



SOSC 11400 2 - Power, Identity, Resistance I - Instructor(s): Sunit Singh

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

Number Enrolled: **15**

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 about the political thoughts and theories of Locke, Rousseau, and Hobbes. I learned how to better my writing and analyze political theory writing.
Proper writing techniques, political philosophies of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. I feel that we really learned primarily how to discuss and understand difficult readings and texts to follow. Through the assignments, we learned how to identify textual problems and reconcile them on paper and in discussion. My writing is definitely what developed and improved the most in this course.
Different perspectives on power dynamics between subject and sovereign. Taking a deeper dive into Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau.
Hobbes', Locke's, and Rousseau's theories of government and society, how to write papers that deconstruct an author's argument in a clear, accurate, yet novel way
Throughout this course, I've learned the invaluable lesson that a single problem can be approached in multitude of ways. The diversity of perspectives presented has expanded my understanding of tackling complex issues that I personally ponder over and bring to my thoughts and actions outside the classroom. A crucial skill I've acquired is the ability to critically analyze others' arguments, enabling me to mirror their strengths in my own writing and construct compelling cases for the texts I engage with. This course has not only heightened my knowledge and understanding but also equipped me with the tools to navigate diverse writing styles, emphasizing adaptability and a broader appreciation for different viewpoints when dealing with complex topics.
We read Hobbes' Leviathan, Locke's Second Treatise and Rousseau's Discourse on Inequality and the Social Contract. 1 class on Kant and 1 class on Benjamin Constant. I guess what I learned in this course was to critically "question the system", how we came to where we are and how these authors conceive the world ought to be. Definitely the transformation of needs from the ancient man to the civil man. The course reminds me somewhat of the book Homo Sapiens (duh), with the line of thinking being more in-depth philosophy of history.
Above all, how to read canonical texts and how to stay close to the text in writing and discussion. Professor Singh didn't only teach how to do this, though. He also made clear how valuable such an approach can be, how rich the texts are as they were written, and how revelatory a rigorous close-reading can be.
We learned how to examine texts critically and how to apply and interpret their ideas in writing. Specifically, we studied the political theories of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau and how they envisioned a legitimate government. I learned to write with more focus on the text and creating more clarity in my sentences. I also learned how to fully support an argument by interacting with the author's ideas from different perspectives.
I learned how to better read philosophical texts and compare them. Also, I learned how to critically think about these texts.
I learned how to engage with older texts in the Political Science tradition, and understand precisely what they are saying and what they are not saying.
I learned how to analyze philosophical texts, as well as how to do argument reconstruction.

