



Spring 2022 Arts & Sciences Instructor Report for SP2022.L32.Pol Sci.3321.01 - Topics in Politics: Human Rights (Zachary Bowersox)

Project Title: **Spring 2022 Course Evaluations - Danforth Campus**

Courses Audience: **22**

Responses Received: **8**

Response Ratio: **36.36%**

Report Comments

Welcome to your Instructor Report for WashU Course Evaluations. Below you will find response data from the specified course section. Responses to personalized questions appear at the bottom of the report.

The intention of this report is to provide feedback, and also to prompt improvement in areas that may be lacking. This report is accessible to appropriate department level and school level users, as determined by your school. We appreciate your dedication to our learning community at Washington University.

If you have questions about this report, please contact evals@wustl.edu

Creation Date: **Thursday, May 19, 2022**

Course and Instructor Evaluation

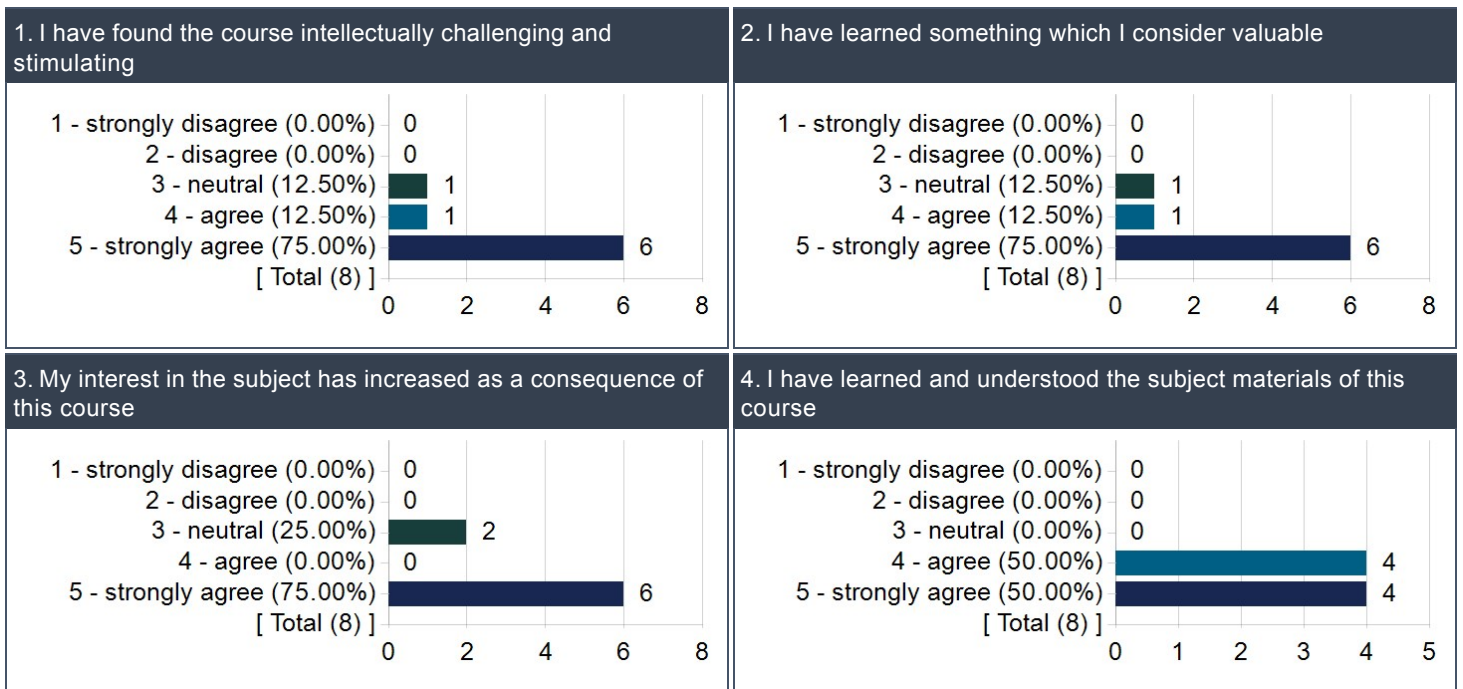
Past research shows that the students' answers to any one question can be noisy, more prone to biases, and provide less useful data for evaluating courses and instructors. Since interpreting individual questions, including their relative highs and lows, can easily lead to inaccurate conclusions due to low reliability, individual question responses are not available in any standard report.

However, combining students' responses to several questions aimed at measuring the same underlying attribute can improve the quality of the measures. Therefore, the statistics displayed for each attribute (mean, median, mode, and standard deviation) are calculated from the grouped responses to all the questions in each topical block.

