



NEHC 20015 1, HIST 25706 1, RLST 20315 1 - ANCIENT EMPIRES V: THE Umayyads, NEHC 20015 1, HIST 25706 1, RLST 20315 1 - Ancient Empires V: The Umayyad - Instructor(s): Cecilia Palombo

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

Number Enrolled: **15**

Number of Responses: **9**

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, March 28, 2024**

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

Comments
I learned about the main issues in the study of the Umayyad period, as well as substantive ideas, concepts, and important events about the period. I learned to think critically about the early sources, compare the period to other important ideas in early history ("late antiquity"), and think of events through a multilayered paradigms.
I learned how to analyze historical sources, this class gave me a new perspective on analyzing data
History of the Umayyad caliphates
Early Islamic history
Characteristics of the ancient world, early Islamic art (coinage, paintings, architecture), literature (especially Quranic and political), and politics.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –The empires of Late Antiquity –The rise of Islam and the Medinan caliphate –The Umayyads of Syria and the Umayyads of al-Andalus –The interplay between different religions and cultures under the caliphate –Umayyad art, architecture, coins, and artifacts –Visit to the ISAC Museum –Umayyad poetry and music –Manuscripts and the Quran –Administration and mobility across the empire –Imperial cities –The Hajj –Dissent and rebellion

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

Comments
I think the "tasks" were very helpful to see how the history can be seen in real materials and object. The discussion was helpful in highlighting the broad ideas we must keep track of. The readings were, of course, helpful in both understanding the "tools" historians use as well as the events.
the lectures were well written to foster engagement naturally
Mostly lectures, discussions. Readings were dry and boring. There were easy weekly tasks that were more engaging though.
Classes were joint lecture and discussion, TA sessions reinforced what we discussed in class
Lectures were very informative, podcasts maybe not that much
Lectures were helpful, and readings provided detail that lecture could not.
Lectures were the most important for understanding course content. They were very well put together and interesting while also encouraging interaction and discussion. Weekly readings and podcasts were very reasonable and a lot of fun. Discussion sections led by our TA Jeson were enjoyable and used to dive deeper into course content.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	25.00%	62.50%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.88	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.88	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%
My work was evaluated fairly.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
I felt respected in this class.	4.88	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
I think the guidelines and the means to success were clear from the beginning of the course, and they continued to be clear. I enjoyed the clarity of the rubrics and the metrics used to evaluate us.
I loved it!
Straightforward if you pay attention in class.
Interesting material, light reading load, no papers, cool final project. Prof. Palombo and Jeson are kind, passionate, and knowledgeable.
Not the most intellectually demanding course, nor was it particularly well structured. There was a lot of going back and forth subjects within the Umayyad period.
Professor Palombo and Jeson are experts in their field and had a wealth of incredible knowledge to share. I would highly recommend this course to anyone with an interest in Islamic culture even if they have no prior experience. This course will completely transform your perspective on history, religion, and how you view ancient cultures. This has been one of the best courses I have taken at this university.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	12.50%	87.50%
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
I think her lectures were great, as well as the readings and tasks she chose for the class. Her pedagogical skills are amongst the finest I have seen.
I think Professor Palombo's ability to make it comfortable for everyone to participate was the best part of the class. Even if you occasionally miss a reading, you will be well-prepared for quizzes and finals so long as you show up and put effort in.
Professor Palombo lectured and shared lots of media including maps, quotes from religious texts, artwork, artifacts, poems, and much more. She also encouraged class participation and discussion. This made the lectures very engaging and easy to follow.

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
I feel like most of the time, she could have elaborated on her answers to questions in the lectures, although I do understand the time constraints of the class. Also, I feel like the "discuss with people around you" did not really lead to the best discussions.
I think that the podcasts could be shortened. The readings were fine in length but the podcasts could be either a bit dense or too long and it was hard to parse the useful information at times.
Some of the assigned tasks and podcasts were not helpful, for example, the Hajj video game was not productive. Also, I thought some of the podcasts were very interesting and understand why they were assigned but I personally feel that it's important to choose podcasts that also have transcripts for students with different learning styles/accommodations.
Making the sequence of topics addressed more logical. Beyond this, the expectations for content covered on the exams were sometimes unclear.
No changes are needed.

