



THE STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF INSTRUCTION SYSTEM THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE				
Political Science 463	Sec # 46365 (CLAS)	Matthew J. Buehler		
Contemp Middle East Politics (CLAS)	Fall 2014	Form A	# of Students: 18	

Questions	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Item Mean
1. Course as a whole	14 (78%)	3 (17%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.72
2. Course content	9 (50%)	8 (44%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.44
3. Instructor's contribution to the course	10 (56%)	5 (28%)	2 (11%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	4.28
4. Instructor's effectiveness in teaching material	13 (72%)	3 (17%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	4.50
5. Course organization	12 (67%)	6 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.67
6. Clarity of instructor's voice	9 (50%)	7 (39%)	2 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.39
7. Explanations by instructor	7 (41%)	8 (47%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	4.18
8. Ability to present alternative explanations	8 (44%)	8 (44%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	4.22
9. Use of examples and illustrations	9 (50%)	4 (22%)	4 (22%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	4.11
10. Quality of questions/problems raised by instructor	9 (50%)	7 (39%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	4.28
11. Students' confidence in instructor's knowledge	13 (72%)	4 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	4.56
12. Instructor's enthusiasm	12 (67%)	4 (22%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	4.44
13. Encouragement given to students' self expression	11 (61%)	5 (28%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	4.39
14. Answers to students' questions	8 (44%)	9 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	4.28
15. Availability of extra help when needed	7 (39%)	8 (44%)	2 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	4.06
16. Use of class time	12 (67%)	5 (28%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.61
17. Interest in whether students learned	13 (72%)	4 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	4.50
18. Amount you learned in the course	12 (67%)	5 (28%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.56
19. Relevance and usefulness of course content	13 (72%)	4 (22%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.61
20. Evaluative and grading techniques	12 (67%)	5 (28%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.56
21. Reasonableness of assigned work	12 (67%)	4 (22%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.50
22. Clarity of students' responsibilities/requirements	13 (72%)	4 (22%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.61

Relative to other college courses you have taken	Much Higher			Average				Much Lower	
23. Do you expect your grade in this course to be:	4 (20%)	8 (40%)	3 (20%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)	
24. The intellectual challenge presented was:	5 (30%)	6 (30%)	5 (30%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	
25. The amount of effort you put into this course was:	4 (20%)	7 (40%)	2 (10%)	3 (20%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)	
26. The amount of effort to succeed in the course was:	1 (10%)	9 (50%)	4 (20%)	2 (10%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	
27. Your involvement in this course (asgn, atnd, etc) was:	12 (70%)	2 (10%)	2 (10%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	

28. On average, how many hours per week have you spent on this course, including attending classes, readings, reviewing notes, writing papers, and any other course related work?

Under 2	1 (6%)
3-4	2 (11%)
5-6	7 (39%)
7-8	3 (17%)
9-10	2 (11%)
11-12	1 (6%)
13-14	1 (6%)
15-16	0 (0%)
17-18	1 (6%)
19-20	0 (0%)
21-22	0 (0%)
22 or >	0 (0%)

29. From the total average hours above, how many do you consider were valuable in advancing your education?

Under 2	1 (6%)
3-4	5 (28%)
5-6	6 (33%)
7-8	1 (6%)
9-10	2 (11%)
11-12	1 (6%)
13-14	2 (11%)
15-16	0 (0%)
17-18	0 (0%)
19-20	0 (0%)
21-22	0 (0%)
22 or >	0 (0%)

30. Expected Grade

A	9 (50%)
B+	7 (39%)
B	1 (6%)
C+	0 (0%)
C	1 (6%)
D	0 (0%)
F	0 (0%)
S	0 (0%)
NC	0 (0%)
Other	0 (0%)

32. Class Composition

Fresh	0 (0%)
Soph	0 (0%)
Junior	2 (11%)
Senior	16 (89%)
Grad	0 (0%)
Other	0 (0%)

31. Course Was

In major	14 (78%)
In minor	1 (6%)
Dist. Req.	2 (11%)
Elective	0 (0%)
Other	1 (6%)

33. Wanted to take course

Yes	14 (78%)
No	2 (11%)
Neutral	2 (11%)

Student Responses to Open Ended Questions

Question #1: Was this class intellectually stimulating? Did it stretch your thinking?

