



SOSC 12600 12 - Self, Culture, and Society III - Instructor(s) - Julie Chu

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

Number Enrolled: **18**

Number of Responses: **11**

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
I found the Foucault and the Kuhn readings very interesting.
Publics plus the social science of conspiracy theories and nostalgia.
How to look at power relations in society.
I learned about the history of science, who has the authority to speak "truth" and the evolution of "truth" and knowledge, how sociology/social science can intersect with many different fields and how it's applied, about Foucault's conception of power and discourse, especially in relation to sexuality, more about the conception of the "self" from different theorists, and generally a lot of really cool things related to sociology.
How to approach accurate recountings of history and the biases of knowledge production
The course covered ideas about the individual, power, objectivity, etc., including a wide range of authors and concepts. The instructor also assigned a group presentation where we brought in a piece of media that we analyzed with the authors we had read.
Any word that ends in "tivity"
Foucault, and the exposure to the anthropology of science, technology, and knowledge production in general. First half is similar to other self sections. In the second half, we discussed modern feminist theory (very briefly), facts/objectivity, citizen science, technoscience, conspiracy theories, silenced pasts, restorative nostalgia, crisis, and settler colonial spectacles.

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

Comments
The classes were very disorganized with the professor running behind in content, which negatively affected my learning—I felt very lost in the content as well as the purpose of the class. The assignments were unnecessarily long and seemed like busy-work, they weren't complex, but demanded a lot of time to complete, which essentially felt like an absolute waste of time. I also did not appreciate how late the instructor was with regards to grading assignments while having very strict extension policies. Overall, it really seemed like there was a double standard in the class with how the instructor expected to be treated and how she treated the students. For example, quite often she would be late to class, then make the class run long, she would also have a problem with people leaving to go to the bathroom, which is quite surprising and introduces hostility in the class. I really enjoyed some of the readings and overall did well on assignments, but it was probably the most frustrating class I ever took at UChicago just because then human factor of the instructor really made it a burden. A positive aspect of the class was really only that it was the last part of the sequence so even though it discouraged me from the social sciences as a whole, at least it won't affect any of the other classes I will take in the future.
Discussion was great and the readings were super interesting.
discussion was helpful
The class meetings were very helpful in developing my understanding of the texts we had to read, as many were hard to understand at first due to their complexity. Professor Chu had mini-lectures that helped clear up confusions and the discussions were very productive.
The class presentations that we had to do were also great, because they helped us establish a connection from a reading to another piece of media, like a news article.
The later content was interesting. Professor seemed interested in anthropology.
The lectures were clear and helpful for clarifying both the reading and succeeding on the essay assignments, which included a section where we explained important terms from the class, in addition to a standard essay.
Prof Chu mainly lectures throughout the class. Definitely be attentive because the information from the lectures comes up on the midterm essay/word definitions and final essay/word definitions.
I'd divide the class into two halves. The first half was typical "Self" social science material. The second half, which felt like a collection of cool anthropology articles from the professor, was really interesting, and I don't think every section gets this version of the content due to the professor's background. The presentations were well-done here in conjunction with the texts. Also, the 150 word questions were low-stakes and the professor truly took the time to actually read them before class and occasionally bring them into discussion.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%	40.00%	40.00%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	10.00%	20.00%	30.00%	40.00%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	3.90	4.00	0.00%	10.00%	20.00%	40.00%	30.00%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	3.80	4.50	20.00%	0.00%	10.00%	20.00%	50.00%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	3.70	4.00	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	40.00%	30.00%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.30	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	30.00%	50.00%
I felt respected in this class.	3.80	4.00	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	30.00%	40.00%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	3.33	4.00	11.11%	33.33%	0.00%	22.22%	33.33%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
The professor is disorganized and demands a lot of commitment from students without reciprocating it. Consequently, I did not feel respected in the class, which discouraged me from putting in effort. I also felt that the professor was pushing her own research and area of study (anthropology) too much into the course, which is a core class and should mostly focus on the standard classic readings of that class (it did not). I did not really understand what the professor's purpose was with this class since it did not seem to align with Self, Culture and Society.
Amazing way to finish my SOSC core. I LOVE Self and this quarter did not disappoint at all!
Lectures given by the professor were unhelpful, long, confusing. Professor made several references that were bizarre, undefended, and had no factual backing. Very monotonous lecture. Class is supposed to be seminar, but was lecture. Professor didn't seem interested in teaching the class.
If you're looking for an easy A Self class this wouldn't be my first choice. Chu isn't the hardest, but she definitely has higher standards of success than other profs I've had for Self.
I really appreciate that the professor always came well-prepared with presentations that elucidated the content. Midterm /final assignments were cool, as they asked us to apply the texts to modern day news articles. Overall, this was a solid course that contributed substantively to my worldview.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	40.00%	60.00%
Anyone interested in the topic	30.00%	70.00%