All questions below use a 5-point response scale: 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree

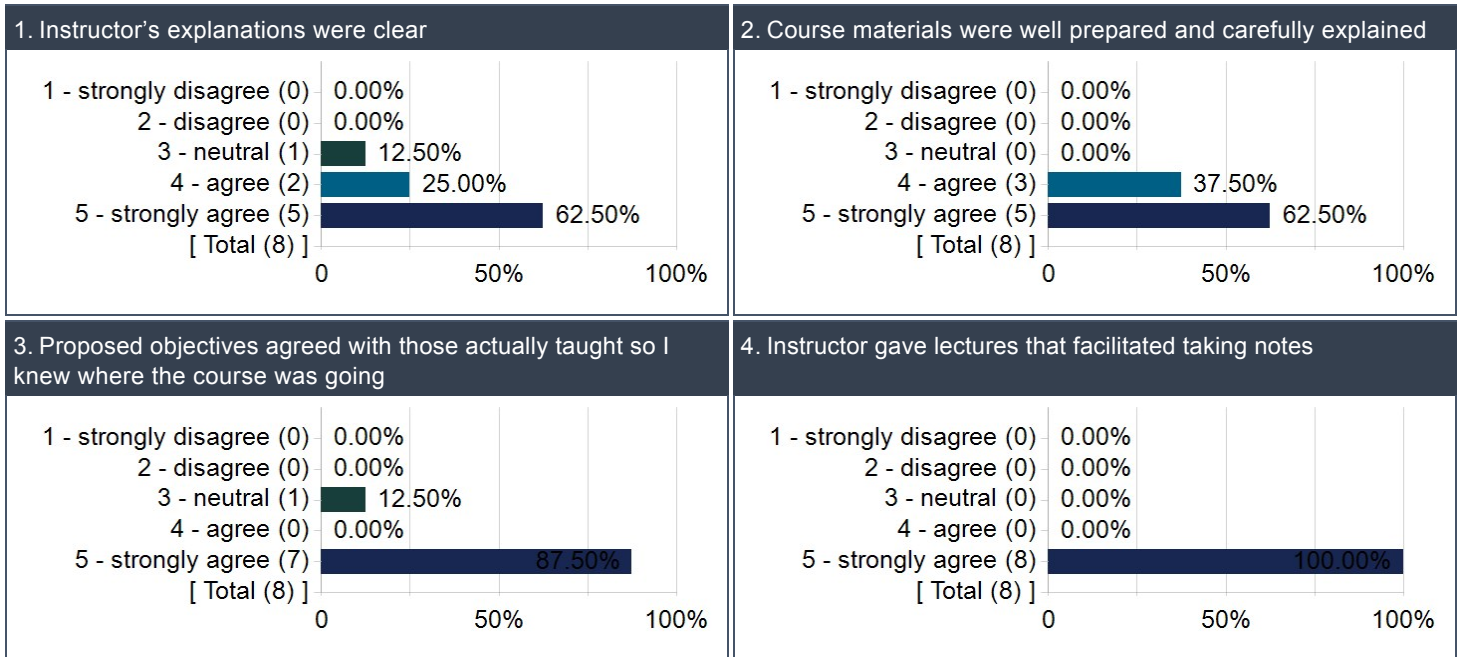
Learning

Competency Statistics	Value
Mean	4.56
Median	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.72



