Course Report for POLS-351.001 - Public Policy & Adminstration (Giovanny PLEITES-HERNANDEZ) - Fall 2019

UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE

Project Title: **UNCA SFI - Fall 2019 - Term 2**

Survey Audience: **11**
Responses Received: **9**
Response Ratio: **82%**

Report Comments

Instructors, department chairs, program directors, deans, review committees, and other evaluators should keep the following points in mind as they review SFI data:

1. **Results from the SFI survey should be regarded as student feedback rather than evaluation.** The information gleaned from the SFI instrument represents students' feedback about their learning experiences, not an objective evaluation of *learning outcomes*. Moreover, while student feedback is valuable - particularly for informing pedagogy - it is only one data source and should not be interpreted as a comprehensive measure of teaching effectiveness.

2. **Comparisons cannot be made between items on the old instrument and the new instrument.** Because we transitioned to an entirely new survey instrument in Fall 2018, direct comparisons cannot be made between results from this semester and those from any previous semester, even on items with similar wording.

3. **Responses to customized qualitative questions are not appropriate sources of data for faculty evaluation.** Responses to these items should be used solely as tools for instructors' reflection on pedagogy. Instructors should be applauded, never penalized, for creating relevant qualitative questions that provide them valuable formative information about students' perceptions of learning.

4. **Comparisons across courses should only be made when appropriate and meaningful.** For example, while student feedback from two different sections of the same course may be compared, data from a senior capstone course in the major should not be compared to data from a large introductory course geared toward non-majors. Research also indicates that student perceptions may differ across required vs. elective courses.

5. **Universal items - rather than bank items - should be considered the only data sources appropriate for summative assessment or for comparison across courses and instructors.** The primary purpose of bank items is to invite student responses that may inform pedagogical practices associated with the learning goals of particular courses; therefore, bank items are not necessarily valid measures of comparison across courses or instructors.

6. **Neither instructors nor those evaluating them should rely solely on "overall impression" measures to draw conclusions.** While it is tempting to use these items as proxies for teaching effectiveness, doing so ignores potentially useful dimensions of variation and may obscure important patterns, thus limiting instructor reflection and learning.

7. **Qualitative comments should be interpreted with care.** While *patterns* in qualitative student comments are worthy of consideration, neither instructors nor administrators should overgeneralize or draw definitive conclusions on the basis of 1-2 comments. In cases where low numbers of students respond to an open-ended question, instructors might consider what percentage of students overall voiced a particular theme.

8. **Scores on items assessing "student reflections on own learning behaviors and engagement" are not appropriate data sources for summative evaluation of instructors.** The purpose of these items is to encourage students to reflect on how their personal engagement impacts their own learning. Because student engagement is not wholly within the instructor's control, faculty should not necessarily be compared on these student ratings. However, faculty are encouraged to use this information to inform their own pedagogy.

9. **SFI data from courses in which response rates are low should be interpreted cautiously.** This is especially true for courses in which fewer than 8 students are enrolled. Furthermore, as response rates approach 60-65% they may be considered more reliable and representative.

10. **SFIs and bias.** At present, the research regarding respondent bias in student ratings of instruction is inconclusive. However, we urge evaluators to remain alert to potential biases, particularly with respect to gender, race/ethnicity, and age of instructors.

Please don't hesitate to contact SFI@unca.edu with any logistical questions. If you have substantive questions, contact Amanda Werts, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, at awerts@unca.edu.

Creation Date: **Thursday, December 12, 2019**

Evaluation Summary

Student Perceptions of Own Learning

	Invited Count	Resp Count	Resp Rate	1	2	3	4	5	Course Mean	Median	SD	Prefix Mean	Univ Mean
I increased my understanding of major concepts or ideas in this course.	11	9	82%	0%	0%	0%	44%	56%	4.56	5.00	0.53	4.45	4.38
I learned to use principles from this course.	11	9	82%	0%	0%	11%	44%	44%	4.33	4.00	0.71	4.31	4.32

Student Perceptions of Own Learning (bank items)

I improved my ability to think and communicate clearly about issues and ideas in this field.

Invited Count	Resp Count	Resp Rate	1	2	3	4	5	Course Mean	Median	SD	Prefix Mean	Univ Mean
11	9	82%	0%	0%	11%	44%	44%	4.33	4.00	0.71	4.33	4.28

I learned to make connections between concepts and real-world issues.

Invited Count	Resp Count	Resp Rate	1	2	3	4	5	Course Mean	Median	SD	Prefix Mean	Univ Mean
11	9	82%	0%	0%	0%	22%	78%	4.78	5.00	0.44	4.53	4.37

Student Reflection on Own Learning Behaviors and Engagement

	Invited Count	Resp Count	Resp Rate	1	2	3	4	5	Course Mean	Median	SD	Prefix Mean	Univ Mean
I attended class regularly, arriving on time and staying for the duration of the class.	11	9	82%	0%	0%	0%	67%	33%	4.33	4.00	0.50	4.46	4.50
I actively engaged with the class content.	11	9	82%	0%	11%	11%	22%	56%	4.22	5.00	1.09	4.23	4.30
I completed class assignments conscientiously (such as readings, homework, and/or other class-related tasks).	11	9	82%	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%	4.67	5.00	0.50	4.44	4.43

I sought assistance when needed. (Please mark N/A if you did not need to seek assistance.)

