

Teaching Portfolio

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Contents

Summary of Teaching Evaluations	3
Summary of Numerical Evaluations	3
Summary of Open Responses	4
Data in Politics: Instructor of Record (Fall 2019; Spring 2020; Fall 2020)	8
Sample Syllabus	9
Sample Class Materials (Recorded Lectures, Slides, R Scripts)	16
Critical Analysis Project — Student Project Summaries (Fall 2019)	17
Critical Analysis Project — Quantitative Deliverable Outline (Fall 2019)	18
Critical Analysis Project — Quantitative Deliverable Outline (Fall 2020; Online)	19
Exam I (Fall 2020; Online)	24
Exam II (Fall 2020; Online)	28
Complete Course Evaluations — Fall 2020; Online Instruction	37
Complete Course Evaluations — Spring 2020; Hybrid Instruction	42
Complete Course Evaluations — Fall 2019; Face-to-Face Instruction	47
Odum Institute: Instructor (Spring 2018; Fall 2019; Spring 2020; Fall 2020)	51
Complete Course Materials (Fall 2020)	52
Complete Course Evaluations — Fall 2020; Online Instruction	53
Introduction to American Politics: Instructor of Record (Spring 2019)	68
Sample Syllabus	69
Sample Class Materials (Presentation Slides)	75
Midterm Exam	76
Final Exam	78
Paper Assignments	80
Complete Course Evaluations — Spring 2019; Face-to-Face Instruction	82
Introduction to American Politics: Teaching Assistant (Fall 2017; Spring 2018)	86
Sample Syllabus	87
Complete Course Evaluations — Spring 2018; Recitation Sections	92
Complete Course Evaluations — Fall 2017; Recitation Sections	101
Introduction to Comparative Politics: Teaching Assistant (Fall 2018)	110
Complete Course Evaluations — Fall 2018; Recitation Sections	110

Summary of Teaching Evaluations

This document provides a synopsis of numerical evaluations and open-ended feedback that I received during my tenure as an instructor and teaching assistant at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I have served as the instructor of record for two different undergraduate courses. Additionally, I was a teaching assistant for large lecture-style classes where I led three weekly discussions sections (“recitations”) for about sixty students per semester. Please find more information about these courses in the sample course content provided in this portfolio.

Instructor of Record

- Data in Politics I (POLI 281) — Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020
- Introduction to American Politics (POLI 100) — Spring 2019

Teaching Assistant

- Introduction to Comparative Politics (POLI 100) — Fall 2018
- Introduction to American Politics (POLI 100) — Fall 2017, Spring 2018

Summary of Numerical Evaluations

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill administers course evaluations with an online survey that prompts students to answer questions on their class experience. Each question is answered on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale. Presented teaching assistant evaluations have been averaged across the three discussion (“recitation”) sections taught each semester. A selection of questions are presented in the tables below.

<i>Instructor-of-Record</i>	Average	Data in Politics I			Into to American
		FA 2020	SP 2020	FA 2019	SP 2019
Shows an enthusiasm for teaching	4.7	4.9	4.7	4.6	4.5
Promotes a climate of mutual respect	4.8	5.0	4.7	4.8	4.5
Encourages student questions	4.8	5.0	4.8	4.8	4.6
Encourages critical thinking	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.5
Promotes active student involvement	4.5	5.0	4.6	4.1	4.5
Is available when needed	4.8	5.0	4.9	4.5	4.7
Is well-prepared for instruction	4.7	5.0	4.7	4.6	4.6
Learned a great deal from this course	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.5
Overall, this instructor was excellent	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.4	4.5
Total Number of Students		29	30	31	30
% Reporting		41%	33%	27%	42%

<i>Teaching Assistant</i>	Average Score	Intro to Comparative Fall 2018	Intro to American Spring 2018	Intro to American Fall 2017
Did a good job leading discussions	4.72	4.80	4.82	4.55
Was well-prepared for class	4.78	4.83	4.80	4.71
Displayed a mastery of material	4.74	4.76	4.89	4.58
Overall, this TA did an effective job	4.64	4.80	4.64	4.47
Overall, this TA was excellent	4.66	4.70	4.68	4.60
Total Number of Students		54	48	53
N by Recitation Section		(18, 18, 18)	(20, 8, 20)	(18, 17, 18)
% Reporting		35%	39%	42%

Summary of Open Responses

An open-ended response section asks students to offer feedback, suggestions for change, and any other comments on my performance as an instructor. A selection of responses are presented below:

Political Methodology Courses

Data in Politics — Fall 2020 (Instructor)

- Rachel has been flexible and open during this semester which is super important due to how crazy of a semester it was. She would would push due dates back, and shift materials around in order to make sure that we learned the material before starting assignments, which was extremely helpful in learning a new skill such as coding in R.
- Rachel was very accommodating and more than willing to flex to individual emergency situations. I appreciated knowing she would be flexible, even if I didn't need to ask for an extension. She was also available for more hours than probably any of my other professors, and would allow us to come work through coding projects and ask questions — this was probably the most valuable part of the course for me because I got immediate feedback while I was completing assignments and she was able to suggest more efficient/effective ways to write my code.
- Rachel always made class feel energetic and was understanding of the situations at hand with the current times. She was flexible and and available when we needed her, making it less stressful than it could have been to stay afloat in this challenging course. I appreciate all that she did and feel lucky to have learned from her this semester.
- I absolutely love Rachel. She made office hours extremely accessible. Her scheduled office hours conflicted with one of my classes but whenever I needed to meet with her she would answer my email promptly and extend her office hours forme to be able to make it. Not only that but she is always checking her emails and is mindful of our needs. She is one of the few professors that I have met that truly taking in mind the student's mental health. She doesn't try to make school harder but rather accommodates us and our needs. This subject is extremely hard but Rachel makes it extremely easy to keep up. Overall love her.
- The course was well supported by a good structure of learning, flexible schedule, and examples/work to cultivate an understanding of the subject.

- Flexible, compassionate, and understanding professor which is super important during times such as this. Communicates often and clearly with the class on due dates, upcoming lectures, expectations, etc. which allows for little to no confusion on what to expect throughout the course/week.
- Rachel was a great teacher, who was incredibly dedicated to her students and teaching the material effectively. She always presented her lectures with enthusiasm, cultivated a psychologically safe learning environment that promoted curiosity, and always made herself available to speak with students outside of class.
- I could go on and on she's amazing. Always available and the opposite of intimidating.
- Rachel was very approachable and made learning fun and easy. She was flexible in her teaching approach, and made herself always available to tutor students and answer questions outside of class. Overall Rachel was an incredible teacher, who's dedication to providing quality mentorship is remarkable.
- Made a conscious effort to check in with students at every opportunity to make sure everyone understood the concepts we were learning about. When someone asked a question, which was often as Rachel prompted us to ask questions if there was anything we were confused about, she always tried to explain the answer in the simplest and most accessible way and was never smug when someone was having trouble understanding something (something I have experienced in other classes).
- This was honestly one of the most straight forward courses I've taken at UNC. Some professors don't communicate about when you should expect assignments or grades and Rachel was always beating us to the punch and answering questions before we had them.

Data in Politics — Spring 2020 (Instructor)

- I cannot speak more highly of Rachel. She is passionate, intelligent, and understanding. Her lectures are interesting and informative. She is available to answer any and all questions and she does so in a manner that is always helpful and never condescending. I felt very comfortable asking her for guidance throughout online learning and believe she is one of the best instructors I have had at UNC. She provided us with feedback, graded in a timely manner, and always made sure the course load was manageable for all students.
- Rachel was flexible, kind, and accessible as an instructor. Her goal was that she truly wanted the students to understand the material. She cared about how students were doing during the transition, not only with the class material, but the entire transition in general. She handled the transition to online learning incredibly well, and I felt like I didn't miss a second of class.
- Rachel is full of energy in class. This energized me as a student, she was a joy to learn from. She gives so much time to students in office hours and genuinely cares about our understanding of the material. I felt like I got a lot of individualized help when I needed it which incredibly increased the benefit I got from this course. I did not expect to like this course as much as I did, but Rachel made it great.
- Rachel was an excellent teacher. She taught the class by giving ample examples that made the material easy to digest and understand. She would step through confusing topics and ask for collaboration from the class to make sure we were learning the topics correctly. She held extensive office hours and would spend a lot of effort to make sure I understood the topics she was showing me. She never let an assignment go by without being explained, in full, after the due date. This made me feel comfortable that I was not missing topics.

- Rachel was by far the most effective professor I had during this semester. She upheld our schedule with classes and office hours but created a slightly more manageable course load for us. She taught us during live sessions but recorded them so we could view them later. She also was very available to zoom us individually with questions.
- Rachel was extremely helpful in the transition to online instruction. She remained very accessible for office hours both before and after the transition to online classes. She gave constant updates on the class, office hours, and assignments. There was never a moment where I did not understand the expectations for the course, and I always felt like I could reach out and get assistance from Rachel.
- Rachel was one of the best instructors I have had at UNC.

Data in Politics — Fall 2019 (Instructor)

- The content in the problem sets and projects were very hands on and the application from lecture was very clear and interesting.
- She was enthusiastic, fair, and very accessible outside of class. I would take a class with her again just for fun.
- Rachel was always available to meet with, helpful in reinforcing material outside of class during office hours, and knew how to teach the material so that everyone could understand.
- Rachel is really great at being approachable and giving reasonable and helpful feedback. She reminds us often to not get discouraged, which is super important in a difficult and challenging class like this one. I think she does a great job at knowing what pace to teach at, when a student is confused and doesn't want to show it, and is really great at being patient with those who need more explanation.
- Rachel had no limitations. She handled the class well and structured it excellently.
- This course was informative on the processes involved in data analytics within the political sphere. There were ample opportunities for success within the classroom while also learning about how to become involved outside the class.
- This course was well-designed to facilitate my learning R, through in-class assignments, working as a class, individual assignments, and PowerPoints. The idea of learning R was daunting to me, but Rachel made it attainable and accessible.
- Rachel created a very low stress environment for students and genuinely wanted us all to understand the material. She provided ample opportunities to visit her in office hours and get her feedback throughout the course

American Politics Courses

Introduction to American Politics — Spring 2019 (Instructor)

- She did a phenomenal job of teaching a highly polarized political atmosphere from a neutral standpoint with a neutral agenda of topics to cover.
- Very engaging, highly interesting and motivated teacher. Made coming to class in the evening worth it because it was always interesting.
- She is very enthusiastic about the topics she teaches in class. She also makes learning the material easy and enjoyable.

- Great professor who is engaging, enthusiastic, and accepting of her students and questions.
- Always was there to help when I didn't understand concepts, good grader, good constructive feedback, very helpful. Somehow remained very politically neutral and sensitive despite it being a class about politics so kudos.
- She asks lots of questions and allows for lots of students bouncing ideas off the room.

Introduction to American Politics — Spring 2018 (Teaching Assistant)

- Honestly Rachel is one of my favorite TAs at UNC. Not only is she funny and engaging but she is more than willing to help. She relates very well to students and I really appreciate that. I always looked forward to attending recitation because I always learned something new.
- Enthusiasm for material and clarity were present. Very prepared and guided discussion very well. Honestly one of the best TAs I have had at Carolina even though I didn't enjoy the lecture. Keep doing you Rachel!
- Rachel was a great TA! She was really relatable, led fruitful class discussions, gave positive feedback, and encouraged us all to think deeply about the subject matter. I felt like her grading standards were reasonable and her plan for the course played out very well.
- Rachel was extremely passionate and knowledgeable about American government and it showed. Her excitement for the subject made the students more engaged in learning and more willing to contribute to the discussion. I thought that she presented the material in a way that captured students' interests and made them curious about the subject. I feel like I genuinely learned a great deal from this class. The paper topics were unique and easy to write about, and more interesting than a regular academic essay.

Introduction to American Politics — Fall 2017 (Teaching Assistant)

- Very nice, accessible, knowledgeable, discussions were interesting
- I love Rachel! I have so greatly been inspired by her expertise in the field of political science and the help she has offered me in office hours, both inside and out. I will miss her greatly and wish her the best of luck in her future.
- I thought that Rachel did a great job as the TA for this course, handling class discussions skillfully, even when the students did not want to participate. She was engaging, knowledgeable, helpful, and approachable. One of the best TA's I've had at Carolina, I would say.
- You did an amazing job! You were always well prepared and extremely knowledgeable about the course material.

Intro. to Comparative Politics — Fall 2019 (Teaching Assistant)

- Rachel was AMAZING! Best TA I have had at Carolina. She presented all of the material very clearly and really engaged the class with thoughtful questions. This class was great in terms of the lecture but was made complete through the recitations led by Rachel.
- Rachel was one of the best instructors I have had at UNC, better than many professors. She made a topic I honestly have a hard time getting into very interesting and presented all information very clearly. She wanted us to understand the concepts and offered tons of knowledge on the topics.

**Data in Politics (POLI 281) Instructor of Record
Sample Course Materials**

POLI 281: Data in Politics I

Sample Syllabus

Instructor: Rachel Porter

Email: rachsur@live.unc.edu

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 10:00 - 11:30

Office Location: Hamilton 303

Classroom: Gardner, 307

Course Description

This course is designed to achieve three objectives: (1) introduce you to research and quantitative analysis in political science, (2) help you become critical consumers of quantitative analysis used in political and policy-oriented reporting, and (3) give you the ability to answer questions of social scientific importance using data. Throughout the course, we'll discuss the complexities of generating good research designs, starting with how to ask interesting questions and how to measure concepts of interest to social scientists. We'll discuss the challenges and limitations of gathering good data to test these theories as well as various statistical tools that can be used to evaluate our theories. Throughout the course, we'll use what we've learned to think critically about the use and abuse of data by analysts, reporters, politicians, and policy advocates. As such, not only will you be learning to do your own analysis this semester, but also learning to evaluate such information when it's presented in the media.

The target audience for this course is undergraduate students with interest in the social sciences (not only Political Science), who want to use quantitative approaches to solve important problems, develop marketable analytical skills. This course fulfills the Quantitative Intensive (QI) requirement and counts as a research methods course for completing the Political Science major. It is a prerequisite for Poli 381: Data in Politics II which will be offered in future semesters.

Required Text

There is one required book for this course, available in the UNC Bookstore. We rely heavily on this textbook so it is essential that you buy it.

- Imai, Kosuke. 2017. *Quantitative Social Science: An Introduction*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Software

Much of the hands-on work we will do in this class requires us to use computers, so I ask that you bring your laptops to class each day. Specifically, we will make use of the R statistical computing environment to analyze data and create graphics over the course of the semester. RStudio is a popular editor that allows you to open, edit, and save R text files, making it much easier to work with R. I will use RStudio to demonstrate in class, and I recommend you download and use it as well. To access these programs:

- **R:** Download precompiled binary distributions at <http://cran.us.r-project.org>
- **RStudio:** Download RStudio Desktop at <http://www.rstudio.com/products/rstudio>

Suggested Materials & Additional Resources

The textbook has extensive online materials for learning to use R. There are also a number of free supplemental resources available through UNC that offer assistance:

- <http://qss.princeton.press/student-resources-for-quantitative-social-science>
- R Open Labs: <http://ropenlabs.web.unc.edu>

Additional help may be found with the Odum Institutes statistical consultants at the Research Hub on the second floor of Davis Library from 9am to 6pm, Monday through Friday.

Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. If changes are made, students will be informed through email and verbally in class.

Grading & Course Requirements

Your grade for the course will be determined by performance in five areas: class participation, problem sets, DataCamp exercises, exams, and a critical analysis project.

Grading

Final grades for the course will be based on the following scale. I reserve the right to make adjustments to individual grades based on overall performance in the course and/or extenuating circumstances. There will be no extra credit provided.

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| • A: 93-100 | • B: 83-86 | • C: 73-76 | • D+: 67-69 |
| • A-: 90-92 | • B-: 80-82 | • C: 73-76 | • D-: 60-62 |
| • B+: 87-89 | • C+: 77-79 | • C-: 70-72 | • F: 59 or below |

Course Grade Breakdown

The proportion of each assignment as part of your overall grade is as follows:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| • Participation and Assigned Work: 15% | • Critical Analysis Project: 30% |
| • Problem Sets: 25% | – Proposal: 5% |
| • Exams: 30% | – Preliminary Analysis: 5% |
| – Exam One: 10% | – Presentation: 5% |
| – Exam Two: 20% | – Paper: 15% |

In Class Participation & Assigned Work

Class time will be divided between lecture and in-class activities. The way you are going to learn best, especially when it comes to working with statistical software, is through practice. Active involvement in activities is absolutely crucial to success in this class not to mention, an easy way to boost your participation grade (and thus your overall grade). We will be doing a lot of in-class work, both individually and in groups. While attendance is not graded directly, absences will hurt your grade as you cannot earn participation points if you are not in class. If you know you are going to be absent for an excused reason, email me before class and give me any documentation I need to excuse you (i.e. doctor's notes, University's notes, etc.). When your absence is excused, you

can make up the in-class work for credit. When your absence is unexcused, you cannot make the in-class work up and you will receive a zero.

Problem Sets

Homework assignments will be assigned throughout the semester. The problem sets will be posted to Sakai, and due electronically on Sakai before the start of class on the due date. Late homework will be subject to a 10% penalty each additional day it is late. Late homework will no longer be accepted after the answer key is posted to Sakai.

Critical Analysis Project

The research project is a primary focus of this course and, as such, makes up just under a third of the overall grade. This project will allow you to directly apply the lessons from this course to a political issue or question that you care about. For the project, you will be assigned to a group of 4-6 students (depending on class size). Your group will work together to select a relevant political issue or question, theorize about some factors that might explain that issue or help answer the question, choose a (provided) data set appropriate for the question, and analyze the data to see whether your expectations were supported. Each member of the group will receive *approximately* the same grade on all parts of the research project; I expect each member, in turn, to make an equal contribution throughout the process. You will be asked to evaluate your group members and yourself at each stage of the process and the evaluations provided will have an impact on your grade. The project and overall distribution of points are divided into four parts:

- **Project Proposal (5%):** Each group must turn in a two-page, double-spaced paper proposal by October 9th. This proposal should include a brief description of the issue or question about public opinion you plan to examine. Make sure to address why this topic is interesting to you and/or important within political science. This proposal should include an initial description of your research question, theory, and hypotheses.
- **Preliminary Analysis (5%):** Each group must turn in a preliminary data analysis, which includes the key statistics used to test your hypotheses, by November 11th. This assignment, totaling approximately two or three double-spaced pages, requires a brief description of the data used, a brief explanation of the statistical methods you used, the relevant statistical outputs you computed, and an indication of whether and why the outputs support or oppose your paper's hypotheses.
- **Presentation (5%):** At the end of the semester, each group will give a PowerPoint presentation about its research on December 7th. Each presentation should be approximately 12-15 minutes, and time will be left for questions and answers after each group presents.
- **Paper (15%):** The final research paper is due on December 7th before presentations begin. This paper should be approximately 10 pages, double-spaced, not counting any tables, figures, or the bibliography.

Exams (30%)

There will be two exams; the first worth 10% and the second worth 20% of your final grade. The first will be on October 11th and the second will be on November 25th. Note that this is not the final exam slot. We will be using the final exam slot for group presentations. The format of each exam will be discussed in class before the exam.

Unexcused Absences and Exams

You are required to be present for all scheduled exams. The only allowable exception to this policy is a documented emergency. If at all possible you should contact the instructor before the exam to discuss the emergency, provide documentation, and schedule the make-up.

Expectations

Communication

I am very happy to meet with students outside of class time. Whether it be to discuss concerns about the course, remediation with the material, or simply to engage further with the topic, please feel free to stop by Hamilton 303 during my office hours. If you are unable to meet during my office hours, which are listed at the top of this syllabus, please email me to set up a time to talk. Email is the best mode of communication with which to reach me. While I do my best to respond to emails as quickly and thoroughly as possible, please expect a response within 24 hours and plan accordingly.

Office hours are an important resource that should be utilized to improve understanding of materials or ask more personalized questions. Office hours before an exam will be held at regular times and, unless noted by me, no additional office hours will be held - so plan accordingly. University Policy stipulates that no grades can be sent over email. *After I have graded and returned your assignments, there is a twenty-four hour moratorium before I will answer questions about that assignment.*

Technology Use

The use of cell phones or other mobile communication devices is prohibited during this class, without exception. Laptops, on the other hand, are required. We are going to be doing a lot of work on the computer, especially with statistical programming software. Please email or come talk to me if you do not have access to a laptop and we will find a solution. Please bring your laptop to every class.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should (1) contact the office of Learning Disabilities at UNC: <http://www.unc.edu/depts/lds/index.html> and (2) bring a letter to me indicating the need for accommodation and what type during the first week of class.

