

Teaching Evaluations Summary

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I have served as a Lecturer for two courses at Washington University in St. Louis:

- Fall 2014, “International Institutions” (Pol Sci 3024, 7 students)
- Spring 2015, “International Environmental Politics” (Pol Sci 333, 12 students)

The Washington University in St. Louis Registrar asks students to provide online course evaluations that include overall ratings of courses on a 1-7 ordinal scale and open-ended responses. This is the distribution of my *overall course rating* across the two courses:

7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Course
1	2	0	1	0	0	0	Pol Sci 3024 - Fall 2014
2	5	0	2	0	0	0	Pol Sci 333 - Spring 2015

As a point of reference, I also include the mean overall course rating I received with the mean ratings for all Political Science Department courses and the University at large those semesters.

<i>My Course</i>	<i>Political Science Department</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Semester</i>
5.75	5.65	5.51	Fall 2014
5.78	5.29	5.51	Spring 2015

I have served as an Assistant in Instruction (“preceptor”) for three lecture courses at Princeton University:

- Fall 2009, “International Relations” (Pol 240, 3 sections, 36 students)
- Spring 2010, “International Relations” (Pol 240, 3 sections, 29 students)
- Spring 2011, “Intelligence, National Security and the Constitutional Democracy” (Pol 379, 3 sections, 24 students)

The Princeton University Registrar asks students to provide online course evaluations that include rating the quality of discussion sections on a 1-5 ordinal scale and open-ended responses. This is the distribution of my precept quality ratings across the three courses:

<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Very Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Course</i>
10	6	7	4	0	0	Pol 240 - Fall 2009
6	10	1	1	0	0	Pol 240 - Spring 2010
6	7	3	1	0	0	Pol 379 - Spring 2011

As a point of reference, I also include the mean ratings I received with the mean ratings for each of three courses and for all Politics Department courses those semesters.

<i>My Sections</i>	<i>This Course</i>	<i>Politics Department</i>	<i>Semester</i>
3.82	3.7	3.9	Fall 2009
4.15	4.4	3.9	Spring 2010
4.1	3.7	3.9	Spring 2011

Students at Princeton University and Washington University in St. Louis were asked to write open-ended responses to the prompts below. The responses appear verbatim and in no particular order.

Washington University in St. Louis

International Institutions (Fall 2014)

What did you like most about this course?

- The course material was relevant and although we covered a vast amount of information, I felt that the course was specified enough in areas that I feel very comfortable with many of the topics. I also found the questions asked at the end of each day's class to be helpful.
- Interesting and specific course, covered a lot of ground in a small amount of time, started in theories and concepts then moved into specific cases.
- I liked the questions we always had at the end of class to allow for some discussion within the lectures.
- The teacher was well-prepared and informed on the topics.

What did you like least about this course?

- Sometimes we focused too much on theory (realism, institutionalism, constructivism) when we could have learned more specific and practical information about relevant institutions.
- The readings were very dense and I had trouble getting anything from them. If there was a way we could have fewer readings so I wouldn't feel overwhelmed by the quantity then I have gotten more out of the readings.
- The pace was sometimes a little boring and slow. Also, the format of the midterm exam was very difficult and there wasn't enough time.

International Environmental Politics (Spring 2015)

What did you like most about this course?

- I really liked the material. I think everything was presented in a very orderly way and the progression of the course made sense.
- Professor Ovodenko is clearly very knowledgeable on the subject and he brought his expertise into the classroom - it was great to get to learn from him because he knew so much about his field and enjoyed sharing his knowledge with students.
- interesting material presented at a good pace. environmental issues was a good proxy for international political issues at large.
- I was interested in learning about international environmental politics, and the course and

the materials lived up to its description. The lectures were also well structured. I learned a lot.

- Topics were current and relevant

What did you like least about this course?

