

PLIR 3310-106 Ethics & Human Rights in Polit - Spring 2016

CGAS (11769)

INSTRUCTORS: Post, Abigail (asn9dp)

Respondents: 15 / Enrollment: 21

~ QUESTIONS AND DETAILS ~

~ ANSWER MATRICES ~

1. If I were to teach this class myself (probably at a different university), how would you recommend I structure the class? How would you change the course readings, discussion of current events, etc.?

Question Type: Short Answer

contributed by Post, Abigail (asn9dp)

Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail

Total	Individual Answers
14	See below for Individual Results

I think that the structure of the class is well laid out, but the readings could be a bit redundant week to week. However, if you split the reading load in discussion sections it can be easier to navigate. I rather like the division of current and past events, they are equally important.

I would definitely assign less readings, and to focus them more on human rights issues and less on ethical theory.

I think the reading load was kind of a lot. I think the overall structure of the class is pretty good. The start of the class where it mostly focused on theory was probably the least interesting part of the class, so focus more on the practical side of this topic.

Instead of having students read an entire book or hundreds of pages a week, I would pick and choose which chapters of the books were most important to the class and have them read those. The class was very heavily reading based and it was hard to decipher what was important and what was not from the readings.

Less readings so students can fully engage with the material!

I thought the class was well-organized! The readings were a little heavy, making it hard to keep up, but between lecture and discussion I felt caught up most of the time.

I would recommend that you structure the class similar to how the class is set up now with a few minor adjustments. I would not spend as much time covering the theories behind moral choice and reasoning. Coming into the class I expected it to be more about discussion on current events but it felt as though more time was spent on historical theorists than was necessary. I recommend starting off by explaining different ways to make moral decisions but spend most of the time discussing cases. Also, a more structured lecture class would have led me to understand the material better.

Lighter on the readings and perhaps just a little bit less philosophy to begin the course with.

The amount of reading for this class was overwhelming. If you teach the course, I would suggest that you lessen the reading load so that students read what they are supposed to. I liked the general structure of the course, where the first half was ethics based and the second half was human rights based. I have always found that lectures of this sort aren't particularly helpful for me, and I get more from the readings and discussions, but that may be a personal thing.

I thought that the theory portion was not as critical to the course as it was made to be

More current events, theory is well and all but after a certain point it loses all meaning and just doesn't help. Most college kids have a decent understanding of ethics so spending more than 3 weeks on the theory of it is overkill. Also the best part of this class was the current events hands down

I would cut down a little on the amount of reading so that it is a more manageable amount. I would also suggest reading to be assigned to match lecture by lecture or at least week by week. It would probably work very well as a seminar class.

I always enjoy more incorporation of current events since it is more applicable and usually I am more interested as well. However, it is also important to study the past. I would cut down on some of the readings. I have tons of other readings for my 4 other classes so it was very challenging to keep up this semester. I actually enjoy the way Smith teaches in lecture. Sometimes he is too biased, or spends too much time reading off quotes, but overall his lectures were interesting.

In this class, the material was pretty sharply divided. We learned ethical theories and then we learned about human rights issues. I would recommend structuring the class in a way that integrates the two more effectively. Use the ethics material to analyze the human rights issues. Bring up the cases during the ethical theory sections so that students can see how they apply. During class, I liked how Prof. Smith had an outline projected, but it was confusing when he switched back and forth between the outline and passages and quotes. I would recommend sticking with an outline and speaking to that. It would also be cool to switch up the format of lecture a little bit. Rather than just stand up there talking the whole time, occasionally ask students for their opinions or have students talk to their neighbors quickly (mini debates) about issues and report back to the class.

~ QUESTIONS AND DETAILS ~	~ ANSWER MATRICES ~																								
<p>2. The teaching assistant stimulates me to think and learn.</p> <p>~ Question Type: Likert ~ <i>contributed by Department of Politics</i></p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="8">Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Mean</th> <th>Std Dev</th> <th>Strongly Agree (5)</th> <th>Agree (4)</th> <th>Neutral (3)</th> <th>Disagree (2)</th> <th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>4.87</td> <td>0.35</td> <td>13 (86.67%)</td> <td>2 (13.33%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail								Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	15	4.87	0.35	13 (86.67%)	2 (13.33%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
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~ QUESTIONS AND DETAILS ~

~ ANSWER MATRICES ~

10. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching assistant? What suggestions would you make for improving the discussion section?