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.63	5.00	0.00%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%	87.50%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	0.00%	87.50%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.88	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.86	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	75.00%	12.50%
Motivated you to think independently.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.88	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%	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
Jeson Ng. Jeson, I think, is one of the most best TAs I have ever interacted with. He possesses the typical aspects of a TA—knowledge of the course topics, passion for the topic, and a very detailed and precise ways of thinking about the topic, but he goes far beyond the requirements of the TA–ship. He dedicates a great portion of his time to hold office hours, even helping people catch up with the important topics they may have missed in their absence. He not only welcomes general and specific questions about the course material, but also he allows for broader questions, which he answers very well. He can talk knowledgeably about the Seljuks, Mongols, and Abbasids, and even contemporary Arabic and Turkish cultures. He communicates very well with us; we received detailed announcement and notes about what to study within only a few hours of asking for them. However, what I enjoyed most about Jeson, aside from his industrious and studious personality, is his great conversation, humor, and kindness. When I serendipitously see him outside class—on the Quad or in the library—he stops to ask me about my progress and allows for short, passing questions. Such kindness that goes beyond the classroom is unheard of for me. If he had ever offered a course that he taught solely, I would—without any hesitation—have taken it—and I say this as a graduating student. I have loved every interaction with such a wonderful, kind person.
Jeson Ng
Jeson was great!
Jeson Ng
Jeson was great and I thought our discussions were helpful in identifying key points from lectures and readings
Jeson helped provide detail and examples to more theory–based lectures. He was especially helpful in preparing for exams and projects.
Jeson was our TA. He led discussion sections and also did a guest lecture during one of our classes. Jeson was very kind; he was always eager to help students and would always ensure that we were prepared for our projects and assessments. In addition, Jeson brought fascinating insights from his knowledge of Arabic poetry to our class. He was passionate about the content that we were learning, and he was an integral part of the course.

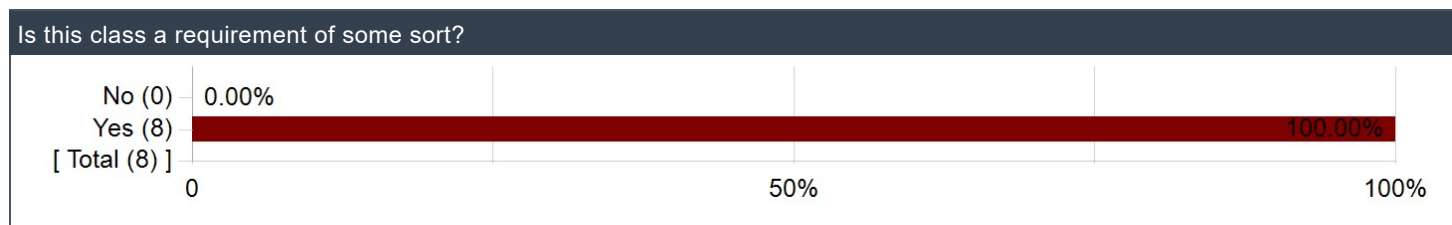
The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.88	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%	0.00%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	87.50%	12.50%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.88	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%	0.00%

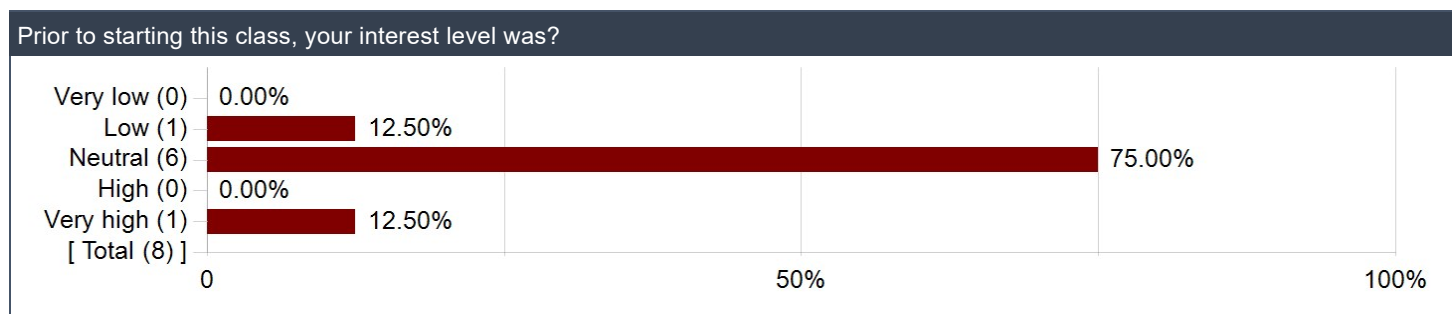
How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	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	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Library Sessions	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Review Sessions	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Writing Seminars	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

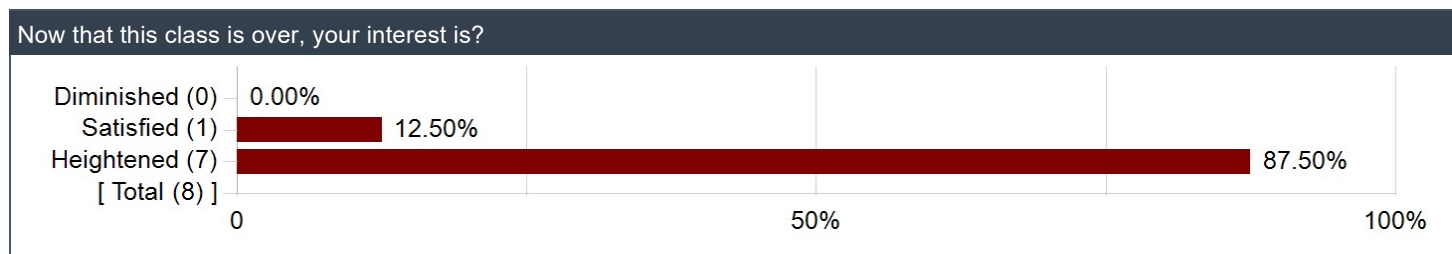
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