Academic Integrity

According to UNC's Instrument of Student Judicial Governance, It shall be the responsibility of every student enrolled at the University of North Carolina to support the principles of academic integrity and to refrain from all forms of academic dishonesty. Failure to abide by this policy may result in punitive action taken against the offending students. Consult the UNC Writing Centers handout on plagiarism (<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/plagiarism/>) to learn more on how to avoid academic dishonesty.

Programming is a skill that takes time and practice to develop. Whenever you encounter a new problem, you will have to grapple with it and reach an understanding of what it is asking before you can reach a solution. Discussing the problem with other people is permitted and even encouraged. When it comes time to actually write your code to solve the problem, all work must be your own. Do not copy anyone else's code, and do not share your code with others. Identifying plagiarized code is surprisingly easy, even after renaming variables or rearranging individual pieces of code.

Some in-class work and the critical analysis project is collaborative, and collaborative writing of code is permitted. **All collaborative assignments will be clearly identified.**

Honor Code

All students participating in the class are assumed to be familiar with and adhering to the UNC Honor Code. I treat violations of the Honor Code seriously. More information is available at <http://instrument.unc.edu>.

Collaborative Group Membership

As explained above, students will work on the research project, including the presentation and final paper, as a group. Though time will be given in class for group members to work together on the various sections of the research project, you will still need to devote a substantial amount of time to the group project outside of class. I expect all members of the group to contribute equally to the project, and each component of the project should reflect contributions from each group member. In other words, do not simply divide up the components of the project among the members of the group. While collaborative work poses some challenges, the benefits you will gain from learning how to work together successfully as a team will serve you well in all facets of your life, from the classes you take in the future to the career you pursue after graduation.

When it comes to group work, two problems often occur: (1) one member of the group dominates the project, or (2) some members of the group “free ride” by relying on other group members to do their work for them. I will try my best to prevent both, by regularly checking in with groups about the status of their projects. If problems within the group do arise, I encourage you first to discuss them openly and honestly among yourselves to see if some resolution can be found. If problems persist, please see me.

Schedule

Readings and assignments are due the date of class listed.

Date	Class Topic	Readings & Assignments
08/21	Introduction & Syllabus Day	Download R & R Studio
08/23	Working with R: The Basics	Data Camp Introduction to R: Chapters 1-3
08/26	Working with R: The Basics	In-Class Exercise
08/28	Working with Data in R	Data Camp Introduction to R: Chapters 4-6
08/30	Working with Data in R	In-Class Exercise
09/04	Analyzing Data in R	In-Class Assignment Problem Set #1 Released
09/06	Analyzing Data in R	
09/09	Intermediate R: Loops	Data Camp Intermediate R: Chapters 1-2 Problem Set #1 Due Problem Set #2 Released
09/11	Intermediate R: Functions	Data Camp Intermediate R: Chapters 3-4
09/13	Intermediate R: Review	In-Class Exercise
09/16	Introduction to Causality I	Bertrand & Mullainathan pgs. 991-997 Imai pg. 32-48 Problem Set #2 Due Problem Set #3 Released
09/18	Introduction to Causality II	Imai pgs. 49-63 Yeh et al. 2018 and NPR parachute article
09/20	Group Projects	
09/23	Data Visualization & Descriptive Statistics	Imai pgs. 63-88 Problem Set #3 Due
09/25	Visualizing Data in R	In-Class Exercise
09/27	Cleaning Data in R	Data Camp Cleaning Data in R: Chapters 1-4
09/30	Measurement: Surveys and Sampling	Imai pgs. 88-116 Cohn 2016 NYT article
10/02	Research Ethics	Denizet-Lewis 2016 (LaCour/Green/Brookman/Kalla NYT article)
10/04	Applying Concepts	In-Class Exercise Problem Set #4 Released
10/07	Group Project Work Day	
10/09	Review & Catch-Up	Turn in Project Proposals

Continued on next page

Calendar – continued from previous page

Date	Class Topic	Readings & Assignments
10/11	Exam # 1	
10/14	Prediction	Imai pp. 123-160
10/16	Applying Concepts	In-Class Exercise Problem Set #4 Due
10/21	Linear Regression I	DataCamp Corr. and Regression: Chapters 1-5
10/23	Linear Regression II	Imai pgs. 161-170
10/25	Multiple Regression	Reingold & Smith 2012 In-Class Exercise Problem Set # 5 Released
10/28	Multiple Regression	Carnes & Lupu 2014 In-Class Exercise
10/30	Catch-Up & Finish Multiple Regression	
11/01	Bringing It All Together	In-Class Assignment
11/04	Interaction Effects	Imai pgs. 171-182 Hansen & Treul 2015
11/06	Introduction to Probability I	Imai pp. 242-265
11/08	Introduction to Probability II	Imai pp. 277-306
11/11	Applying Concepts	In-Class Exercise Preliminary Analysis Due
11/13	Uncertainty I	Imai pp. 314-369
11/15	Uncertainty II	Preliminary Analysis Returned
11/18	Group Work Day	
11/20	Group Work Day	
11/22	Review	
11/25	Exam #2	
12/02	Group Work Day	
12/04	Group Work Day	
Final Paper & Presentation Due Saturday December 7th at 8:00 A.M.		

Sample Class Materials

Week of 08/16/2020: Introducing Statistical Programming in R

- *Prior to this class:* Students completed initial homework assignment using the online learning platform DataCamp to familiarize themselves with the basics of objects, vectors, etc.
- *In this class:* Students were introduced to RStudio and completed their first R script.
- Class Materials
 - R Script: [Introduction to R \(Empty\)](#); [Introduction to R \(Filled\)](#)
 - Online Class: [Full Class Session \(00:58:45\)](#)
 - Online Class: [Highlight—Intuition Behind Object-Oriented Programming \(00:01:38\)](#)

Week of 10/18/2020: Multiple Regression & Categorical Variables

- *Prior to this class:* Students were introduced to ordinary least squares regression and practiced interpreting model results in the context of bivariate relationships.
- *In this class:* Students' knowledge of OLS was extended to multiple regression; concepts covered previously, such as multicollinearity and causality, were placed in the context of regression; students learned how to interpret models with categorical predictors.
- Class Materials
 - Presentation Slides: [Multiple Regression](#)
 - Online Class: [Full Class Session \(00:55:41\)](#)
 - Online Class: [Highlight—Intuition Behind Multiple Regression \(00:06:06\)](#)
 - Online Class: [Highlight—Modeling Multiple Independent Variables \(00:02:01\)](#)
 - Online Class: [Highlight—Causality & Controls \(00:05:11\)](#)
 - Online Class: [Highlight—Interpreting Coefficients in Multiple Regression \(00:19:05\)](#)

Week of 10/25/2020: Implementing OLS in R; Cleaning Data for Analysis

- *Prior to this class:* Students solidified their understanding of multiple regression.
- *In this class:* For the first time, students paired their understanding of regression with those R programming skills they had developed across the course of the semester.
- Class Materials
 - R Script: [Implementing Linear Regression in R](#)
 - Online Class: [Full Class Session \(01:07:30\)](#)
 - Online Class: [Highlight—Recoding Variables for Analysis \(00:05:25\)](#)
 - Online Class: [Highlight—Running a Linear Model in R \(00:05:52\)](#)

Critical Analysis Project

Final Project Abstracts — Fall 2019

For their Critical Analysis Project, groups were expected to employ data from the American National Election Survey (ANES) to answer a salient political question. Students first prepared and presented a group project proposal; this draft was revised with comments from their classmates and myself. Next, groups conducted a preliminary analysis, which included key statistics used to test their hypothesis and a series of linear regressions. I provided feedback on their R scripts and, implementing these changes, groups prepared a final analysis and paper for presentation. A sample of abstracts from students' final projects are presented below. On the following page, I have included my assignment expectations for their preliminary analysis completed in R.

- **Example Group A:** In most concepts of patriotism, a notion of duty to one's country is included. The United States especially focuses on a concept of duty to one's nation, but the interpretation of what that duty is varies greatly from person to person. Our research project focuses on the idea that voting could be considered a duty. We will attempt to identify variables that predict a person's support for the idea of voting as a duty as opposed to a choice. We will be using a linear probability model to examine a binary outcome. For each independent variable we will identify how it will affect the likelihood of viewing voting as a duty. We will also include a more descriptive portion where we talk about how viewing voting as a duty or choice affects the likelihood of a voter supporting Democrats or Republicans in the 2016 general election. We believe that research into this question could be useful for political campaigns messaging, as well as understanding what motivates people to vote and how different mobilization tactics might be more effective for different populations.
- **Example Group B:** In discussions about the 2016 presidential election, one controversial issue has been the influence of media on an individual's perception of the presidential race. The reality is that Americans are consuming more media than ever before. For instance, Pew Research shows a steady increase in Americans' use of social media every year since 2014 (Social Media Fact Sheet). Increasing usage of social media and other media sources has inevitably altered the political landscape. Media defines how Americans take in information in our complex world, and therefore how they learn about and interpret politics. Politics and the media have become undoubtedly intertwined. Our research attempts to test our hypothesis that increased media consumption leads to increased confidence in desired election results by analyzing the presidential election of 2016. We studied this election through the American National Election Survey, a reputable national election survey conducted before and after every presidential election. Our hypothesis was tested by comparing respondents' reported usage of media to their "confidence" that their preferred candidate would win.
- **Example Group C:** Satisfaction with democracy in the United States is currently at an all-time low. According to the 2018 American Institutional Confidence Poll, only 40 percent of Americans reported being satisfied with the state of democracy following the 2016 election (Kates, 2018). Our research project focuses on the analysis of how people voted in the 2016 presidential election and their satisfaction with the US democracy following the outcome. We suspect that a relationship exists between a voter's presidential candidate choice and their satisfaction with democratic processes given the results of the election. Recognizing this relationship could help with an understanding of what kinds of political environments voters in the US consider democratic. It can also help political scientists better understand democratic backsliding.

Critical Analysis Project: Preliminary Analysis

DUE: November 11th

1 THE ASSIGNMENT

Each group must turn in a preliminary data analysis, which includes the key statistics used to test your hypotheses, by November 11th. This assignment, totaling approximately two or four double-spaced pages, requires a brief description of the data used, a brief explanation of the statistical methods you used, the relevant statistical outputs you computed, and an indication of whether and why the outputs support or oppose your paper's hypotheses. Specifically, this proposal should outline an initial description of your:

- Description of the data used
 - Describe your dataset
 - Include a description of how you cleaned your data (i.e. the variables that may have had codes for “Don’t know” or “No answer” that you have converted to NA)
 - Include any descriptions of other cleaning or coding decisions you made (i.e. reverse coded a variable; changed a variable to binary (0,1) indicator, etc.)
- Explanation of the statistical methods used
 - Write out, mathematically, the model you ran (including all control variables as well)
 - *For example:* $\text{income} = \alpha + \beta_1 \cdot \text{age} + \beta_2 \cdot \text{gender} + e$
 - Describe the statistical method you used to estimate your model and justify that choice
 - This is especially important for people who are treating a 5 or 7 ordinal variable as continuous so you can run OLS. This is a good and fine decision – but I want you to note it in your paper.
- Relevant statistical outputs you computed
 - Make a table of the regression output that you get from R. Ideally, you should copy and paste the output into an excel or word table and format it properly.
 - Describe the findings
 - Talk about your betas/coefficients (mathematically)
 - *For example:* a one unit increase in age leads to a 0.5 increase in income, on average, all else constant
 - Discuss the statistical significance of your findings. Are they significant? And if so, at what level?
- Indication of whether and why the outputs support or oppose your paper’s hypotheses
 - This is where you should substantively interpret your findings – what do your findings tell us about your theory and hypotheses?
 - *For example:* we find evidence that increases in age tend to lead to increases in income, on average. This confirms our hypothesis that as individuals get older, their incomes increase.
 - If your findings do not confirm your hypotheses, discuss why and discuss avenues for possible future research (or things *you* may change for the final paper).
- Include your R Script that includes all coding, cleaning, and statistical analyses you ran.

Final Project: POLI 281 (Fall 2020)

Optional Feedback: November 11th, 11:59

Paper & Analysis Due: November 22nd, 11:59

1 THE ASSIGNMENT

In the field of political science, there is substantial research on the infrastructure of elections – this research shows that everything from [ballot design](#) to the [kind of primary election system a state adopts](#) has an influence in determining election outcomes. Policy experts have most recently turned to long wait times as a key factor in affecting who does and does not vote in U.S. elections. In 2018, everything from [broken scanners](#) to [insufficient polling locations](#) brought about grueling waits for voters – causing some to stand in line for [upwards of 6 hours](#). After this debacle, questions arose as to whether certain Americans – namely people of color – waited, on average, in longer lines than white Americans. From this question, we produce a null hypothesis and alternative hypotheses:

H₀: There is no difference in the voting wait times of white Americans and non-white Americans

H_{a1}: Black Americans had longer voting wait times than white Americans

H_{a2}: Hispanic Americans had longer voting wait times than white Americans

H_{a3}: Asian Americans had longer voting wait times than white Americans

H_{a4}: Americans of “other” races/ethnicities had longer voting wait times than white Americans

For your final project, you will be using real data from the [2018 Congressional Cooperative Elections Study](#) to investigate racial disparities in Election Day wait times for voting. This assignment will be composed of two parts: (1) a quantitative analysis, and (2) a written essay.

2 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Using your knowledge of linear regression and coding skills in R, your task is to conduct a robust quantitative analysis of voter wait times in the 2018 U.S. midterm election. In this exercise, the main variable being investigated is `cces$wait`, which takes on six values = 1 (not at all); 2 (less than 10 minutes); 3 (10-30 minutes); 4 (31 minutes-1 hour); 5 (more than 1 hour); and 6 (don't know). This analysis will be broken into several parts. Each component is described in detail below. Data and a codebook will be provided, please use only these materials to complete the quantitative portion of your assignment:

2.1 PROVIDE SUMMARY STATISTICS

Using the variable of interest, calculate summary statistics for wait times. Report these in your essay.

2.2 HOW LONG DID AMERICANS WAIT BY REGION?

For each of region in the data set (South, West, Midwest, and Northeast), calculate the percentage of people who reported waiting more than ten minutes. Plot these proportions using a bar plot in `ggplot2`, what trends do you notice? Place this plot in your essay and discuss the trends you observe.

Helpful tips:

- Using the margins command in prop.table might be helpful here!
- Remember, ggplot2 is only compatible with type data.frame, no matrices allowed!

2.3 HOW LONG DID AMERICANS WAIT BY PARTY?

Using the same approach as above, create a plot in ggplot2 that assesses wait times by party, what trends do you notice? Place this plot in your essay and discuss the trends you observe.

2.4 PREPARING YOUR DATA FOR ANALYSIS

We're almost ready to embark on our main analysis, but first we'll have to clean up the data. Our main independent variable will include: (1) race, (2) faminc, (3) income_county, (4) density, and (5) vote2016. Please refer to the bulleted list below for all variable cleaning instructions. In addition to these instructions, please take whatever steps you think are additionally necessary to prepare these variables for your linear regression analysis:

- Race – what race/ethnicity did the respondent self-identify?
 - Simply the variable “race” such that the categories include “Black”, “White”, “Hispanic”, “Asian” and “Other”.
 - Is there anything else that should be done to this variable? Discuss in your essay.
- Family Income – how wealthy is the respondent?
 - Set all individuals who earn less than \$30,000/year to “Low Income”; all individuals who earn between \$30,000/year and \$150,000/year to “Medium Income”; and all other individuals with reported incomes to “High Income.”
 - Is there anything else that should be done to this variable? Discuss in your essay.
- Income County – how prosperous is the county where the respondent lives?
 - Check the distribution of this variable? Is there anything else that should be done to this variable? Discuss in your essay.
- Density – how rural or urban is the county where the respondent lives?
 - This variable is not currently in the data set, you have to create it using county_pop and land_area. This variable should reflect density in the *thousands*. So, for instance, if a county had a density of 2,000 the variable should have a numerical value of 2.
- Vote Choice – did the respondent vote for Trump or Clinton in 2016?
 - Set all respondents who did not vote for Clinton or Trump to NA
 - Is there anything else that should be done to this variable? Discuss in your essay.

2.5 RUNNING THE REGRESSION & REPORTING THE RESULTS

Run two separate models. In the first, investigate a bivariate relationship between race and wait time. In the second model, use all the variable described above to investigate the relationship between race and wait times. Use the results you see to make a nicely-formatted regression table, where there is one column for model 1, and a second column for model 2. Your table must include the coefficients the

number of observations, and the *r*-squared statistic. You can include the standard errors if you wish, but this is not required. Please ensure you bold or place a star next to those coefficients that are statistically significant at an alpha level of 0.05.

Additionally, provide the mathematical equation from your model using all available data from your regression output (alpha value, coefficients, etc.)

In the body of your essay, provide an interpretation of all coefficients in model 2. This can be done in the form of bullet points in you desire (however, please use full sentences). Please also interpret the *r*² value. Once this is complete, answer the following questions below:

- Did we find support for our alternative hypotheses? Discuss and provide a statement concerning whether we reject or fail to reject our null hypothesis (for each alternative hypothesis).
- Did poorer respondents spend more time in line than those wealthier respondents?
- Did respondents in poorer counties spend more time in line than those from wealthier counties?
- Did respondents in more urban areas spend more time in line than those from more rural areas?
- Did Democrats spend more time in line than Republicans?
- Why are the coefficients in model 1 and model 2 different? Which model provided a more robust investigation of our question of interest? How do you know?

3 WRITTEN ESSAY

The subheadings above should provide a structure for your written essay. This essay should include a short introduction, stating the question of interest and hypotheses being investigated. In the body of the essay, discuss your descriptive data, including all plots and statistics produced. Then, go on to discuss your data preparation. What steps did you take? Why did you take these steps? Why is it important that these steps be taken before a linear regression model is fit?

In the final section, provide your regression table output, discuss your results, and address all questions outlined above. In addition, please provide a thoughtful and **thorough** discussion of the policy implications of these results. What are these results' implications on the democratic process? What recommendations might you make to experts? This section will count for a *****third***** of your final grade on this essay! Finally, think back to your model 2 and provide some concluding thoughts. What improvements could have been made? What could you have done differently?

3.1 FINDING (ACADEMIC) SOURCES

If you would like to include help academic sources for your paper (this is not a requirement, but could be useful in your policy discussion) there are a number of good search engines to help. The three that I suggest that you use are:

Google Scholar (<https://scholar.google.com/>)

1. JSTOR (<http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/action/showAdvancedSearch>)
2. UNC Library (<http://library.unc.edu/>)

As with all essays, any and all outside information used should be included in a bibliography/references section. It does not matter which citation style you use, so long as you are consistent. Plagiarism will be penalized to the fullest extent possible through the UNC Honor System.