- I wish there was a bit more discussion in the course. Since there were only ~12 students, it would've been nice to have less lecture and more of a seminar style class.
- Professor Ovodenko was not overly friendly and although he tried to maintain a great class environment, I sometimes felt hesitant to talk to him.
- the questions at the end of class were always really normative and I didn't like that but I can understand how they were good discussion material that got people thinking
- The prompts for short 500 word assignments were just as long as for the 3000 word paper. Would help to condense 500 assignments into fewer questions so could talk more in depth about one question.

Princeton University

Please comment on the quality of the precepts. How did they contribute to your learning in the course? To what extent did the preceptor raise challenging questions, help clarify course material, and encourage broad student participant? Was the precept responsive to students' questions, opinions, and criticism?

Intelligence, National Security and the Constitutional Democracy (Spring 2011)

- Alex is a fantastic preceptor.
- One of the best preceptors I've ever had. Alex was really clear, organized and really presented the otherwise messy material well to everyone.
- He did a good job leading the discussions. I wish that the instructor had made a greater effort to deliberately bring energy into the discussion. Many discussions were slow to start because the preceptor almost entirely relied on us to prompt the discussion. I wish that he had taken a slightly more proactive role.
- Reviewed material from lecture.
- Alex ran a great precept and posed stimulating questions to the class. However, the students needed to participate more to make the precept as engaging as it could have been. National security and constitutional democracy can be very controversial subjects at times and the students needed to voice their opinion more.
- Alex did a great job trying to stimulate conversation. We had a particularly challenging precept because no one talked but Alex kept asking us questions and trying to keep us engaged. I think he could have called on people more to establish some sort of

accountability, because if people knew they had to answer during class they might have prepared more.

- I am very glad I was in Alex's precept, he helped us by organizing the material we had read/heard in class, while also allowing us to participate.
- Great job reviewing the material and making things more organized than the lectures.
- Precepts were alright. They basically just summarized some of the material from the readings each week. I don't feel like I actually "learned" anything from them. I think they would have been much better if they had been a discussion format. People definitely wanted to talk about the issues that arose in our readings and we never had time.
- Alex was a really great preceptor. The precepts were always well structured and thoroughly added to understanding the readings.
- Alex was VERY thorough and clear in examining the relevant statutes, programs, etc. that were important for each week. I've heard from other students who are in Professor Snyder's precept who visited my precept that Alex's precept was far and beyond more helpful.

Introduction Relations (Spring 2010)

- Precepts often presented the most important points in a way that was easy to follow.
- Well structured precepts. Would have wished for more debate between the students, although this would probably be more applicable if the class were more theory based.
- Alex explained complicated concepts clearly and effectively and also allowed for student participation. I thought the simulations were especially effective.
- I really enjoyed the precepts as my preceptor did a good job of summarizing/clarifying stuff covered in lecture as well as delving into the assigned readings for the week to cover additional facets to the topic at hand. The precepts were really good in clarifying the week's material before going onto the next week.
- Alex was a good preceptor. He was able to lead interesting discussions, while also clarifying the complicated information from readings and lectures.
- Alex taught the material clearly and looking over precept notes really helped me review for the final. He also gave good feedback during office hours and on the midterm exam.
- Generated good discussions while outlining key points.
- Alex is an amazing preceptor. I learnt as much from precept as I did from lectures and he did a good job organizing precept. I didn't go to him during office hours, but I'm sure he'd have been very willing to help if I had. This precept has been the most useful precept so far during my time in Princeton.
- Alex did a great job, he clarified things for our class and kept all our discussions interesting.