Question Type: Short Answer

contributed by Department of Politics

Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail	
Total	Individual Answers
13	See below for Individual Results

She is definitely one of the best TAs I have ever had and she really knows her stuff. However, sometimes I think she expected too much from us. She was also a harsh grader.

There was a lot of material to cover which could sometimes feel overwhelming and disorganized given the short time available for discussion, but the various activities (group discussions, debate, worksheets) helped a lot!

The strengths of the teaching assistant were that she was very welcoming and was able to take the information, simplify it, and present it in a way that was more understandable. She was a lot more structured than the professor was in lecture and was able to clarify many aspects of the course. I felt that I learned most of the information through her rather than through the professor. She also was good at making the discussion sections different. I like how she incorporated small group discussions, debates, and group activities (such as working on worksheets and definitions) into the discussion sections. The only possible suggestion I have is to use more visual aid such as more powerpoints or images that depict whatever we are learning in class.

Abby is a very understanding TA. She is very approachable.

She is a very knowledgeable TA and works hard to get everyone involved in discussion. She was a very fair grader.

amazingly organized and helpful

Strengths: Abby did a fantastic job switching up the format of discussion section by organizing debates and having small group discussions. She also was very understanding of the fact that there was a lot of reading. She helped manage that by creating study guides to organize the material. Weaknesses: Maybe could have posted discussion questions a little earlier in advance.

She carried out well organized discussions that were both thought provoking, and did a good job of clearing up lecture. She also was very effective in helping to understand the readings. I would not say she has any weaknesses. One of the best discussion sections I have had so far in the politics department. I really enjoyed the debate we had in class about Syria.

She encouraged active participation from the entire discussion, and it showed with almost the entire class participating in the discussions. If we had any questions about assignments, the readings or exams she was always there to help and give her input on the topics.

Abigail Post is a wonderful teacher, she can stimulate conversation and offers her knowledge of the subject to her students in a way that makes her very approachable. She spends a lot of time with students and always seems to genuinely enjoy her work.

I liked how Abby switched up the style of class a lot so that we weren't constantly debating or constantly listening to her lecture but got to experience a number of methods of teaching. Could work on summarizing basic points she wants us to understand from lecture before launching into a full discussion.

A solid grasp on the material but like most TAs seems unable to create effective discussion, though its undoubtedly not all her fault

She is very organized. Her weekly emails were very helpful as they aided me in my readings.

11. In your opinion, did the TA welcome alternative viewpoints? Did the TA treat all students fairly? Why do you feel this way?

Question Type: Short Answer

contributed by Department of Politics

Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail	
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She presented all the information in a fair and unbiased manner. In discussion, she treated students fairly, and there were plenty of opportunities for people to participate. My papers were graded fairly as well.

Yes, absolutely! She was forthcoming about her own opinions and made it clear that any and all student opinions were welcome.

Yes, she encouraged everyone to give their ideologies and even attempted to show the opposing viewpoints when other people did not speak up. She treated her students with a lot of respect and was an overall great TA.

~ QUESTIONS AND DETAILS ~

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She definitely welcomed alternate viewpoints and treated all students fairly. She encouraged people to look at both sides of an issue and try to get us to understand possible alternative viewpoints. She was also non-judgmental if a student had a differing opinion than the majority of the class. She would welcome any opinions that were discussed in the class.

always willing to accept all opinions

Yes, many issues were controversial with no right or wrong answer. Abby encouraged everyone to share their opinions and be respectful of those they didn't agree with.

Yes - she would often present both viewpoints on a particular topic and make sure that everyone feels comfortable telling their viewpoint.

Yes, she was unbiased and always facilitated discussion without making her own views prominent.

She encouraged alternative viewpoints and encouraged her students to consider both sides of an issue.

Yes, I think she tried to press students to question all beliefs at a deeper level, and engage in critical thinking. She was very professional and understanding as long as a student showed a drive and passion for the work they were doing.

Yeah, never had any problem saying my interpretations in class

Yes, Abby welcomes alternative viewpoints. She remained pretty neutral throughout discussion and showed interest when students brought up ways of thinking she hadn't considered. Yes, she treated all students fairly. She gave everyone an opportunity to speak/participate. Breaking into small group discussions made it easier for people that are less outspoken than others to participate.

12. Would you recommend this teaching assistant to other students? Why or why not?

~
Question Type: Short Answer

~
contributed by Department of Politics

Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail

Total	Individual Answers
12	See below for Individual Results

Yes! She was very helpful with the course material.

Yes, interesting methods of teaching and very generous with making time for meeting with students outside of class.

I would refer her if she were to continue as a TA.