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

Comments
Readings and 3 decently short essays as essay assignments with class discussion. The discussions were really enlightening and helped understand what was going on in the text more. Prof Singh is really dedicated to answering people's questions throughout discussion and really facilitates a discussion that allows for everyone to share their thoughts or opinions. He is great at leading these discussion and guiding us in the right direction without it turning into a lecture. The discussions are the best part of class.
The discussions were extremely helpful in elaborating on the readings and gaining a better understanding of the texts. Readings and discussions, as well as office hours and individual meetings with Professor Singh and our writing advisor, Maggie, helped with essay assignments.
The seminar discussions were very useful, we speak our confusions or parts we found interesting and add upon one another with the professor leading the discussions.
Discussions were always engaging and illuminated the finer details of the author's arguments
The readings played a major role in guiding my learning throughout this course. While initially challenging, they taught me not just how to read, but how to approach complex texts with a focus on discerning the author's argument. The course design emphasized the importance of not only reading but also understanding and delving deeper into the true meanings and intentions of the authors. This approach proved to be immensely beneficial to me because it required extensive preparation and independent analysis before class. The interactive nature of the class sessions, including discussions and analyses, further broadened my understanding. Engaging with the diverse opinions of my peers enhanced my ability to interpret texts and reinforced the significance of multiple perspectives in comprehending complex subject matter.
Lectures!!! OH with Prof. Singh, and also detailed comments on essays.
Professor Singh demands that one take Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, and Constant on their own terms. He expected this in one's writing and one's seminar comments. And he led by example with this in his interactive lectures.
The class was discussion based which made class very interactive and engaging. The lectures were always very informative and thorough. Mr. Singh always comes to class with a good discussion planned and he always allows us to ask questions to make sure our needs are addressed. He gave excellent feedback in writing assignments which were very helpful in improving our skills.
The class discussions were mentally stimulating and helpful for understanding the readings.
Singh runs a discussion very well. It both is closely linked to the text and moves through the important concepts of each section at the right pace, slowing where the class wants clarification and moving quickly where a concept is understood.
Discussions were clearly structured and thought-provoking.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.91	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	90.91%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.73	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27%	72.73%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.55	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	27.27%	63.64%
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.	4.82	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	81.82%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.73	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27%	72.73%
I felt respected in this class.	4.91	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	90.91%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.82	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	0.00%	90.91%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
Prof Singh is a really hard grader, but I knew that going into the class. I do think that my writing has improved. However, do not take this class if you are expecting an easy A. You will learn a lot and you will improve your writing, but Prof Singh grades hard and it might not be worth it for some people. Also the readings are not as bad as a typical Power class. I think Prof Singh gives less reading than other profs, but this really does allow us to engage better with the text and actually understand what the writers are saying.
Professor Singh is great!
This course was one of the most rigorous learning experiences I've encountered (if not the most), but its challenges were accompanied by immense motivation. It pushed me to grow in multifaceted ways, encouraging me to not only meet expectations but to consistently strive for the next level of understanding. The course inspired a depth of thinking that extended beyond the immediate requirements, prompting me to explore concepts with a keen desire to delve even deeper. The journey was demanding, yet it fostered a sense of accomplishment and a realization of my potential to stretch beyond perceived limits. I would love to thank Professor Singh for orchestrating this transformative learning experience, which has significantly shaped my intellectual growth and instilled in me a lasting commitment to deeper understanding.
Get ready for some crazy grades
Mr. Singh grades more harshly on writing, however it is very fair and understandable. Average work does not merit an A. Writing papers is about engaging with the writing process and learning how to improve one's writing abilities. The criticism was very fair (even felt somewhat generous) and really allowed me to criticize and re–think about my writing style/abilities.
The course was quite challenging.
Singh has his reputation for a reason. He is quite a character, but if you want to truly engage with these texts I can't think of a better way.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	0.00%	100.00%
Anyone interested in the topic	9.09%	90.91%

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

Comments
His discussions and the way he leads class discussion by guiding us and helping answer our questions. I also think that Prof Singh's office hours are incredibly helpful in understanding specific passages or topics that you does not understand.
Professor Singh took questions from the class at the beginning and framed the discussion around those ideas, allowing the discussion to really be driven by what we wanted to talk about. He was very good at facilitating the discussions and helping us gain a better understanding of the text while encouraging our own ideas and interpretations.
Whenever someone answers a questions, even if it's wrong he won't explicitly say it but ask you questions to correct your answers. Feels very easy to talk in class.
Prof. Singh's guided discussions, office hours
The most impactful aspect of the instructor's teaching that contributed to my learning was their ability to consistently motivate and challenge us during discussions. The professor adeptly encouraged us to approach problems and texts from different perspectives, emphasizing the importance of considering context and various variables. This approach not only fostered a culture of critical thinking but also significantly enhanced my understanding of the text and its broader implications.
Prof Singh often begins class taking questions from the floor and writes it onto the blackboard, and would come back and link back these questions altogether by the end of class. He has a lot, a lot of energy for every single class, and it can be slightly overwhelming (at least for me for the first 2 classes), but his enthusiasm and passion for the subject really helped push me forward and be more involved in what we were doing. He can extract the essence/insight from our wild comments in class and therefore help us understand the proposed ideas a lot better. I can't stress it enough, his lecture style is really something out of this world; I don't think I've had such an eloquent and CLASSY (he didn't want to dress like how Hobbes was portrayed) lecturer. And he's really available for OH.
His comments on essays were very detailed too.
Professor Singh has high expectations. He expects that students not only come prepared, but that they take the texts on their own terms and work through the argument with care and precision. He leads in this by example, through his interactive lectures which were nothing short of astounding. In these, he infused the whole class with his passionate devotion to rigorously taking the texts on their own terms.
Mr. Singh gives excellent lectures and he fully understands all the nuances and aspects of the text. Professor Singh is one of the kindest, most approachable, and helpful teachers I've ever met. He even brought us candy on Halloween! He always sets up a multitude of office hours and invites students to continue class discussions after class. He's very approachable when asking for help and always wants to get to know his students and their experiences. He doesn't grade harshly because he has something against you, but rather he wants you to improve and learn. Mr. Singh will always go out of his way to make you feel welcome and be helped. He always tries to address students when they raise their hands and never makes students feel wrong or scared. He also has a great sense of humor. However, he sometimes talks with such eloquence and I feel like he's not really making sense or being clear, but his rhetorical skills seem to throw me off. Although he seems somewhat scary on the first day of class, he's one of the kindest, most humble, and helpful individuals I've ever met. He will help you interpret texts more concisely and teach you specific ways to improve your writing in ways you've never thought about before. He always respects the ideas and opinions of students and always focuses on trying to help us succeed.
Professor Singh would walk through each reading, covering the important points while also addressing the students' questions. This made me leave class with an overall understanding of the previous night's reading.
See above comments, Singh runs a discussion very well. Being available for office hours directly after class to talk more about the class is also invaluable.
Comments on papers were insightful and had clear objectives to accomplish for future papers. Discussions were helpful in deciphering the material.