4 CODEBOOK

Variable	Details
Caseid	A unique number for each respondent
Race	<p>Respondent's answer to the question "What racial or ethnic group best describes you?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 White 2 Black 3 Hispanic 4 Asian 5 Native American 6 Mixed 7 Other 8 Middle Eastern
Vote2016	<p>Respondent's answer to the question, "In the election for U.S. President, who did you vote for?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Donald Trump 2 Hillary Clinton 3 Someone else 4 I did not cast a vote for president 5 I don't recall
faminc	<p>Respondent's self-reported income, coded as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Less than \$10,000 2 \$10,000 - \$19,999 3 \$20,000 - \$29,999 4 \$30,000 - \$39,000 5 \$40,000 - \$49,999 6 \$50,000 - \$59,999 7 \$60,000 - \$69,999 8 \$70,000 - \$79,999 9 \$80,000 - \$99,999 10 \$100,000 - \$119,999 11 \$120,000 - \$149,999 12 \$150,000 - \$199,999 13 \$200,000 - \$249,999 14 \$250,000 - \$349,999 15 \$350,000 - \$499,999 16 \$500,000 or more 97 Prefer not to say

wait	<p>Respondent's answer to the question, "Approximately, how long did you have to wait in line to vote?"</p> <p>1 Not at all 2 Less than 10 minutes 3 10-30 minutes 4 31 minutes – 1 hour 5 More than 1 hour 6 Don't know</p>
land_area	The size of the respondent's county, in square miles
county_name	The name of the respondent's county of residence
state county_pop	<p>The name of the state where the respondent lives (or DC)</p> <p>The population of the respondent's home county</p>
income_county	The average income in the respondent's county, in thousands of dollars.
region	<p>What region of the country the respondent lives in:</p> <p>MW: Midwest NE: Northeast S: South W: West</p>

Exam One

Name: _____

Multiple Choice (2 points each)

1. Which of the following is a key tenant of probability sampling?
 - a. The sample must be at least 1,000 respondents
 - b. Uses some form of random selection to produce sample of respondent
 - c. The treatment is randomly assigned to units in the sample
 - d. All selected units can and will be contacted
2. Which of the following describes a variable that measures income in US dollars?
 - a. Discrete
 - b. Categorical
 - c. Ordinal
 - d. Continuous
3. A researcher interviews Americans about their preferences for the 2020 election. She uses random digit dialing as a primary means to contact potential respondents. What kind of bias might this approach introduce?
 - a. Response bias, certain individuals won't respond
 - b. Item non-response bias, the means (or item) by which people are contacted induces bias
 - c. Unit non-response bias, some people are bad at answering their home phones
 - d. Sampling bias, certain people will not be offered to take the survey
4. A researcher intends to compare the scholarship opportunities at liberal arts colleges versus those at large, public universities. What is the level of analysis in her study?
 - a. Colleges and Universities
 - b. The United States
 - c. Each scholarship at each school
 - d. Individual students' scholarship amounts
5. What command should be applied to a variable in R so that they are recognized as a character rather than a number?
 - a. `as.character()`
 - b. `as.factor()`
 - c. `as.numeric()`
 - d. `as.level()`

Short Answer (30 points)

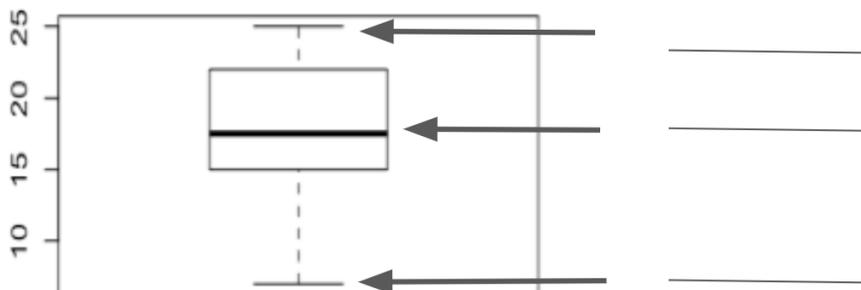
7. Explain the process of conducting a simple random sample. Why is randomness important in sampling? (8 points)

8. What are the three primary metrics for a strong sample (i.e. objectives of a sample)? Which do you think is most important? Why? (8 points)

9. What is the importance behind producing R code that is reproducible? (5 points)

10. In the latest Gallup Poll, Candidate A is polling at 48% with Candidate B trailing at 42% (+/- 3 points). Which candidate is in the lead? Why? (6 points)

11. Label each attribute of the boxplot below indicated by the arrows. (3 points)



Working in R

What makes people more or less likely to vote in election? Today we'll be working with data from an experiment conducted during the statewide primary election conducted in Michigan in August 2006. People were sent postcard with one of four randomly selected messages:

- no message (the control group)
- a message stressing the civic duty of voting
- a message informing people that they were being studied (Hawthorne effect message)
- a neighborhood social pressure message

This is a **randomized experiment** because the message on a given postcard was randomly selected. If we've done a good job randomizing, then we can estimate the **causal** effect of our treatment on our outcome of interest (whether certain messages make people more or less likely to vote). A description of the variables in the data is presented below:

Name	Description
<code>sex</code>	Respondent's biological sex
<code>yearofbirth</code>	Respondent's year of birth
<code>primary2004</code>	Whether respondent voted in 2004 primary election
<code>messages</code>	Experimental condition contained on respondent's postcard
<code>primary2006</code>	Whether respondent voted in 2006 primary election
<code>hhsz</code>	Size of respondent's household

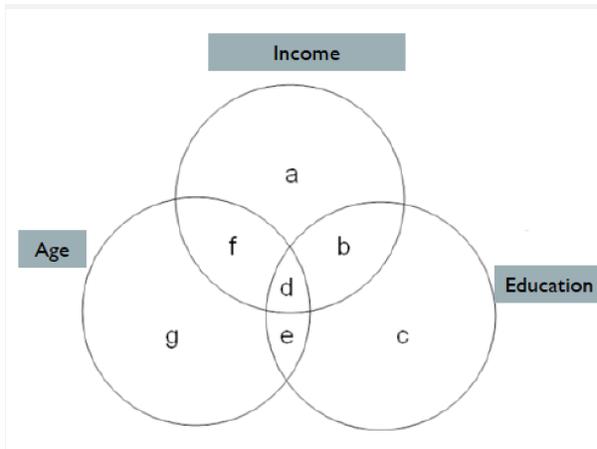
Source: Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. 2008. "Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 102(1):33-48. doi:10.1017/S000305540808009X.

12. Load the data into R. They are contained in the file `social.csv`. Name the dataframe `social`. (4 pts)
13. What is the dimensionality of the data i.e. how many rows and columns are there? What variables are in the data? (3 pts)
14. What is the median year of birth? When was the oldest person born? When was the youngest person born? (3 pts)
15. What is average household size for respondents born before 1970? What is the average household size for respondents who got the "Hawthorne" message? (4 pts)

-
16. Take a look at the line of code that follows. Write out in regular language what exactly it is doing, be sure to include all the details! `new <- subset(social, social$sex == "female" & social$primary2004 == 1 | social$sex == "male" & social$primary2006 == 1)` (6 pts)
17. Convert the turnout columns to factor variables. Why is this an important step (i.e. what are we telling R about this variable)? (6pts)
18. Create a new column in the data called "treatment." In this variable, every respondent who got the message "Control" should be labeled "control" and every other respondent should be labeled "treatment." Please use an ifelse statement to create this new variable. Please make your code as efficient as possible. (8 pts)
19. What would be the consequences of calling our "treatment" column "messages"? Explain what these consequences would mean. (6 pts)

Applying Concepts

5. Use the diagram below to answer the following questions where income is the dependent variable:



- a. What do f and b represent? (4 points)
- b. What is a? If the space occupied by “a” is 60%, what does that tell us about variability in the dependent variable for our model? What is this statistic called? (9 points)
- c. What does d represent? Is this included in our coefficients? What is this called? (9 points)

Analysis - Theory & Hypothesis

6. In a time punctuated by polarized politics, a global pandemic, and economic uncertainty, Rachel conducted a (FAKE) online survey to address one of the most pressing questions confronting Americans today: how soon after Halloween should department stores start playing holiday music? Some argue that jams like “Jingle Bells” and “Frosty the Snowman” can be enjoyed as soon as the pumpkins are packed away. The holidays are, after all, the most wonderful time of the year! Others incorrectly believe that even December 1st is too early to hear carols of good tidings and cheer. Eager to resolve this age-old question, Rachel developed the following theory:

There are two main reasons why people have differing opinions about when is the appropriate time to start playing holiday music. Individuals who self-identify as "a grinch" will want to hold off on hearing holiday music as long as possible because they dread the pomp and circumstance associated with this season. For others, getting in the holiday spirit may take a little longer because their place of residence is in a warm climate, where the average temperature in November is too warm to feel quite like winter.

Using the attached (FAKE) codebook, please answer the questions below:

- (a) What is the dependent variable in the analysis? (2 points)
- (b) What are the two key independent variables highlighted in the theory above? In other words, what expectations do we have about relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable? (4 points)

(c) Write null hypotheses for $H1$ and $H2$ using the variables and their corresponding values from the codebook (4 points)

(d) Write alternative hypotheses for $H1$ and $H2$ using the variables and their corresponding values from the codebook (4 points)

Analysis - Working in R

7. To implement the preceding study, please complete the R-based questions below:

(a) For each of the six independent variables below, express the variable type (i.e. continuous, ordinal, binary, etc.) and whether or not it should be converted to a factor (6 points)

(i) music_dv

(ii) identify_grinch

(iii) age

(iv) religion

(v) temperature_average

(vi) average_snowfall

(b) Calculate the expected number of days after Halloween each hypothetical respondent feels is appropriate before playing holiday music. **Show all of your work.** (15 points)

(i) An unaffiliated individual who self identifies as a grinch, is 59 year old, and lives in Florida (Average Nov. temp = 78 degrees; Average Nov. snowfall = 0 inches)

(ii) A Jewish woman who is 15 years old, does not identify as a grinch, and lives in Oklahoma (Average Nov. temp = 42 degrees; Average Nov. snowfall = .5 feet)

(iii) A 2 year old Christian from Juno, Alaska (which has 12.7 inches of snow each November) who does not identify as a grinch.

(b) Write out the full regression equation using the attached output (8 points)

(c) With an alpha level of 0.10, which coefficients are statistically significant? What kind of confidence interval is associated with $\alpha = 0.10$? (8 points)

(d) With a confidence interval of 95%, does the output support the research's hypotheses (i.e. what do we do to the null hypothesis)? Why or why not? (12 points)

BONUS QUESTION: OPTIONAL!

9. This is an optional question. Completing these question can either (1) give you extra completion points, or (2) replace a problem set grade. If your grade on this question does not exceed the score on your existing lowest problem set, it will not be substituted.
- (a) Please indicate below if you completing this question for option #1 (give you extra completion points) or option #2 (replace a problem set grade).
- (b) In a paragraph or two, please explain how the model proposed in the preceding question could be improved. What variables are missing? What shouldn't have been included? What other thoughts do you have about improving this model?

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Fall 2020
Rachel Surminsky, POLI 281-004 DATA IN POLITICS I

Raters	Students
Responded	12
Invited	29
Response Ratio	41.4%

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.58	5.00	0.51	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	41.7%	58.3%
2. The instructor treated all students with respect.	4.83	5.00	0.39	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%
3. The instructor encouraged students to participate in this class.	4.92	5.00	0.29	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	91.7%
4. The instructor saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.67	5.00	0.65	12	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	16.7%	75.0%
5. In this course I had multiple opportunities to express my viewpoints and questions.	4.64	5.00	0.50	11	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	36.4%	63.6%
6. The course challenged me to think deeply about the subject matter.	4.50	4.50	0.52	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%
7. The design of this course (e.g., its format, selected materials, assignments, exercises, quizzes, etc.) helped me better understand the subject matter.	4.58	5.00	0.51	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	41.7%	58.3%
8. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.50	5.00	0.71	10	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	30.0%	60.0%

Department Specific

Political Science Undergraduate: Instructor Ratings

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Demonstrates enthusiasm about teaching.	4.92	5.00	0.29	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	91.7%
2. Communicates clearly and logically.	4.92	5.00	0.29	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	91.7%
3. Promotes a climate of mutual respect.	5.00	5.00	0.00	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
4. Encourages student questions.	5.00	5.00	0.00	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
5. Emphasizes critical thinking.	4.83	5.00	0.39	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%
6. Uses teaching strategies that promote active involvement.	5.00	5.00	0.00	11	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
7. Clearly communicates expectations for student performance.	4.91	5.00	0.30	11	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	90.9%
8. Regularly provides constructive criticism of student performance.	4.83	5.00	0.39	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%
9. Provides timely feedback on student performance.	4.83	5.00	0.39	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%
10. Provides a fair evaluation of student performance.	4.73	5.00	0.47	11	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	27.3%	72.7%
11. Is available when needed.	5.00	5.00	0.00	11	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
12. Is well-prepared for instruction.	5.00	5.00	0.00	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
13. Overall, considering both the possibilities and limitations of the subject matter and course, I would rate this instructor as "excellent."	4.83	5.00	0.39	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%

Political Science Undergraduate: Course Quality Ratings

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
14. Course goals and objectives are clearly specified.	4.67	5.00	0.49	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%
15. Requirements (e.g., assignments, attendance, student responsibilities) are clearly specified.	4.83	5.00	0.39	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%
16. Course assignments are clearly related to the course objectives.	4.83	5.00	0.39	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%
17. Instructional methods in the course facilitate my learning.	4.75	5.00	0.45	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%
18. In general, the course is well-organized.	4.75	5.00	0.45	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%
19. Course materials stimulated critical thinking.	4.75	5.00	0.45	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%
20. I know significantly more about this subject than before I took this course.	4.83	5.00	0.39	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%
21. Overall, considering its content, design, and structure, I would rate this course as "excellent."	4.64	5.00	0.67	11	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	18.2%	72.7%

Open-Ended Responses

1. In what ways did your instructor try to make learning possible for you during the Fall 2020 semester?

Comments

Rachel has been flexible and open during this semester which is super important due to how crazy of a semester it was. She would push due dates back, and shift materials around in order to make sure that we learned the material before starting assignments, which was extremely helpful in learning a new skill such as coding in R.

Providing lectures online was super helpful

Rachel always made class feel energetic and was understanding of the situations at hand with the current times. She was flexible and available when we needed her, making it less stressful than it could have been to stay afloat in this challenging course. I appreciate all that she did and feel lucky to have learned from her this semester.

She was very accessible and ready to help you understand the course.

She was always accessible and available for us to ask questions and made sure that we learned the material.

Rachel was very approachable and made learning fun and easy. She was flexible in her teaching approach, and made herself always available to tutor students and answer questions outside of class. Overall Rachel was an incredible teacher, who's dedication to providing quality mentorship is remarkable.

She was a very kind and helpful teacher, who always puts our wellbeing above everything else. I loved her as a teacher.

She was very flexible with her schedule and allowed students the opportunity to have an extension on assignments if needed.

Rachel was very accomodating and more than willing to flex to individual emergency situations. I appreciated knowing she would be flexible, even if I didn't need to ask for an extension.

She was also available for more hours than probably any of my other professors, and would allow us to come work through coding projects and ask questions – this was probably the most valuable part of the course for me because I got immediate feedback while I was completing assignments and she was able to suggest more efficient/effective ways to write my code.

She made this class accessible to all students, whether or not they were interested in studying this topic full time. In every one of her lectures, she made students participate in discussion. Activating discussion in lecture and holding office hours helped me learn personally, because discussing topics helps me solidify them.

I absolutely love Rachel. She made office hours extremely accessible. Her scheduled office hours conflicted with one of my classes but whenever I needed to meet with her she would answer my email promptly and extend her office hours for me to be able to make it. Not only that but she is always checking her emails and is mindful of our needs. She is one of the few professors that I have met that truly taking in mind the student's mental health. She doesn't try to make school harder but rather accommodates us and our needs. This subject is extremely hard but Rachel makes it extremely easy to keep up. Overall love her.

Department Specific

Please comment on the strengths of the course.

Comments

i saw the correlation between subjects which was helpful

Well organized.

It was really engaging and the different assignments and mode of instruction was really helpful in facilitating my learning.

The course was well supported by a good structure of learning, flexible schedule, and examples/ work to cultivate an understanding of the subject.

Very forgiving too students, a nice environment in which I can always feel comfortable, and she is very kind.

This was honestly one of the most straight forward courses I've taken at UNC. Some professors don't communicate about when you should expect assignments or grades and Rachel was always beating us to the punch and answering questions before we had them.

This course was structured intuitively, each topic was relevant and led to the next one in a way that made it easy to learn. Recording lectures was also very helpful. If I was having trouble with an assignment, I could rewatch the relevant lecture and often get an answer.

Great course only because of Rachel.

Please comment on the limitations of the course.

Comments

Taking the course online is a little inconvenient to getting help on certain assignments, but Rachel makes up for it by offering numerous opportunities to attend office hours!

switching between r and information was sometimes confusing

None.

None.

There isn't any limitations.

There could have been more writing practice during the course to help prepare students for the final project.

None

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, College of Arts & Sciences

Please comment on the strengths of the instructor.

Comments

Flexible, compassionate, and understanding professor which is super important during times such as this. Communicates often and clearly with the class on due dates, upcoming lectures, expectations, etc. which allows for little to no confusion on what to expect throughout the course/ week.

she is very enthusiastic about her work and passionate

She made this course that was daunting at first very accessible. She is amazing at teaching, and knows how to encourage others to learn.

Rachel was always so accessible! She always made sure there was a safe space to ask questions and ensure we understood the material.

Rachel was a great teacher, who was incredibly dedicated to her students and teaching the material effectively. She always presented her lectures with enthusiasm, cultivated a psychologically safe learning environment that promoted curiosity, and always made herself available to speak with students outside of class.

She is a kind, helpful instructor who gives good advice and is productive.

Competent, very knowledgeable, kind and understanding

Made a conscious effort to check in with students at every opportunity to make sure everyone understood the concepts we were learning about. When someone asked a question, which was often as Rachel prompted us to ask questions if there was anything we were confused about, she always tried to explain the answer in the simplest and most accessible way and was never smug when someone was having trouble understanding something (something I have experienced in other classes).

I could go on and on she's amazing. Always available and the complete opposite of intimidating.

Please comment on the limitations of the instructor.

Comments

N/A

None.

None.

At times she can get side tracked but that's about it.

Sometimes her tone could be mistaken as aggressive when she was not.

None she is absolutely amazing. I would be lucky to take a course with her again.

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Spring 2020
Rachel Surminsky, POLI 281-003 DATA IN POLITICS I

Due to the global pandemic, all spring 2020 courses shifted to remote instruction midway through the semester. As a result, these student evaluations of teaching are for the instructor only. It is entirely up to the course instructor if these results and comments are shared during future evaluation or promotion settings.

Raters	Students									
Responded	10									
Invited	30									
Response Ratio	33.3%									
	Mean	Median	SD	N	%(1)	%(2)	%(3)	%(4)	%(5)	
1. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.60	5.00	0.70	10	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	20.0%	70.0%	
2. The instructor treated all students with respect.	4.80	5.00	0.42	10	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	80.0%	
3. The instructor encouraged students to participate in this class.	4.70	5.00	0.48	10	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	30.0%	70.0%	
4. The instructor saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.50	5.00	0.71	10	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	30.0%	60.0%	
5. In this course I had multiple opportunities to express my viewpoints and questions.	4.40	5.00	0.84	10	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%	60.0%	
6. The course challenged me to think deeply about the subject matter.	4.40	5.00	0.97	10	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%	30.0%	60.0%	
7. The design of this course (e.g., its format, selected materials, assignments, exercises, quizzes, etc.) helped me better understand the subject matter.	4.20	4.50	1.03	10	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	30.0%	50.0%	
8. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.30	5.00	1.06	10	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	20.0%	60.0%	
9. If my instructor had more time to prepare, I think this course would have the potential to be an excellent online course.	4.00	5.00	1.41	8	0.0%	25.0%	12.5%	0.0%	62.5%	

Department Specific

Instructor Ratings

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Demonstrates enthusiasm about teaching.	4.70	5.00	0.48	10	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	30.0%	70.0%
2. Communicates clearly and logically.	4.33	5.00	1.12	9	0.0%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	66.7%
3. Promotes a climate of mutual respect.	4.70	5.00	0.48	10	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	30.0%	70.0%
4. Encourages student questions.	4.80	5.00	0.42	10	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	80.0%
5. Emphasizes critical thinking.	4.80	5.00	0.42	10	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	80.0%
6. Uses teaching strategies that promote active involvement.	4.60	5.00	0.84	10	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	80.0%
7. Clearly communicates expectations for student performance.	4.40	5.00	1.07	10	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	70.0%
8. Regularly provides constructive criticism of student performance.	4.70	5.00	0.67	10	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	80.0%
9. Provides timely feedback on student performance.	4.60	5.00	0.97	10	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%	10.0%	80.0%
10. Provides a fair evaluation of student performance.	4.70	5.00	0.67	10	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	80.0%
11. Is available when needed.	4.90	5.00	0.32	10	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	90.0%
12. Is well-prepared for instruction.	4.67	5.00	1.00	9	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	88.9%
13. Overall, considering both the possibilities and limitations of the subject matter and course, I would rate this instructor as "excellent."	4.70	5.00	0.67	10	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	80.0%

Course Quality Ratings

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Course goals and objectives are clearly specified.	4.50	5.00	0.71	10	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	30.0%	60.0%
2. Requirements (e.g., assignments, attendance, student responsibilities) are clearly specified.	4.70	5.00	0.48	10	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	30.0%	70.0%
3. Course assignments are clearly related to the course objectives.	4.70	5.00	0.67	10	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	80.0%
4. Instructional methods in the course facilitate my learning.	4.50	5.00	0.97	10	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%	20.0%	70.0%
5. In general, the course is well-organized. Course materials stimulated critical thinking.	4.60	5.00	0.70	10	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	20.0%	70.0%
6. I know significantly more about this subject than before I took this course.	4.80	5.00	0.63	10	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%	90.0%
7. Overall, considering its content, design, and structure, I would rate this course as "excellent."	4.60	5.00	0.84	10	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	80.0%

Open-Ended Responses

1. In what ways did your instructor try to make learning possible for you during the spring 2020 semester?

Comments

Rachel was extremely helpful in the transition to online instruction. She remained very accessible for office hours both before and after the transition to online classes. She gave constant updates on the class, office hours, and assignments. There was never a moment where I did not understand the expectations for the course, and I always felt like I could reach out and get assistance from Rachel.

She help consistent office hours and would go through the problem sets with us in class.