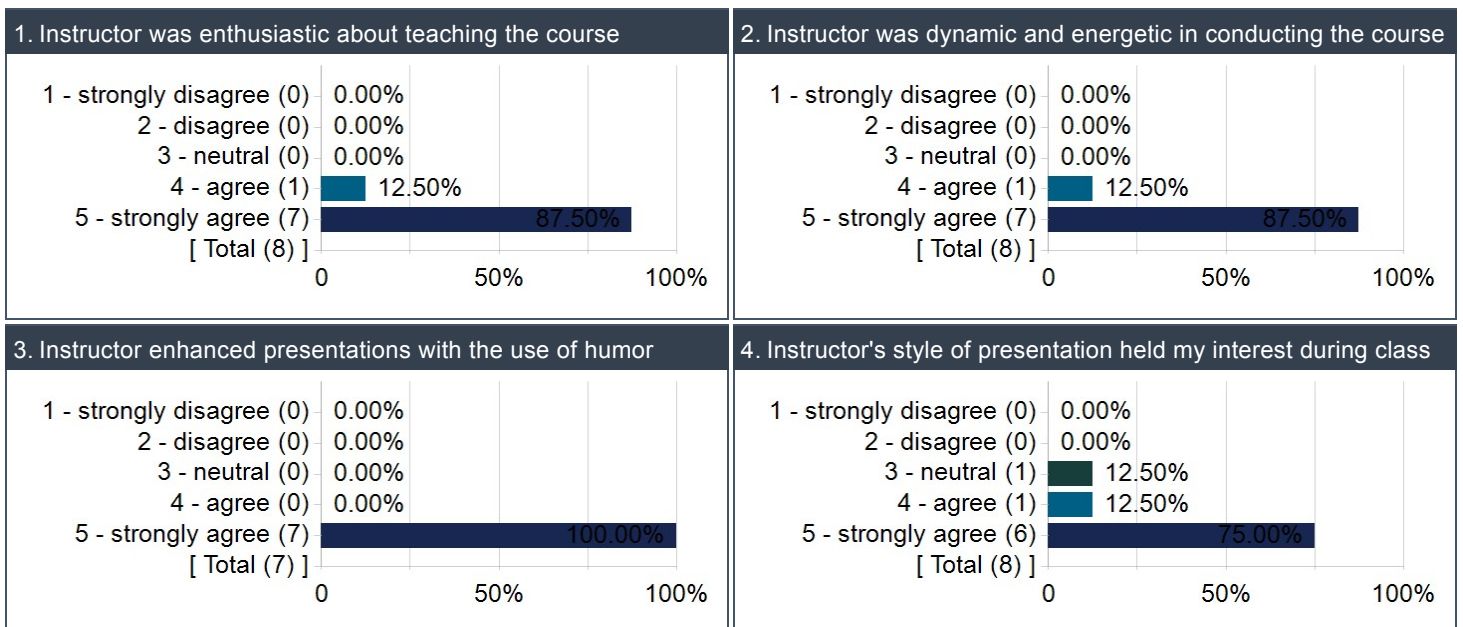
Organization

Competency Statistics	Value
Mean	4.72
Median	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.58



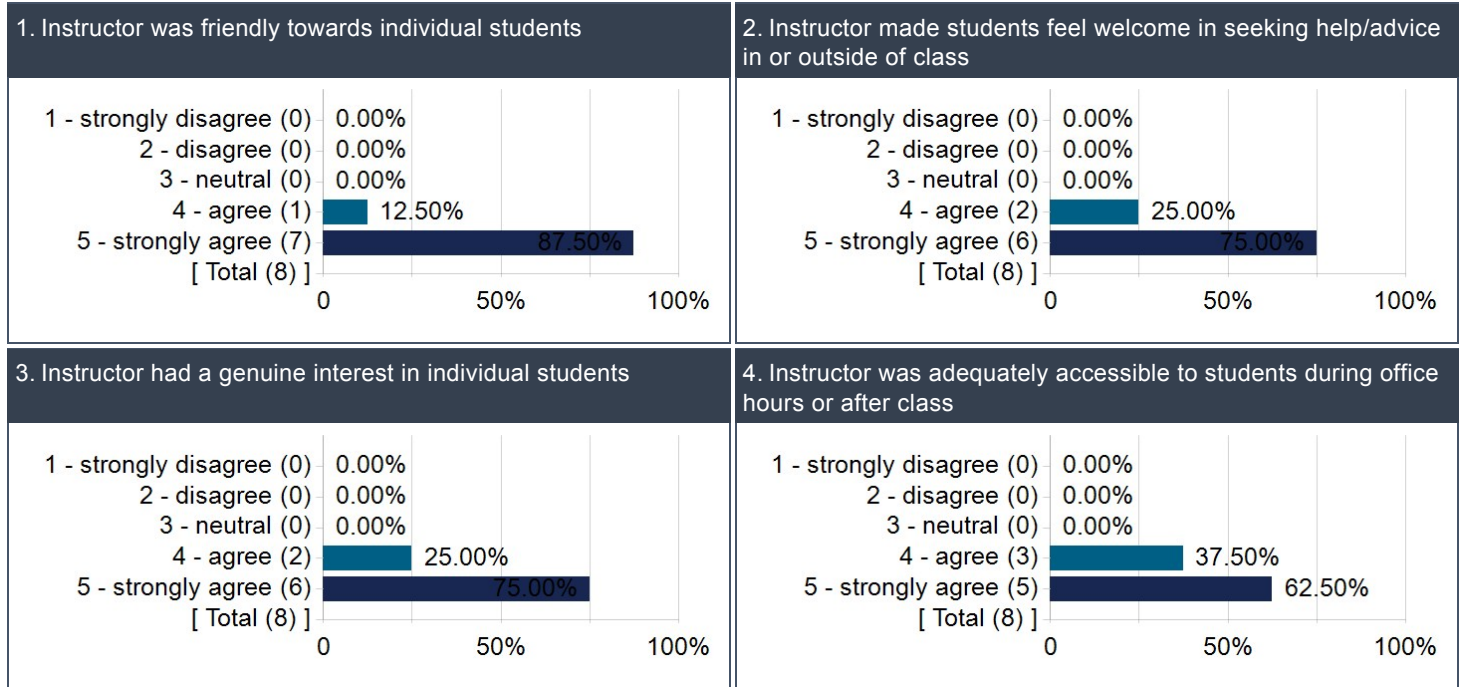
Enthusiasm (Zachary Bowersox)