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

Comments
The instructor's teaching only contributed to my frustration. She was disorganized during lectures, did not know how to lead discussion and mostly gave 40-minute lectures full of defining terms that often didn't even really align with the content of the readings. Considering I took the 3rd part of the Self, Culture and Society sequence with this instructor I had a comparison to two very good and pleasant experiences with professors in parts 1 and 2 of the sequence, which this particular class did not fit into. I'm sure Julie Chu is a great researcher and anthropologist, but she really did an awful job teaching this class.
Discussions were interesting and student presentations helped link the content to current events in a really engaging way.
Writing the key terms and agenda on the board before class
lectures and discussion posts
Professor Chu's ability to facilitate discussions and her mini-lectures contributed the most. These both helped me truly digest what we were seeing in our readings. She projects her voice clearly and is open to answering questions during class.
Passion to the material
The instructor was very open to questions in class, and also made class clearly structured by writing an agenda at the beginning of each day. She also provided feedback on a midterm draft (and was very receptive/flexible about when we had to request feedback by), which was incredibly helpful for improving my midterm.
Lectures

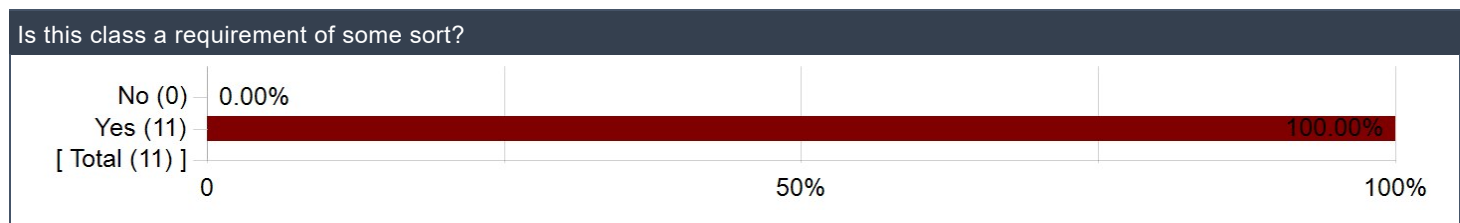
What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
It would help for the instructor to take a step back and understand that they are teaching a core class. Often it felt like the instructor was disorganized in her teaching, which seemed to be coming from the lack of understanding that most of the students in the class are not social science or anthropology specialists. It would help if she was more engaged with the class and kept the students engaged. With the current teaching style her class is really a waste of time and was unpleasant to attend.
Keep track of time better so that we can discuss everything she says we'll discuss in a given day. Most classes she would write 5/6 bulletpoints on the board and then get through the first 2 or 3.
Maybe explain some of the concepts in more basic language so we are able to grasp the complex readings better
Less and shorter lectures, more discussions.
break things down first in simpler terms— most of class was very confused, would have to stay engaged to catch bits that made sense.
It would be awesome if Professor Chu shared her mini-lecture notes/packet/something to the Canvas page, because the speed at which she conveys ideas can be hard to follow if one is taking notes (notes are Important; they can be essential in the midterm and the final and just to one's general comprehension of anything). Other than that, Professor Chu is amazing.
Facilitate more discussion, use language undergraduates can understand, answer questions to make topics easier to understand, get feedback back in a more efficient/timely manner
Talk less and facilitate discussions
Particularly with Foucault, it felt like the lectures felt more confusing/obscure than in the second half of the course