She gave a lot of lectures during class. We also did assignments in class to reinforce our understanding of the material. The quality of her teaching remained the same when we transitioned to online learning.

Rachel was by far the most effective professor I had during this semester. She upheld our schedule with classes and office hours but created a slightly more manageable course load for us. She taught us during Ivie sessions but recorded them so we could view them later. She also was very available to zoom us individually with questions.

Great zoom lectures, demonstrations with R, multiple exposure to material to ensure understanding.

Rachel was an excellent teacher. She taught the class by giving ample examples that made the material easy to digest and understand. She would step through confusing topics and ask for collaboration from the class to make sure we were learning the topics correctly. She held extensive office hours and would spend a lot of effort to make sure I understood the topics she was showing me. She never let an assignment go by without being explained, in full, after the due date. This made me feel comfortable that I was not missing topics.

2. How would you describe your learning experience after the transition from face-to-face instruction to remote instruction? What did you find most helpful to your remote learning experience? In what ways, if at all, did aspects of your learning change?

Comments

The class got more difficult as the class shifted towards using more RStudio, and we shifted to online classes. However, Rachel remained accessible for assistance.

I thought it was difficult at first. The zoom office hours were helpful, but it was difficult for me to digest and retain the information. I thought class went by very quickly and the assignment deadlines piled up quickly. Rachel was nice about extending deadlines, but the course felt overwhelming at the end.

My learning experience was fine. I did not struggle to adjust to online learning at all.

It was challenging to learn coding online, but lectures helped and I think maybe if there were more datacamps or practice activities to help would have been beneficial.

The learning experience in this course was only slightly altered. It was harder to grasp the material without group work and collaboration but our class made the best of it. The most helpful part of remote learning was individual office hours. My learning was less focused, I will admit, but I feel as if I still learned a great deal.

Rachel did a fantastic job – accommodated students with multiple office hours/long hours during the week. Understanding about students' situation so made assignments easier to complete with more time.

I found it much harder to maintain focus when the instruction moved online. It was very hard to stay motivated, and I think this negatively impacted my learning experience.

Department Specific

Please comment on the strengths of the course.

Comments

The course was conducted well both before and after the transition to online classes.

I thought the course was interesting and pushed me to think outside the box.

I enjoyed this course. I wanted to learn R programming which is why I took it. Overall, I feel like I have become proficient in R programming after taking this course.

The strength of this course was that it effectively allowed me to learn a concrete skill. The learning objectives, assignments, and lectures were perfectly set up to master the coding with the right commitment to learning.

I wish we could delve more into the politics side of data. The Congressional Dataset was a great starter though

Teaches hard skills and critical thinking.

Please comment on the limitations of the course.

Comments

The RStudio instruction suffered from the transition to online classes, but I do not think that this has anything to do with the instructor or the class, just the shift to online classes.

I think the course could expand more into the "political science" side, besides just the final project. We worked a lot on coding (such as data camp) in the first half of the semester but I wish we could have tied in more politics to it. I liked the in-class assignments that we did, so more of those would have been nice and better preparation for the final project.

I didn't notice any limitations.

Some of the assignments or material could have been explained more in class time, but overall it was a great course.

This course was hard to do online without other students to collaborate with during class time. I found it to be limiting to not be able to easily ask questions when I was stuck.

We did not use the textbook much and I wish I hadn't bought it. The syllabus said that we would heavily rely on it in the second part of the semester, but I certainly could have gotten by without it.

Please comment on the strengths of the instructor.

Comments

Rachel was flexible, kind, and accessible as an instructor. Her goal was that she truly wanted the students to understand the material. She cared about how all of the students were doing during the transition, not only with the class material, but the entire transition in general. She handled the transition to online learning incredibly well, and I felt like I didn't miss a second of class.

I thought Rachel was clear with expectations in guidelines. I like that she set aside class time to review for the exams and to answer our questions.

She was very enthusiastic about teaching and also had a nice sense of humor.

I cannot speak more highly of Rachel Surminsky. She is passionate, intelligent, and understanding. Her lectures are interesting and informative. She is available to answer any and all questions and she does so in a manner that is always helpful and never condescending. I felt very comfortable asking her for guidance throughout online learning and believe she is one of the best instructors I have had at UNC. She provided us with feedback, graded in a timely manner, and always made sure the course load was manageable for all students.

Very enthusiastic and funny, helpful, answers questions quick!

Rachel is full of energy in class. This energized me as a student, she was a joy to learn from. She gives so much time to students in office hours and genuinely cares about our understanding of the material. I felt like I got a lot of individualized help when I needed it which incredibly increased the benefit I got from this course. I did not expect to like this course as much as I did, but Rachel made it great.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, College of Arts & Sciences

Please comment on the limitations of the instructor.

Comments

Rachel was one of the best instructors I have had at UNC.

I wish we spent more time on regression, error, and uncertainty. I think we could have moved quicker in the beginning because I felt overwhelmed with the material by the end of the course.

None.

I cannot think of a limitation.

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Fall 2019

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 281-003 DATA IN POLITICS I

Raters	Students
Responded	13
Invited	31
Response Ratio	41.9%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.00	4.00	1.00	13	0.0%	7.7%	23.1%	30.8%	38.5%
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.54	5.00	0.78	13	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	15.4%	69.2%
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	4.54	5.00	0.78	13	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	15.4%	69.2%
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	3.92	4.00	0.86	13	0.0%	7.7%	15.4%	53.8%	23.1%

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	13	100.0%
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	13	100.0%

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.54	4.00	0.78	13	0.0%	7.7%	38.5%	46.2%	7.7%
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.62	4.00	0.77	13	0.0%	7.7%	30.8%	53.8%	7.7%

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	3.70	3.50	0.82	10	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	30.0%	20.0%
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	4.27	4.00	0.65	11	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	54.5%	36.4%
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	3.64	4.00	0.67	11	0.0%	0.0%	45.5%	45.5%	9.1%
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	3.20	3.00	0.63	10	0.0%	0.0%	90.0%	0.0%	10.0%
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	3.91	4.00	0.83	11	0.0%	0.0%	36.4%	36.4%	27.3%
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	3.91	4.00	0.83	11	0.0%	0.0%	36.4%	36.4%	27.3%
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	3.50	3.00	0.85	10	0.0%	0.0%	70.0%	10.0%	20.0%

Department Specific

Instructor Ratings

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Demonstrates enthusiasm about teaching.	4.54	5.00	0.66	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	30.8%	61.5%
2. Communicates clearly and logically.	4.46	5.00	0.97	13	0.0%	7.7%	7.7%	15.4%	69.2%
3. Promotes a climate of mutual respect.	4.54	5.00	0.66	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	30.8%	61.5%
4. Encourages student questions.	4.62	5.00	0.65	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	23.1%	69.2%
5. Emphasizes critical thinking.	4.46	4.00	0.52	13	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	53.8%	46.2%
6. Uses teaching strategies that promote active involvement.	4.46	5.00	0.66	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	38.5%	53.8%
7. Clearly communicates expectations for student performance.	4.08	4.00	0.95	13	0.0%	7.7%	15.4%	38.5%	38.5%
8. Regularly provides constructive criticism of student performance.	4.54	5.00	0.66	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	30.8%	61.5%
9. Provides timely feedback on student performance.	4.62	5.00	0.51	13	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	38.5%	61.5%
10. Provides a fair evaluation of student performance.	4.15	4.00	0.90	13	0.0%	7.7%	7.7%	46.2%	38.5%
11. Is available when needed.	4.69	5.00	0.48	13	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	30.8%	69.2%
12. Is well-prepared for instruction.	4.62	5.00	0.65	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	23.1%	69.2%
13. Overall, considering both the possibilities and limitations of the subject matter and course, I would rate this instructor as "excellent."	4.46	5.00	0.78	13	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	23.1%	61.5%

Course Quality Ratings

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Course goals and objectives are clearly specified.	4.46	5.00	0.66	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	38.5%	53.8%
2. Requirements (e.g., assignments, attendance, student responsibilities) are clearly specified.	4.62	5.00	0.51	13	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	38.5%	61.5%
3. Course assignments are clearly related to the course objectives.	4.46	5.00	0.66	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	38.5%	53.8%
4. Instructional methods in the course facilitate my learning.	4.38	4.00	0.65	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	46.2%	46.2%
5. In general, the course is well-organized. Course materials stimulated critical thinking.	4.38	4.00	0.65	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	46.2%	46.2%
6. I know significantly more about this subject than before I took this course.	4.69	5.00	0.63	13	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	15.4%	76.9%
7. Overall, considering its content, design, and structure, I would rate this course as "excellent."	4.15	4.00	0.80	13	0.0%	0.0%	23.1%	38.5%	38.5%

Open-Ended Responses

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

We were able to work together in class to work through problem sets and practice coding skills which allowed me to work with peers with different experiences and perspectives.

Students had various statistical and coding backgrounds.

I do not think that the diversity of my classmates contributed to my learning in this course.

It was nice to work with people of different majors and years, but it didn't contribute in ways that I could see.

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

N/a

I do not think that it could be more inclusive.

Nothing really

Department Specific

Please comment on the strengths of the course.

Comments

The content in the problem sets and projects were very hands on and the application from lecture was very clear and interesting.

This course was informative on the processes involved in data analytics within the political sphere. There were ample opportunities for success within the classroom while also learning about how to become involved outside the class.

I enjoyed the opportunity for practice in class with peers as that allowed me to more fully understand the coding lessons of the course.

This course was well-designed to facilitate my learning R, through in-class assignments, working as a class, individual assignments, and PowerPoints. The idea of learning R was daunting to me, but Rachel made it attainable and accessible.

I think this class does a great job of making a largely humanities audience think about math and statistics in a way that makes us care.

Content is very interesting and useful in potential careers in the field of Political Science.

I think that the course was very hands-on in learning R, and was easily accessible for those who had never coded before.

The course is interesting and I understand why research is so important.

Gained both theoretical and practical knowledge of data analysis.

Please comment on the limitations of the course.

Comments

This course was handled extremely well, but with so many students it was difficult for one professor to handle all of the unique questions presented by the differing final group projects. As well, it was difficult for students to learn an entire programming software in a few weeks/months.

The material itself could be complicated especially for someone who did not have any computer science experience. However, that is unavoidable and it allowed me to get exposure to skills that I had not developed yet.

The material was sometimes difficult to grasp on my own.

I think this course tries to pack WAY too much into the time constraint. There were many topics that we just could not get to because the material was too complicated and took longer to explain or just because there was too much material.

We did not cover a significant section of material that was initially included on the syllabus. Maybe there needs to be a more clear focus on particular topics or concepts.

We were behind for a lot of the semester because some of the lectures took too long.

We had a period of three weeks where we didn't do any R Practice in class. I understand that we should keep R at the front of our minds, but Problem Set 4 was way too difficult with how long we went without doing R. I think for the weeks where we learn abstract concepts about research we should start the class with a small five minute R exercise. That way we won't forget any key concepts. I was just blindsided with how difficult Problem Set 4 was especially considering how well I did on the others.

Please comment on the strengths of the instructor.

Comments

Always brings great energy to class, extremely available outside of the classroom, is understanding.

Rachel Surminsky was always available to meet with, helpful in reinforcing material outside of class during office hours, and knew how to teach the material so that everyone could understand some of the difficult concepts.

Rachel created a very low stress environment for students and genuinely wanted us all to understand the material. She provided ample opportunities to visit her in office hours and get her feedback throughout the course.

Rachel is a clear communicator, knowledgeable on the subject, and includes everyone in the class discussions.

Rachel is really great at being approachable and giving reasonable and helpful feedback. She reminds us often to not get discouraged, which is super important in a difficult and challenging class like this one. I think she does a great job at knowing what pace to teach at, when a student is confused and doesn't want to show it, and is really great at being patient with those who need more explanation.

Rachel is clearly very knowledgeable about the subject of Data in Politics and she used helpful examples in class to help explain difficult topics.

She is very personable, open to questions, and explains concepts well.

Grad students are typically fantastic teachers and Rachel was no exception. She was enthusiastic, fair, and very accessible outside of class. I would take a class with her again just for fun.

I really liked how Rachel had such long office hours. She was also good at explaining complex topics clearly and succinctly.

Explain things clearly and is energetic.

I like her jokes.

Please comment on the limitations of the instructor.

Comments

Rachel had no limitations. She handled the class well and structured it excellently.

Statistical analysis and coding can be very complex and so it can be hard to understand in a lecture format occasionally. This did not happen often and Rachel did a great job at trying to avoid that but there were definitely some concepts that required more individual study to get a better understanding.

N/a

She can be long-winded and gets behind easily.

I think for group projects if your group members said you didn't contribute, the person should get a heads up earlier. That way they can be proactive about fixing the issue. It's hard to gauge how your group members voted about you.

Collecting & Analyzing Text-as-Data: Short Course
Instructor for UNC Odum Institute
Sample Course Materials

Fall 2020 Course Materials



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This event has passed.

TEXT ANALYSIS USING R (ONLINE)

October 13 @ 12:00 pm - 2:30 pm | Recurring Event ([See all](#))

This is a 2-day (10/13/20 and 10/15/20) online course.

This workshop will introduce participants to the basics of text analysis in R. Text analysis is a promising new approach that uses machine learning to discover patterns, trends, and other information by using text as data. For example, in measuring misinformation on social media to study how candidates have changed their campaign rhetoric over time, text analysis has an incredibly broad scope of applications.

In this course, participants will develop the skills and understanding necessary to collect text data from a variety of sources, including websites and APIs. Participants will gain practical skills for completing their own analyses using text as data. Basic to intermediate knowledge of programming in R is required; no background in statistics is necessary.

This course and waitlist are FULL.

Instructor: Rachel Porter

Day 1: Collecting Text Data Using R

- *In this class:* Introduced various methods for collecting text-as-data including web scraping and API queries. Covered the basics of cleaning text data of extraneous source code as well as prepping data for analysis.
- Class Materials
 - [Day 1 Lab R Script](#)
 - [Presentation Slides](#)

Day 1: Analyzing Text Using Topic Models in R

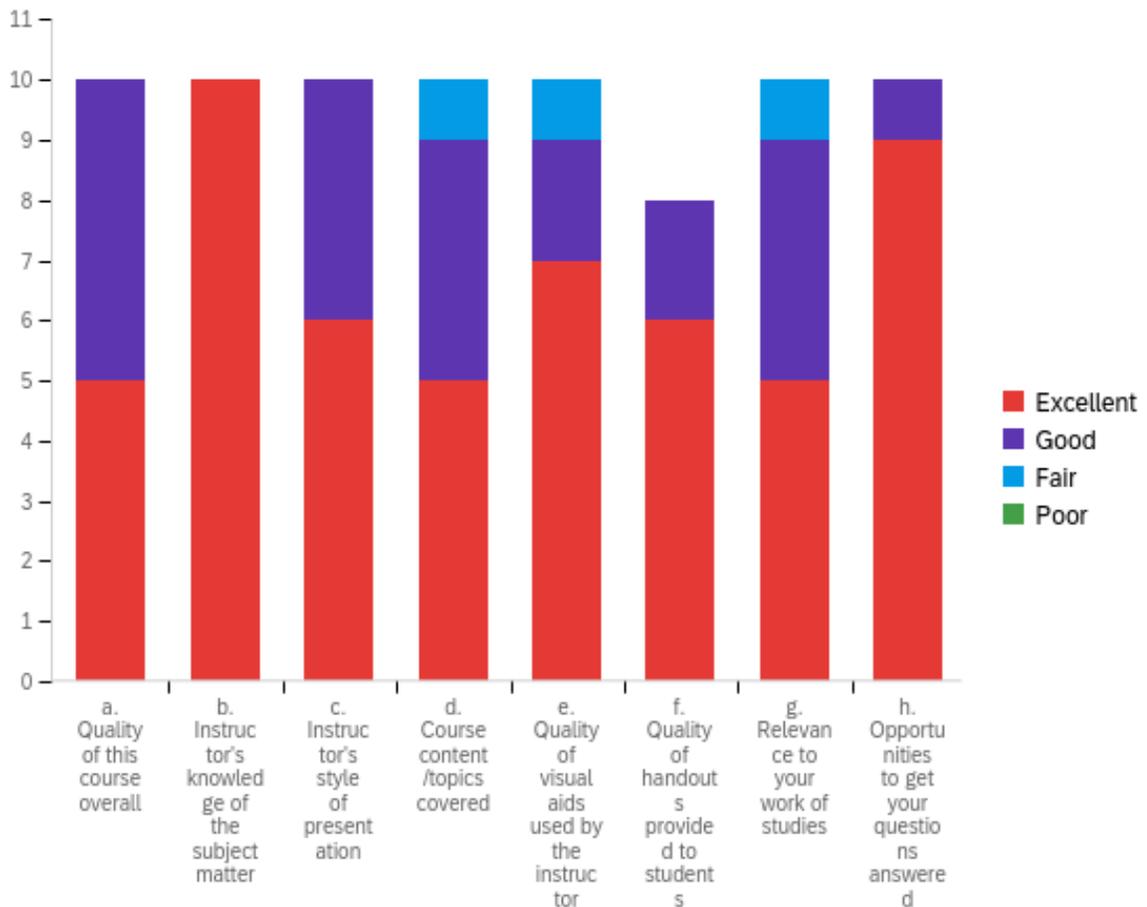
- *In this class:* Extensively covered structural topic modeling in R; introduced new methods for topic analysis such as keyword assisted topic models
- Class Materials
 - R Script: [Day 2 Lab R Script](#)

Course evals for instructor

Short Course Evaluation Form 2020

October 26th 2020, 10:56 am EDT

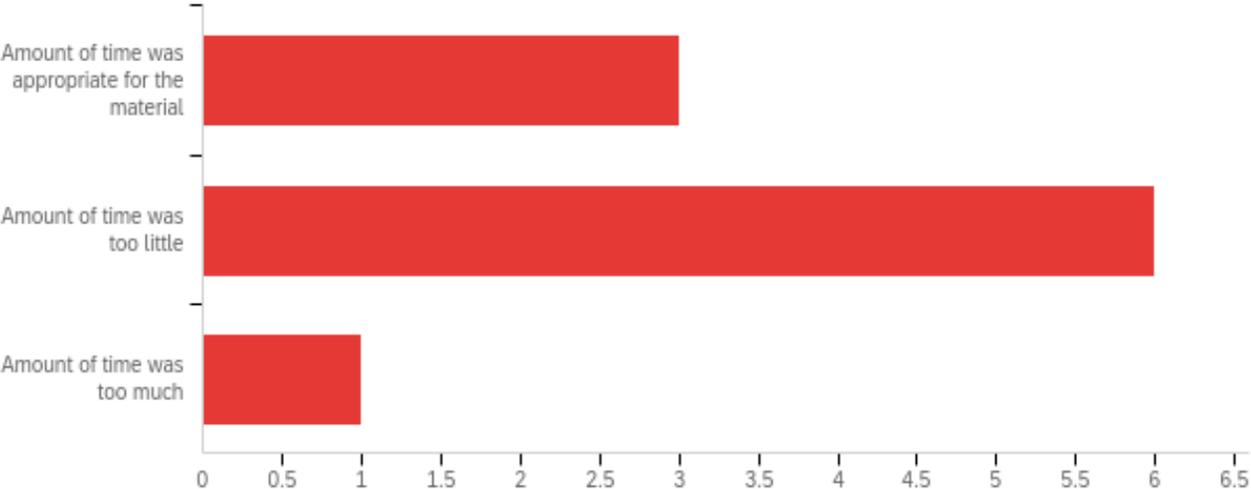
Q1 - How would you rate the following aspects of the Odum short course you just completed?



