't just feel like an abstract HUM course!
The significance of language and its intersections with power and social stratification, how to become a truly complex writer
I learned about how language alone can have significant affects on the way people interact in society and how cultures are built and changed.
How to contribute to class discussions.
I learned that there are several ways to interpret things, and that it is important to listen to all viewpoints because they can help inform me about my own thoughts.
how linguistic features and the context of languages can affect power dynamics
I learned about how language is a medium for exchanging information, and how language can be used to distinguish people or groups into strata (based on competence, dialects, etc.).
I learned a lot about analyzing the literal language we were reading, as well as how power dynamics play into language.

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

Comments
Discussions in class helped me to better understand our readings as it showed different perspectives.
I actually really enjoyed the seminars in this class! Professor Yu prepares thought-provoking questions and creates a very relaxed environment that is conducive to participation. The writing seminars, however, were not very helpful in my experience.
Discussions were helpful on occasion; however, such utility only came when Professor Yu chose to step in and guide the conversation in a certain direction, or offer his own opinion. I recommend paying close attention to his opinions and interpretations, as they make construction and framing of the papers much smoother. Similarly, I highly recommend attending office hours, and doing so with specific questions or ideas prepared. He will challenge the mechanisms of your potential topic and force you to consider its shortcomings. These pointed questions can be challenging at first, but they should be taken as hints towards *what* your essay could be about. It's much easier to convince him of his own opinion, rather than your own.
We discussed readings that we completed on our own time in class. These readings were accompanied by some lectures.
Readings out of class then discussions in class helped learning
Class discussions were helpful in understanding the texts, although frequently pretty quiet/dry (no real discussion going on). Essays were helpful in teaching me how to do college writing. I think the discussion post required for each reading was good at keeping me accountable to close read/draw conclusions from the reading, but I can't say any real "discussion" was facilitated in the online forums.
This course was primarily discussion-based. A few classes were led with a short lecture to give us more context on the reading that was to be discussed. The discussions were a great way to solidify my understanding of the readings.
Lectures contributed the most to my learning. Our professor facilitated lectures well by letting students talk but also stepping in to provide information when needed.
Made me think more about themes in books and how they apply to our everyday lives because of the discussions.
I thoroughly enjoyed the classes because we had very avid discussions about the texts that we read. My favorite part was that it did not feel like work, but rather a deep conversation that would flow on its own.
class discussions are great
Class discussions facilitated most of the learning, and canvas discussion posts on the readings were a good opportunity to deepen my understanding of the texts we studied this quarter.
I really enjoyed many of the readings we did in class, and all our discussions were also really insightful. Time always passed by quickly in class because I felt like it was just a conversation about a book rather than a class.

## Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	3.93	4.00	0.00%	6.67%	20.00%	46.67%	26.67%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.20	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%	66.67%	26.67%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	3.40	4.00	6.67%	20.00%	20.00%	33.33%	20.00%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	3.47	4.00	6.67%	6.67%	33.33%	40.00%	13.33%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	3.73	4.00	6.67%	13.33%	6.67%	46.67%	26.67%
My work was evaluated fairly.	3.80	4.00	0.00%	20.00%	6.67%	46.67%	26.67%
I felt respected in this class.	4.47	5.00	0.00%	6.67%	0.00%	33.33%	60.00%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.07	4.00	6.67%	0.00%	13.33%	40.00%	40.00%

## Additional comments about the course:

Comments
Professor Yu was AMAZING, he really helped bring discussions to a new intellectual level.
I love the texts I read in this class. It feels very thoughtfully designed and structured.
Would recommend!
After establishing the primary point of language's effect on power structures, the course did get a bit repetitive. All of the readings seemed to reinforce or add a slight nuance to the same point we'd been discussing.
Very interesting class. Not too many assignments and the readings were mostly interesting.
n/a
N/A
interesting topic, no too much reading
Participating in discussions was a little daunting at first but everyone seemed comfortable having discussions on even some of the more difficult subjects since our teacher created a good environment for challenging discussions and welcoming to everyone's ideas