Competency Statistics	Value
Mean	4.84
Median	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.45

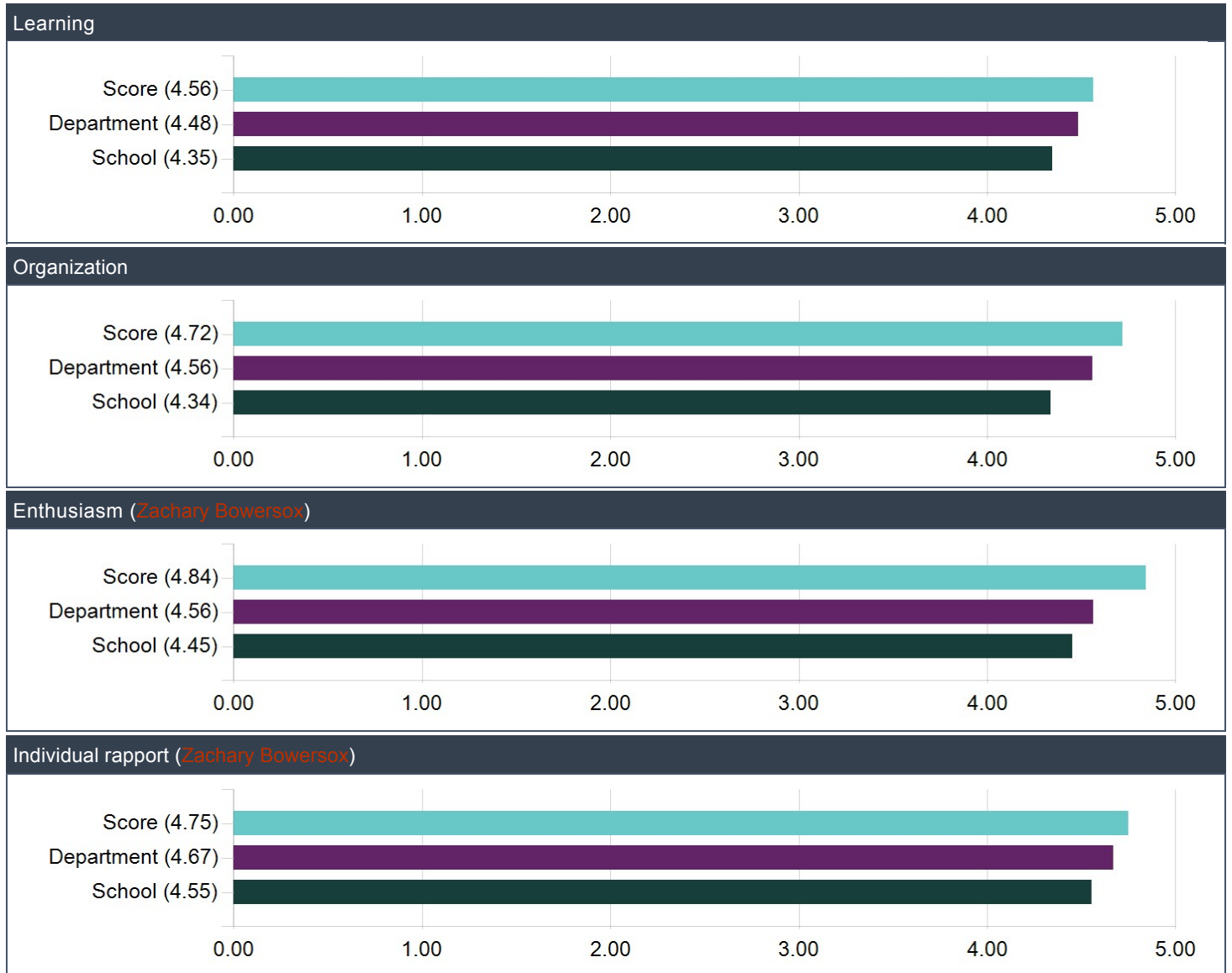


Individual report (Zachary Bowersox)

Competency Statistics	Value
Mean	4.75
Median	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.44