- Yes I liked the topics that we talked about.
- Yes, I took this course for a purpose and that purpose was achieved.
- I didn't know a single thing about the topic before, now I feel like I know every side possible.
- This class was intellectually stimulating by providing a glance into an issue that is prevalent in the news and in our society, but little exposure is given to actually learn the processes behind democratization in the Middle East.
- This class was very stimulating and interesting.
- Class was always discussion based and challenged us to think not just show up.
- Yes.
- Absolutely. This is one of a very few classes I have taken in which I can say I learned something new and interesting with every class meeting.
- Absolutely, I found everything we went over in class to be both relevant to the modern world and new material I would otherwise had a hard time accessing or understanding without the class. It opened my eyes to a lot of modern political thought going on in the middle east.
- The required readings were interesting for the most part. I am studying public administration so I occasionally felt lost compared to many other students who were global studies majors. I feel that I was not on the same level of understanding as global studies students when the class began but I think it progressed in a manner that still allowed me to gain a great deal of knowledge and understanding on the courses essential question.
- Yes. I feel like out of my five years at this university, I learned more in this course than many of my classes combined.
- Yes, the discussions in class were very helpful in understanding the material.
- It provided material that expanded my knowledge about the Middle East and made me think of things I had not previously thought of. These are things I do continually use outside of class.
- Yes. You did a very good job in the class involving the students.
- Absolutely. It gave me knowledge of a fascinating and important area of the world that influences foreign and domestic politics.
- Yes, the course is set up for you to think critically.
- No, the class offers a glimpse into several aspects of the course topic.

Question #2: What aspects of this class contributed most to your learning?

- I liked that we had to read every day and that the SPs ensured that we knew what was happening when we came to class.
- Instructor led discussions.
- Having to attend class, daily assignments.
- Over the course of the semester, the readings gave great insight into the world in the Middle East. They, in my opinion, helped to contribute to the class, along with Dr. Buehler's explanations.
- The readings and discussions were interesting.
- Discussions and the reading assignments
- How the class is set up with short SPs due about every class discussing the topic we were going over.
- The summary papers we were required to write for almost every reading forced me to analyze material on a deeper level than would a cursory class reading.
- The readings, SP's, lecture, and video. It all was helpful.
- The discussions were great. Although I felt that I lagged behind many students in total understanding of th subject material because they were more well versed in global studies, I gained a wealth of knowledge from listening to dialogue between the well versed students and the professor and occasionally contributed myself.
- The readings.
- The class discussions and summaries for the articles we read.
- The knowledge of the professor and even though I hate to admit it the required SP helped as well.
- Lecture from the instructor is what best helped me to learn
- Class discussions were the most insightful part of the class allowing discussion of complex ideas.
- As much as I hate to admit it, the SP papers are a brilliant way to keep students involved and learning. It forces them to read if they want to be successful in the class.
- The journal articles were very useful and much more effective than the use of a textbook given that issues in the Middle East change rapidly.

Question #3: What aspects of this class detracted from your learning?
• Nothing.
• The amount of animals that we saw get their throats slit.
• Mandatory participation was nerve-wracking but that was more of a personal problem rather than a class or instructor-related issue.
• none
• If there were any, they were personal.
• If I knew the Sp's would be graded harder, I might have put in more effort to do them as the semester went on. I would have had to understand the reading better and read more in depth to write a better SP.
• I think the SPs were good for overall participation. Since I learn in an auditory manor ideally the professor would lecture a little more.
• I was nervous coming to class because I did not want to be randomly called upon. I don't think it truly detracted from my learning though.
• Nothing that the teacher couldn't change.
• n/a
• None really.
• Nothing really...the most organized course I have ever taken. Buehler keeps great control over the class. If I had to give one criticism, it may be that he can favor other students (but most of these students are very familiar with Mid East Politics, so that is to be expected. Overall, great professor!
• The teacher consistently failed to elaborate on the reading materials and failed to encourage critical thinking of the articles. Readings were assigned every week including a short summary which was very useful for keeping track of the information, the readings were discussed in group sessions, however the instructor failed to add analysis to the readings or the issues. Mr. Buehler seems to care little for student learning, his office hrs were one day a week for three hrs starting at 7am! He was always unwilling to make appointment times outside of that time slot and specifically mentioned at one point that the department directs professors to prioritize their research over their students. The course was not very difficult, the material was interesting and the class overall was not below average. However, the instructor's arrogance and failure to meet student needs made him more of a supervisor in the classroom than a teacher to students.

Question #4: What suggestions do you have for improving the class?
• None.
• Give Dr. Buehler a raise.
• N/A, Dr. Buehler does a great job with this class in my opinion.
• I did not particularly enjoy being called out in class so perhaps if there was less pressure put on students to speak, it would be appreciated by students who are shy.
• none
• One more Sp so the final isn't worth as much. Kidding, probably my favorite structure for a class to date.
• Random SP sharing!
• Nothing. It was incredible
• Lecture a little bit more on some things that may not be well understood by students that study political science of public admin rather than global studies. That is my only negative for the class as a whole.
• None. I thought the course overall was one of the best I've taken at UT.
• I think it would be nicer if the teacher understood that there are sometime classes that go over and he shouldn't hold being a few minutes late against us so heavily. He should also not dock us in case we have to leave early.
• I think that involving the students is very important in the learning process. However, your level of education in this area is superior and I would have like to hear more of your expert opinion.
• The only suggestion would be to perhaps have more supplemental material for class discussions other than the required articles.
• Nothing, great class and great professor. Maybe needs to be a little more considerate of those who might be running late because of a previous class being far away. Ultimately, Buehler, despite not knowing what mood he'll be in that day, is probably the best professor I have ever had.
• Perhaps the instructor could use a teaching assistant who can focus more on the teaching aspects.