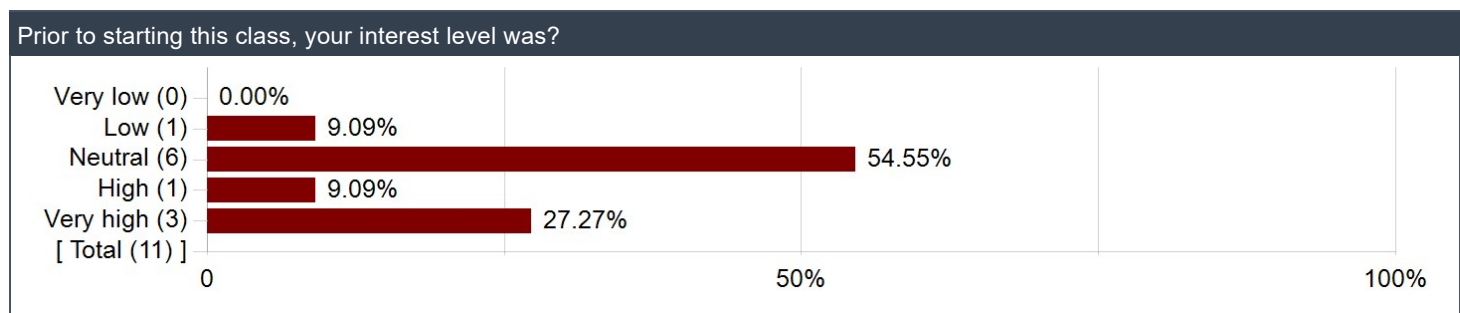
The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	3.90	4.00	10.00%	10.00%	0.00%	40.00%	40.00%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	3.60	4.00	20.00%	10.00%	0.00%	30.00%	40.00%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	3.30	4.00	30.00%	0.00%	10.00%	30.00%	30.00%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	3.20	4.00	30.00%	10.00%	0.00%	30.00%	30.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	3.40	4.00	20.00%	10.00%	10.00%	30.00%	30.00%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	3.40	4.00	20.00%	10.00%	10.00%	30.00%	30.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	10.00%	20.00%	30.00%	40.00%	0.00%
Motivated you to think independently.	3.30	4.00	30.00%	0.00%	10.00%	30.00%	30.00%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	3.50	4.00	10.00%	20.00%	10.00%	30.00%	30.00%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	3.60	4.00	10.00%	20.00%	10.00%	20.00%	40.00%	0.00%

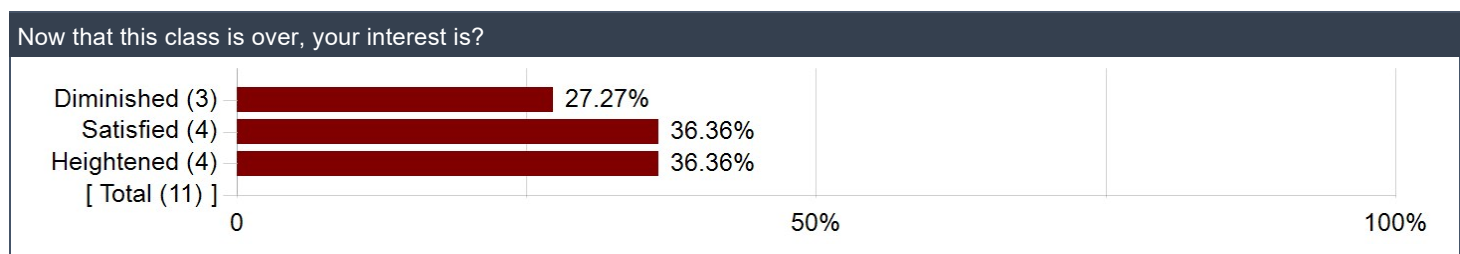
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



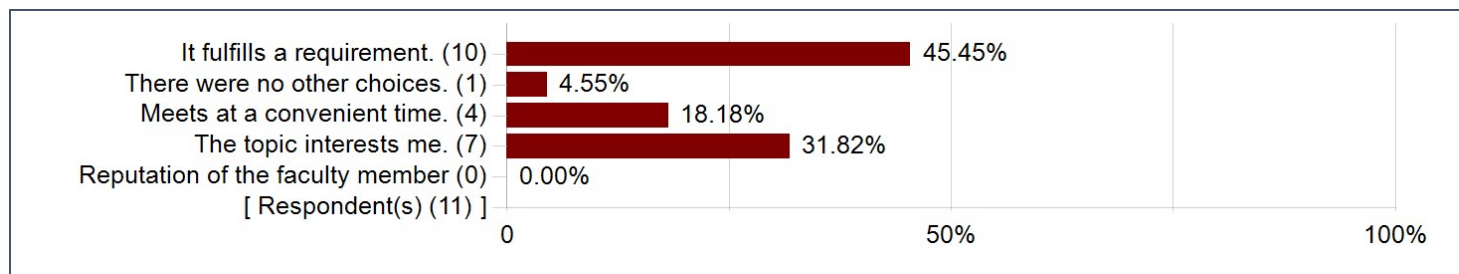
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



