HUMA 14000 10 - Reading Cultures: Collection, Travel, Exchange I - Instructor(s): Valerie Levan

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

Number Enrolled: **17**
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: **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 learned that discussions can be just as, if not more, impactful than lectures.
Close reading, basic essay–writing skills, engaging in class discussions productively.
I learned how to find a clear focus in my writing and support my ideas in discussions with textual evidence. I also learned how to analyze the text beyond the level of metaphors, symbolism, etc., instead uncovering the big ideas within the text.
The most important things i learned in this course is how to close read and create nuanced claims about a text In addition, I learned how to write well structured essays and create a contestable yet strongly supported argument.
In this course I learned valuable skills in close reading and close listening. While I consider myself to be someone who enjoys reading and generally has a decent understanding of the text, this class requires you to challenge your own initial perceptions of the text as you look to argue about the author's inclusion of specific diction in the text. The best part about this class though, is that you are not doing it alone and by listening to the understandings of your fellow students and professor you gain highly valuable reading skills. All of these skills acquired through the class are easily translated to the writing and comprehension skills necessary to excel in other classes and extracurriculars.
I learned about the tradition of storytelling and its everlasting effects.
How to write college level essays and close read
The most important things that I learned were how to support arguments with evidence and how to structure academic writing. I significantly improved as a writer.
close reading and how to look at just one aspect of a story or novel and not as a whole

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

Comments
The discussions allowed me to see how other students interpretations of works compared to my own. The essays and discussion posts helped me to articulate my thoughts.
Writing seminars and meetings outside of class were pretty good, enabled me to refine my skills to the expectations of college writing. Discussions in the later part of the quarter were crucial to writing our final essay. Some of the museum visits felt orthogonal to the content learned in class, but were nonetheless interesting and taught me some interesting history.
Class discussions were really important to understanding the text, and when we did small group discussions I found it really helpful to unpack different interpretations of the same idea. The writing seminars have also been extremely helpful and engaging while preparing a draft.
The assignments were relevant to our reading assignments and helped us prepapre for writing big papers in the class.
The three main aspects of the course included written assignments (essays and discussion posts), writing seminars, and in–class discussions. Firstly, the written assignments helped me greatly in improving my reading and writing skills. The weekly discussion posts start out very challenging and are a great mechanism of gauging both the professor's expectations of your writing, but also the types of strategies you should engage to better understand the text upon a primary inspection. Furthermore, the writing seminars help you grow as a writer by working in a small group to confront your previous notions of what a strong, significant argument consists of and how far a small passage can be interpreted. Finally, the best tool for your learning offered by this class are the in–class discussions. Unlike a lecture format, this method of learning emphasizes collaboration and creates a very personalized environment where you regularly find yourself engaging with your peers' opinions. This model is especially beneficial because, like you, your peers have very good opinions to offer and you will often catch yourself seeing the text in a new light at least once per seminar under this model. Additionally, your professor also learns more about the text based on your personalized insight, so it is always great to make your voice heard in the class.
I think the discussions were good because they enabled the class to further their understanding from learning from each other.
Allowed me to think analytically
Discussions contributed to my learning by allowing me to see the texts in a way that was not previously obvious, and assignments helped me gather these discussions into structured papers.
discussions helped me understand the books better

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.36	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	45.45%	45.45%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.45	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55%	45.45%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.36	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	45.45%	45.45%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.27	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	54.55%	36.36%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.36	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	27.27%	54.55%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.27	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	54.55%	36.36%
I felt respected in this class.	4.50	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.27	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	54.55%	36.36%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
I really enjoy this class
This course was interesting in that it opened me up to new texts and ideas about the tradition of stories. I really enjoyed the first two books, ovid and arabian nights. However, I think it was tough writing essays about themes that purely stayed within the text. It was odd that we couldn't write about how these themes worked within society or how it linked to the bigger picture—it felt difficult to keep our claims and interpretations and the ideas that came out of that just within the context of the book.