#	Question	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Total
1	a. Quality of this course overall	50%	5	50%	5	0%	0	0%	0	10
2	b. Instructor's knowledge of the subject matter	100%	10	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	10
3	c. Instructor's style of presentation	60%	6	40%	4	0%	0	0%	0	10
4	d. Course content/topics covered	50%	5	40%	4	10%	1	0%	0	10
5	e. Quality of visual aids used by the instructor	70%	7	20%	2	10%	1	0%	0	10
6	f. Quality of handouts provided to students	75%	6	25%	2	0%	0	0%	0	8

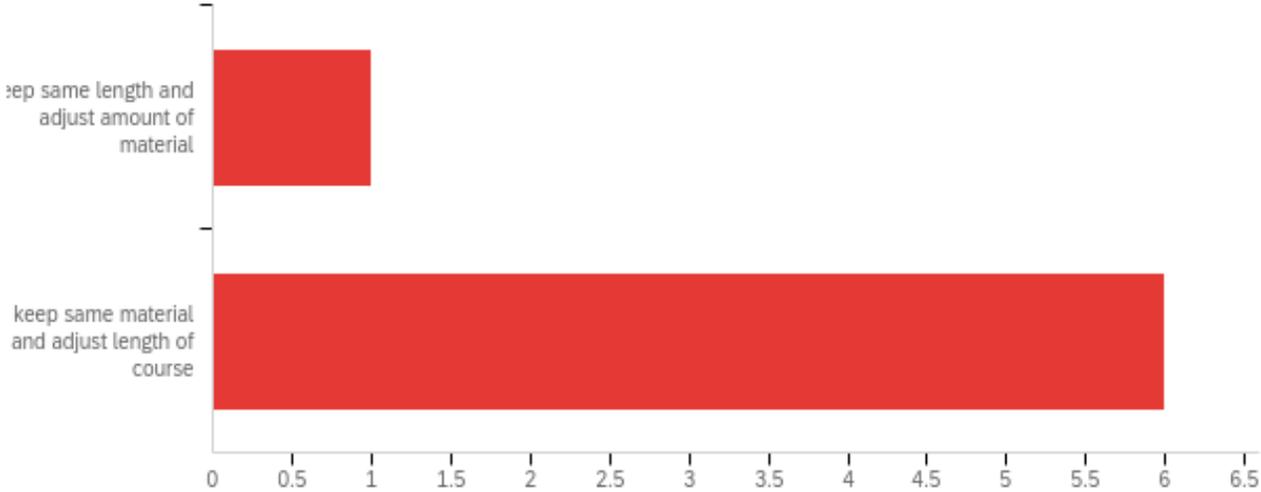
7	g. Relevance to your work of studies	50%	5	40%	4	10%	1	0%	0	10
8	h. Opportunities to get your questions answered	90%	9	10%	1	0%	0	0%	0	10

Q2 - Was the amount of time allotted for the course appropriate for the amount of material covered, was it too short, or was it too long?



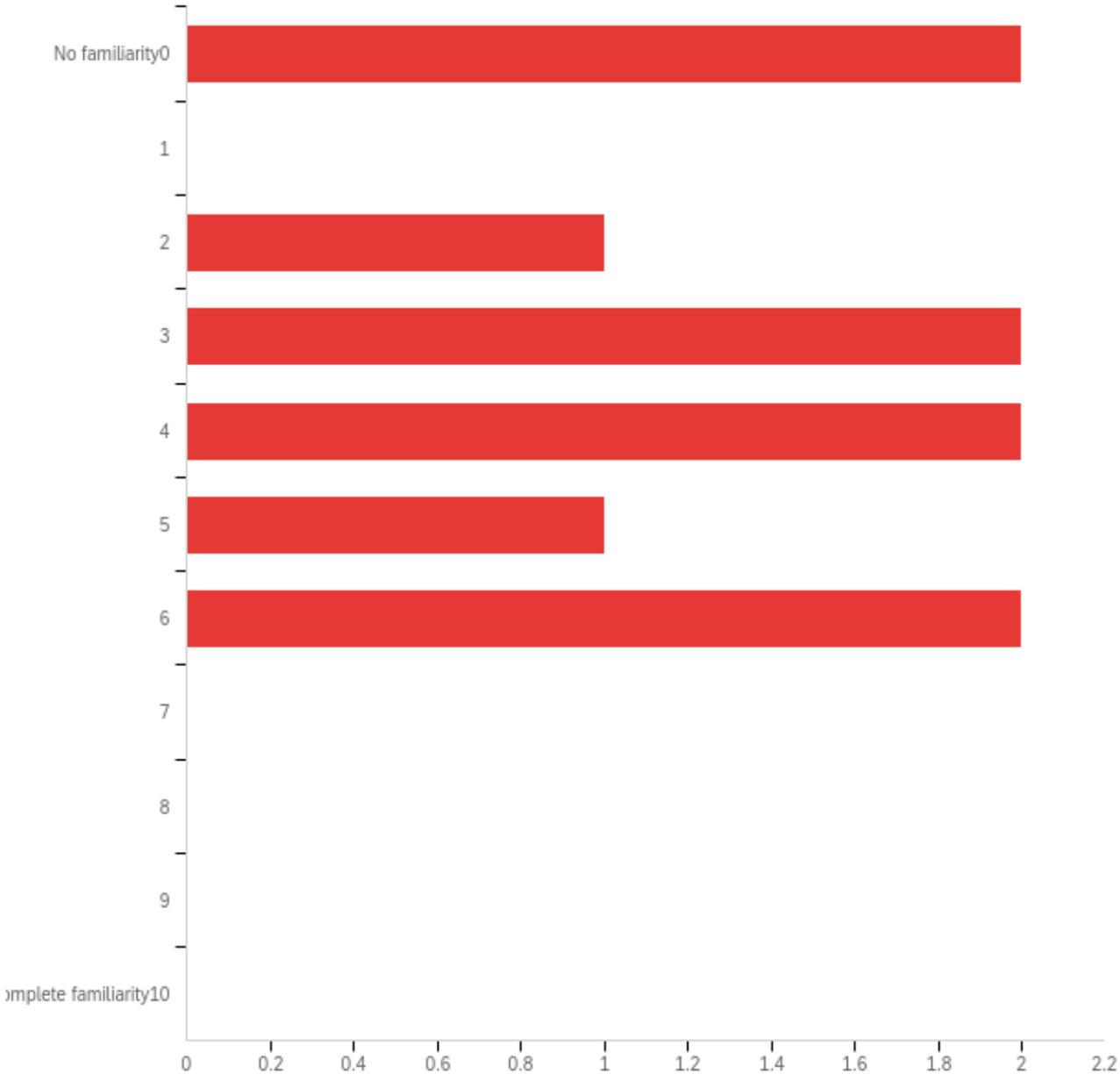
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Amount of time was appropriate for the material	30%	3
2	Amount of time was too little	60%	6
3	Amount of time was too much	10%	1
	Total	100%	10

Q3 - If this course were offered again in the future, should we keep the length of the course the same but change the amount of material, or should we cover the same amount of material but adjust the length of the course?



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Keep same length and adjust amount of material	14%	1
2	keep same material and adjust length of course	86%	6
	Total	100%	7

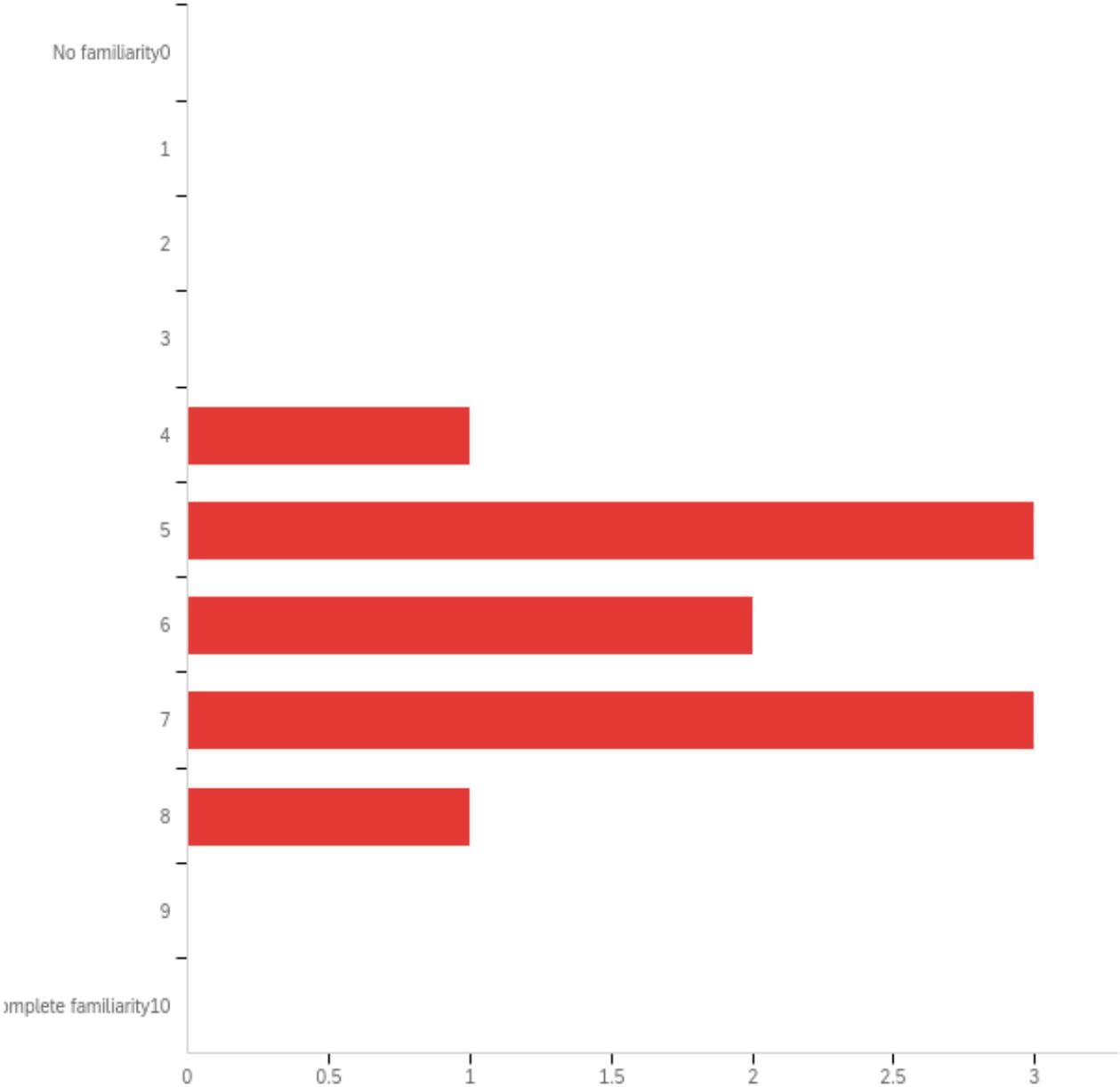
Q4_before - On a scale of 0 to 10, how would you describe your familiarity with the topic of this short course BEFORE the start of the course?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	On a scale of 0 to 10, how would you describe your familiarity with the topic of this short course BEFORE the start of the course?	1	7	4	2	4	10

#	Answer	%	Count
1	No familiarity0	20%	2
2	1	0%	0
3	2	10%	1
4	3	20%	2
5	4	20%	2
6	5	10%	1
7	6	20%	2
8	7	0%	0
9	8	0%	0
10	9	0%	0
11	Complete familiarity10	0%	0
	Total	100%	10

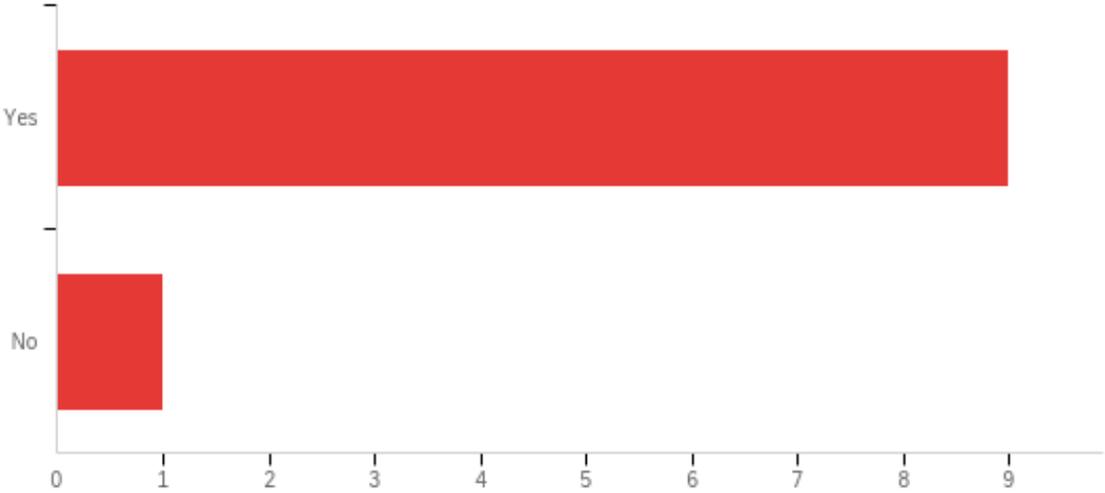
Q4_after - On a scale of 0 to 10, how would you rate your familiarity with the topic of this short course now?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	On a scale of 0 to 10, how would you rate your familiarity with the topic of this short course now?	5	9	7	1	1	10

#	Answer	%	Count
1	No familiarity0	0%	0
2	1	0%	0
3	2	0%	0
4	3	0%	0
5	4	10%	1
6	5	30%	3
7	6	20%	2
8	7	30%	3
9	8	10%	1
10	9	0%	0
11	Complete familiarity10	0%	0
	Total	100%	10

Q5 - Did you learn what you had hoped to from this course? That is, did it meet your expectations?



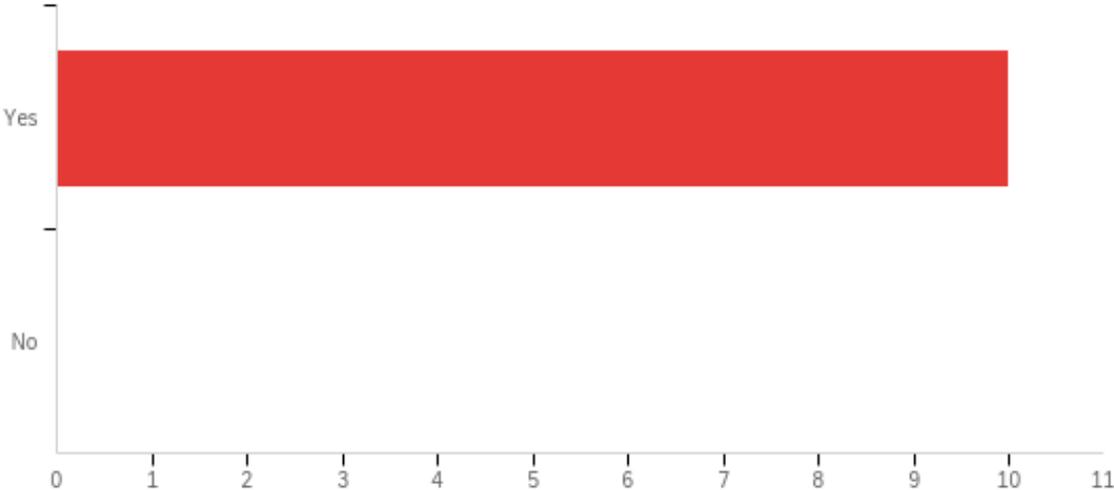
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	90%	9
2	No	10%	1
	Total	100%	10

Q5a - In what way(s) did it not meet your expectations?

In what way(s) did it not meet your expectations?

This was an excellent short course. I did not realize that it would be solely dedicated to Topic Analysis and Keyword-Assisted Topic Analysis. I think it would be helpful if Odum could mention that more explicitly in the description of the course. Text Analysis is a pretty broad area. I did appreciate that we did such a deep dive into one specific aspect, it just was not what I had expected, nor is it the area of text analysis that I'm focusing on myself. Great course nonetheless, I learned a lot!

Q6 - Would you recommend this course to colleagues with backgrounds like yours?

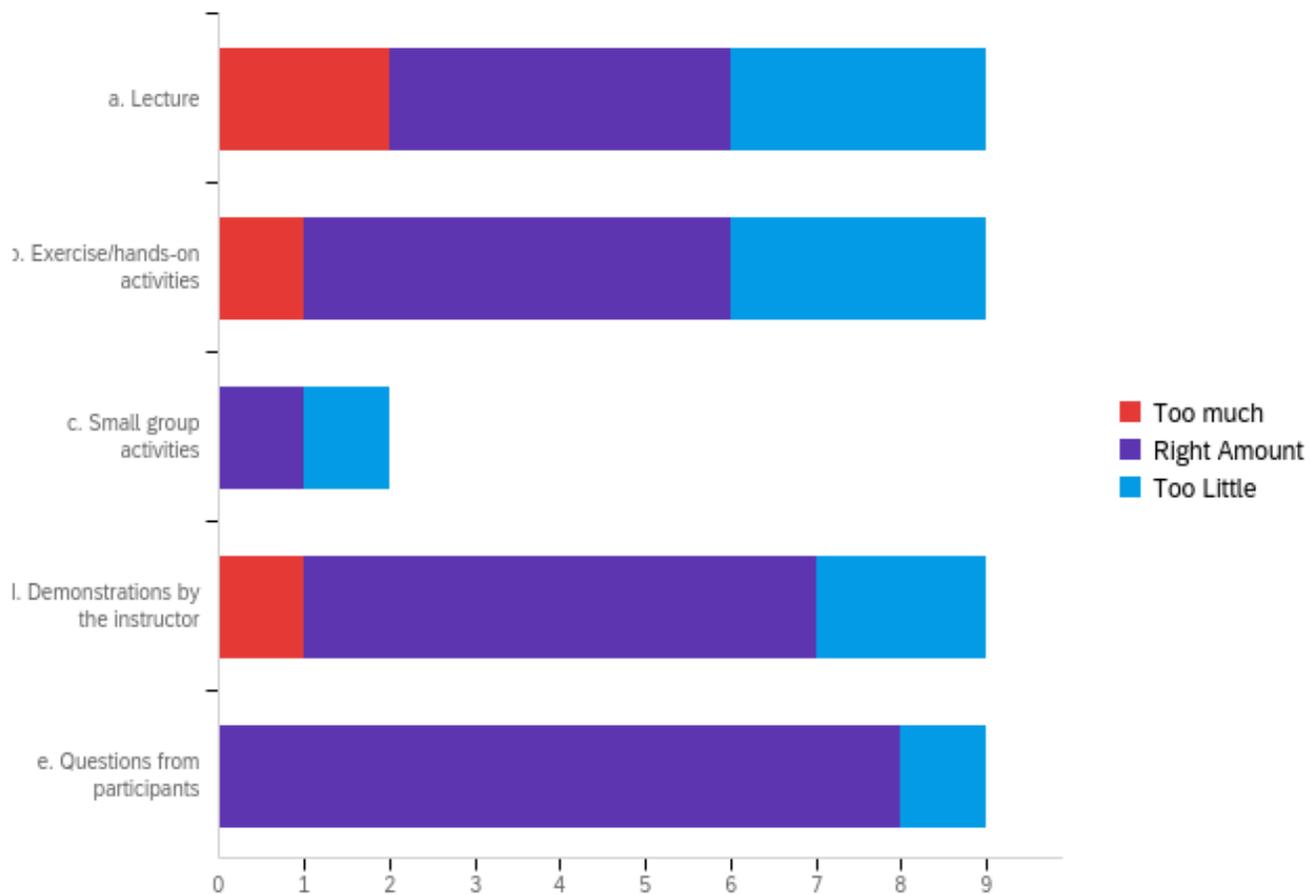


#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	100%	10
2	No	0%	0
	Total	100%	10

Q6a - Why not?

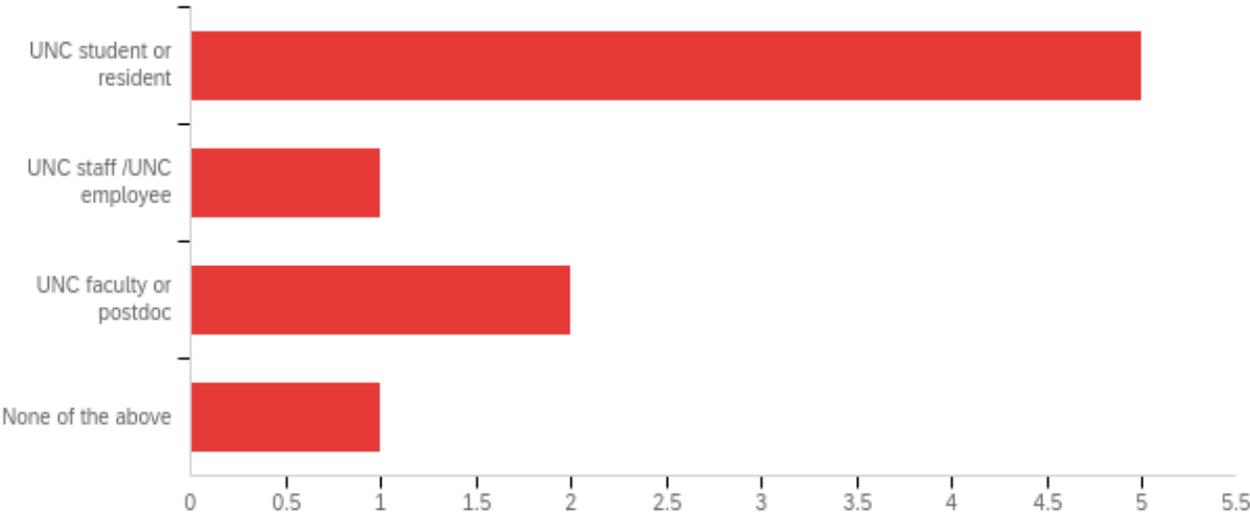
Why not?