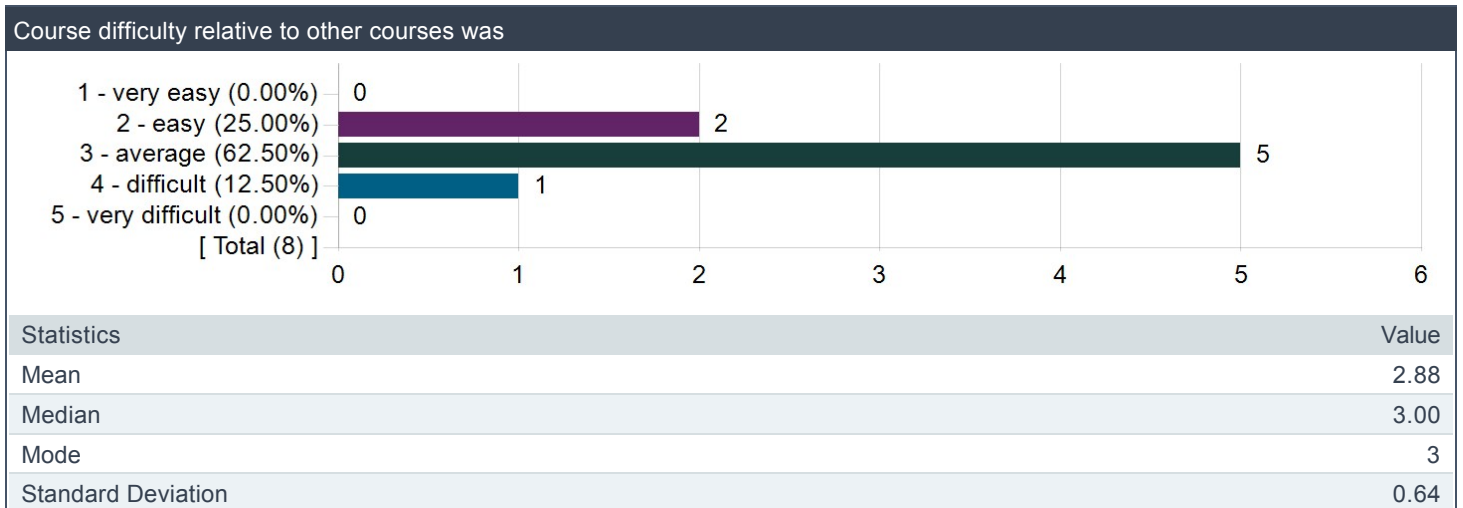
Comparison Detail for Course and Instructor Evaluation



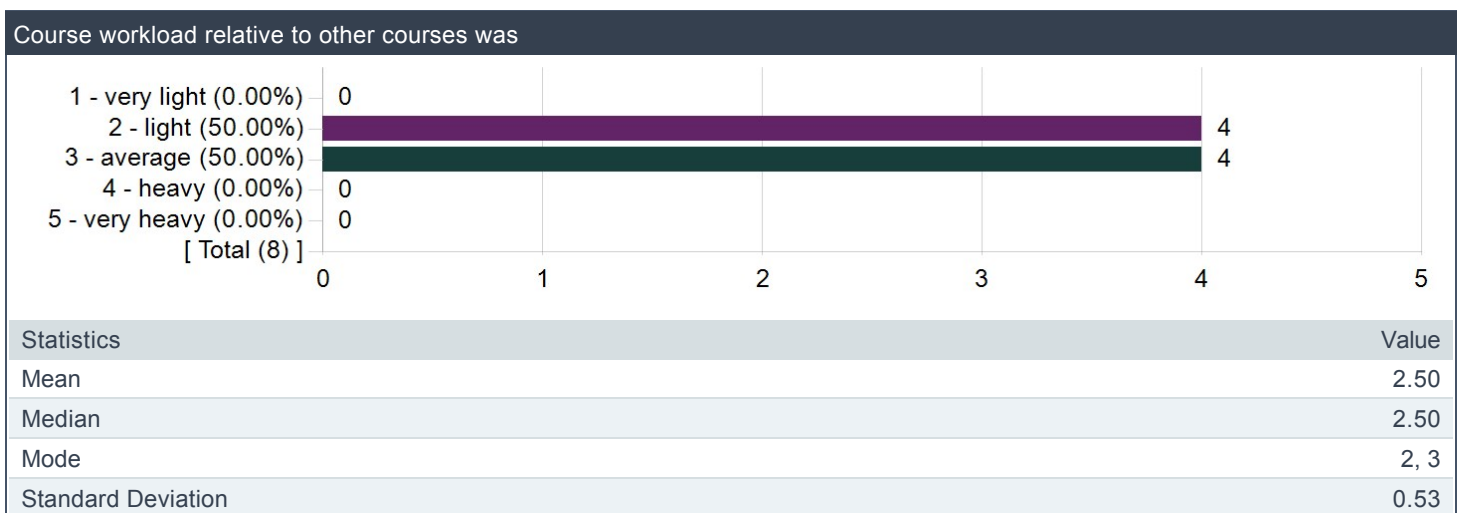
Varied Rating Scale Responses

The varied rating scale responses are statistically reliable as individual questions.