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
I think in terms of essay feedback that less incredibly specific feedback on a particular word could be replaced by feedback that focuses on how to fix a certain writing mistake.
I can't think of much at the moment. At times the reading load could be heavy, specifically when we were also working on another writing assignment, but proper time allocation helps a lot and is a skill I was able to develop during this course.
The discussions on Rousseau were too rushed, we couldn't cover the entire reading in one class and never got to talk about it in class.
Clarifying who exactly our audience is for papers, i.e, how pedantic should we be about explaining author's definitions of various terms without crossing into the area of summarizing.
Nothing really!
Nothing much
Professor Singh asks a lot of leading questions. On the one hand, this feels important given the structured nature of the course and the need to hit certain essential points. On the other hand, however, it felt like it kept us from getting deep into some of the matters that required discursive unpacking or that students were interested in. To be fair, he was very amenable to hearing these out in office hours.
I think having small-group discussions or allowing us to talk with our neighbor would help more. Often it feels like people participate for 'participation points' rather than for the sake of learning. Maybe the professor could ask some question and allow students to talk a little with people around us. This also allows us to actually get to know our classmates, rather than just interacting with the professor. I think that being able to interact and share ideas with our peers helps us feel more confident in sharing our ideas but also creates a more welcoming and friendly learning environment.
I wish Professor Singh made clearer his standards for success on papers.
I am greedy so I would like more pages to write for my essays. This may be impossible.

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.91	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	90.91%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.73	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27%	72.73%	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.	4.82	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	81.82%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.82	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	81.82%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.91	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	90.91%	0.00%
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.	4.91	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	90.91%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.91	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	90.91%	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
Maggie was our writing advisor. She was helpful both in writing seminars and in individual meetings. We were required to meet with her individually at least once, but I recommend trying to do more appointments (1 per paper was helpful for me).
Maggie the writing instructor is very helpful and always available.
Maggie Rothrock–Wang was very helpful when helping us with our writing.
The TA for our class, Margaret Rothrock, ran good writing seminars and was very helpful with helping with essays. She gave specific feedback and methods to address flaws in the essays.

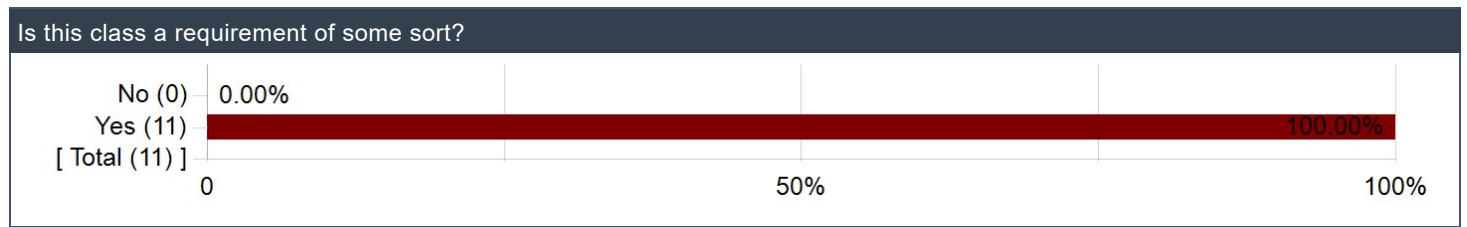
The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.00%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	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%	100.00%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.00%

