



# SOSC 15300 6 - Classics of Social and Political Thought III - Instructor(s) - William Levine

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

Number Enrolled: **19**

Number of Responses: **10**

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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: **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   |
|--|
| I became a much better writer in this course. The improvement was much more noticed than in HUM.   |
| I learned how to read important theoretical texts in a critical way, and learned to identify and resolve the tensions that animate the text through close reading and interpretation         |
| Sampling texts of social theory in the 19th–20th c.  |
| Analyzing political theorists and texts— how to read and interpret Tocqueville, Marx, Nietzsche, Du Bois, De Beauvoir, etc.  |
| How to make sense of texts that challenge our assumptions about the "naturalness" of our social world  |
| How to critically analyze seminal works of political philosophy and social theory and how to write sophisticated papers  |
| I learned how to make a philosophical argument that actually identified a problem. This allowed me to become a much stronger writer as I looked for meaning beyond a surface-level analysis. |

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

| Comments  |
|---|
| Daily question assignments were sometimes annoying to do but were always appreciated when it came time to write papers. Will does a great job of guiding the in class discussion without ever giving us any answers, making it so that we really have to dig deep for everything.         |
| Class consisted of discussions led by Professor Levine, and as necessary, lecture during the discussions from Professor Levine to better explain the text. Lectures and discussions were great— I thought the balance of these was good, and Professor Levine does a great job as always. |
| Discussions are especially critical in working through somewhat dense or opaque texts like Marx and Nietzsche   |
| Professor Levine's lectures were ver engaging and informative, and seminars and workshops hosted by our writing TA Justin helped with papers  |
| Normal class seminar discussions were super helpful as they provided a space to reflect on the texts and make connections.  |

**Please respond to the following:**

|  | Mean | Median | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree  | Strongly Agree |
|--|------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|
| This course challenged me intellectually.  | 4.60 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 40.00% | 60.00%         |
| I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it. | 4.60 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 40.00% | 60.00%         |
| I understood the standards for success on assignments.                           | 4.40 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 20.00%  | 20.00% | 60.00%         |
| Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.                 | 4.70 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 30.00% | 70.00%         |
| I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work. | 4.60 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 40.00% | 60.00%         |
| My work was evaluated fairly.  | 4.80 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 20.00% | 80.00%         |
| I felt respected in this class.  | 4.70 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 10.00%  | 10.00% | 80.00%         |
| Overall, this was an excellent course.   | 4.80 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 20.00% | 80.00%         |

## Additional comments about the course:

| Comments  |
|---|
| Discussions were not particularly helpful, and made up mostly of 2–3 very vocal speakers. My general sense is that people didn't read the texts closely enough, granted they were difficult.  |
| Could not recommend this Sosc sequence enough, especially with Prof. Levine! Was definitely the highlight of my year!   |
| Professor Levine is fantastic. I didn't think I'd enjoy any of the readings at all, but class discussions are always engaging and he always manages to probe the class with questions no one is prepared to answer. His understanding of the texts is fantastic, and he will probe you to write a really compelling paper by the end. |

## I would recommend this course to:

|   | No    | Yes     |
|---|-------|---------|
| Highly-motivated and well-prepared students | 0.00% | 100.00% |
| 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  |
|---|
| Will is a phenomenal teacher, really knowledgeable about the content but he never forces his reading of the text on us. The way he leads discussions allows us to come to our own interpretations of the text which I really enjoyed.   |
| Professor Levine helped us explore each text in a very productive manner, and also helped provide historical context for theories and ideas by situating them as the product of wider philosophical/political/social traditions   |
| Levine is great! He works hard to make a welcoming environment for discussion and learning, and making the material more approachable to students. Office hours were also very helpful.   |
| I appreciated that, as we read more complex texts this quarter, Professor Levine lectured more to help us understand them.  |
| He does a great job balancing keeping the discussion on track and letting us go off in different directions. He also makes a point of contextualizing texts within the broader philosophical tradition that most of us are not so familiar with   |
| Prof. Levine was very passionate about the course material, and his lectures were always engaging and thought-provoking. He really wanted to make sure that we understood the material and facilitated a challenging but warm classroom environment. He was also always available after class or during office hours, whether you wanted to pick his brain about his research or ask questions about assignments. Overall, he truly a gem of a professor. |
| Will was really great at setting our goals for each class which was helpful in concisely identifying which ideas we had most trouble with or wanted to explore more.  |