## I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	13.33%	86.67%
Anyone interested in the topic	6.67%	93.33%

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

Comments
Professor Yu was very talented in keeping discussions flowing, which contributed most to my learning.
Professor Yu is very good at facilitating accessible but thought-provoking discussions. I feel like everyone in the class was given the opportunity to contribute meaningful ideas because of it. He also is very attentive to student needs, and was super easy to reach via email or to meet during office hours.
As mentioned previously, office hours are most helpful when you are actually prepared.
The lectures on more difficult concepts
His slideshows and videos he prepared for the class offered interesting perspective
I think the facilitated in-class discussions helped me to think about the texts differently and practice articulating my thoughts. They were kinda stressful though because I was always worried about not having something interesting/useful to say (this is probably true for all HUM classes). Prof Yu didn't lecture a lot, but sometimes he would go into the technical linguistics stuff, which was interesting even if not directly applicable (a bit esoteric).
Professor Yu was very well-versed in the topics and could answer questions that strayed a bit from what was explicitly in the readings and give context. He did a good job facilitating discussions and ensuring everyone was heard. He was very respectful and created a healthy discussion environment.
Professor Yu was very knowledgeable about language.
Discussions.
I enjoyed that my professor was open to all opinions about the text. I feel like with a reading heavy course, it can be easy to only take one route to understand the material, but my professor genuinely was interested in everything the students had to say about our material.
class discussion and his 1-on-1 OH
Professor Yu was open-minded and empathetic towards his students. It allowed us to feel comfortable when contributing to discussions. He also challenged us by asking follow-up questions, contributing to my development as a student.
Openness to people's ideas and flexibility to meet about papers
Definitely the guided discussion contributed most to my learning. Many of the ideas I've had for essays were birthed through discussion and then put into words in my essays later. Mr. Yu was very good at guiding discussions when it stalled or bringing up new interesting points.

## What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Maybe add some lectures to have students be more informed on certain ideas and topics in class.
I think the expectations for what creates a successful essay in this class would have been very helpful. This could be as simple as providing a rubric.
Be clearer about the expectations of this course: why does it matter that language is being analyzed in this manner? Accordingly, it would be helpful to understand why certain texts were included. The ambiguity behind both of these aspects led to a general misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the course objectives.
More lectures and more guidance in discussions
Maybe more small group time, because it felt like the whole-class discussions were either dry or incomplete a lot of the time
Given more direction when initiating discussions and participated more in them. The students very much drove the discussions, yet sometimes went a little too off-kilter.
Provide more detail on how he would like papers to be written before grading them so harshly.
Absolutely nothing. Everything in this class was well thought-out.
Be more clear on essay instructions and what he wants
nothing I can think of
More videos/recordings of spoken language rather than just written language!

## The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.40	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%	46.67%	46.67%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.33	5.00	0.00%	6.67%	6.67%	33.33%	53.33%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.33	5.00	0.00%	6.67%	13.33%	20.00%	60.00%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.27	5.00	6.67%	0.00%	6.67%	33.33%	53.33%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	6.67%	20.00%	40.00%	33.33%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.20	4.00	0.00%	6.67%	6.67%	46.67%	40.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.36	5.00	0.00%	6.67%	6.67%	26.67%	53.33%	6.67%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.33	5.00	0.00%	6.67%	6.67%	33.33%	53.33%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.33	5.00	0.00%	6.67%	6.67%	33.33%	53.33%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.27	5.00	0.00%	13.33%	0.00%	33.33%	53.33%	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
My class had a writing workshop instructor, Clara Mitchell. I enjoyed that she would often pair us up with small groups of peers, which helped me get another perspective on writing. I feel that she can modify some things though. She introduces ideas of how to write through short videos, but never fully expands on the ideas. After under informing her wants on these ideas, she unfairly grades papers.
Mitchell. Ms. Mitchell was not particularly helpful. Her writing seminars seemed to be very surface-level at times and I struggled to apply them to my own writing. Some exercises definitely felt more effective than others, but I think she had a very hands-off approach to the class. She seldom was present and, per my own experience and that of my classmates, she was hard to reach for support or feedback. If I recall correctly, she was also assisting another HUM section, which certainly could explain this, but I do feel like my grade suffered a bit from the lack of support on her end.
Clara Mitchell
Clara Mitchel: Assignments for writing seminar were posted too late, sometimes the night before the session. It would be helpful if these assignments were posted earlier. Additionally, it would be nice if the sessions met more in advance of essay due dates.
Clara Mitchell. She was helpful in seminar, but I think only 3 short meetings weren't enough for me to make the expected transition to excellence in college-level writing. Maybe more writing seminar assignments/draft feedback would have been helpful? I felt like a lot of the time I wasn't fully picking up what she was saying because the content (Problem, etc.) was very new and abstract to me.
Clara Mitchell

