SOSC 18500 3 - Democracy: Equality, Liberty, and the Dilemmas of Self-Government II - Instructor(s): Andrew Brandel

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

Number Enrolled: **17**
Number of Responses: **10**

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
Democracy, ideas and conceptions of democracy over time, the issue of revolution and democracy in a revolutionary context.
In this course, I learned about ancient conceptions of democracy, flaws and paradoxes of democracies, and what the relationship can entail between a citizen, the people, and government. I advanced my writing skills and ability to read a wide range of texts form different times and places, which is something not highlighted in descriptions or advertisements of the course, but ended up being a really cool and effectual part of the sequence.
The essence of revolutions and how they shape and are shaped by the times.
I gained a practical working knowledge of natural rights, which is useful in a world that debates implementation of natural rights
The most important thing I have learned in this course is how to gather reliable source documents and sufficiently apply and examine them in an essay.
I learned how to dissect dense primary sources and text to find the political theory and contextualize it within a historical period. I really feel that I have gotten a better understanding of so many different time periods, and gotten more comfortable with reading historical speeches and pamphlets to understand different demands or ideas. I feel like my instinct is to always connect the history to something else, but I have learned how to stay within a text and understand what it is saying purely.
I learned how different aspects of a revolution effect its standing in relation to democratic ideals

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

Comments
The readings were often a lot to handle so discussions were very helpful in breaking the readings down and getting the key ideas.
The discussions were where ideas and remarks from the reading were put together more concretely through conversing with peers and gaining contextual information from the professor. The writing assignments sometimes felt a bit elementary in their general structure or type of prompt (ex. compare and contrast a and b, etc.), but also involved more dense and collegiate sources, which was at times an odd combination.
The lectures were always super informative, and discussing with the rest of the class always cleared up any questions or misconceptions I might have had.
Heavily discussion based, but professor is instructive with the format and flexible with the ideas you want to write about.
Discussions were decently helpful for learning
In–class lectures and discussions contributed the most to my learning by clearing up questions I had from the readings.
We only had discussion, and I think the style of breaking down each source in detail allowed me to be more discerning with my reading. I also learned how people draw these conclusions just from the text by watching/being led by the professor.
the discussions provided me with better understanding of the readings

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.	4.20	4.00	0.00%	10.00%	0.00%	50.00%	40.00%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.50	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.30	4.50	0.00%	10.00%	0.00%	40.00%	50.00%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.50	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%
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.	4.70	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	30.00%	70.00%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
This course pairs quite nicely with the HUMA Human Being and Citizen, as the topics and content of the readings often overlap.
N/a
Take this class if you are interested in historical revolutions and rebellions.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	11.11%	88.89%
Anyone interested in the topic	22.22%	77.78%

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

Comments
Discussions. Discussions were very helpful in understanding the topics in the readings and the bigger picture ideas.
The instructor was descriptive and made sure to emphasize the key points of each reading during the lecture. He also infused humor into his teaching, keeping class engaging.
Willingness to meet outside of class to clear up problems.
The instructor always pointed discussions towards the important concepts that needed to be discussed
the energy he brought to every class
The teacher's use of comedy to cover the course content in a more entertaining manner contributed the most to my learning.
Professor Brandel was clearly knowledgable about the subject and wanted us all to mirror his techniques of learning directly from primary sources. His style of discussion demanded comprehension and I enjoyed hearing his thought process when leading us to a conclusion about a historical event. He was open and engaged and willing to field all questions, and clearly valued reading comprehension.
The relaxed atmosphere and open discussions

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Sometimes the reading were a bit long, so long that they began to distract from the ideas themselves.
I think that the instructor should at times narrow the scope of the questions he asks the class, as they are often quite broad and difficult to answer questions. While those types of questions are good to float around and ask on occasion, questions that combine many of the topics from class but are a bit more concrete to grapple with might be better. Also, the professor filled us in on the background surrounding each reading when we discussed it after reading it for homework, but I think it might have been more helpful to be given the context information the class before when it was assigned to help us bette understand what we're then reading.
Nothing.
nothing
No comments
nothing GIVE THIS MAN A RAISE
The instructor could define the shift between documents analyzed in class further to create a more apparent transition from one source material to the next.
I think that it would be helpful if there were less texts because often in class we would only focus on one out of the seven readings. If this was conveyed beforehand, I think that people could dive deep into one and have a rich discussion. Also, I think that the one on one meetings were helpful but I found myself frustrated with Professor Brandel at times because his causal/uninterested attitude often made you feel like he didn't want to be there. I disliked when he texted or was silent during those meetings. I enjoy his casual manner, but not when I am asking for help.
n/a