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

| Comments   |
|--|
| Not much actually, I think I probably got a lot more out of these texts than I was expecting and I'm not quite sure how I could've gotten more.                            |
| No comments.   |
| Not much; perhaps slightly more timely feedback, but he usually accounts for this by extending deadlines so that it's not an issue.  |
| He had a habit of grading papers late, but this wasn't really a damper on the course by any means. He's an absolutely wonderful educator!                                  |
| I really liked the later texts as they felt more connected to our current reality, so I think it'd be nice to either spend more time on them or read more texts like them. |

## The Instructor . . .

|  | Mean | Median | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree  | Strongly Agree | N/A    |
|--|------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|--------|
| Organized the course clearly.  | 4.60 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 40.00% | 60.00%         | 0.00%  |
| Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.                       | 4.78 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 20.00% | 70.00%         | 10.00% |
| Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.                     | 4.80 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 20.00% | 80.00%         | 0.00%  |
| Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.                  | 4.80 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 20.00% | 80.00%         | 0.00%  |
| Challenged you to learn.   | 4.90 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 10.00% | 90.00%         | 0.00%  |
| Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.              | 4.80 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 20.00% | 80.00%         | 0.00%  |
| Was available and helpful outside of class.                                | 4.89 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 10.00% | 80.00%         | 10.00% |
| Motivated you to think independently.                                      | 4.90 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 10.00% | 90.00%         | 0.00%  |
| Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.          | 4.70 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 10.00%  | 10.00% | 80.00%         | 0.00%  |
| Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning. | 4.80 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 20.00% | 80.00%         | 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   |
| Justin Smolin. He was readily available almost every week for one-on-one help with writing assignments, which really made a difference.   |
| Justin Smolin. He was fantastic. The required write ins and group sessions could be quite boring, however I highly recommend meeting with him individually to go over your paper. He is a really thoughtful writer, and provided great feedback. He is always willing to make time to meet as well. |

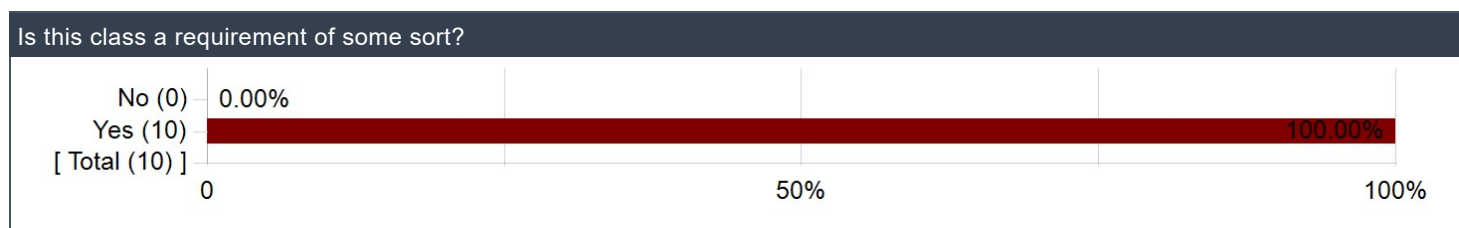
## The TA/CA or Intern. . .

|  | Mean | Median | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree  | Strongly Agree | N/A    |
|--|------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|--------|
| Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.                      | 4.33 | 4.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 50.00% | 25.00%         | 25.00% |
| Gave you useful feedback on your work.                                     | 4.25 | 4.50   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 25.00%  | 25.00% | 50.00%         | 0.00%  |
| Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.                   | 4.50 | 4.50   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 25.00% | 25.00%         | 50.00% |
| Challenged you to learn.   | 4.50 | 4.50   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 25.00% | 25.00%         | 50.00% |
| Helped you succeed in the class.   | 4.75 | 5.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 25.00% | 75.00%         | 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. | 4.33 | 4.00   | 0.00%             | 0.00%    | 0.00%   | 50.00% | 25.00%         | 25.00% |