Q7 - Please evaluate the amount of time spent on each of the following in this course



#	Question	Too much		Right Amount		Too Little		Total
1	a. Lecture	22%	2	44%	4	33%	3	9
2	b. Exercise/hands-on activities	11%	1	56%	5	33%	3	9
3	c. Small group activities	0%	0	50%	1	50%	1	2
4	d. Demonstrations by the instructor	11%	1	67%	6	22%	2	9
5	e. Questions from participants	0%	0	89%	8	11%	1	9

Q9 - Which of the following best describes you? Please choose the first option that applies.



#	Answer	%	Count
1	UNC student or resident	56%	5
2	UNC staff /UNC employee	11%	1
3	UNC faculty or postdoc	22%	2
4	None of the above	11%	1
	Total	100%	9

Q11 - Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Odum Institute or the instructor to know about your experience in this course.

Please provide any additional comments that you would like the Odum Institute or the instructor to know about your experience in this course.

Rachel Porter was super super fantastic. Really intelligent, but unlike my professors, was a really great teacher, even online. Answered questions very thoroughly and with clear interest in and enthusiasm for the material.

Would have appreciated a broader overview of text methods. But in depth on STM was also useful

Excellent

Instructor did a great job!

**Introduction to American Politics (POLI 100):
Instructor of Record
Sample Course Materials**

POLI 100: Introduction to American Politics

Sample Syllabus — Spring 2019

Instructor: Rachel Porter

Email: rachsur@live.unc.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday 3:15-4:45 and Thursday 3:15-4:45

Office Location: Hamilton 303

Classroom: Murphy, Room 104

Course Description

In order to fully understand our complicated and contentious political climate and events, it is necessary to understand how the American political system works. We will work toward that understanding together by exploring the system from two angles: *institutions*, or the structure of the United States government; and *behavior*, or the actions and motivations of political actors, both politicians and the general public. We will discuss what problems the government and political system seek to solve and why they sometimes succeed and sometimes fail to solve those problems.

Required Text

- Kollman, Ken. 2017. *The American Political System*. 3rd Edition. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

General Expectations

I expect all students to behave professionally in this class. Class discussions are expected to be civil, rational, and respectful of the opinions of others. Although class attendance is not mandatory, you will be held responsible for all material in the textbooks and in lectures, even if you miss a class. Moreover, I expect all students to attend class prepared to participate in any class discussion and to show up on time. I reserve the right to hold “pop” quizzes if no one is participating in class discussion. Laptops, tablets, and other forms of electronic media are not to be used in this class. If you need an exception to this rule, please see me. I am willing to make accommodations.

Course Requirements

Exams (2) The first exam will be taken in class on March 5th. The last exam will be taken during the final exam period, which is scheduled for May 7th. The first exam will be worth 20% and the second exam will be worth 30%. The final exam will be cumulative.

Writing Assignments (2) Each paper will be five to six pages in length. The due dates are February 19th and April 18th. The papers are to be handed in in class. Each paper will be worth 20% of your grade for this class. Papers must be printed and handed in at the beginning of class on the date due, otherwise considered late. A 10% reduction will be taken off the final paper grade for every day late. Information regarding the writing assignments will be distributed in class.

General Participation Your general class participation will be evaluated, constituting 10% of your final grade. I strongly encourage all students to actively participate in discussion. Class attendance is part of your participation grade, as is participation in discussion. If you attend every

class, but never say a word you can do no better than a B- for participation; though a B- is not guaranteed, as you must show evidence of active listening (i.e. sleeping, being on Facebook/Twitter, etc., and emailing do not demonstrate active listening).

If you are uncomfortable speaking up in class, please consider this section an opportunity to grow and push yourself to contribute to the discussion — and come chat with me in office hours if you are having trouble participating.

Research Participation All students who enroll in Political Science 100 are required to participate in research studies conducted in the Political Science Department should they be conducted during the semester you are enrolled in the course. The total time commitment to such studies will not exceed 3 hours. Failure to satisfy the research participation requirement will result in an incomplete for the course. This requirement does not substitute for other course requirements, nor does it generate extra credit. You will be alerted to studies via Sakai. The subject pool and the research studies are currently administered by Professor Anna Bassi. Should you have any questions please email her. It is important to note that if studies are made available they must be completed in a timely manner, as the studies are not always available throughout the semester. In the event that you would rather not actively participate in an actual study, you have the option of satisfying the research participation requirement in a different way. This alternative assignment consists of writing a 4-page research paper.

Grading

A final grade of “incomplete” will only be given in this course under exceptional circumstances and is solely at the discretion of the instructor. In addition, written assignments that do not follow the guidelines of the assignment and/or have poor grammar and spelling will be severely penalized. As a general rule, make-ups for exams will not be given. Students who must miss exams because of scheduled activities of an official University student organization, a religious holiday, or a verifiable illness should contact the instructor *in advance* of missing an exam so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Grading Scale

A 94-100, A- 90-93, B+ 87-89, B 84-86, B- 80-83, C+ 77-79, C 74-76, C- 70-73, D+ 67-69

Assignments & Tests

You are responsible for keeping a copy of all written assignments for the course. This ensures that we will not run into problems with lost assignments. You are also responsible for keeping copies of the assignments once they are handed back. Sometimes errors do happen, and a grade may not be recorded for you. If this happens you must be able to produce the graded paper to verify that the assignment was completed and that the grade is correct.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is broadly defined as submitting work that is not your own without attribution, and is not acceptable in this or any other academic course. Any academic dishonesty found on an assignment results in a failing grade for that assignment and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent permissible under University of North Carolina guidelines, which can be accessed at: <http://honor.unc.edu>.

Communication

I am very happy to meet with students outside of class time. Whether it be to discuss concerns about the course, remediation with the material, or simply to engage further with the topic, please feel free to stop by Hamilton 303 during my office hours. If you are unable to meet during my office hours, which are listed at the top of this syllabus, please email me to set up a time to talk. Email is the best mode of communication with which to reach me. While I do my best to respond to emails as quickly and thoroughly as possible, please expect a response within 24 hours and plan accordingly.

Office hours are an important resource that should be utilized to improve understanding of materials or ask more personalized questions. Office hours before an exam will be held at regular times and, unless noted by me, no additional office hours will be held - so plan accordingly. Prior to writing assignments due dates I will be available during office hours to read over paper outlines provide feedback. Please do not bring completed papers and, be advised, office hours before paper deadlines may be busy.

Electronics Policy

In class, our aim is to engage deeply with the subject matter as well as with each other. This means that we must actively listen to each other and formulate thoughtful responses. As a result, electronic devices (e.g. laptops, tablets, and cell phones) will not be needed, so you should keep them muted or turned off to avoid distracting yourself or your classmates. To come prepared for class, you may either bring a printed copy of the readings, notes on the readings, or both.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who need academic accommodation should contact UNC's Office of Accessibility, Resources, and Services or the Learning Center. Further, please either set up a time to meet with me *or* write me an email about the accommodations you will require. This should be done during the first week of class.

Schedule

I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule at any time. If changes are made, students will be informed through email and verbally in class and online. Adjustments will be made based on how quickly we work through material. Please see the following page for a schedule of assigned readings and assignments.

Date	Class Topic	Readings & Assignments
1/10	Introductions, Syllabus, Course Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Readings
1/15	The State of American Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mara Liasson, <i>NPR</i>, The State Of Our Politics Is Divided, Mis-trustful And Engaged
1/17	Why is Politics Ineffective?: Questions & Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman, Chapter 1
1/22	Articles of Confederation & Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman, Chapter 2 • Richard Stengel, <i>TIME</i>, One Document, Under Siege
1/24	Federalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman Chapter 3 • Libby Nelson, <i>Vox</i>, Everything You Need to Know about Com-mon Core
1/29	Congress I: Districts & Getting Elected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman Chapter 5, pp.147-164 • David R. Mayhew, The Electoral Connection
1/31	Congress II: The Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman Chapter 5, pp.165-180
2/5	Congress III: Polarization & Dysfunction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ezra Klein, <i>Vox</i>, What is Congressional Dysfunction? • Frances Lee, <i>Washington Post</i>, American politics is more com-petitive than ever... • Sean Theriault, <i>Washington Post</i>, Polarization we can live with. Partisan warfare is the problem.
2/7	Presidency I: Historical Perspective & Today	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman Chapter 6, pp 199-224 • Ezra Klein, <i>Vox</i>, The Green Lantern Theory of the Presidency” • David Graham, <i>The Atlantic</i>, The Strangest Thing About Trump’s Approach to Presidential Power
2/12	Judiciary I: The Federal Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman Chapter 8, pp. 285-311
2/14	Judiciary II: SCOTUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman Chapter 8, pp. 311-324
2/19	Civil Rights & Civil Liberties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman Chapter 8, pp. 109-132 • Roger Parlo, <i>The New Yorker</i>, Christian Bakers, Gay Weddings, and a Question for the Supreme Court

Continued on next page

2/21	Gerrymandering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Gerrymandering, <i>Vox</i>, see Sakai for link • Black Representation in North Carolina, <i>FiveThirtyEight</i>, see Sakai for link
2/26	Gerrymandering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Gerrymandering, <i>Vox</i>, see Sakai for link • Black Representation in North Carolina, <i>FiveThirtyEight</i>, see Sakai for link
2/28	Bureaucracy	• Kollman Chapter 7
3/5	Catch-Up and Review (First Paper Due)	• No Readings
3/7	Midterm Exam	• No Readings
3/19	Public Opinion I: Measuring Public Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman, Chapter 9, pp. 330-340 • Vann R. Newkirk II, <i>The Atlantic</i>, What Went Wrong With the 2016 Polls? • Nate Silver, <i>FiveThirtyEight</i>, The Polls Are All Right • Kollman, Chapter 9, pp. 341-361 • Johnathan Weiler and Marc Hetherington, Prius Or Pickup? How the Answers to Four Simple Questions Explain America's Great Divide (Chapter 1)
3/21	Public Opinion II: Forming Political Attitudes	• Kollman, Chapter 9, pp. 341-361
3/26	Public Opinion III: Are Americans Divided?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johnathan Weiler and Marc Hetherington, Prius Or Pickup? How the Answers to Four Simple Questions Explain America's Great Divide (Chapter 1)
3/28	Elections I: Mechanics	• Kollman, Chapter 13
4/2	Elections II: The Electoral College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garrett Epps, <i>The Atlantic</i>, The Electoral College Wasn't Meant to Overturn Elections • Tim Alberta, <i>Politico</i>, Is the Electoral College Doomed?
4/4	Elections III: Political Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kollman Chapter 10, pp. 380-397 • Dylan Matthews, <i>Vox</i>, Obama suggested making it illegal not to vote. Heres how thats worked in Australia
4/9	Elections IV: Candidate Nomination & Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brookings Institute, The 2018 Primaries Project: The ideology of primary voters • Adam Nagourney, <i>New York Times</i>, Heres How Californias Jun- gle Primary System Works • Dan Balz, <i>New York Times</i>, Californias open primaries are a cautionary tale about political reform
4/11	Political Parties I	• Kollman Chapter 12

Continued on next page

4/16	Political Parties II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jonathan Rauch, <i>The Atlantic</i>, How American Politics Went In-sane
4/18	Politics & The Media (Second Paper Due)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kollman Chapter 12, pp. 542-566 Jonathan Rothwell, <i>New York Times</i>, Biased News Media or Biased Readers? An Experiment on Trust
4/23	Money in Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maggie Koerth-Baker, <i>FiveThirtyEight</i>, How Money Affects... Andrew Prokop, <i>Vox</i>, The Citizens United era of money in politics, explained Michelle Ye Hee Lee, <i>Washington Post</i>, Eleven donors have plowed \$1 billion into super PACs since they were created
4/25	The 2020 Presidential Election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Readings
4/29	Catch-Up and Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Readings
4/7	Final Exam	

Sample Class Materials

Class Concept: Introducing American Political Institutions

- *Teaching Takeaways:* My undergraduate classes are designed to produce informed citizens who are effective participants in the political process. To me, this means not only understanding the fundamentals of American politics but also appreciating how and why political outcomes occur. To achieve this aim, I start every class session with a review of the week's political news and pose a "big" question. In this class (01/17/19), we began by talking about the newest Democratic candidates who had declared their run for the 2020 presidential election. I tied this piece of political news back to a discussion of coordination problems, specifically addressing party failures to coalesce around a presidential candidate in recent elections.
- Class Materials: [Presentation Slides](#)

Class Concept: Measuring Public Opinion

- *Teaching Takeaways:* I find that students sometimes struggle in their coursework to make connections between abstract concepts and real-world application. To make more clear connections, I introduce challenging concepts by way of familiar political events. To understand public opinion measurement, I led a class discussion on the unexpected result of the 2016 election. My goal for this class (03/19/19) was to challenge students' preconceived notions about the reason why election predictions were inaccurate and evaluate the limitations of polling data.
- Class Materials: [Presentation Slides](#)

Class Concept: Understanding and Evaluating Money in Politics

- *Teaching Takeaways:* I believe that teaching is most successful when treated as an open dialogue, where students' questions can help inform the content of class. At the beginning of the semester, I had students fill out a survey about their prior political knowledge and asked them to indicate a topic they wanted to learn more about. The overwhelming response to this question was "Money in Politics." In my last class of the semester (04/23/19), I delivered a lecture outlining the basics of *Citizens United*. With this new understanding, students compared and contrasted the role that big money plays in influencing elections with the impacts of other institutions like political parties.
- Class Materials: [Presentation Slides](#)

Introduction to American Government
POLI 100
Exam I
March 7, 2019

1 Short Answer

Answer 12 of the following 14 questions. (5 points each)

1. Define and explain the significance of: judicial review
2. Define and explain the significance of: Duverger's Law
3. Define and explain the significance of: the Calculus of Voting ($V = pb - C + D$)
4. Define and explain the significance of: majority-minority districts
5. Define and explain the significance of: the Tenth Amendment
6. Define and explain the significance of: geographic sorting
7. Define and explain the significance of: coordination problems
8. Compare and contrast executive orders and signing statements
9. Compare and contrast the attitudinal model and the legal model
10. Compare and contrast polarization and partisanship
11. Compare and contrast 'credit claiming' and 'position taking'

2 Essay

Answer 1 of the following 2 essays. (60 points)

1. The process of a bill becoming a law isn't as simple as School House Rock makes it out to be. In a well-organized essay, discuss the process of a bill's passage through Congress. You must clearly explain the major steps, from the legislation's inception to the final floor vote, of a bill passing through the House and Senate. After detailing the steps, assess what obstacles a bill may face in becoming a law. Clearly identify and explain at least three obstacles a bill might face that would prevent its passage.
2. The Founding Fathers designed the legislative branch to be strongest arm of government, but many argue that in present-day the power of the president far exceeds that of Congress. Why did the Founders want a weak executive? What steps did the Founders take to restrict presidential power? How does presidential power in our Constitution compare to that under the Articles of Confederation? Take a position on whether Congress or president is the stronger branch of government. Draw on examples discussed **in class or in the required readings** to support your stance.

3 Bonus—5 potential points

Identify up to five candidates running in the Democratic primary for the 2020 presidential election. The candidate's name, current office, and the state they are from must be included in each identification. 1 point of credit will be given for each candidate fully identified, no partial credit will be given for names only.

Introduction to American Government
POLI 100
Exam I
May 7, 2019

1 Short Answer

Answer 12 of the following 16 questions. (5 points each)

1. Define and explain the significance of: judicial review
2. Define and explain the significance of: Duverger's Law
3. Define and explain the significance of: the Calculus of Voting ($V = pb - C + D$)
4. Define and explain the significance of: random sampling
5. Define and explain the significance of: partisan gerrymandering
6. Define and explain the significance of: straight-ticket voting
7. Define and explain the significance of: the Elastic (Necessary and Proper) Clause
8. Define and explain the significance of: *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission*
9. Define and explain the significance of: Median Voter Theorem
10. Define and explain the significance of: special interest groups
11. Define and explain the significance of: principal-agent problems in the bureaucracy
12. Define and explain the significance of: checks and balances
13. Compare and contrast open vs. closed primary elections
14. Compare and contrast the roles of Speaker of the House and Minority Leader
15. Compare and contrast a population vs a sample in public opinion measurement
16. Compare and contrast the partisan model (Michigan model; 'psychological attachment') vs the retrospective model ('running tally')

2 Essay

Answer 2 of the following 3 essays. (60 points)

1. Throughout the course of this semester we've talked a lot about the incumbency advantage — the leg up that current members of Congress have over challengers when running for reelection. Identify and explain the three components of the incumbency advantage according to the Mayhew reading. Next, identify and explain one other factor that contributes to an incumbent's advantage in elections, other than those in the Mayhew reading. Finally, take a position on whether you think the incumbency advantage is still important in elections today. Do voters care about what an incumbent does in office or do they just care about a candidate's party affiliation (partisanship)?

2. Political parties are incredibly complex networks central to the functioning of American government. What is the primary purpose of political parties (what do they help candidates do)? Pick one of the three primary functions of parties — in government, as organizations, or in the electorate — evaluate and explain its significance to helping politicians achieve their goals. For that same concept, explain any limitations or constraints parties face making them less effective. Draw on examples discussed **in class or in the required readings** to support your argument
3. Political scientists and journalists alike point to polarization and partisanship as key factors contributing to our current state of ‘dysfunctional’ politics. Define and explain the differences between polarization and partisanship. What electoral factors (ie. geographic sorting, primary elections, etc.) in American politics tend to exacerbate polarization / partisanship? Drawing on examples discussed **in class or in the required readings**, take a stance on whether polarization or partisanship is worse for American politics.

3 Bonus—5 potential points

Answer 1 of the following 3 (super hard) ID questions. Please only answer one of the following IDs, if you do more than one I will only grade the first one.

1. Define and explain the significance of the 17th Amendment
2. Define and explain the significance of the Invisible primary
3. Define and explain the significance of the McCain-Feingold Act

Paper Assignment POLI 100

Paper Due Date: February 28th, 2019

Papers must be submitted in class on the due date or considered late

This assignment is about institutions in American government. The paper is due Thursday, February 28th *in class* at the beginning of class.

Assignment Goal: The goal of this assignment is to apply political science theories and concepts to the overarching class theme of institutions. Throughout our discussions of Congress, the Judiciary, and the Presidency, we have reviewed how institutions shape outcomes. Sometimes institutions can have unintended consequences that shape outcomes in an unintended way.

For this assignment, you should (1) choose a branch of government (judiciary, executive, or legislature) and propose a reform to fix an ongoing political problem within that branch; (2) put forward why this reform should occur, outline the intended outcomes of this reform, and discuss potential unintended consequences of this reform.

Assignment Specifics: In the paper, you should address the following points:

- Properly diagnose an ongoing political problem and correctly identify the rule, procedure, or institution that is the source (or in part the source) of that political problem. Be sure to discuss *why* this particular rule, procedure, or institution is contributing or causing the political problem you diagnose.
- Fully and completely outline the components of your reform. Discuss why you proposed your chosen reform and what the intended goals of the reform are. How is it going to fix your political problem? Provide evidence. You can rely on outside research for this portion of the assignment. However, be sure to cite all sources used in the bibliography.
- Reflect on your chosen reform. All rules, procedures, and institutions have unintended consequences. What unintended negative (or positive) consequences may your reform cause? Again, you can rely on outside research for this portion of the assignment. However, be sure to cite all sources used in the bibliography. Be sure to address this part of the prompt; do not skip over it by simply saying there will be no unintended consequences.

Be sure to do the following in your assignment: 1) organize your paper around a simple argument, do not choose too large or too complex of a reform; 2) answer each question directly; 3) draw on class readings or outside research to provide evidence; 4) minimize typos and grammatical errors.

Papers should be submitted in 12-point font, Times New Romans, double-spaced and stapled. Papers should be five pages in length with an additional page for citations (totaling to six pages). Please use APA format for citations and be sure to include a works cited page.

Paper Assignment POLI 100

Paper Due Date: April 18th, 2019

Papers must be submitted in class on the due date or considered late

This assignment is about institutions in American government. The paper is due Thursday, April 18th *in class* at the beginning of class.

Assignment Goal: The goal of this assignment is to apply political science theories and concepts to elections. Throughout our discussions of public opinion and campaigns, we have reviewed how political elites manipulate their campaign messaging to appeal to certain voters or elicit certain thoughts/feelings.

For this assignment, you will evaluate presidential campaign announcements for the 2016 or 2018 election posted under the “Paper_Assignment_2” folder on Sakai. You will compare and contrast two campaign announcements, first evaluating what types of appeals each used in order to win over voters and then assessing the broader implications of these tactics on the American electorate.