### The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	2.60	2.00	0.00%	50.00%	16.67%	16.67%	0.00%	16.67%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	3.00	3.00	0.00%	16.67%	66.67%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	1.75	2.00	16.67%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%
Challenged you to learn.	3.20	4.00	16.67%	16.67%	0.00%	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%
Helped you succeed in the class.	2.17	2.00	16.67%	66.67%	0.00%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	2.50	2.50	16.67%	33.33%	33.33%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	2.33	2.00	16.67%	50.00%	16.67%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%

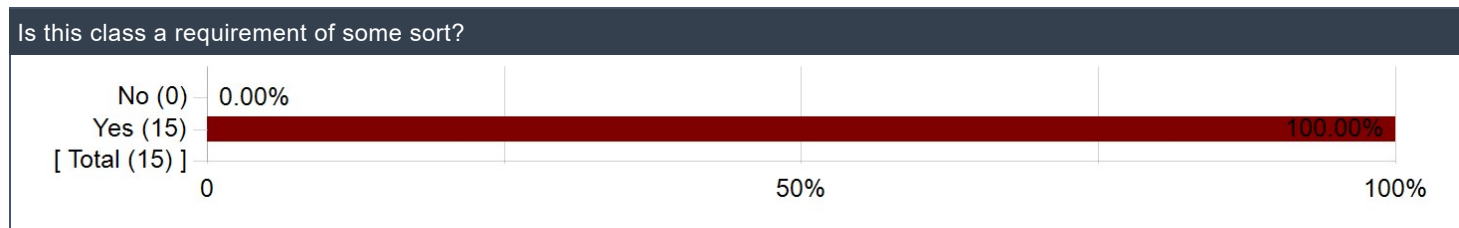
### How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	Mean	Median	No Gain	A Little Gain	Moderate Gain	Good Gain	Great Gain	N/A
Laboratory Experience	1.00	1.00	9.09%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	90.91%
Field Trips	2.86	3.00	0.00%	18.18%	36.36%	9.09%	0.00%	36.36%
Library Sessions	1.00	1.00	9.09%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	90.91%
Review Sessions	1.00	1.00	9.09%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	90.91%
Writing Seminars	2.93	3.50	21.43%	14.29%	14.29%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%

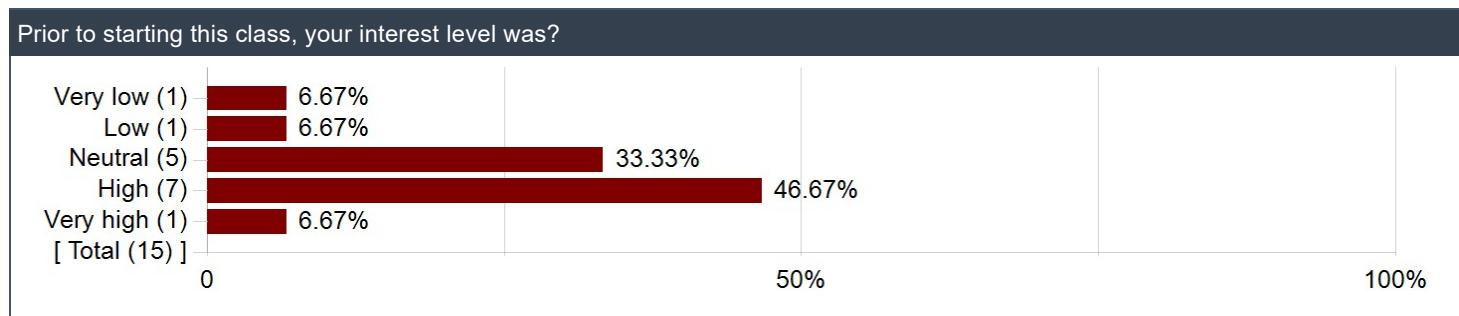
### Other course elements not mentioned above:

Comments
One time we went to ISAC which was cool, because it was so applicable to what we'd been learning about! Ex) text as a commodity, colonialism, barbarism, linguistic record
N/A

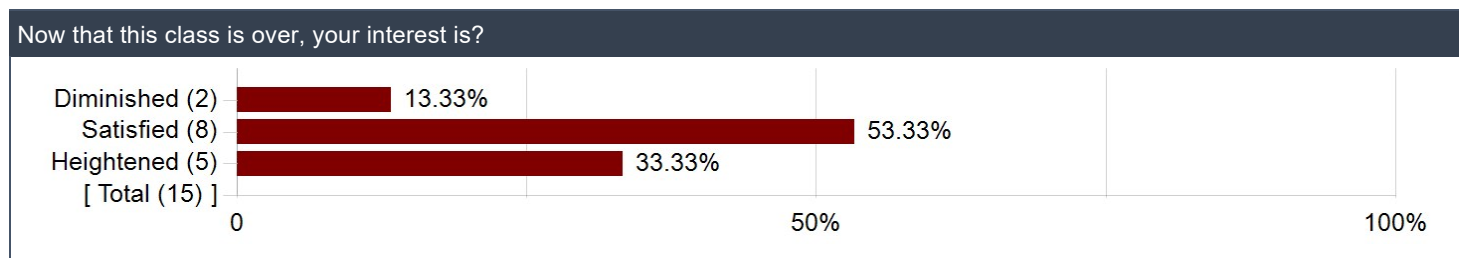
## Is this class a requirement of some sort?



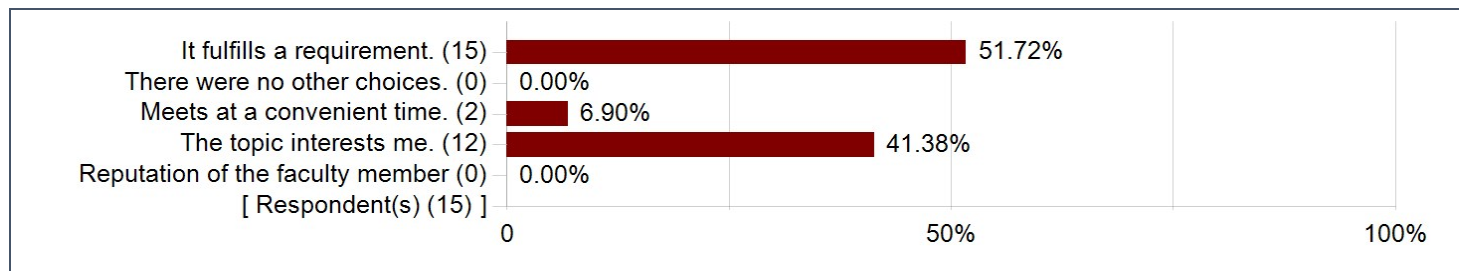
## Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



