



Spring 2017 - Comment Report for Robert Howton

PHIL 1040 - ARISTOTLE - 1050 - Lecture

2174 - Teaching Survey

Total Enrollment 17

Responses Received 11

Response Rate 64.71%

Subject Details

DEPARTMENT_CD	PHILH
CAMPUS_CD	PIT
SCHOOL_CD	ARTSC
CLASS_NBR	26023
COURSE_NUMBER	1040
SECTION_NUMBER	1050

Report Comments

Responses to open-ended questions

Creation Date Wed, May 17, 2017

What did the instructor do to help you learn?

Comments
Went in depth well, used good analogies when explaining complicated topics.
Very thorough instruction. Answered all of my questions. Very patient.
desire us to do our best and not accept anything less
The reading quizzes were honestly very important. They forced you to read critically
Daily assignments helped to make sure I was focusing and trying to understand all of the readings. Always did his best to understand questions that students had, and answer them in meaningful ways.
His lectures often transitioned into a lot of open dialogue when we had questions about the material. Without fail Robby would make sure that our questions were answered before moving on.
Lectures were excellent, engaging, and immensely detailed. So much information was presented during each class meeting, and yet Professor Howton's lectures flowed so well and were so effective at reinforcing new information as it was introduced that it never felt overwhelming. Required homework for each class meeting was more demanding than expected, but meant that comprehension of what was being discussed was far better (as the assignments required high attentiveness towards readings). Questions were answered phenomenally well in class. Seemed to genuinely care about students, both with regard to the quality of the learning process and to the students themselves. Exams were occasionally tough but always fair, and constructive feedback offered for all assignments was always excellent. Overall, fantastic experience.
Robert provided excellent descriptions and analyzation of the text that stimulated my thinking
Each lecture was enthusiastically and clearly expressed. One thing I found very helpful was the 'scribe sheets' made by students as an assignment then uploaded as study guides. This provided a great way to review old material, make sure nothing was missed, and to catch up on a class if one was unable to make it. Though the scribe sheets were made by us he guided us through the process and gave corrections and supplementations for each one before it was uploaded. Additionally, I found the presentations a helpful way to be exposed to material that was more advanced and available for interpretation. His selection of the articles was helpful in guiding that exposure
Very enthusiastic professor and presenter. Also very personable and encourages students to seek help and ask questions which provides us with a positive learning environment.

What could the instructor do to improve?

Comments
Schedule more time for complicated or interesting topics so class isn't rushed
N ^o
only thing I could think of is to post the discussion questions earlier than the night before.
A way to practice for the exam would have been great
Not much! Maybe it would work better to prepare lectures to anticipate time for questions. Though that can get a little tricky.
The organization of the course in how one lecture transitions into the next was a little bit hard to follow at certain points throughout the semester. About 2 nd of the way through I was able to catch on, but it took a lot of time for me to wrap my head around the organization.
Structuring the assignments so that students could see the reading response questions further in advance would be helpful, as it would give students the chance to get ahead on class readings or look ahead at the issues to come. Also, the abrupt transition from comprehensive lectures to very specialized student presentations occasionally threw off the pace of the class. But ultimately, these were both minor things, and I had no broader complaints about the course at all.
I am not sure what Robert could do to improve. I am not sure how long Robert has been lecturing, I presume that it cannot be especially long based on how old he looks; nevertheless, he provided perhaps the most exceptional class experience I have ever had. The greatness of Aristotle does not need comment but Robert enhanced the material in every way. Often times during the semester, when Robert started preaching the gospel, I could not help moving and dancing in my seat.
During the class presentations I think he could allow the students to speak for themselves a bit more. Oftentimes he would chime in with asides or comments at multiple points in the presentation. I think this took away from the flow and organization of some presentations and that occasionally the points made were something the presenter had planned to discuss and thus limited their content.

Do you have any other information that you would like your instructor to know?

Comments
Really enjoyed the class, and it was more challenging than I initially anticipated.
It would have been nice to get more of a warning on the difficulty of the class in the description on the online Pitt course catalog. Also, I feel like there should have been another pre-requisite course for this class. Maybe another 1000 level PHIL class. I qualified for the class after having taken only one PHIL class and no UHC classes, and I was honestly not prepared for this. I feel like the some of the other students are getting a lot more out of the class, since they can readily understand things, whereas I can generally only get the main ideas. The readings and concepts are quite difficult, and I feel like more pre-requisite classes would prevent people like me from entering prematurely. I do, however, find the course quite interesting, and in a perfect world, would turn back time and take a non-honors 1000 level before jumping right into this.
Your lectures are the most stimulating and entertaining of any course I have ever taken outside of my major. I loved going to lecture. It was the highlight of my week. Also I really liked the reading questions system. It ensured that I did the readings every week and that I went to lecture. I really don't think I would have been successful in this course without that system. It also was nice because it provided a lot of opportunity for points that would not have been possible otherwise. Thank you for a fantastic semester!
Thanks so much for a great semester! It was amazingly informative and enjoyable, and I really did get a lot out of it!
Great job on the course! Though I did not find every topic equally interesting I think that each of them was necessary to address and that you spread it out in a way that gave appropriate attention to each.