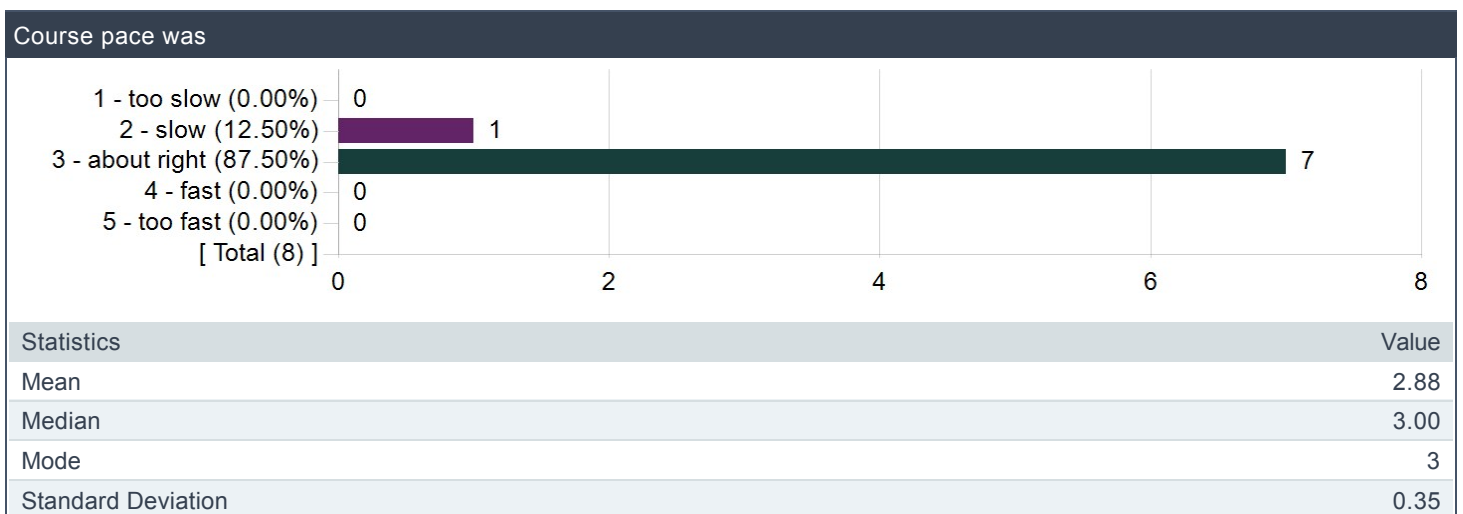
Course difficulty relative to other courses was



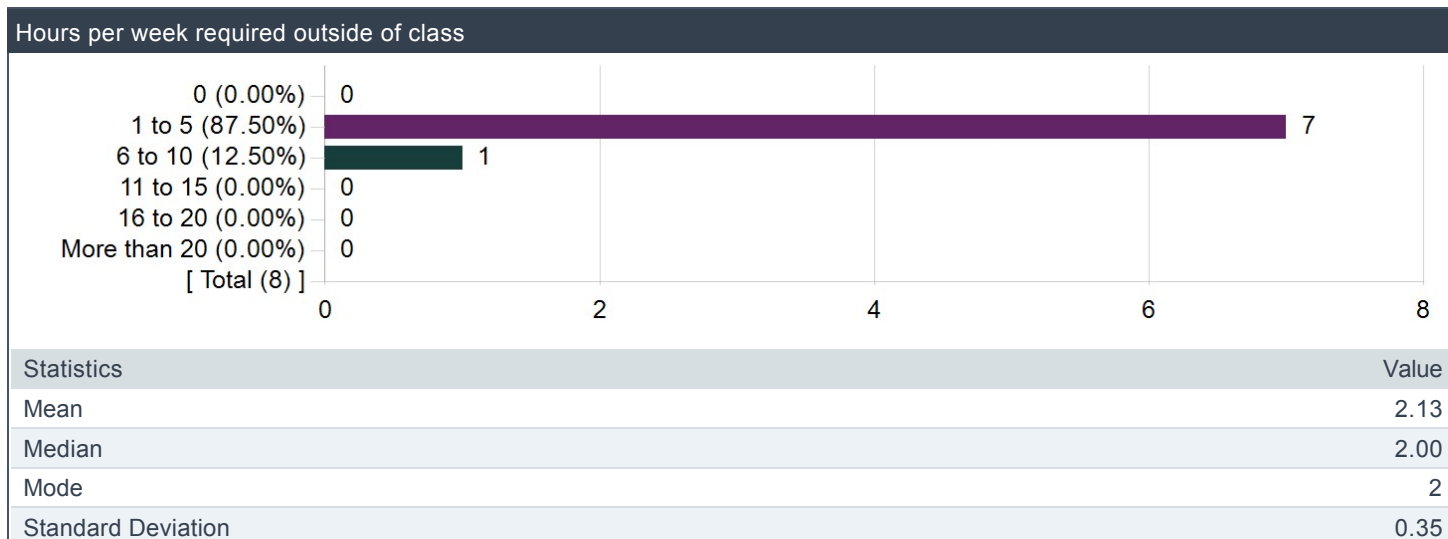
Course workload relative to other courses was