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.70	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	30.00%	70.00%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	10.00%	0.00%	10.00%	60.00%	20.00%
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.	4.80	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	0.00%	90.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.70	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	30.00%	70.00%	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%	0.00%	30.00%	70.00%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.90	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	90.00%	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
Emma Adler; She was well–prepared for each writing seminar and happy to help with anything we needed.
The name of the writing intern I'm evaluating is Emma Adler. Her use of argumentative essay models contributed the most to my learning. In order to help me learn more, she could have relied less on open discussion and instead came to the workshops with more activities for us to complete.

The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.50	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	3.50	3.50	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	3.50	3.50	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%
Challenged you to learn.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%	0.00%	33.33%
Helped you succeed in the class.	3.33	3.00	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.67	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	3.67	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%	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	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	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	0.00%	83.33%
Review Sessions	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Writing Seminars	2.86	3.00	14.29%	14.29%	57.14%	0.00%	14.29%	0.00%

Other course elements not mentioned above:

Comments
N/a

Is this class a requirement of some sort?

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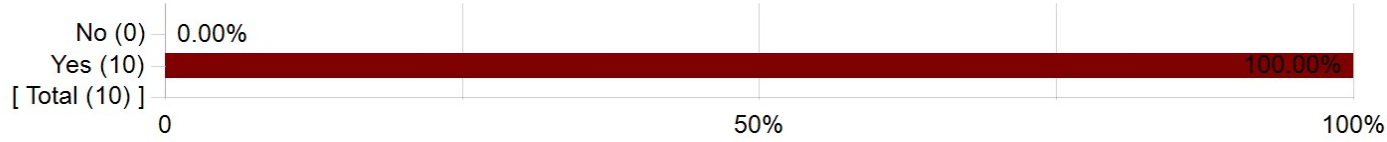

Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?

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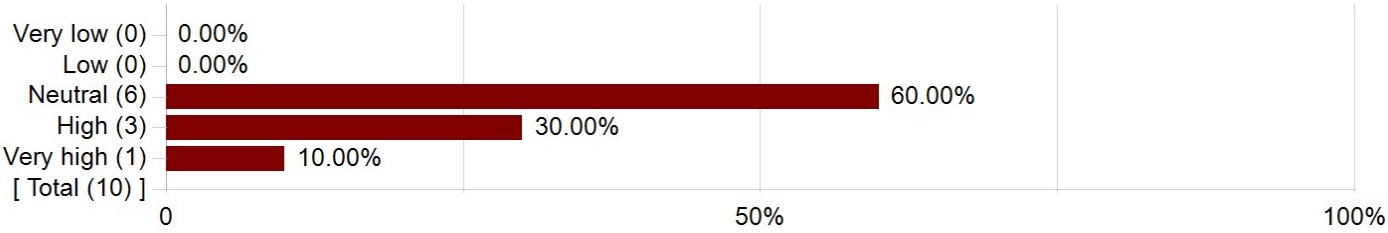

Now that this class is over, your interest is?

