

# College Course Evaluations

## SOSC 13100: Social Science Inquiry -1

### Section 3 - Autumn 2016

**Instructor(s):** Perez, Lauren

**Number Enrolled:** 17

**Number of Responses:** 10

### Evaluation Comments

#### What were the instructor's strengths? Weaknesses?

- Professor Perez was extremely professional, and one of the most knowledgeable and qualified professors I have ever had. She explained concepts very thoroughly and was always ready to answer any questions that were asked. Her strengths, which include timeliness, understandability, and enthusiasm all overwhelmingly outnumbered her weaknesses. Perhaps her only weakness was that we seemed to jump around from topic to topic without a clear roadmap, which would have been useful in order to better understand the overall goals of the course.
- Strengths: knowledgeable on subject Weakness: unskilled at stimulating discussion, lulls in discussion
- Prof. Perez was a fantastic instructor, as she was great at appropriately using her real-world knowledge and experience to enrich theory.
- Strengths: The instructor is highly motivated in teaching. She is willing to spend time outside of class to help students. Weakness: The instructor focuses the majority of class discussions on topics related to political science.
- Professor Perez does a good job in a one on one setting helping to explain why she graded a paper how she did and offering constructive feedback. She lets the class control discussion over the readings which can be nice when the readings are interesting, but some of the time that class time felt disorganized.
- Perez had somewhat interesting essay prompts that made assignments more engaging than traditional prompts. However, at times her lectures felt disorganized and did not help much for learning.
- Good at keeping the class organized, with prepared questions that guided the direction of the class. Always made sure to come back to the main topic if someone got sidetracked. Gave good, prompt feedback on papers. Only thing that could potentially be improved is that sometimes she kept on the same question for too long, after it was clear no one had any more ideas.
- Professor Perez was absolutely fantastic all the way through. She very clearly outlined what the course was going to be like at the start of the quarter and, I feel, did a great job in achieving those objectives. I had some personal problems affecting me all through the quarter and consistently struggled in keeping up. but Prof. Perez did a lot to help me get through it and was incredibly understanding of the situation. I do not think I have had a better instructor than her in my year and a half at UChicago so far

#### What were the teaching assistant's or writing intern's strengths? Weaknesses?

- The course did not include a teaching assistant or writing intern. Professor Perez helped me with my essays during office hours, and was always quick to contribute helpful ideas or examples that could be used in my essays. Additionally, she made the requirements and expectations of each writing assignment very clear, which lowered my stress and made the prompts far more straightforward.
- N/A

#### What, if anything, would you change about this course and why?

- I would change the syllabus to include an overall roadmap of the course so that students could sense the direction and goals of the class. Although each topic was very interesting, I would have benefitted from seeing more of how these topics overlapped and connected. Otherwise, the class and its structure was extremely well planned and maintained by Professor Perez.
- Less readings, because the sheer amount may be overwhelming
- Nothing! So happy I took this course.
- I believe it would be better if the instructor spent more time on other social science topics like Economics.
- The readings are long and some of them are too specific to a certain field to be generalizable to the entire field of social science
- I thought that posting discussion questions were not very helpful.
- Nothing. The papers were interesting to write about, and the readings gave us a good survey of social science concepts, theory and experimental methods.
- None at all

**Is there any topic in this course that you wished you had had previous background in?**

- Overall, I don't recall any information that required extensive previous background. However, I could have benefitted from a better understanding of how to read scientific papers and studies, which were often dense.
- No
- Economics
- There is no necessary previous background knowledge needed for the class.
- Data in politics
- Nope
- None.

**Which texts were most useful?**

- The most useful texts were the newspaper articles, which were from websites such as the New York Times. These articles presented information similar to the more dense scientific papers, but did so in a much more understandable and personable fashion.
- Scientific research texts
- Noel, Baldwin, Quackenbush, Fisher, Brady, Taubes
- The articles about polling methodology
- The Rational Choice materials
- All readings were useful, but they varied greatly in readability. My favorite was Gangleader for a Day, since it was the most readable and interesting.

**Which least?**

- The least useful texts were the longer, denser scientific papers that discussed various research methods and techniques used by social scientists. While these articles were rich with information, I feel that the topics could have been presented more clearly and easily through a lecture or diagram. Many of these articles, which were often 20-30 pages in length, were difficult to read and comprehend.
- N/A
- n/a
- Many of the political science journals were uninteresting
- N/A
- The one about culture was extremely hard to read.