Course pace was



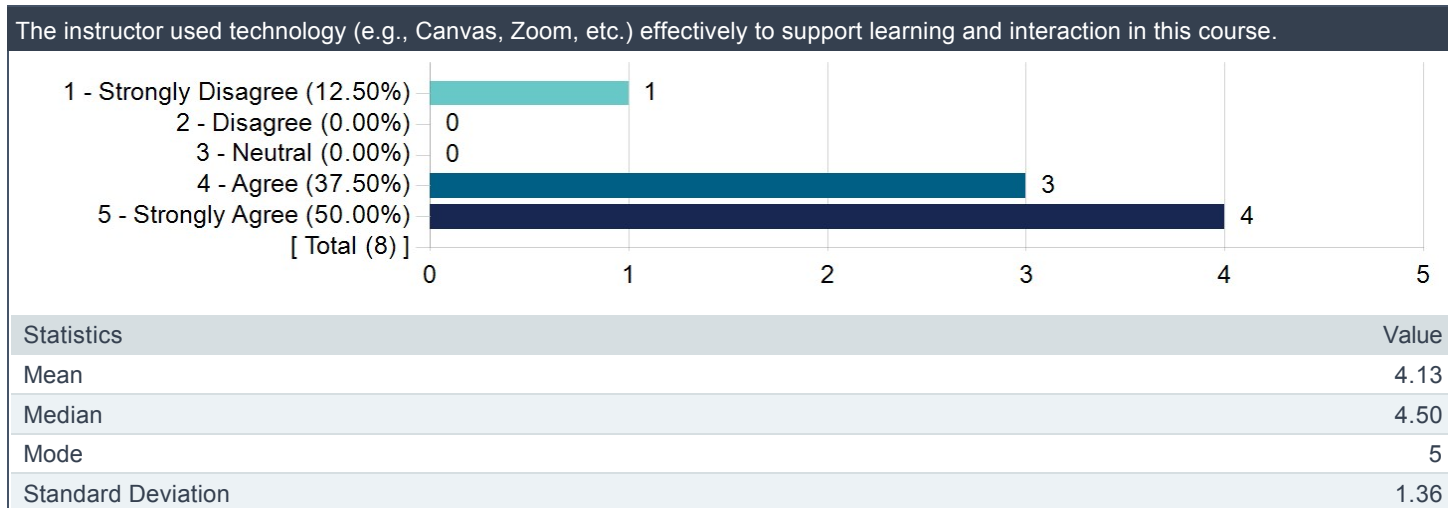
Hours per week required outside of class



Comparison Detail for Varied Rating Scale Responses

Learning Technology and Interaction

The instructor used technology (e.g., Canvas, Zoom, etc.) effectively to support learning and interaction in this course.



Where relevant, please give specific examples to explain your answer above.

Comments
Lectures were sometimes recorded and posted, but not with regularity
Classes were often not recorded, creating a lapse for those not in attendance that day. Material was then uploaded to the course page slowly, making it difficult to catch up in the class.

Short Answer Responses

What would you like to tell other Wash U students thinking about taking this course?

Comments
Course was harder than it should've been. Composed entirely of lecture, 2 exams, 1 presentation, and 1 paper. Participation is graded harshly for a lecture-based course except for the class favorites who dominated discussion by consistently interrupting lectures
Bowersox is an incredible professor and you will learn so much! Take it even if you're not a poly-sci/IR major.
I LOVED this class. Prof. Bowersox is so engaging and truly structures the class in way that lets you learn a lot without having to do "busy work." I went from a very minimal understanding of the subject material to a much stronger concept of how human rights operate in our society.
This is a super interesting course, Prof. Bowersox is incredibly knowledgeable and passionate. It can be difficult if you aren't a polisci major but is worth taking for the content and how much you'll learn—keep up with the readings in the textbook.
This course is *very* broad in terms of being a survey course of human rights in a global sense. It is less of a theory course and more of a research/methodology oriented examination of how human rights are researched by academics. With the broad scope of the course, you cover a lot of ground but don't cover much of it very in depth.
The course is heavily focused on the policy over human rights in practice.

Describe at least one activity (an exercise, project, assignment, etc.) in this course that helped you learn.

Comments
I loved the PK presentations as a way to work through the various readings of the semester. I liked how it was synthesized in a way where we didn't get lost in the weeds of technicalities.
20x20 presentations made me dive into one topic in depth as well as helped improve presentation skills.
The textbook and lectures balanced each other out well. Doing the data project was helpful for getting an understanding of a specific data set.