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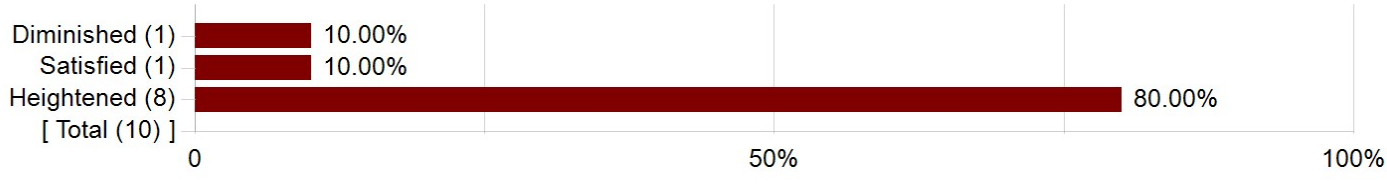
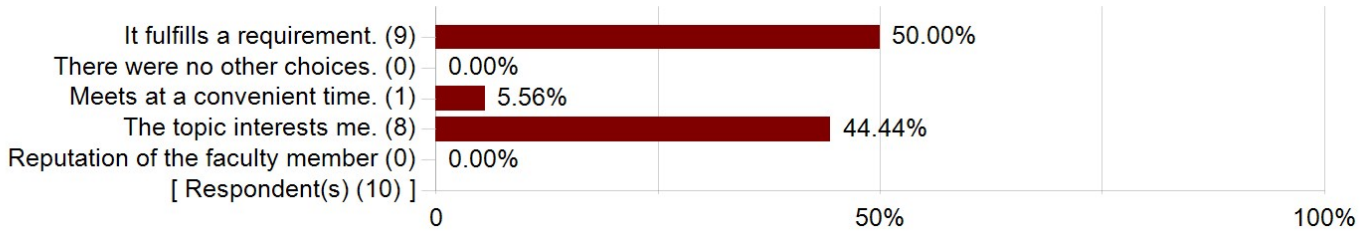


Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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

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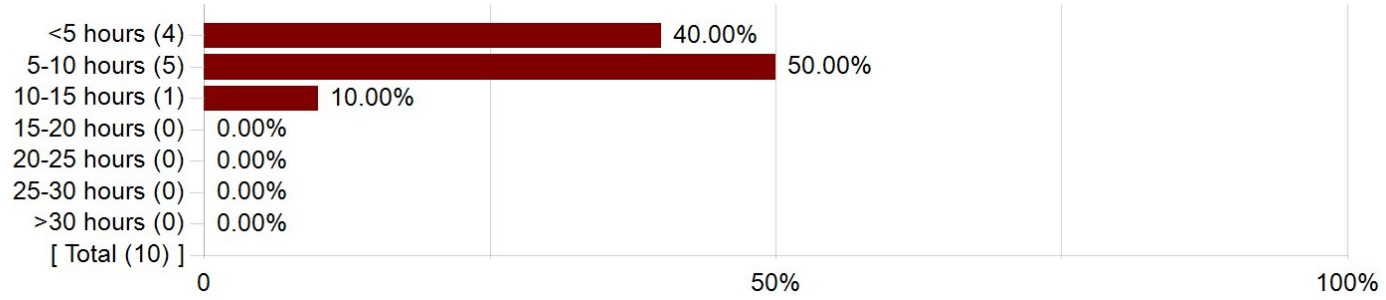

What proportion of classes did you attend?

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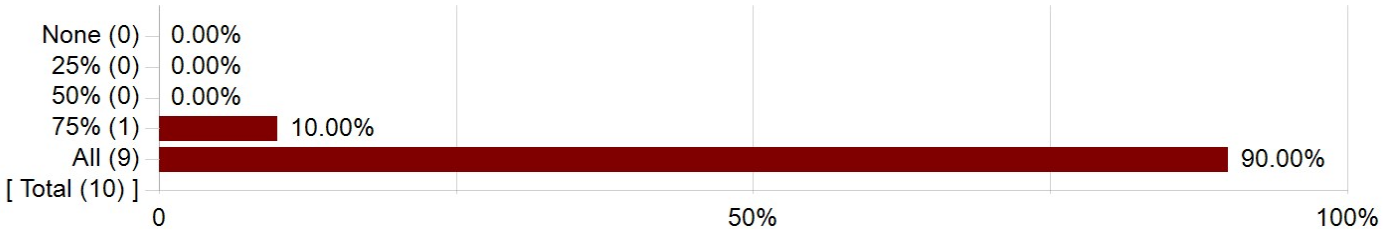

Please comment on the level of difficulty of the course relative to your background and experience.

Comments
It is challenging in the way a good class should be, but isn't too difficult. Be prepared for dense readings about obscure topics/events.
Professor Brandel is a phenomenal instructor who is very understanding of the workload at this school and adjusts the readings to be just the necessary/productive material that leads to good discussion. He's friendly and makes discussions engaging with contemporary jokes/references to make the history more tangible.
Not too difficult based on my background
This course was relatively easy because we weren't given any unnecessary busy work.
not too difficult w little background knowledge