**How productive was class discussion?**

- The class discussion was relatively productive, however it did have to be periodically prodded by Professor Perez. It seemed like out of the class as a whole, only half of the students were regularly engaged. This level of engagement hurt the productivity and discussion level, but did not have too significant of an impact on these aspects. Professor Perez always used relatable examples and fun analogies to keep the discussion flowing.
- New outside information, but lulls in conversation
- Discussion was generally good, a little bit quiet at points, but once people got onto a topic there weren't many silent periods.
- Class discussions were productive because our discussions were based on the readings students did for homework. Therefore, students were able to confirm their understanding of the readings and also able to have a deeper or creative interpretation of the readings through the class discussion.
- sometimes this is productive, it would be better if she took a larger part in the discussions
- Class discussions helped to establish concepts that simplified concepts, but at times the discussions were nebulous due to the lack of depth in material.
- Decently productive. Most of the time I was able to learn more about the readings or clarify misunderstandings, but sometimes students would break out into random arguments that sidetracked the class (this is not the instructor's fault).
- The discussion questions and divisions into groups of 2-3 at the start of the class really helped stimulate good quality and relevant discussion although at the first few classes everyone was still finding their feet in the course.

**How has this course contributed to your education?**

- This course has broadened my view of the social sciences as a multifaceted discipline that deals with far more than history and psychology. Additionally, the course has added many intriguing stories, concepts, and research methods to my repertoire of academic information. In addition to thoroughly enjoying the class and its content, the discussions allowed me to go further into depth with overall themes and listen to varying perspectives.
- It has opened me to reading critically
- I know a lot more about the workings of the social sciences than I did before.
- This course has taught me different ways in which we can analyze concepts in the social science.
- Made me a more analytical and precise writer
- Gave me insight into how social science research is really done and what sorts of considerations are put into designing social science studies.

**Why did you take this course?**

Core requirement	9 / 90%
Instructor Reputation	0 / 0%
Faculty member recommended it	0 / 0%
Concentration Requirement	0 / 0%
Meets at a convenient time	3 / 30%
A student recommended it	0 / 0%
Topic interests me	6 / 60%
Concentration elective	0 / 0%

**In summary, I had a strong desire to take this course**

Strongly Agree	1 / 10%
Agree	4 / 40%
Neutral	3 / 30%
Disagree	0 / 0%
Strongly Disagree	0 / 0%

**How many hours per week did you spend on this course?**

Low Answer	3
Average Answer	5.6
High Answer	8

**What proportion of classes did you attend?**

All	8 / 80%
75%	2 / 20%
50%	0 / 0%
25%	0 / 0%
None	0 / 0%

**Were the time demands of this course reasonable?**

Yes	9 / 90%
No	1 / 10%

**The Instructor**

	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Organized the course clearly.	0%	0%	10%	0%	40%	<b>50%</b>
Presented clear lectures.	0%	0%	10%	20%	10%	<b>60%</b>
Held my attention and made this course interesting.	0%	0%	10%	10%	30%	<b>50%</b>
Stimulated and facilitated questions and discussions.	0%	0%	20%	0%	10%	<b>70%</b>
Responded well to student questions.	0%	0%	10%	0%	30%	<b>60%</b>
Was available outside of class.	10%	0%	10%	0%	0%	<b>70%</b>
Was helpful during office hours.	20%	0%	10%	0%	0%	<b>60%</b>
Motivated independent thinking.	0%	0%	10%	0%	30%	<b>60%</b>

### The Readings

	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Fulfilled the objective of the course.	0%	0%	10%	0%	<b>50%</b>	40%
Were reasonable in number.	0%	10%	10%	0%	30%	<b>50%</b>
Were appropriately difficult.	0%	0%	10%	20%	20%	<b>50%</b>

### Approximately how much of the reading did you do?

	<b>N/A</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>100%</b>
	0%	0%	0%	0%	<b>50%</b>	0%

### The Assignments

	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
How helpful were the lectures and discussions in preparing for exams and completing assignments?	0%	0%	10%	30%	10%	<b>50%</b>
How appropriately were the requirements of the course proportioned to course goals?	0%	0%	0%	30%	30%	<b>40%</b>
How well did the requirements contribute to the goals of the course?	0%	0%	0%	30%	20%	<b>50%</b>
How timely and useful was feedback on assignments and exams?	0%	0%	0%	20%	30%	<b>50%</b>
How fairly were the assignments graded?	0%	0%	0%	20%	<b>40%</b>	<b>40%</b>

### Overall

	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
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This course met my expectations.	0%	0%	0%	10%	<b>50%</b>	40%
This course provided me with new insight and knowledge.	0%	0%	0%	40%	0%	<b>60%</b>
This course provided me with useful skills.	0%	0%	10%	20%	20%	<b>50%</b>
The content of this course was presented at an appropriate level.	0%	0%	0%	10%	30%	<b>60%</b>
I put my best effort into this course.	0%	20%	0%	0%	30%	<b>50%</b>
The class had a high level of morale/enthusiasm.	0%	0%	20%	<b>30%</b>	20%	<b>30%</b>

### The Teaching Assistant(s)

	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Were available outside of class.	<b>90%</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Were helpful with assignments.	<b>80%</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%

### Discussion Sections, Problem Sessions, Writing Tutorials

	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Were well coordinated with this course and contributed to it.	<b>70%</b>	0%	0%	10%	0%	10%
Provided well-designed materials.	<b>70%</b>	0%	0%	10%	0%	10%

Is there any topic from the course that you wish we could have spent more time on? Less time? (Please specify which.)