- Went over the weekly readings in a detailed way. Alex was very helpful in terms of explaining somewhat complex theories.
- One of the less talented preceptor's I've had here-dry, dull, and unable to get the class talking about the material. Basically summarized whatever the professor had said in class. I would have been just as well off not having attended. Provided little to no commentary on the midterm paper or on weekly assignments.
- A good addition to the course. Developed an understanding of particular examples and concepts beyond the readings and the lectures.
- he did well bringing about ideas and letting us express them within our group, the simulations that we did were the most fun i have had in a precept
- Precept was more of a review session of that week's lectures than a class discussion. The two simulations we had were a lot of fun.
- Precepts definitely contributed to learning in the course. Alex was a great preceptor. He focused on the main ideas we should think about and helped direct our thinking of the material. Challenging and thought-provoking questions were raised during precept and discussed. Alex also clarified certain topics that might have been skimmed over in lecture or certain points that may have been difficult to understand. He definitely presented the material in a way that was comprehensive & easy to understand. Precept definitely encouraged student participation and Alex was open to questions and opinions. Alex was also very approachable and always answered questions outside of class.
- Alex did a good job of reviewing the more complex material with us and allowing us time to discuss it as well. I also enjoyed the two simulations we did over the course of the semester and thought they really added to the course.
- good discussions and general overview of material covered in lectures/readings

International Relations (Fall 2009)

- Alex's preceptors were frequently just small lectures. They were very helpful in allowing us to understand the concepts, but not in letting us work out the concepts for ourselves. Questions were not encouraged explicitly -- students had to butt into the talk if they wanted to ask a question. When someone asked a question, though, Alex did answer it fairly comprehensively.
- POL 240 is the first class I have taken at Princeton where precept was actually worthwhile. Alex does a good job presenting the material we went over in class in a way that is clearer than the professor. While many students were silent the entire time, the debate with those who paid attention was lively and interesting. I enjoyed going to precept.
- The precepts were incredibly helpful in summarizing the important points and generating discussion. We did not have discussions in class, and precepts compensated for that.

- The preceptor didn't seem to encourage much engagement to me. It often felt more like a class than a precept.
- The precepts were great and they were a lot of help in understand the course material. Alex was very clear. He both taught us and let us discuss materials. A great mix.
- Alex was very helpful in clarifying material and he was approachable if I had questions. very thorough precepts, good idea to write out important points
- The precepts did not encourage a ton of participation, but re-presented the material in a way that helped my learning in the course.
- he allowed me to understand the material in such a better way than the professor, he was so dedicated to the class and the style in which he styled his precepts was most helpful.
- clearly explained concepts, good
- My preceptor was good at bringing out the main points of the lectures and readings, and sometimes led good discussions; in general the precept was a relaxed environment.
- Alex was a fair preceptor. He failed to stimulate discussion and conducted the precepts as mini lectures rather than a discussion group. He was not helpful in writing the paper and his feedback was not helpful either. Nonetheless, if you asked him a question he did provide a knowledgeable answer.
- Alexander was great at summarizing the readings. His precepts made it so that most of the readings were unnecessary to read. However, there was very little discussion in his class. In the rare instances when he asked us did ask the precept question, the questions were focused more on general current political issues than they were about specific readings (that's probably for the best, because most of the students were unable to do all the readings and wouldn't have been able to answer questions about specific readings!).
- The precepts were great. Alex did a very good job of clarifying and condensing the lectures and making them easy to understand. In the last few precepts, he also encouraged us to respond to specific questions, which I liked a lot. Alex was also very approachable.
- Alex is a great preceptor. He clearly laid out the important elements of the course and answered any questions we had. He successfully gave life to the subject in a way in which the professor was unable to.
- I definitely gained the most knowledge from the precepts. They were extremely laid back and I appreciated the opportunity to listen to other students. There was not that broad of student participation, but I don't think that that necessarily detracted from the precept because students like me like seeing what others have to say and how they choose to vocalize their thoughts.
- Organized, notes helpful for exam and review of material
- Mr. Ovodenko was a great preceptor, engaging, kind and easy to discuss topics with.
- I think the precepts in this course were great. Preceptor Ovodenko facilitated precept in a manner that created a balance between allowing the students to offer up their own analysis and opinions of the readings and allowing himself to clarify any ambiguous

aspects in the readings. The preceptor was responsive to students questions, opinions, and criticisms.

- Good precepts. Discussed a lot of material and took great notes. Well run.
- Very very very dry. We got all the information we needed, and he was great about making sure we always covered what we needed to in class, but it was really boring.
- Very knowledgeable, organized the material in a very simple understandable fashion.