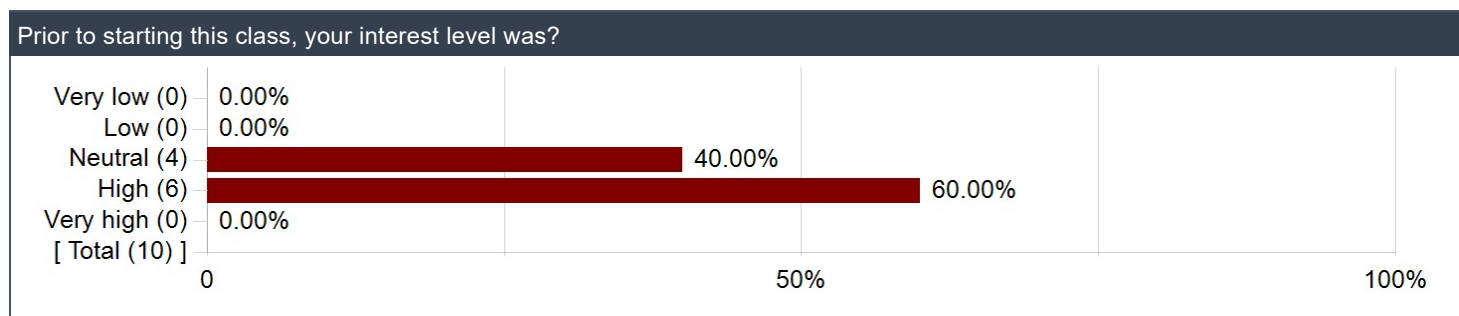
## How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

|                       | 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       | N/A  | N/A    | 0.00%   | 0.00%         | 0.00%         | 0.00%     | 0.00%      | 100.00% |
| Writing Seminars      | 3.57 | 4.00   | 0.00%   | 14.29%        | 28.57%        | 42.86%    | 14.29%     | 0.00%   |

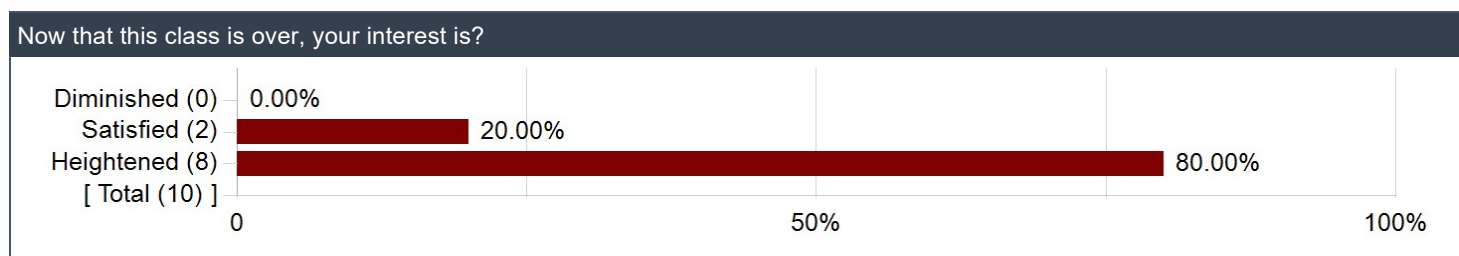
## Is this class a requirement of some sort?



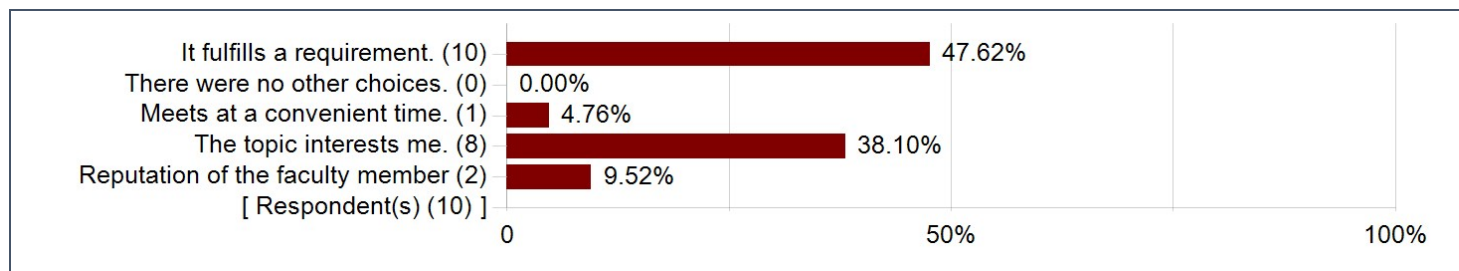
## Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