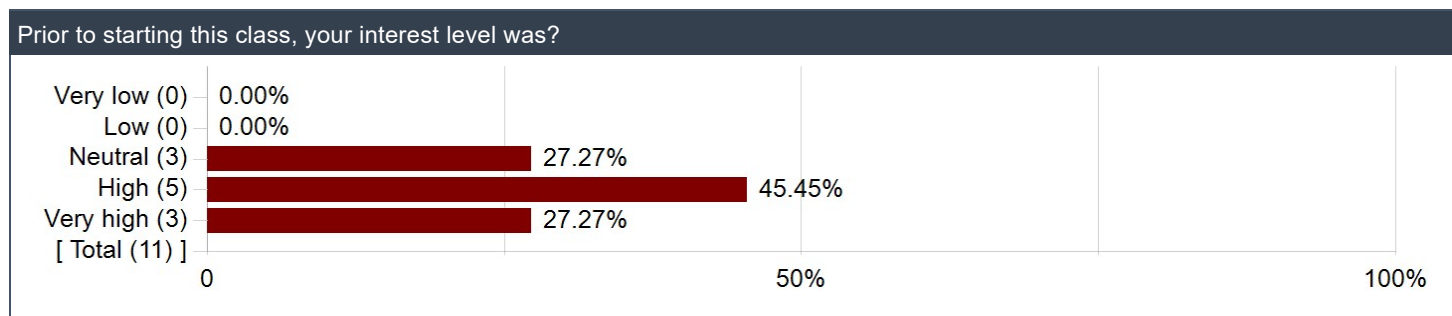
How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	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	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	3.75	4.00	12.50%	0.00%	12.50%	50.00%	25.00%	0.00%

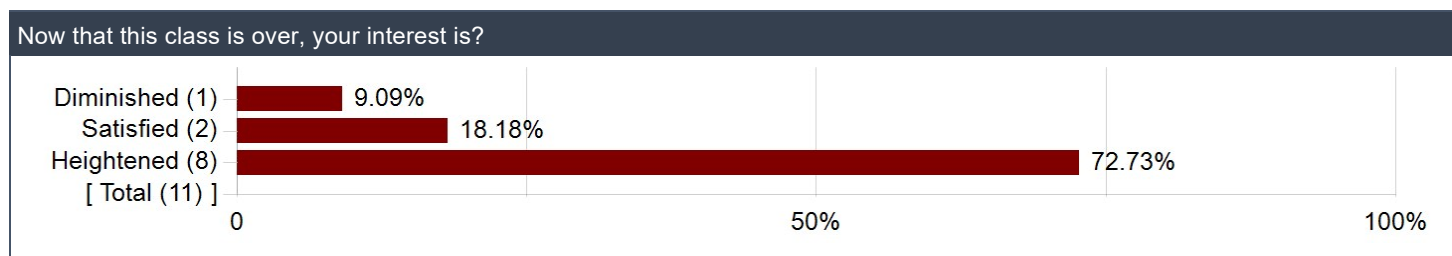
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



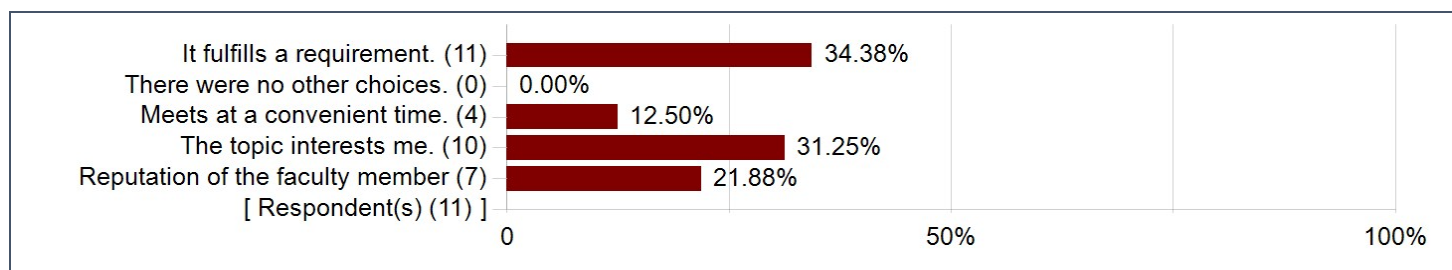
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