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
I like how well she facilitated discussion with the class.
She was very conscious about maintaining equity in the classroom and allowing everyone to get their thoughts in, which made me feel confident I had a floor to speak in and make my voice heard, or at a minimum get participation credit. She also was very responsive to student interest in terms of the parts of the book we wanted to talk to, which made everyone's thoughts and conversations better.
When the professor gave input on our ideas based on her own interpretation of the text, it helped me to understand how we should be shaping our arguments in order to succeed in the course.
One thing that helped was the instructor provided discussion questions prior to class so we could prepapre and better understand the passages we were reading.
The distribution of participation in the class established by my professor contributed the most to my learning. In this seminar–style course, the best way to learn and grow as a critical reader/analyst is to closely listen to the comments of your peers. The professor of this course does a great job in giving every person in the class adequate chances to speak, adding dimensions to the conversation that help you approach future close reading assignments with the help of your peers' insight.
I think Valerie Levan's direction of the class—she helped guide the conversation which was helpful for discussing the texts.
Discussions
Professor Levan always allowed us to discuss, enhancing our ability to interact with the text and understand how our peers interpreted it.
involvement in discussion

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
I don't know, she did a really good job.
I personally would cancel the museum visits and the gallery assignment, because I don't think they were all that useful. I would also introduce the second assignment directly after the first one, and make it due a week earlier in the quarter, only because it made the last two weeks of the quarter a bit hectic.
I do think along with the professor's own interpretations helping us to shape our ideas, it also felt restrictive at times, as if there was only one way to understand the text. I think this could be modified by welcoming different ideas and acknowledging their validity as arguments about the text.
NA
The professor could make the class more of a seminar which involves less participation on their behalf. As of right now, the professor is directing the flow of the conversation which makes sense given that everybody in the class is tailoring their close reading skills. Yet, instead of addressing points made by each other, we often address the professor instead of our classmates. Given that our classmates have great insight into the text, we should be engaging with each other's ideas more and I feel that the professor could do a better job of promoting these interactions.
I think as we got into discussions, to have the instructor have a less hands on approach since it felt like we were presenting topic after topic to the instructor instead of diving deep into one topic. I think also to be a little more involved throughout the writing process—often, we didn't really talk about what she was looking for, so it felt like we were just writing without a main goal.
N/A
Nothing; this was an excellent class.
include more standards for essays and writing in class

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.55	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	27.27%	63.64%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	3.89	4.00	0.00%	9.09%	9.09%	45.45%	18.18%	18.18%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.64	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.36%	63.64%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.18	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	45.45%	36.36%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.45	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55%	45.45%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.27	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	54.55%	36.36%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.30	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	45.45%	36.36%	9.09%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.36	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	63.64%	36.36%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.45	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55%	45.45%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.45	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55%	45.45%	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
Claire Palo
Claire Palo – Her writing seminars were excellent; I really liked that while she guided the format of the seminars she mostly allowed us to lead the discussions ourselves. I think something that she could modify is dividing up the time allotted for seminars appropriately so that we aren't rushing through the last students' essays.
The education videos prior to writing seminars were very helpful. However, the pre writing seminar assignments were very lengthy and depended on other students also compelting those assignments, which didn't help as people often didn't complete assignents on time.
Claire Palo
Claire Palo—she's great! she led our writing seminars and gave a lot of comments if she graded our papers. Although, sometimes, the instructor and Claire's comments would conflict.
Claire Palo, I felt that Claire could have helped more with my writing by giving me starting ideas
Claire Palo, our Writing Specialist, did not teach the class, but was available outside of class to help with our writing and lead writing seminars. her writing seminars were engaging and useful.
Claire Palo, really good job of being available and giving useful help for essays, sometimes after essay deadlines so it would've been helpful to learn before the fact

The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.29	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	37.50%	37.50%	12.50%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	25.00%	62.50%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	50.00%	25.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.25	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	50.00%	37.50%	0.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	4.38	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	37.50%	50.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.38	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	62.50%	37.50%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.25	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	50.00%	37.50%	0.00%

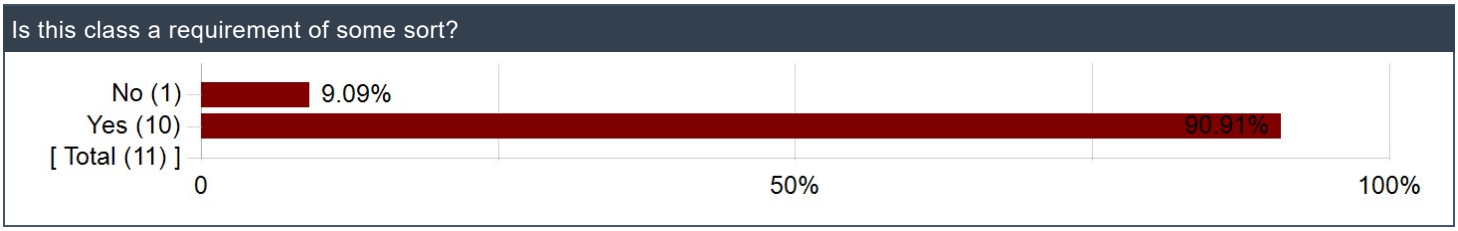
How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	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	3.89	4.00	9.09%	9.09%	0.00%	27.27%	36.36%	18.18%
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	4.18	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	45.45%	36.36%	0.00%