Invited Count	Resp Count	Resp Rate	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	Course Mean	Median	SD	Prefix Mean	Univ Mean
11	9	82%	0%	11%	22%	33%	11%	22%	3.57	4.00	0.98	4.17	4.22

What grade do you expect to earn in this course? please mark N/A for incomplete, in progress, or audit.

What grade do you expect to earn in this course? please mark N/A for incomplete, in progress, or audit.				
Options	Count	Percentage	Statistics	Value
A	4	44%	Response Count	9
B	4	44%	Response Ratio	82%
C	1	11%		
D	0	0%		
F	0	0%		
S	0	0%		
U	0	0%		
N/A	0	0%		

Student Feedback on Instructor's Practices

	Invited Count	Resp Count	Resp Rate	1	2	3	4	5	Course Mean	Median	SD	Prefix Mean	Univ Mean
My instructor clearly communicated course expectations and requirements, through the syllabus and other methods (e.g. Moodle, email, in-class announcements).	11	9	82%	0%	0%	0%	11%	89%	4.89	5.00	0.33	4.25	4.40
My instructor explained the course material clearly.	11	9	82%	0%	0%	0%	11%	89%	4.89	5.00	0.33	4.31	4.31
My instructor created a classroom environment that encouraged students to be intellectually engaged.	11	9	82%	0%	0%	0%	22%	78%	4.78	5.00	0.44	4.43	4.41
My instructor was available for communication if needed.	11	9	82%	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%	4.67	5.00	0.50	4.58	4.49
My instructor provided clear instructions for assignments and/or tasks.	11	9	82%	0%	0%	11%	11%	78%	4.67	5.00	0.71	4.07	4.31
My instructor provided means for me to understand my progress in the course.	11	9	82%	0%	0%	0%	22%	78%	4.78	5.00	0.44	4.10	4.18

Student Feedback on Instructor's Practices (bank items)

My learning and success in this course were important to my instructor.

Invited Count	Resp Count	Resp Rate	1	2	3	4	5	Course Mean	Median	SD	Prefix Mean	Univ Mean
11	9	82%	0%	0%	11%	0%	89%	4.78	5.00	0.67	4.79	4.58

My instructor provided activities or assignments that challenged me to think deeply.

Invited Count	Resp Count	Resp Rate	1	2	3	4	5	Course Mean	Median	SD	Prefix Mean	Univ Mean
11	9	82%	0%	0%	11%	22%	67%	4.56	5.00	0.73	4.56	4.22

Open-Ended Questions

What aspects of this course do you feel were most beneficial to your learning?

Comments
The case studies and response questions, although a pain in the ass, helped me understand and grasp the concepts taught in the course.
I enjoyed the discussions we had in class.
i really liked how Dr. Giovanny tied in real world examples to all of our lessons, it made it easier to swallow and made a policy class at 8am that lasts two hours fun and worthwhile.
I really liked the part where we would engage with actual legislation or government websites. Getting comfortable reading and critically engaging with political platforms, etc is one of my biggest challenges and also favorite parts of poly sci.
Really liked your demeanor and the way you ran class, you've got a great attitude and you're a great addition to polisci department
The in class discussions were extremely helpful, as hearing my peers' ideas and thoughts helped me broaden my knowledge. Additionally, the text books used were exceptionally good and easy to understand.
the power points with the corresponding handouts, looking at 2020 Democratic candidates for their takes on the policies we were learning about
Readings and lectures

In this course, how did the instructor support your learning?

Comments
He had office hours and was very communicative about whether or not he was holding them.
He spoke clearly and was Knowledgeable. He kept a good pace when speaking.
Dr. Giovanny was always asking if we needed anything at all and was always available to talk to after class and during his office hours. Something that I enjoyed that he did in class was also listen to the students, since we were upperclassmen and have lived in Asheville for awhile, we also had perspectives on policies at a local government level and Dr. Giovanny was willing and ready to listen to our perspectives which made the classes better and more enjoyable.
He consistently reminded us when things were do and had a review before the midterm.
Professor Giovanny was great. He was extremely understanding about life and outside circumstances but always provided us with help when he could. He was very responsive via emails and was very helpful during office hours.
Giving us so much time for our final paper, a detailed study guide for the midterm, offering help often
Giving relevant examples

Do you have any suggestions for improving the course or how it was taught? If so, what are they?