Assignment Specifics: In the paper, you should address the following points:

- Evaluate the use of elements like priming and framing, emotions, group attachments, or elite cues in each of your two chosen presidential campaign announcements. You may also rely on information covered in Chapter 13 of the Kollman textbook.
- Fully and completely compare and contrast these two approaches. Discuss what was similar and what was different. Speculate why these candidates chose to take different approaches. You may choose to rely on public opinion data or other polling information to support your argument.
- Reflect on these candidate’s tactics. What might be some of the unintended consequences of these strategies? Do they work to unite voters or divide the electorate? Again, you may rely on your own research to supplement this portion of the answer. Pew Research Center (<https://www.people-press.org/>) may provide some helpful data on growing polarization, diverging policy expectations, and fissures between the parties. The *Prius or Pickup* reading by Marc Hetherington may also be helpful.

Be sure to do the following in your assignment: 1) do not spend the majority of your paper simply describing the two campaign announcements; 2) answer each question directly; 3) draw on class readings or outside research to provide evidence; 4) minimize typos and grammatical errors.

Papers should be submitted in 12-point font, Times New Romans, double-spaced and stapled. Papers should be five pages in length with an additional page for citations (totaling to six pages). Please use APA format for citations and be sure to include a works cited page.

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Spring 2019

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 100-002 INTRO TO GOVT IN US

Raters	Students
Responded	8
Invited	30
Response Ratio	26.7%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.25	5.00	1.39	8	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	62.5%
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.38	5.00	1.41	8	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	75.0%
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	4.50	5.00	1.41	8	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	87.5%
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	4.38	5.00	1.41	8	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	75.0%

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	8	87.5%
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	8	100.0%

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.50	3.00	0.76	8	0.0%	0.0%	62.5%	25.0%	12.5%
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.00	3.00	0.76	8	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	4.00	4.00	0.82	7	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%	42.9%	28.6%
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	3.57	4.00	1.40	7	14.3%	0.0%	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	4.00	4.00	0.82	7	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%	42.9%	28.6%
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	4.00	4.00	0.89	6	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.00	4.00	0.82	7	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%	42.9%	28.6%
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.00	4.00	0.82	7	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%	42.9%	28.6%
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	3.50	3.50	1.52	6	16.7%	0.0%	33.3%	16.7%	33.3%

Department Specific

Instructor Ratings

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Demonstrates enthusiasm about teaching.	4.63	5.00	0.74	8	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	75.0%
2. Communicates clearly and logically.	4.63	5.00	1.06	8	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	87.5%
3. Promotes a climate of mutual respect.	4.75	5.00	0.71	8	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	87.5%
4. Encourages student questions.	4.75	5.00	0.71	8	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	87.5%
5. Emphasizes critical thinking.	4.63	5.00	1.06	8	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	87.5%
6. Uses teaching strategies that promote active involvement.	4.13	5.00	1.46	8	12.5%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	62.5%
7. Clearly communicates expectations for student performance.	4.38	5.00	1.41	8	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	75.0%
8. Regularly provides constructive criticism of student performance.	4.00	4.00	0.76	8	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%
9. Provides timely feedback on student performance.	4.38	5.00	1.06	8	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	25.0%	62.5%
10. Provides a fair evaluation of student performance.	4.25	5.00	1.39	8	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	62.5%
11. Is available when needed.	4.50	5.00	0.76	8	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	62.5%
12. Is well-prepared for instruction.	4.63	5.00	0.74	8	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	75.0%
13. Overall, considering both the possibilities and limitations of the subject matter and course, I would rate this instructor as "excellent."	4.38	5.00	1.41	8	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	75.0%

Course Quality Ratings

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Course goals and objectives are clearly specified.	4.25	4.50	0.89	8	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%	50.0%
2. Requirements (e.g., assignments, attendance, student responsibilities) are clearly specified.	4.50	5.00	0.76	8	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	62.5%
3. Course assignments are clearly related to the course objectives.	4.50	5.00	0.76	8	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	62.5%
4. Instructional methods in the course facilitate my learning.	4.25	5.00	1.39	8	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	62.5%
5. In general, the course is well-organized. Course materials stimulated critical thinking.	4.25	4.50	1.04	8	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	37.5%	50.0%
6. I know significantly more about this subject than before I took this course.	4.00	4.50	1.41	8	12.5%	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	50.0%
7. Overall, considering its content, design, and structure, I would rate this course as "excellent."	4.13	5.00	1.46	8	12.5%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	62.5%

Open-Ended Responses

Comments on: The Instructor Provided Regular Assessment of My Work Throughout the Semester. (Comments)

Comment

- Only two papers were available aside from the midterm and final

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

None

I was completely exposed to see the radical opposite of my political beliefs.

n/a

They allowed me to see all sides of the political spectrum.

Wasn't really about diversity/theory but subject matter that included sensitive topics was well handled (such as how race played a factor in 2012ish elections, wedding cake court cases, ect)

It helped give perspective.

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

Would rather not elaborate.

Individual students need to be less racist (there was only one of these students in the class).

n/a

Nothing it is already pretty inclusive.

Not possible.

Department Specific

Please comment on the strengths of the course.

Comments

None

The course is structured flexibly so that if I needed to miss a class (particularly because it was in the 5–6:15pm time slot) I could go to office hours to retrieve the information as well as to the textbook to study terms.

The teacher is what made the course so much fun and actually worth coming to a late class.

The topics were interesting and made sense when you do the required reading.

The professor is definitely a strength with her teaching/lecture style and enthusiasm with the subject.

Learned a ton, organized really well, small enough class that I never felt lost

It is taught by a great teacher and is very engaging.

Please comment on the limitations of the course.

Comments

Classroom Environment

The course has obscenely large periods of intense studying for the two exams.

none

None.

The availability of office hours.

It covers a lot in a short amount of time, sometimes felt like we could have gone deeper but it is an intro level course so it works

It is a basic level of content due to the nature of the course.

Please comment on the strengths of the instructor.

Comments

None

She did a phenomenal job of teaching a highly polarized political atmosphere from a neutral standpoint with a neutral agenda of topics to cover.

Very engaging, highly interesting and motivated teacher. Made coming to class in the evening worth it because it was always interesting.

She is very enthusiastic about the topics she teaches in class. She also makes learning the material easy and enjoyable.

Great professor who is engaging, enthusiastic, and accepting of her students and questions.

Always was there to help when I didn't understand concepts, good grader, good constructive feedback, very helpful. Somehow remained very politically neutral and sensitive despite it being a class about politics so kudos. Even when my questions were stupid as hell she never berated them.

She asks lots of questions and allows for lots of students bouncing ideas off the room.

Please comment on the limitations of the instructor.

Comments

Gets caught up in the moment, goes off topic often.

She said in the beginning of the class that attendance would not be taken, but she then started taking attendance every class. So, now I do not know what to think and if we are graded on attendance.

none

None.

Picky on grading where some things were either too specific or too vague, but answered the question.

None.

Introduction to American Politics (POLI 100)
Teaching Assistant
Sample Course Materials

Poli 100: Introduction to American Government

Spring 2018
Recitation 609
Friday 10:10-11:00
Gardner Hall 106

Teaching Assistant: Rachel Porter

Email: rachsur@live.unc.edu

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:00-10:00

Office: Hamilton 303

Welcome to your recitation for POLI 100: Introduction to American Government. The purpose of the recitation is to complement course lectures through active learning, dialogue, and discussion. The goal is to improve your understanding by clarifying and elaborating on material presented in the lectures and readings.

The beginning of each class will typically be devoted to questions about material covered in the weeks lectures. The majority of the recitation, however, will be class discussion of assigned readings and/or an activity that allows students to explore the main lecture concepts in new ways, and draw connections between previously presented ideas.

Recitation Requirements

Attendance

Because we will use our time in recitation to learn from one another, regular attendance is important. If necessary, students may miss one recitation session without an impact on their attendance grade. If you need to miss multiple recitation sessions due to documented circumstances beyond your control such as an illness or family emergency, please let me know *in advance* and we can determine how to make up for lost class time. Students are also expected to arrive on time to recitation. Students will be given a five minute grace period for lateness, otherwise will be considered absent. Students will lose five points on their final recitation grade for every non-excused absence.

Participation

Participation counts for 40% of your recitation grade. Beyond showing up, active participation in recitation is vital for success - both for the class as a whole and for your development as a student. Class participation can take many different forms such as speaking and listening to others during class discussions, raising questions for classmates to consider, completing brief in-class writing assignments, attending office hours, corresponding through email, etc. Given that the format of this recitation is discussion-based, it is imperative that you come to class prepared to engage with the material and ask questions. I expect both quality and quantity with respect to class participation - your participation should illustrate that you are thinking critically about topics we cover.

To supplement class participation, there will be an online forum via our Sakai site for questions and commentary about current events in American politics. Contributing to this forum is not required, however, for students looking to improve their participation grade this is a useful tool. I will also offer several minutes at the beginning of class for students to ask questions about current events in U.S. politics. Using my discretion I may also bring up questions or comments made on Sakai during class for us to discuss together.

Writing Assignments

Two five page essays comprise 60% of your recitation grade. The first essay will be due **February 23rd** in class. The second essay will be due **April 20th**. Both essays comprise the writing assignment grade equally. Some discretion will be given if significant improvement is demonstrated between essay one and two. Writing prompts will be distributed closer to deadline.

Communication

I am very happy to meet with students outside of class time. Whether it be to discuss concerns about the course, remediation with the material, or simply to engage further with the topic, please feel free to stop by Hamilton 303 during my office hours. If you are unable to meet during my office hours, which are listed at the top of this syllabus, please email me to set up a time to talk. Email is the best mode of communication with which to reach me. While I do my best to respond to emails as quickly and thoroughly as possible, please expect a response within 24 hours and plan accordingly.

Office hours are an important resource that should be utilized to improve understanding of materials or ask more personalized questions. Office hours before an exam will be held at regular times and, unless noted by me, no additional office hours will be held - so plan accordingly. Prior to writing assignments due dates I will be available during office hours to read over paper outlines provide feedback. Please do not bring completed papers and, be advised, office hours before paper deadlines may be busy.

Electronics Policy

In recitation, our aim is to engage deeply with the subject matter as well as with each other. This means that we must actively listen to each other and formulate thoughtful responses. As a result, electronic devices (e.g. laptops, tablets, and cell phones) will not be needed, so you should keep them muted or turned off to avoid distracting yourself or your classmates. To come prepared for class, you may either bring a printed copy of the readings, notes on the readings, or both. With that being said, there may be occasional times that we will want to use available electronic devices to reference online resources during in-class activities, but I will let you know when it is appropriate to do so.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who need academic accommodation should contact UNC's Office of Accessibility, Resources, and Services (<https://accessibility.unc.edu/>) or the Learning Center (<http://learningcenter.unc.edu/>). Further, please either set up a time to meet with me *or* write me an email about the accommodations you will require. This should be done during the first week of class.

Academic Dishonesty

According to UNC's *Instrument of Student Judicial Governance*, "It shall be the responsibility of every student enrolled at the University of North Carolina to support the principles of academic integrity and to refrain from all forms of academic dishonesty." Failure to abide by this policy may result in punitive action taken against the offending student. Consult the UNC Writing Center's handout on plagiarism to learn more on how to avoid academic dishonesty (<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/plagiarism/>).

Honor Code

All students participating in the class are assumed to be familiar with and adhering to the UNC Honor Code. I treat violations of the Honor Code seriously. More information is available at <http://instrument.unc.edu>.

Schedule of Required Readings

Readings listed for each week are expected to be completed *before* your recitation meets that week. The readings will either be in the Kollman textbook, "Readings in American Politics: analysis and Perspectives," or posted on the lecture section's Sakai site.

Note: Readings listed below are subject to change. I reserve the right to add, remove, or alter readings as the semester progresses. I will notify you in advance if and when such changes occur.

Week 1: January 19 - Introduction to Political Science

- No reading

Week 2: January 26 - Why Washington Won't Work

- Richard Stengel, "Time Cover Story: One Document, Under Siege"
- Julia Azari and Seth Masket, "The Four Types of Constitutional Crises", article from FiveThirtyEight
- Ilya Somin, "Federal court rules against Trump's executive order targeting sanctuary cities", article from The Washington Post

Week 3: February 2 - Federalism

- Paul Callan and Danny Cevallos, "Marijuana: Is the Party Over?" article from CNN
- David G. Evans and Paul Armentano, "Should Federal Laws Be Enforced Where Marijuana Is Legal?" article from CQ Researcher

Week 4: February 9 - Crash Course on Congress

- Mickey Edwards, "We No Longer Have Three Branches of Government", article from Politico
- Gregory Koger, "How to fix Congress: start with the basics", article from Vox

Week 5: February 16 - Members of Congress: Running for Re-Election

- Excerpt from Mayhew on Sakai

Week 6: February 23 - Public Opinion

- Ezra Klein, "The Single Most Important Fact About American Politics", article from Vox

Week 7: March 2 - Campaigns & Elections

- Jacob Smith, "Cherie Berry Put Her Picture in Every North Carolina Elevator. Here's How That Affected Her Reelection", article from the Washington Post

Week 8: March 9 - Polling & Forecasting

- Carl Bialik and Harry Enten, "The Polls Missed Trump. We Asked the Pollsters Why.", article from FiveThirtyEight
- Andrew Prokop, "Poll:Doug Jones Leads Roy Moore...", article from Vox

Week 9: March 16 - Spring Break

Week 10: March 23 - Congressional Districts

- Andrew Prokop, “Gerrymandering, Explained”, article/cards from Vox
- Fred Barbash, “Federal Court Voids...”, article from The Washington Post

Week 11: March 30 - Polarization

- Ezra Klein, “Congressional Dysfunction”, article/cards from Vox
- Nolan McCarty, “What we know and what we don’t know about our polarized politics”, article from The Monkey Cage

Week 12: April 6 - Polarization vs. Partisanship

- Sean Theriault, “Polarization we can live with...”, article from The Monkey Cage
- Frances Lee, “American politics is more competitive than ever...” article from The Monkey Cage

Week 13: April 13 - Parties

- Jonathan Rauch, “How American Politics Went Insane” article from The Atlantic

Week 14: April 20 - Primary Elections

- Brady, Han, and Pope, “Primary Elections and Candidate Ideology: Out of Step with the Primary Electorate?”

Week 15: April 27 - Wrap-Up & Review

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Spring 2018

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 100-601 INTRO TO GOVT IN US

Raters	Students
Responded	5
Invited	20
Response Ratio	25.0%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.40	4.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	40.0 %
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	5	100.0 %
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	5	100.0 %
3. Is this a required course for you?	5	60.0 %

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.60	4.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %	0.0 %
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	2.80	3.00	0.45	5	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	4.20	4.00	0.45	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	80.0 %	20.0 %
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	4.00	4.00	1.00	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	20.0 %	40.0 %
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	4.40	4.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	40.0 %
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.40	4.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	40.0 %
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.00	4.00	1.22	5	0.0 %	20.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	40.0 %

Department Specific

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My teaching associate was fair in the assignment of exams and paper grades.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %
2. My teaching associate did a good job of leading class discussions.	4.80	5.00	0.45	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %
3. My teaching associate was well prepared for class.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %
4. My teaching associate displayed mastery of the material.	5.00	5.00	0.00	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
5. My teaching associate was available for help during office hours.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %
6. My teaching associate made useful comments on my paper.	4.60	5.00	0.89	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	0.0 %	80.0 %
7. Overall my teaching associate did an excellent job.	4.80	5.00	0.45	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %

Class Status:

First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Other
100.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

To the best of your knowledge, what is your grade in this course now?

A	B	C	D	F	PS
25.0 %	75.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Open-Ended Responses

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

The diversity of my classmates contributed to positive class discussions.

Broader perspectives.

Different political viewpoints

I was able to learn other perspectives in politics than my own.

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

N/A

N/A

I do not believe that it could be made more inclusive of diverse students; it already seems inclusive enough.

Department Specific

Please offer your teaching associate positive feedback, suggestions for change, and any other comments you have about his/her performance.

Comments

Rachel was a great TA! She was really relatable, led fruitful class discussions, gave positive feedback, and encouraged us all to think deeply about the subject matter. I felt like her grading standards were reasonable and her plan for the course played out very well.

She's a great TA who is very knowledgeable of the subject material.

Great TA, and showed concern that students were learning and improving overall. One suggestion would be to foster more learning styles for multiple kinds of students besides debates.

Keep doing what you are doing, I learned a lot and it was amazing.

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Spring 2018

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 100-604 INTRO TO GOVT IN US

Raters	Students
Responded	3
Invited	6
Response Ratio	50.0%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	3.67	4.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %	0.0 %
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.00	4.00	0.00	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %	0.0 %
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	4.33	4.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	33.3 %
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	3.33	3.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	33.3 %	0.0 %

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	3	100.0 %
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	3	100.0 %
3. Is this a required course for you?	3	33.3 %

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.00	3.00	0.00	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.00	3.00	0.00	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	4.33	4.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	33.3 %
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	4.00	4.00	1.00	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	33.3 %	33.3 %
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	4.67	5.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	4.33	4.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	33.3 %
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.67	5.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.67	5.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.33	4.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	33.3 %

Department Specific

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My teaching associate was fair in the assignment of exams and paper grades.	2.67	2.00	1.15	3	0.0 %	66.7 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	0.0 %
2. My teaching associate did a good job of leading class discussions.	4.67	5.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
3. My teaching associate was well prepared for class.	5.00	5.00	0.00	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
4. My teaching associate displayed mastery of the material.	4.67	5.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
5. My teaching associate was available for help during office hours.	4.67	5.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
6. My teaching associate made useful comments on my paper.	3.67	3.00	1.15	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	0.0 %	33.3 %
7. Overall my teaching associate did an excellent job.	4.33	4.00	0.58	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	33.3 %

Class Status:

First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Other
100.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

To the best of your knowledge, what is your grade in this course now?

A	B	C	D	F	PS
50.0 %	50.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Open-Ended Responses

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

Good class discussion that included everyone

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

It was very inclusive

Department Specific

Please offer your teaching associate positive feedback, suggestions for change, and any other comments you have about his/her performance.

Comments

I thought the class was well run and I learned a lot, I felt like papers could have deserved an A were often given a B

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Spring 2018

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 100-609 INTRO TO GOVT IN US

Raters	Students
Responded	10
Invited	20
Response Ratio	50.0%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.80	5.00	0.42	10	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.80	5.00	0.42	10	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	5.00	5.00	0.00	10	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	4.80	5.00	0.42	10	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	10	90.0 %
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	10	100.0 %
3. Is this a required course for you?	10	30.0 %

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.50	3.00	0.71	10	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	30.0 %	10.0 %
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	2.80	3.00	0.92	10	0.0 %	40.0 %	50.0 %	0.0 %	10.0 %

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	3.88	4.00	1.25	8	12.5 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	62.5 %	25.0 %
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	3.88	4.00	1.25	8	12.5 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	62.5 %	25.0 %
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	4.11	4.00	0.78	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	22.2 %	44.4 %	33.3 %
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	3.78	4.00	1.20	9	11.1 %	0.0 %	11.1 %	55.6 %	22.2 %
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.33	4.00	0.71	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	11.1 %	44.4 %	44.4 %
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.33	4.00	0.71	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	11.1 %	44.4 %	44.4 %
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	3.63	4.00	1.19	8	12.5 %	0.0 %	12.5 %	62.5 %	12.5 %

Department Specific

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My teaching associate was fair in the assignment of exams and paper grades.	4.40	5.00	0.97	10	0.0 %	10.0 %	0.0 %	30.0 %	60.0 %
2. My teaching associate did a good job of leading class discussions.	5.00	5.00	0.00	10	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
3. My teaching associate was well prepared for class.	4.80	5.00	0.42	10	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %
4. My teaching associate displayed mastery of the material.	5.00	5.00	0.00	10	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
5. My teaching associate was available for help during office hours.	4.90	5.00	0.32	10	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	10.0 %	90.0 %
6. My teaching associate made useful comments on my paper.	4.60	5.00	0.97	10	0.0 %	10.0 %	0.0 %	10.0 %	80.0 %
7. Overall my teaching associate did an excellent job.	4.90	5.00	0.32	10	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	10.0 %	90.0 %

Class Status:

First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Other
66.7 %	11.1 %	22.2 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

To the best of your knowledge, what is your grade in this course now?

A	B	C	D	F	PS
44.4 %	44.4 %	11.1 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Open-Ended Responses

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

It did not.

I got to listen to perspectives that were different from mine.

Our discussions were influenced by the different backgrounds of the students in the class. I learned a lot because everyone had different perspectives and it made the class more interesting and supplemented the material.