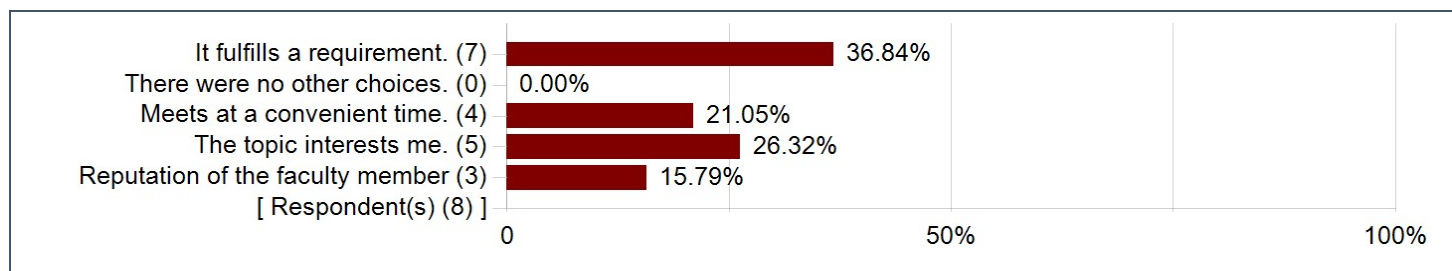
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



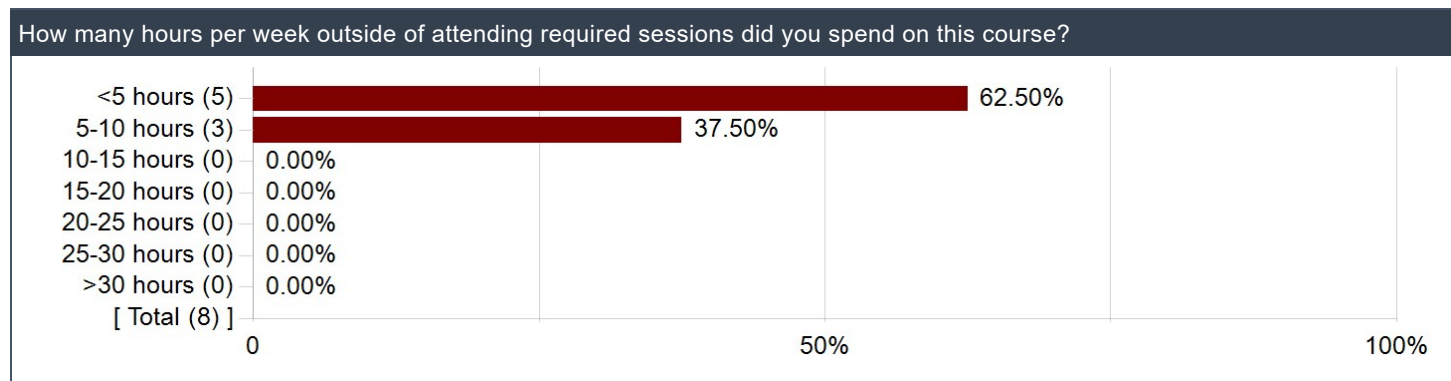
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



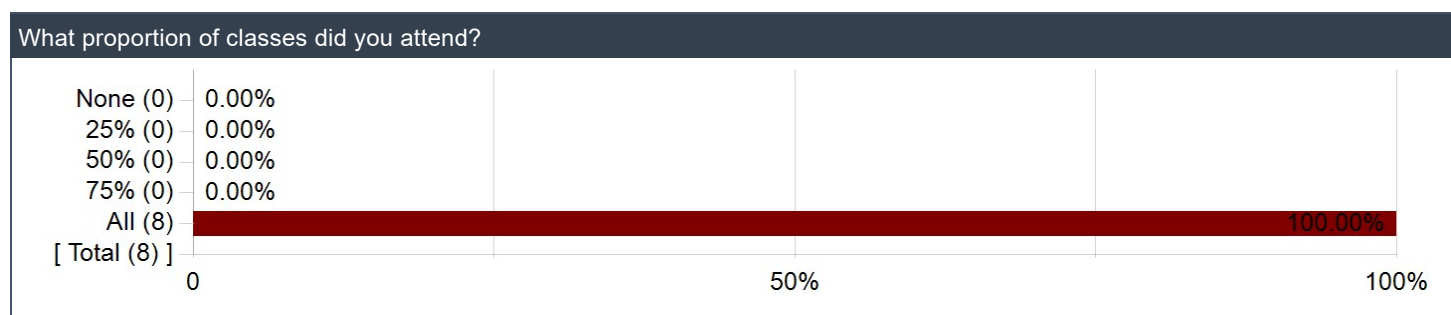
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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
It was very accessible even for a student who did not have a great foundation in the topics we discussed.
Challenging but very manageable
I took Ottomans previously. Doesn't require background of any kind.
Not difficult, but I think I learned a lot
As someone with no prior experience with Islamic history or literature, this course was highly accessible.
Regardless if you have no prior experience with this content or quite a bit, you will learn many things. This was a great course.