Yes, even though she may seem tough at first, her work will help you grow and become a better writer. She forces you to critically read and analyze thoughts and events in a way that seems effortless.

Yes, I would absolutely recommend Abby as a teaching assistant to other students.

Yes - she was a very good TA and helped me a lot. This was my first politics course, and she helped me to understand the type of logic that was necessary for a class like this.

This is the second semester I've had Abby and she is far and away the best TA I have had at UVA. Super organized, nice, and helpful. Would recommend 100%.

Yes, one of the best TAs I have had so far.

Yes, responsible, effective, made this course for me

Yes I would because she knew the course material very well and was enthusiastic about the subject matter. She was also a great teacher and helped the students understand what we went over in lecture.

I would definitely recommend this teaching assistant to other students because she was the nicest most welcoming TA that I have ever had. She was also very good at explaining the material learned in the lectures. I would be very confused after lecture sections but after going to Ms. Abigail Post's discussion sections I would understand the material because she was very good at explaining the material.

yes, she was a fair grader and very knowledgeable about the information. She challenged her students to think and participate in discussion and this showed by the amount of participation that occurred during class.

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<p>13. The average number of hours per week I spent outside of class preparing for this course was:</p> <p>Question Type: Multiple Choice</p> <p>contributed by Office of the Provost</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="6">Results for PLIR-3310-106</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Less than 1 (NA)</th> <th>1 - 3 (NA)</th> <th>4 - 6 (NA)</th> <th>7 - 9 (NA)</th> <th>10 or more (NA)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>5 (33.33%)</td> <td>9 (60.00%)</td> <td>1 (6.67%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Results for PLIR-3310-106						Total	Less than 1 (NA)	1 - 3 (NA)	4 - 6 (NA)	7 - 9 (NA)	10 or more (NA)	15	0 (0.00%)	5 (33.33%)	9 (60.00%)	1 (6.67%)	0 (0.00%)						
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<p>16. The course's goals and requirements were defined and adhered to by the instructor.</p> <p>Question Type: Likert</p> <p>contributed by Office of the Provost</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="8">Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Mean</th> <th>Std Dev</th> <th>Strongly Agree (5)</th> <th>Agree (4)</th> <th>Neutral (3)</th> <th>Disagree (2)</th> <th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>4.67</td> <td>0.49</td> <td>10 (66.67%)</td> <td>5 (33.33%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail								Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	15	4.67	0.49	10 (66.67%)	5 (33.33%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail																									
Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)																		
15	4.67	0.49	10 (66.67%)	5 (33.33%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)																		
<p>17. The instructor was approachable and made himself/herself available to students outside the classroom.</p> <p>Question Type: Likert</p> <p>contributed by Office of the Provost</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="8">Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Mean</th> <th>Std Dev</th> <th>Strongly Agree (5)</th> <th>Agree (4)</th> <th>Neutral (3)</th> <th>Disagree (2)</th> <th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>4.93</td> <td>0.26</td> <td>14 (93.33%)</td> <td>1 (6.67%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail								Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	15	4.93	0.26	14 (93.33%)	1 (6.67%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail																									
Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)																		
15	4.93	0.26	14 (93.33%)	1 (6.67%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)																		
<p>18. Overall, the instructor was an effective teacher.</p> <p>Question Type: Likert</p> <p>contributed by Office of the Provost</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="8">Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Mean</th> <th>Std Dev</th> <th>Strongly Agree (5)</th> <th>Agree (4)</th> <th>Neutral (3)</th> <th>Disagree (2)</th> <th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>4.87</td> <td>0.35</td> <td>13 (86.67%)</td> <td>2 (13.33%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Results for PLIR-3310-106, Post, Abigail								Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	15	4.87	0.35	13 (86.67%)	2 (13.33%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
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Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)																		
15	4.87	0.35	13 (86.67%)	2 (13.33%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)																		
<p>19. Please make any overall comments or observations about this course:</p> <p>Question Type: Short Answer</p> <p>contributed by Office of the Provost</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Results for PLIR-3310-106</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Individual Answers</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>See below for Individual Results</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Results for PLIR-3310-106		Total	Individual Answers	4	See below for Individual Results																		
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Total	Individual Answers																								
4	See below for Individual Results																								
	<p>She seems to have a bright future and I wish her the best of luck</p> <p>Enjoyed discussion with Abby far more than the actual lecture. Overall good teacher.</p> <p>I loved Ms. Post's discussion!!</p> <p>Best TA at the school. Would be an awesome professor if she had the chance</p>																								