Describe at least one thing that could be changed about this course to help you learn.

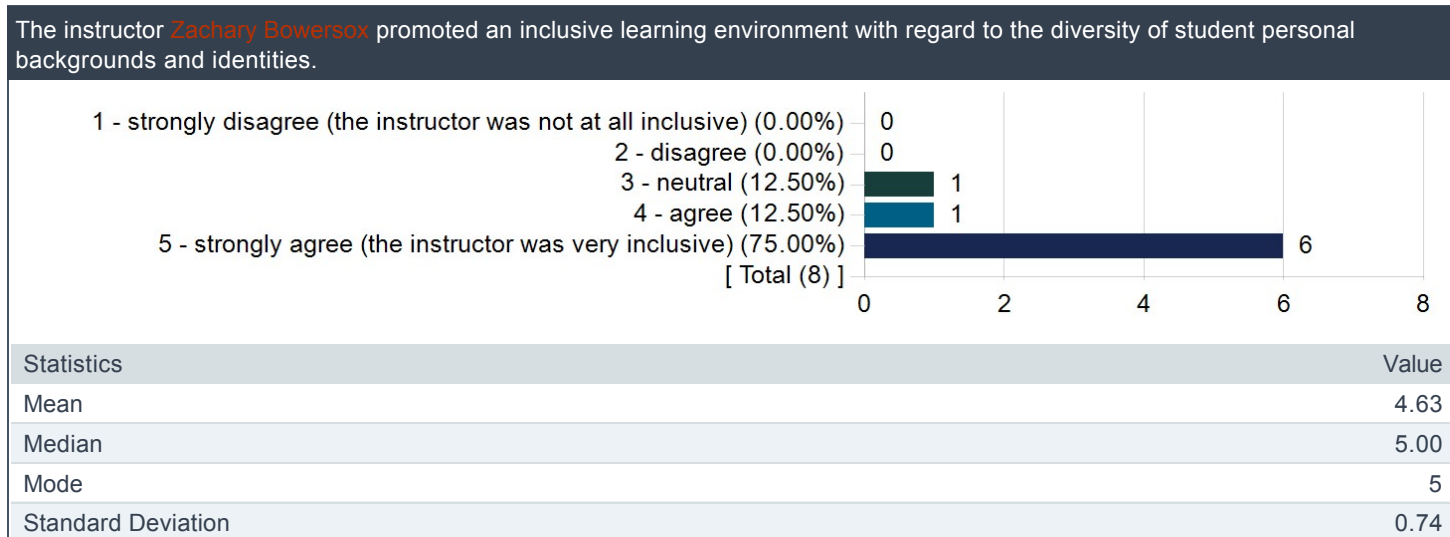
Comments
I wish the signup process for the 20by20 had been different – maybe a google doc? It would've been helpful to have access to all of the suggested readings on Canvas for the duration of the semester
Perhaps talking about tough topics (for example, domestic violence) a bit less flippantly, since these topics are sensitive for some people.
I sometimes found the way Prof. Bowersox talked about topics like abuse, domestic violence, and sexual assault to be a bit jarring. I got the sense that he's been desensitized to these areas through his research with human trafficking, but I wish we'd had a bit more warning for days with challenging content or that it had been approached more sensitively. I think it's a challenging balance because abuse and physical violence is an integral part of many human rights violations, but a bit more preparedness or less specificity would have been helpful.
I would have preferred a check-in assignment midway through the semester to encourage progress with the semester-long data project.
More regular postings of Zoom lectures on Canvas, review of textbook readings in class
I think at times it felt like we were talking about topics without actually talking about them. Whether that was the fault of certain students sort of driving the discussions off course, or the fact that the topics are so many so cannot be studied in depth, but a more driven focus in some topics would have been welcomed. I'm not quite sure what this would have looked like – maybe focusing in on one specific case study to get into the nitty gritty, or perhaps just having faster paced lectures, or maybe culling the number of topics covered. I'm not exactly sure. But at times I was wanting more from the course in some capacity.
Grading rubrics should be included for every portion of the grade. There were times where I would receive low participation points for that week without having any clue as to why, so maybe there should be a student self-evaluation for participation as well.

Describe at least one aspect of how this course was designed and carried out (the organization, structure, communication, etc.) that contributed to your success.

Comments
I appreciated the clarity of communication about expectations and how detailed the syllabus was.
Lecture slides being posted online helped a lot with studying and any missed classes
The general pattern of textbook–lecture per topic made for a stable and predictable pattern of the class that made it easy to stay on top of things and be successful if one stayed up to date with all the work.

Classroom Environment

The instructor **Zachary Bowersox** promoted an inclusive learning environment with regard to the diversity of student personal backgrounds and identities.



Hybrid/Remote Learning

The course Canvas page or website could be easily navigated to find course materials.