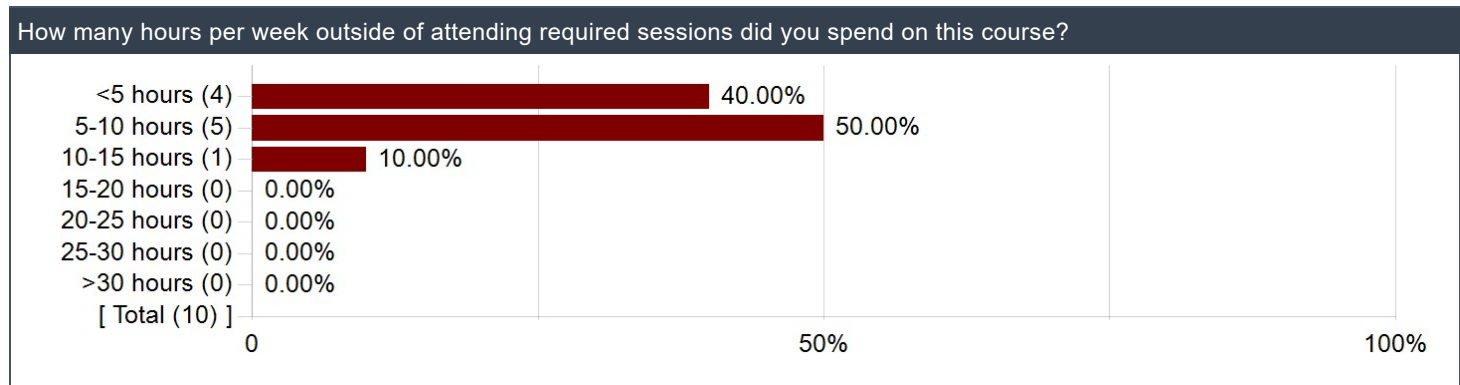
## Now that this class is over, your interest is?



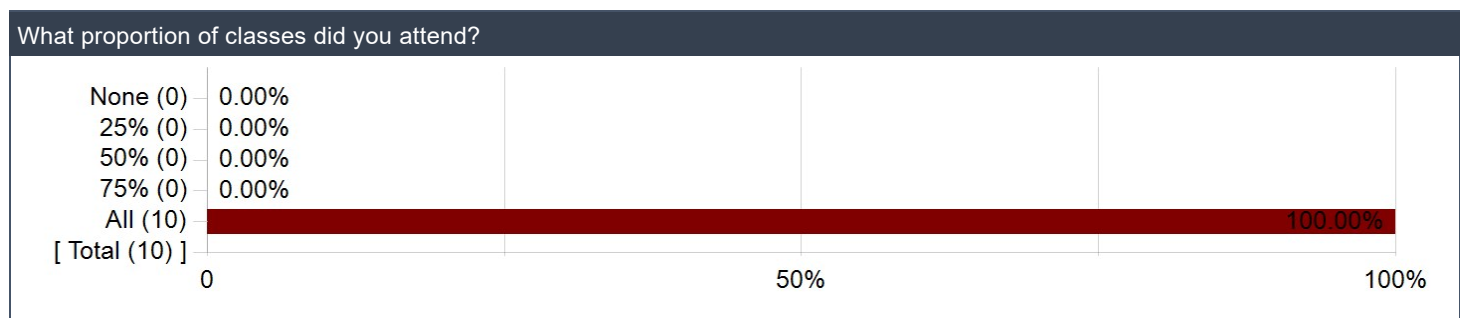
## Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



## 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   |
|--|
| Will expects a lot on papers, much more than HUM. It took me a while to really nail down how to write a paper for this class but once I got there I felt very proud of myself.   |
| It was challenging for me as a beginner and there was a steep learning curve, but I think because of these two things it was extremely essential and necessary for my academic journey in the humanities   |
| Easy.  |
| This class is quite manageable— while some of the texts are difficult to read, they're usually well-discussed and well-explained during class, and it's not difficult to come up with some questions and ideas to ask/contribute to the discussion.                |
| Was a challenging course, but anyone who puts in the work and is engaged will do fine. You really can't skip out on the readings though.   |
| Very reasonable course. Would recommend for anyone to take. Readings are minimal (30 pages per class – ~60 pts per week total) and maybe only one or two papers. Don't be put off by taking this class since Classics has a reputation for being a hard SOSC core. |