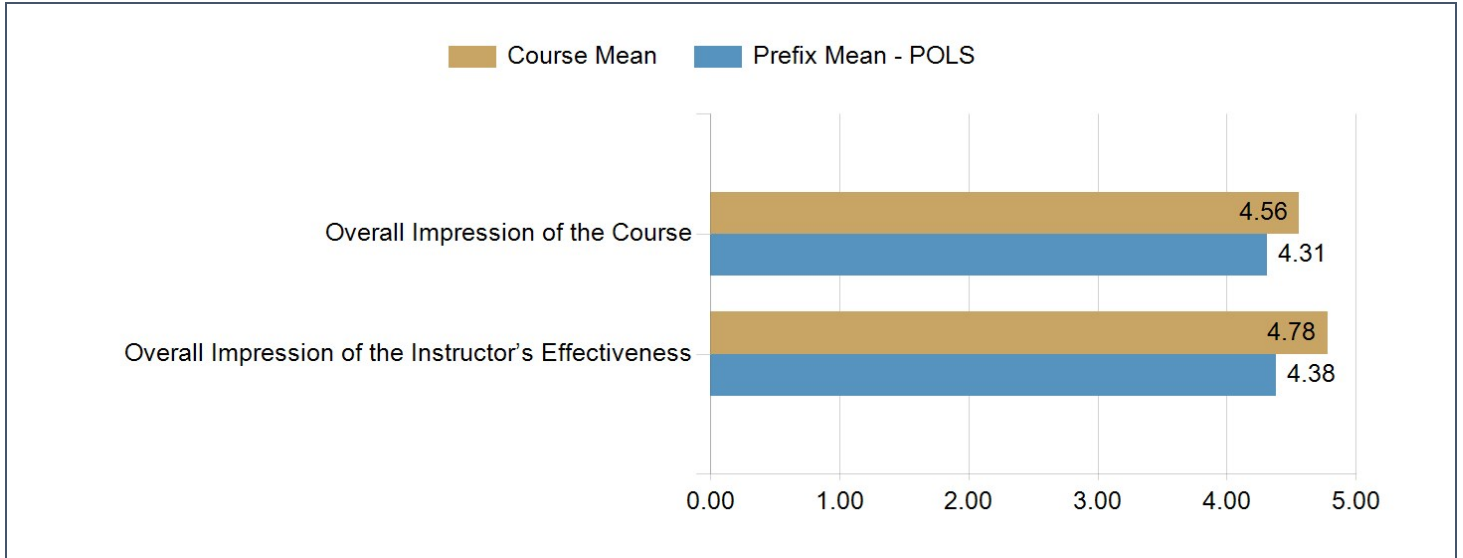| Comments |
|---|
| Maybe less group work, and more independent work? |
| Require a draft of the memo a month or so before it is due. |
| I think that teaching a policy class at 8am is hard, so maybe put it later in the day? But that is not something one can always control. |
| The syllabus could be clearer. |
| it's good that you want the class engaged, and you typically do a good job of keeping everyone interested and aware, but the 8AM time is an uphill battle for sure. If you're going to begin with a long lecture, you're most likely going to have people tune out by the end of class just from fatigue.
sometimes wish you would have pushed back harder when people gave silly answers or ridiculous policy proposals |
| Nope! He is great. |
| Incorporate policy memos into all aspects of the course since it's such a big part of our final. Give examples for every topic that correspond to the set up of ours. It seems like the whole point of the course is building up to being able to successfully write one, but we really only touched on it at the end. |

Additional Personalized Instructor Questions

What aspects of this course do you feel were most beneficial to your learning?

Comments
The writing styles and types of papers.
I think that the topic was interesting to me, since I am looking to get my masters in Public Administration. I liked the class overall.
The class discussion as well as the daily activities.
All of it, they were great.

Do you have any suggestions for improving the course or how it was taught? If so, what are they?

Comments
Nope.
I think being a little more interactive and teaching less off of powerpoints would be good for me, but I know that is not something that can always be helped when looking at policy.
More focus on the policy part at the end or try to blend the two halves. I went into this class thinking it sounded pretty dry and also I was a little apprehensive about having a new professor. This has turned out to be one of my all–time favorite classes and Plietes–Hernandez is an absolute delight.
No, but I think the class size could be increased so there are more viewpoints.

Comparative Data

Legend: Course Mean, Prefix Mean - POLS

- Overall Impression of the Course: 4.56 (Course Mean), 4.31 (Prefix Mean)
- Overall Impression of the Instructor's Effectiveness: 4.78 (Course Mean), 4.38 (Prefix Mean)

Course Mean vs Prefix Mean

Rank	Competency	Difference
1	Overall Impression of the Course	0.25
2	Overall Impression of the Instructor's Effectiveness	0.40

Overall Impressions

Overall Impression of the Course

Invited Count	Resp Count	Resp Rate	1	2	3	4	5	Course Mean	Median	SD	Prefix Mean	Univ Mean
11	9	82%	0%	0%	11%	22%	67%	4.56	5.00	0.73	4.31	4.26

Overall Impression of the Instructor's Effectiveness

Invited Count	Resp Count	Resp Rate	1	2	3	4	5	Course Mean	Median	SD	Prefix Mean	Univ Mean
11	9	82%	0%	0%	0%	22%	78%	4.78	5.00	0.44	4.38	4.42