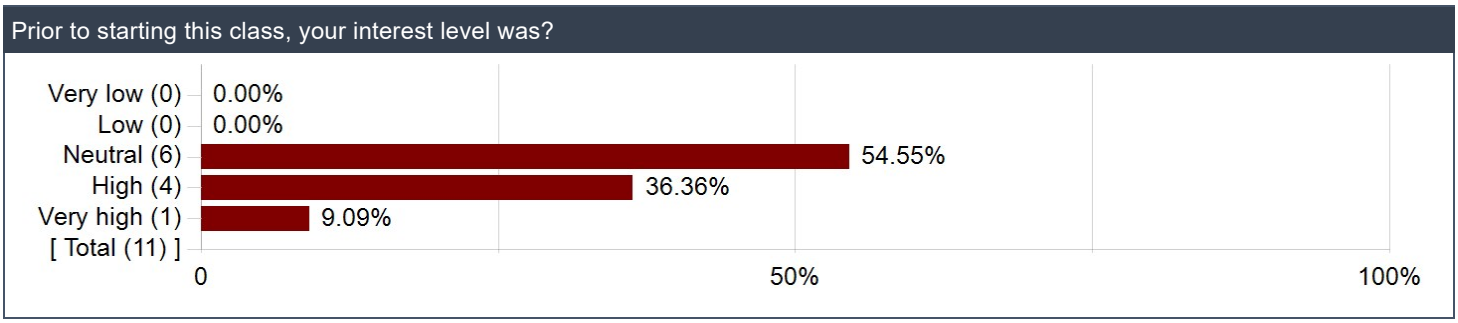
Other course elements not mentioned above:

Comments
SMART Museum presentation

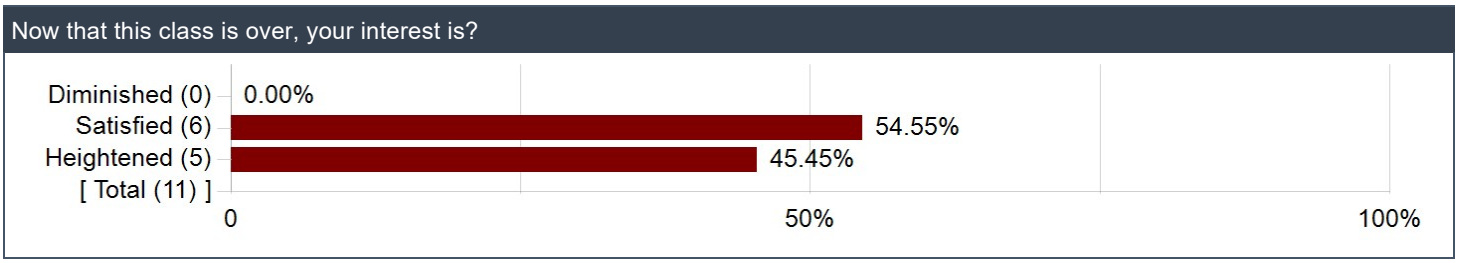
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