Diversity of political knowledge helped to expand that of my own.

Not Applicable

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

It does not need to be more inclusive.

The class has been great. It doesn't need to change.

I think it was very inclusive. Could maybe create an even more open environment to discussion and all points of view but I found the environment to be very open, accepting, and inclusive.

n/a

Not Applicable

Department Specific

Please offer your teaching associate positive feedback, suggestions for change, and any other comments you have about his/her performance.

Comments

Does a great job getting students involved and teaching material in an easy-to-access way.

Honestly Rachel is one of my favorite TAs at UNC. Not only is she funny and engaging but she is more than willing to help. She relates very well to students and I really appreciate that. I always looked forward to attending recitation because I always learned something new.

Rachel was a phenomenal TA! Her attitude was always excellent and her personality really made recitation enjoyable. The very dry material and monotonous lecture style from Professor Stimson was starkly contrasted. I never looked forward to lecture, but I always looked forward to recitation with Rachel. Her grading of our 2 papers was very fair and she actually taught us material relevant to US government (which we most certainly weren't learning about in lecture with Professor Stimson).

Rachel was extremely knowledgeable and a great lecturer. She fully understood the material and kept the recitations interesting and easy to follow. I felt like I learned a lot after every time she taught the recitation. I would like for her to have more accessible office hours but that was because she offered one hour during MWF during a time that I had class so it was hard for me to make it to them. Overall, amazing performance as a TA.

Enthusiasm for material and clarity were present. Very prepared and guided discussion very well. Honestly one of the best TAs I have had at Carolina even though I didn't enjoy the lecture. Keep doing you Rachel!

Recitation was always interesting and I liked the paper topics because they weren't just boring research papers!

Rachel was extremely passionate and knowledgeable about American government and it showed. Her excitement for the subject made the students more engaged in learning and more willing to contribute to the discussion. I thought that she presented the material in a way that captured students' interests and made them curious about the subject. I feel like I genuinely learned a great deal from this class. The paper topics were unique and easy to write about, and more interesting than a regular academic essay.

She is a very charismatic and happy person. Her positive attitude would definitely gear me up to participate in class.

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Fall 2017

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 100-600 INTRO TO GOVT IN US

Raters	Students
Responded	6
Invited	18
Response Ratio	33.3%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.17	4.00	0.75	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	16.7 %	50.0 %	33.3 %
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.33	4.00	0.52	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	33.3 %
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	4.50	4.50	0.55	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	50.0 %	50.0 %
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	4.00	4.00	0.89	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	33.3 %	33.3 %

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	6	100.0 %
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	6	100.0 %
3. Is this a required course for you?	6	50.0 %

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.00	3.00	0.00	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	2.83	3.00	0.41	6	0.0 %	16.7 %	83.3 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	3.67	3.50	0.82	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	50.0 %	33.3 %	16.7 %
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	4.00	4.00	1.00	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	20.0 %	40.0 %
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	4.17	4.50	0.98	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	16.7 %	50.0 %
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	3.67	4.00	0.52	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %	0.0 %
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	3.83	4.00	0.75	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	50.0 %	16.7 %
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.00	4.00	0.89	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	33.3 %	33.3 %
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	3.67	4.00	0.52	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %	0.0 %

Department Specific

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My teaching associate was fair in the assignment of exams and paper grades.	3.83	4.00	0.41	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	16.7 %	83.3 %	0.0 %
2. My teaching associate did a good job of leading class discussions.	4.50	5.00	0.84	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	16.7 %	16.7 %	66.7 %
3. My teaching associate was well prepared for class.	4.50	5.00	0.84	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	16.7 %	16.7 %	66.7 %
4. My teaching associate displayed mastery of the material.	4.33	5.00	1.03	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	0.0 %	66.7 %
5. My teaching associate was available for help during office hours.	4.50	5.00	0.84	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	16.7 %	16.7 %	66.7 %
6. My teaching associate made useful comments on my paper.	3.50	3.50	1.05	6	0.0 %	16.7 %	33.3 %	33.3 %	16.7 %
7. Overall my teaching associate did an excellent job.	4.33	4.50	0.82	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	16.7 %	33.3 %	50.0 %

Class Status:

First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Other
16.7 %	0.0 %	50.0 %	33.3 %	0.0 %

To the best of your knowledge, what is your grade in this course now?

A	B	C	D	F	PS
50.0 %	50.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Open-Ended Responses

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

had people from foreign countries talk about their government

Seeing the different perspectives of foreign governments from exchange students was very interesting

Diversity of inherent political beliefs helped display different viewpoints on the topics of government that we were discussing.

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

it was good

N/A

The class climate could be made more inclusive by speaking freely and developing a trust in different political issues.

Department Specific

Please offer your teaching associate positive feedback, suggestions for change, and any other comments you have about his/her performance.

Comments

I thought that Rachel did a great job as the TA for this course, handling class discussions skillfully, even when the students did not want to participate. She was engaging, knowledgeable, helpful, and approachable. One of the best TA's I've had at Carolina, I would say.

You made the recitations useful and enjoyable

N/A

Some people just didn't talk at times! I know it's difficult to get people to talk but maybe there is something you can do to change that if you experience something like you did with our recitation class this semester.

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Fall 2017

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 100-601 INTRO TO GOVT IN US

Raters	Students
Responded	7
Invited	17
Response Ratio	41.2%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.71	5.00	0.49	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	28.6 %	71.4 %
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.71	5.00	0.49	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	28.6 %	71.4 %
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	4.67	5.00	0.52	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	4.29	5.00	0.95	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	28.6 %	14.3 %	57.1 %

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	7	100.0 %
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	7	100.0 %
3. Is this a required course for you?	7	42.9 %

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.14	3.00	0.69	7	0.0 %	14.3 %	57.1 %	28.6 %	0.0 %
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	2.86	3.00	0.38	7	0.0 %	14.3 %	85.7 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	4.50	4.50	0.55	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	50.0 %	50.0 %
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	4.17	4.00	0.41	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	83.3 %	16.7 %
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	4.83	5.00	0.41	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	16.7 %	83.3 %
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	4.83	5.00	0.41	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	16.7 %	83.3 %
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.83	5.00	0.41	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	16.7 %	83.3 %
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.67	5.00	0.52	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.67	5.00	0.52	6	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %

Department Specific

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My teaching associate was fair in the assignment of exams and paper grades.	4.29	4.00	0.76	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	14.3 %	42.9 %	42.9 %
2. My teaching associate did a good job of leading class discussions.	4.71	5.00	0.49	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	28.6 %	71.4 %
3. My teaching associate was well prepared for class.	4.86	5.00	0.38	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	14.3 %	85.7 %
4. My teaching associate displayed mastery of the material.	4.86	5.00	0.38	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	14.3 %	85.7 %
5. My teaching associate was available for help during office hours.	4.86	5.00	0.38	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	14.3 %	85.7 %
6. My teaching associate made useful comments on my paper.	4.57	5.00	0.53	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	42.9 %	57.1 %
7. Overall my teaching associate did an excellent job.	4.71	5.00	0.49	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	28.6 %	71.4 %

Class Status:

First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Other
57.1 %	28.6 %	14.3 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

To the best of your knowledge, what is your grade in this course now?

A	B	C	D	F	PS
57.1 %	28.6 %	14.3 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Open-Ended Responses

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

Having international students in an American politics class brought new and world perspectives that showed the "perfect" American government in new lights.

I was able to hear their backgrounds and opinions on topics.

It gave me many different points of views on topics.

Since this is a poli class, diversity was very important. The diversity of my class, especially having a student from ENGLAND, helped me learn more and broaden my view. So awesome.

Diversity of students brought different perspectives to topics in the class which contributed to discussion and gave a fuller picture.

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

By including more diversity into the lectures.

Not sure, very inclusive class.

No way.

N/A

Department Specific

Please offer your teaching associate positive feedback, suggestions for change, and any other comments you have about his/her performance.

Comments

I loved having Rachel Surminsky as my TA, she made the recitation interesting and her lectures were always well prepared.

Great teaching associate. She was very engaged.

She rocks!!!!

Very good!! Learned a lot in my recitation and loved it!!

You did an amazing job! You were always well prepared and extremely knowledgeable about the course material.

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Fall 2017

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 100-604 INTRO TO GOVT IN US

Raters	Students
Responded	9
Invited	18
Response Ratio	50.0%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.00	4.00	0.50	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	11.1 %	77.8 %	11.1 %
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.33	4.00	0.71	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	11.1 %	44.4 %	44.4 %
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	4.25	4.00	0.71	8	0.0 %	0.0 %	12.5 %	50.0 %	37.5 %
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	3.44	3.00	0.73	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	22.2 %	11.1 %

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	9	88.9 %
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	9	100.0 %
3. Is this a required course for you?	9	55.6 %

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	2.78	3.00	0.44	9	0.0 %	22.2 %	77.8 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	2.56	3.00	0.73	9	11.1 %	22.2 %	66.7 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	3.89	4.00	0.60	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	22.2 %	66.7 %	11.1 %
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	3.50	3.50	0.53	8	0.0 %	0.0 %	50.0 %	50.0 %	0.0 %
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	4.22	4.00	0.44	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	77.8 %	22.2 %
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	4.00	4.00	0.71	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	22.2 %	55.6 %	22.2 %
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.11	4.00	0.78	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	22.2 %	44.4 %	33.3 %
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.11	4.00	0.78	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	22.2 %	44.4 %	33.3 %
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	3.78	4.00	0.67	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	55.6 %	11.1 %

Department Specific

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My teaching associate was fair in the assignment of exams and paper grades.	4.33	4.00	0.71	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	11.1 %	44.4 %	44.4 %
2. My teaching associate did a good job of leading class discussions.	4.44	4.00	0.53	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	55.6 %	44.4 %
3. My teaching associate was well prepared for class.	4.78	5.00	0.44	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	22.2 %	77.8 %
4. My teaching associate displayed mastery of the material.	4.56	5.00	0.53	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	44.4 %	55.6 %
5. My teaching associate was available for help during office hours.	4.67	5.00	0.50	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
6. My teaching associate made useful comments on my paper.	4.67	5.00	0.50	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
7. Overall my teaching associate did an excellent job.	4.75	5.00	0.46	8	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	25.0 %	75.0 %

Class Status:

First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Other
22.2 %	77.8 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

To the best of your knowledge, what is your grade in this course now?

A	B	C	D	F	PS
37.5 %	62.5 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Open-Ended Responses

Comments on: The Instructor Provided Regular Assessment of My Work Throughout the Semester. (Comments)

Comment

- Only assessment of my work would be the two essays that were assigned

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

It exposed me to different ideas and ideologies

When we discussed controversial topics (like Silent Sam, flag burning, etc.) the diversity of my classmates helped me to understand the wide variety of perspectives held by Americans on these topics.

It allowed me to see different political views from my own, which was helpful

It helped gain different opinions and insights to create a more unified opinion of my own that is much more well-informed and contextual.

Exposure to different opinions helped broaden my perspective

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

N/A

N/A

The class did not have this problem. Everyone was completely included.

N/A

Department Specific

Please offer your teaching associate positive feedback, suggestions for change, and any other comments you have about his/her performance.

Comments

You made class discussions easy by making us feel comfortable and validated in class. At the same time, you taught material in a way that was super easy to understand. My only suggestion for change is that you use the discussion questions we write in a concrete way to lead class discussion. Otherwise, the exercise feels kind of useless.

Very nice, accessible, knowledgeable, discussions were interesting

I love Rachel! I have so greatly been inspired by her expertise in the field of political science and the help she has offered me in office hours, both inside and out. I will miss her greatly and wish her the best of luck in her future.

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Fall 2018

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 130-606 INTRO TO COMP POLI

Raters	Students
Responded	5
Invited	18
Response Ratio	27.8%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	3.80	5.00	1.79	5	20.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.00	5.00	1.73	5	20.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	60.0 %
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	4.40	5.00	0.89	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	20.0 %	60.0 %
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	4.25	4.50	0.96	4	0.0 %	0.0 %	25.0 %	25.0 %	50.0 %

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	5	100.0 %
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	5	100.0 %
3. Is this a required course for you?	5	20.0 %

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.60	4.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %	0.0 %
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.00	3.00	0.71	5	0.0 %	20.0 %	60.0 %	20.0 %	0.0 %

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	4.50	5.00	1.00	4	0.0 %	0.0 %	25.0 %	0.0 %	75.0 %
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	4.50	5.00	1.00	4	0.0 %	0.0 %	25.0 %	0.0 %	75.0 %
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	4.50	5.00	1.00	4	0.0 %	0.0 %	25.0 %	0.0 %	75.0 %
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	4.50	5.00	1.00	4	0.0 %	0.0 %	25.0 %	0.0 %	75.0 %
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.50	5.00	1.00	4	0.0 %	0.0 %	25.0 %	0.0 %	75.0 %
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.50	5.00	1.00	4	0.0 %	0.0 %	25.0 %	0.0 %	75.0 %
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.50	5.00	1.00	4	0.0 %	0.0 %	25.0 %	0.0 %	75.0 %

Department Specific

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My teaching associate was fair in the assignment of exams and paper grades.	5.00	5.00	0.00	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
2. My teaching associate did a good job of leading class discussions.	4.40	5.00	0.89	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	20.0 %	60.0 %
3. My teaching associate was well prepared for class.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %
4. My teaching associate displayed mastery of the material.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %
5. My teaching associate was available for help during office hours.	4.80	5.00	0.45	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %
6. My teaching associate made useful comments on my paper.	5.00	5.00	0.00	3	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
7. Overall my teaching associate did an excellent job.	4.20	5.00	1.10	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %

Class Status:

First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Other
50.0 %	50.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

To the best of your knowledge, what is your grade in this course now?

A	B	C	D	F	PS
0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Open-Ended Responses

Comments on: The Instructor Provided Regular Assessment of My Work Throughout the Semester. (Comments)

Comment

- Only in office hours. TA isn't the one doing any grading other than participation, which is not fairly delineated.

Comments on: The Instructor Held Class Meetings Consistent With the Course Syllabus and the Official Schedule Published For This Course. (Comments)

Comment

- +extra time to meet!

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

our discussions

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

n/a

Department Specific

Please offer your teaching associate positive feedback, suggestions for change, and any other comments you have about his/her performance.

Comments

She is AWESOME

I loved having Rachel as a TA, she was very nice and super helpful and always lead great discussions in class and was always willing to help you if needed.

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Fall 2018

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 130-609 INTRO TO COMP POLI

Raters	Students
Responded	5
Invited	18
Response Ratio	27.8%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.40	5.00	1.34	5	0.0 %	20.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	80.0 %
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	5.00	5.00	0.00	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	5.00	5.00	0.00	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	4.60	5.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	5	100.0 %
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	5	100.0 %
3. Is this a required course for you?	5	20.0 %

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.60	3.00	0.89	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	20.0 %	20.0 %
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.40	3.00	0.89	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	80.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	4.40	4.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	40.0 %
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	4.20	4.00	0.84	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	40.0 %	40.0 %
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	4.40	4.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	40.0 %
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	4.20	4.00	0.84	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	40.0 %	40.0 %
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.80	5.00	0.45	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.80	5.00	0.45	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.40	4.00	0.55	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	40.0 %

Department Specific

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My teaching associate was fair in the assignment of exams and paper grades.	4.80	5.00	0.45	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	80.0 %
2. My teaching associate did a good job of leading class discussions.	5.00	5.00	0.00	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
3. My teaching associate was well prepared for class.	5.00	5.00	0.00	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
4. My teaching associate displayed mastery of the material.	5.00	5.00	0.00	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
5. My teaching associate was available for help during office hours.	5.00	5.00	0.00	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
6. My teaching associate made useful comments on my paper.	4.00	5.00	1.73	3	0.0 %	33.3 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %
7. Overall my teaching associate did an excellent job.	5.00	5.00	0.00	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %

Class Status:

First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Other
60.0 %	0.0 %	40.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

To the best of your knowledge, what is your grade in this course now?

A	B	C	D	F	PS
50.0 %	25.0 %	25.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Open-Ended Responses

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

Enriched the perspectives.

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

NA

Department Specific

Please offer your teaching associate positive feedback, suggestions for change, and any other comments you have about his/her performance.

Comments

My TA, Rachel, was amazing. She was personable and knowledgeable of the course. She gave great examples in recitation to relate to the material.

She is an excellent teacher, very knowledgeable, approachable, and great at conveying the information

Love her teaching style! Perfect combination of class discussion/engagement and lecture and always helpful during office hours

Student Evaluation of Teaching, Fall 2018

Rachel Surminsky, POLI 130-616 INTRO TO COMP POLI

Raters	Students
Responded	9
Invited	18
Response Ratio	50.0%

Overall

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, this course was excellent.	4.22	4.00	0.67	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	11.1 %	55.6 %	33.3 %
2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	4.56	5.00	0.53	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	44.4 %	55.6 %
3. Overall, this instructor was an effective teacher.	5.00	5.00	0.00	7	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
4. The instructor was one of the best I have had at Carolina, fully deserving of a teaching award.	4.33	5.00	0.87	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	22.2 %	22.2 %	55.6 %

	N	Yes
1. The instructor provided regular assessment of my work throughout the semester.	9	88.9 %
2. The instructor held class meetings consistent with the course syllabus and the official schedule published for this course.	9	100.0 %
3. Is this a required course for you?	9	77.8 %

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Very Easy	Easy	Average	More Rigorous	Most Rigorous
1. Rate the grading standards of this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	3.22	3.00	0.67	9	0.0 %	11.1 %	55.6 %	33.3 %	0.0 %
2. Rate the workload required in this course compared with others you have taken at UNC.	2.67	3.00	1.00	9	11.1 %	33.3 %	33.3 %	22.2 %	0.0 %

Diversity and Inclusion

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The diversity of my classmates enriched my learning in this course.	4.00	4.00	0.50	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	11.1 %	77.8 %	11.1 %
2. I increased my ability to work on a team with students from different backgrounds and perspectives.	3.63	4.00	0.92	8	0.0 %	12.5 %	25.0 %	50.0 %	12.5 %
3. This course exposed me to points of view different from my own.	4.50	4.50	0.53	8	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	50.0 %	50.0 %
4. I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.	4.50	4.50	0.53	8	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	50.0 %	50.0 %
5. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, valued the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.38	4.00	0.52	8	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	62.5 %	37.5 %
6. The instructor, Rachel Surminsky, saw cultural and personal differences as assets.	4.38	4.00	0.52	8	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	62.5 %	37.5 %
7. In-class activities were organized to value the diversity of life experiences among students.	4.25	4.00	0.71	8	0.0 %	0.0 %	12.5 %	50.0 %	37.5 %

Department Specific

	Mean	Median	SD	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My teaching associate was fair in the assignment of exams and paper grades.	4.67	5.00	0.50	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
2. My teaching associate did a good job of leading class discussions.	5.00	5.00	0.00	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0 %
3. My teaching associate was well prepared for class.	4.88	5.00	0.35	8	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	12.5 %	87.5 %
4. My teaching associate displayed mastery of the material.	4.67	5.00	0.50	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
5. My teaching associate was available for help during office hours.	4.67	5.00	0.50	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	66.7 %
6. My teaching associate made useful comments on my paper.	4.00	4.00	1.07	8	0.0 %	12.5 %	12.5 %	37.5 %	37.5 %
7. Overall my teaching associate did an excellent job.	4.89	5.00	0.33	9	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	11.1 %	88.9 %

Class Status:

First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Other
0.0 %	77.8 %	22.2 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

To the best of your knowledge, what is your grade in this course now?

A	B	C	D	F	PS
25.0 %	50.0 %	25.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

Open-Ended Responses

How Did the Diversity of Your Classmates Contribute to Your Learning in This Course?

Comments

Made for interesting points on topics we were learning about.

Differences in opinion led to better class discussions

It didn't.

How Might the Class Climate Be Made More Inclusive of Diverse Students?

Comments

I think it was diverse enough.

n/a

It really couldn't; there wasn't much of an opportunity.

Department Specific

Please offer your teaching associate positive feedback, suggestions for change, and any other comments you have about his/her performance.

Comments

Always kept class interesting, made sense of the material

Rachel was AMAZING! Best TA I have had at Carolina. She presented all of the material very clearly and really engaged the class with thoughtful questions. This class was great in terms of the lecture but was made complete through the recitations led by Rachel.

I think Rachel is wonderful. She is helpful, bright, and she relates well to the students and goes over concepts in ways which are helpful to me. She really does want each student to succeed. No negative comments at all :)

Rachel was one of the best instructors I have had at UNC, better than many professors. She made a topic I honestly have a hard time getting into very interesting and presented all information very clearly. She wanted us to understand the concepts and offered tons of knowledge on the topics.