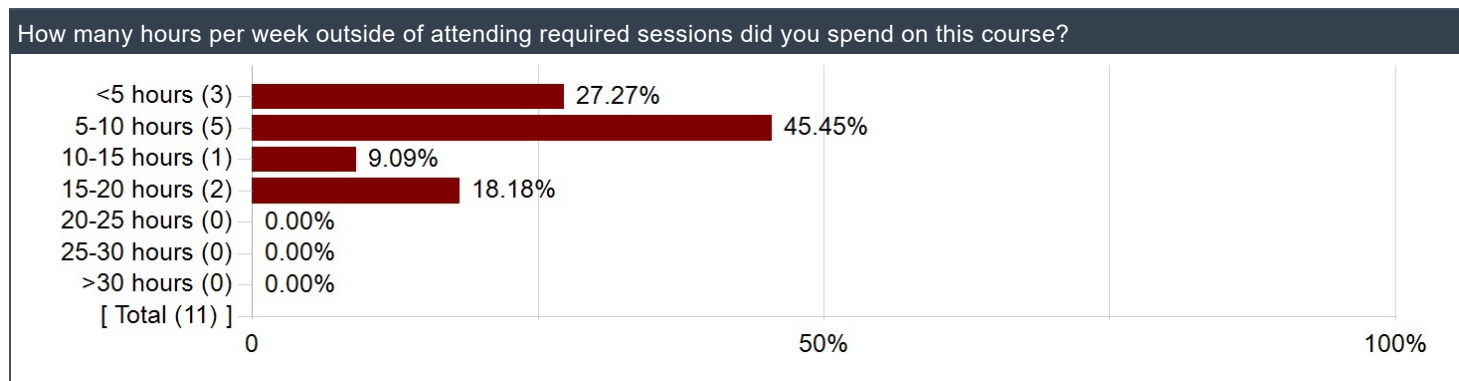
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



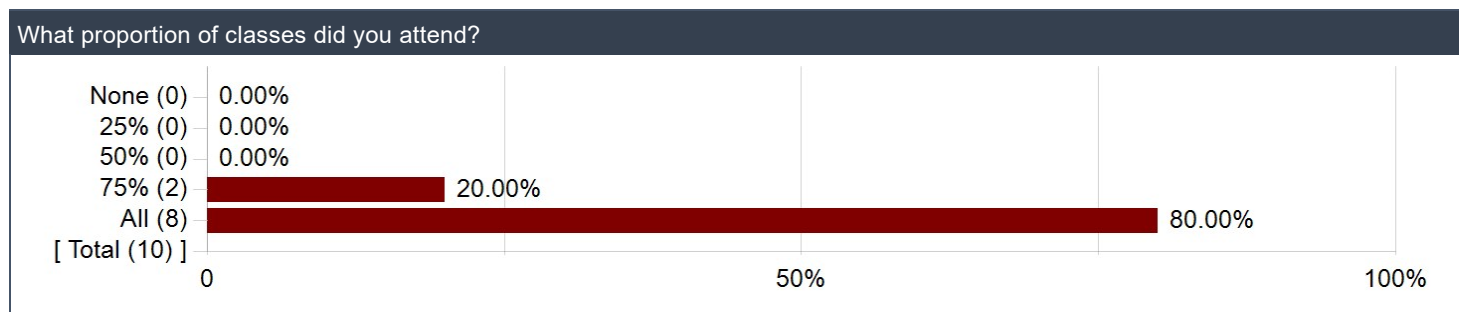
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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
Lack of clarity and terms that were too advanced made understanding the class difficult.
Not difficult compared to the other courses in the sequence.
Not difficult if youve done the first 2 quarters of self
typical soc. nothing too bad, great that instructor gives feedback and edits on paper, definitely do that. you can absolutely find easier soc sections with less work and content that is presented in a way that's easy to understand, but this one isn't too bad coming from someone who does not enjoy hum or soc.
After Self I and Self II, this was about the same level of difficulty. Obviously, it can depend on professor, but I'd say the level of rigor expected was just about perfect for this course. If you are passionate about the topics/readings and willing to engage, this will be an excellent, rewarding experience. Yes it can be a lot of work especially for denser readings and the midterm/final, but it's worth it if you enjoy the topics.
Follows social science course, carries that sociological framework for analyzing topics
This course was approximately the same difficulty as the preceding courses in the sequence.
Similar to prior quarters in difficulty