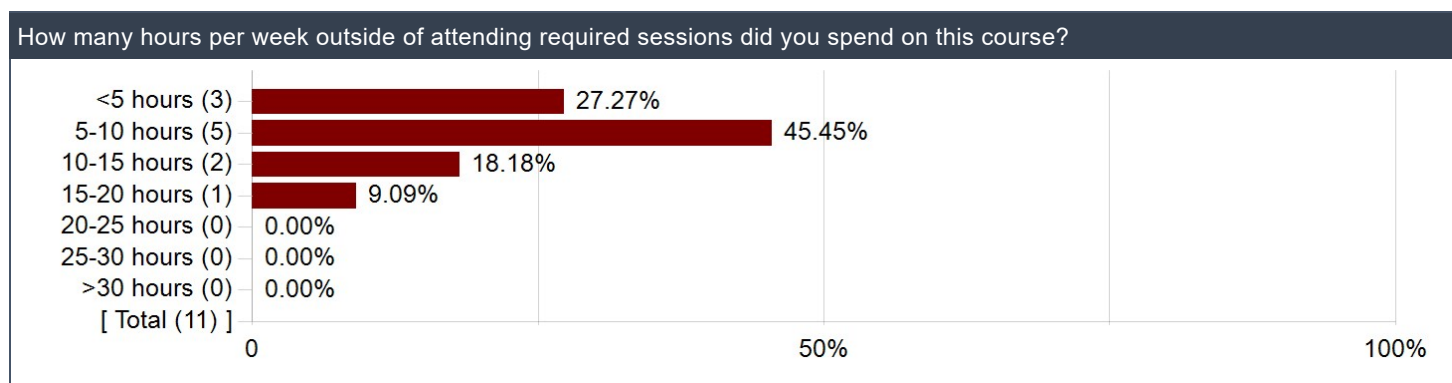
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



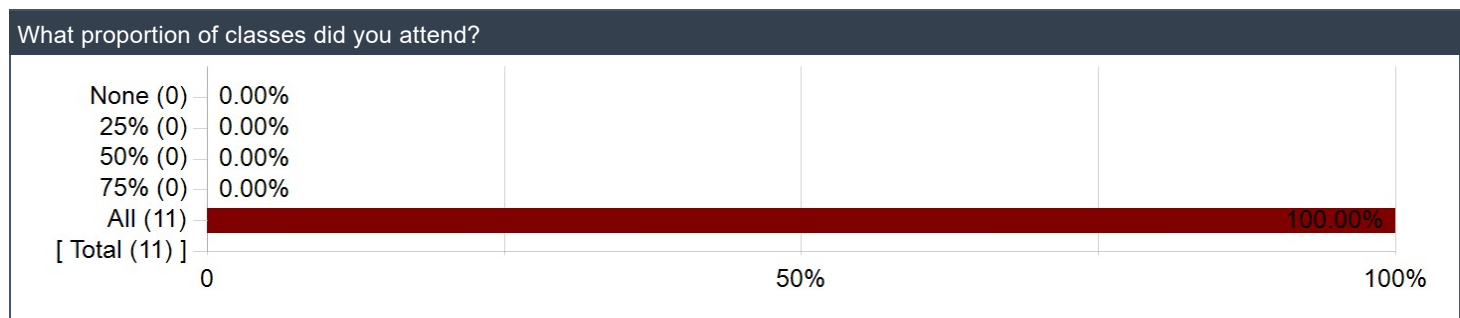
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



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
I think this is a hard class, as all Power classes are. The readings are not as long as other profs, but Prof Singh does grade hard. However, I think that my writing has improved and my way of thinking with the text has improved as well so I think that if you are willing to take a B instead of an A to learn more and better your writing, then it is worth it.
The reading was denser and longer than in previous classes like my HUM sequence, but was definitely doable. Make regular use of office hours if you can, and, if not, try to individually meet with Professor Singh and your writing advisor as that prove very helpful in better understanding the course content and developing ideas for discussion or essay assignments.
It is very reading dense but you get used to it. The readings are all relevant to the topic. Professor Singh is a harsh grader when it comes to essays but he is fair and willing to go over mistakes or even foundations of essays.
Readings were much denser than in HUM (took readings in world lit personally). Papers were graded harshly but criticism was fair
Not really a humanities guy, so I slightly struggled with the class' readings and ideas. Came for Singh and enjoyed it! (grades are ...)
With regard to writing, Professor Singh has very high expectations. He does, however, justify his tough grades with extensive feedback.
Compared to HUM, there's a lot more focus on the text. Class is solely based on interpreting and understanding the ideas and claims of the author. There's no metaphysics or philosophy. Readings (especially Kant) can be quite difficult to understand. Overall, you have to prepare for class discussion and make sure you fully understand the text. It's completely attainable for all students.
Difficult
It was very difficult.