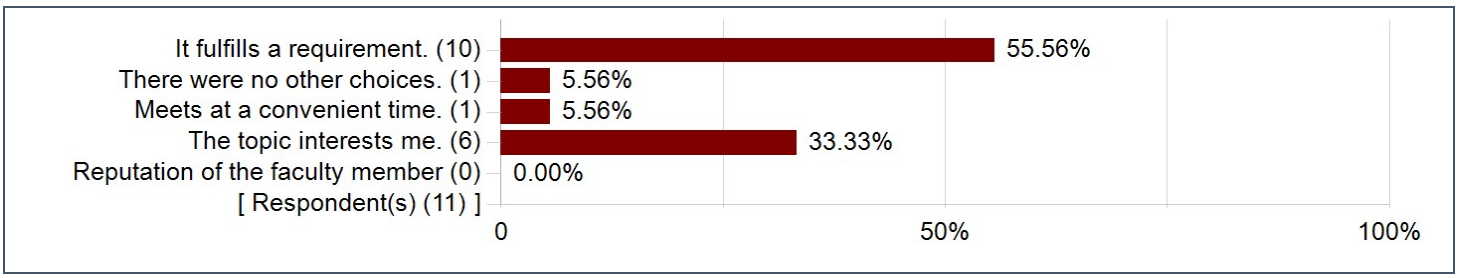
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



Now that this class is over, your interest is?

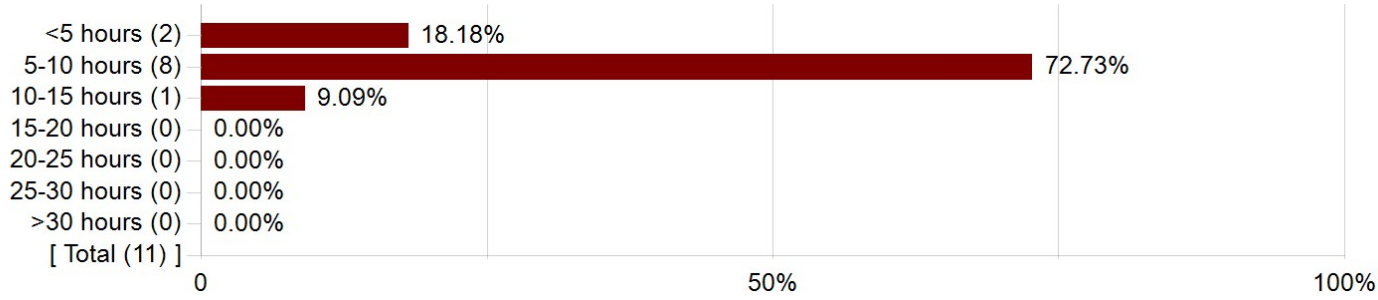


Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



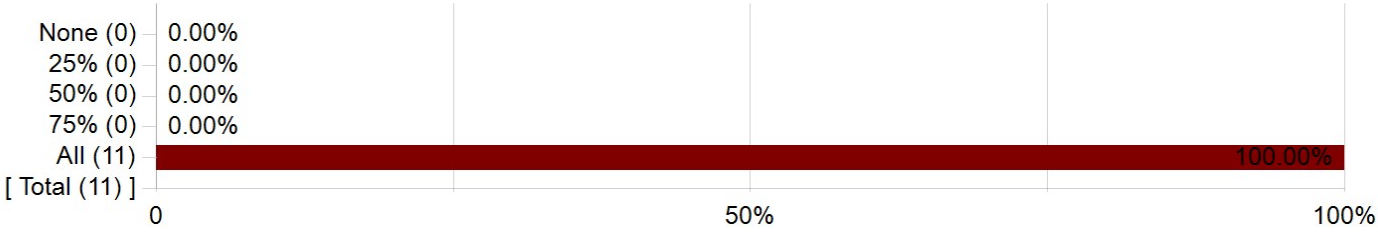
How many hours per week outside of attending required sessions did you spend on this course?

How many hours per week outside of attending required sessions did you spend on this course?



What proportion of classes did you attend?

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 course comes naturally to me because I love literature based courses.
I don't think the course was too difficult compared to my high school experience, but it was definitely very different from what I expected. Coming from AP Lang and AP Lit I expected a different style of analysis than what this course teaches. But I didn't find it insanely difficult to adjust.
Moderately difficult
This class is more difficult than any English class I have taken before. Yet, I have felt that approaching the class with a positive mindset and a willingness to learn provides excellent results in the long–term. This class requires that you take every close reading assignment and writing assignment seriously which makes it more difficult than prior English classes where skimming of the text was more prevalent.
The class felt relatively easy since most of it felt very discussion based (which sometimes had an added pressure). I had a very similar writing seminar my freshman year of high school, so it felt easy to complete written assignments.
This course was appropriately difficult for an introduction to academic writing, but it was not extremely difficult.
i think this class was appropriate difficulty with someone with a lot of experience in discussion–based english classes before