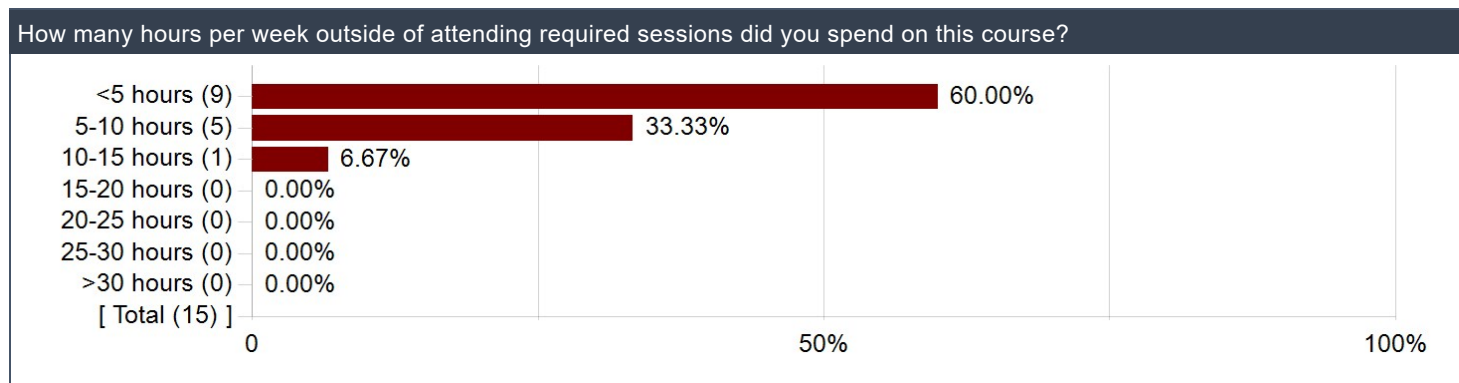
## Now that this class is over, your interest is?



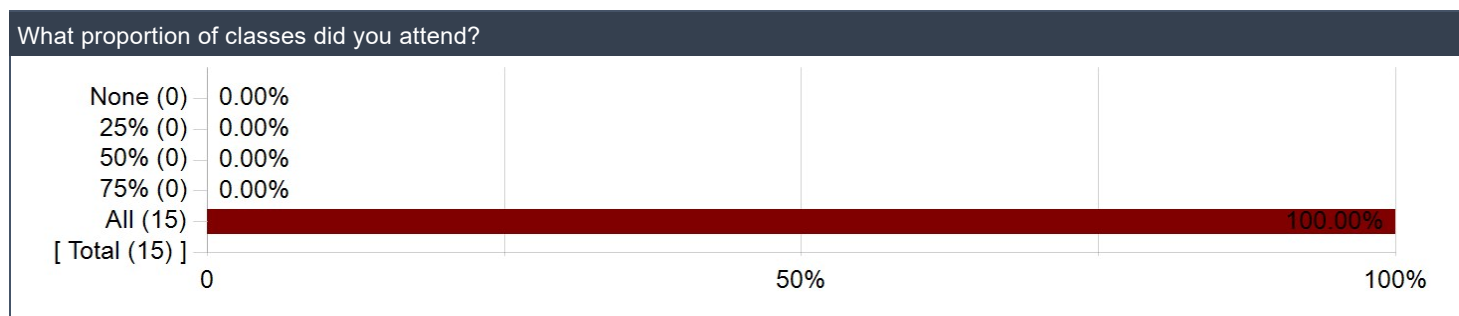
## Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



## 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
Pretty difficult, but in a good and mind-challenging type of way. Having no foreknowledge, it led me to learn a lot in this course.
The readings vary in length and complexity, but overall this course is very accessible. If you find language/linguistics at all interesting, I highly recommend!
While the sections' content might vary from professor to professor, this course rushed through readings quite often. For instance, by necessity, we could not finish <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> due to time constraints: this incomplete reading made constructing the essays difficult. The course itself is not difficult; the professor just made the content confusing.
Moderate
The reading wasn't too difficult, as it was a good balance between very dense fairly modern literature and essays. I'd say it was definitely hard for me to transition into college writing, but I think this class was a great context in which to do it! No huge complaints.
Reading was not overwhelming, essays were difficult because of the lack of rubric – it was hard to know what to do to get a desired grade
The only assignments are essays so if you are good at writing essays then the course will be no problem. As far as reading and understanding what you are reading, in-class lectures are enough to help you understand.
no background info needed
I felt as though I was prepared for the class, and as long as I was willing to engage, it was not too difficult.
Writing style was different from what I was accustomed to in high school