



2018F Instructor Report for PSCI 3893 02 - Selected Topics in American Government (Allison Anoll)

Vanderbilt University Course and Teaching Evaluations

Project Audience 20

Responses Received 13

Response Ratio 65.00%

Report Comments

The following is a report for an individual section of a class. Please do not distribute, print, or share this report except for administrative purposes.

Project Audience - Total number of students enrolled

Responses Received - Number of evaluations submitted by students

Response Ratio - Percent of enrolled students who submitted evaluations

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Prepared by Vanderbilt University Course and Teaching Evaluations

Creation Date Tue, Jan 29, 2019



Questions about the Instructor (**Allison Anoll**):

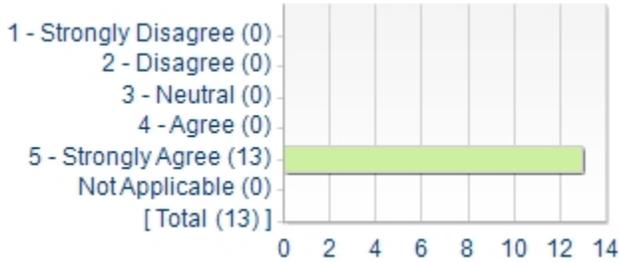
Question	This Class Section		Department (PSCI)		School (A&S)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
The instructor helped me understand the core ideas and issues in this subject.	5.00	0.00	4.49	0.79	4.41	0.89
The instructor explained what was expected of me in the assignments and assessments for this course.	4.92	0.28	4.21	0.98	4.38	0.91
The instructor encouraged critical, original, or creative thinking.	5.00	0.00	4.40	0.86	4.37	0.93
The instructor demonstrated interest in students' learning.	5.00	0.00	4.48	0.82	4.51	0.84
The instructor used class time productively.	5.00	0.00	4.22	1.06	4.34	0.97
The instructor created a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment.	4.92	0.29	4.58	0.72	4.52	0.82
Overall, the instructor (Allison Anoll) was:	4.92	0.28	4.30	0.91	4.27	0.97

Questions about this Course (**PSCI 3893 02**):

Question	This Class Section		Department (PSCI)		School (A&S)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
This course helped me appreciate the significance of the subject matter.	5.00	0.00	4.34	0.94	4.28	0.97
The components of the course, such as class activities, assessments, and assignments, were consistent with the course goals.	5.00	0.00	4.35	0.85	4.39	0.86
The feedback I received during the course was helpful.	4.85	0.38	3.97	1.07	4.15	1.04
I felt comfortable asking questions in this course.	4.50	1.00	4.25	0.99	4.32	0.98
This course helped me consider connections between course material and other areas of my personal, academic, or professional life.	4.92	0.28	4.34	0.94	4.21	1.03
Overall, the course (PSCI 3893 02) was:	4.75	0.45	3.98	0.97	3.94	1.02
Compared to other classes, the amount I learned in this course was:	4.77	0.60	3.70	1.01	3.64	1.03
Compared to requirements in other classes, the workload assigned in this class was:	3.85	0.55	3.38	0.86	3.28	1.01

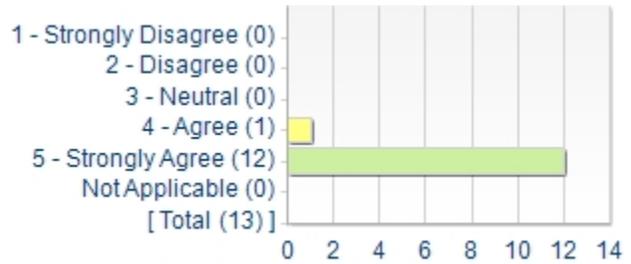
Please respond to the following questions about the instructor (**Allison Anoll**).

1. The instructor helped me understand the core ideas and issues in this subject.



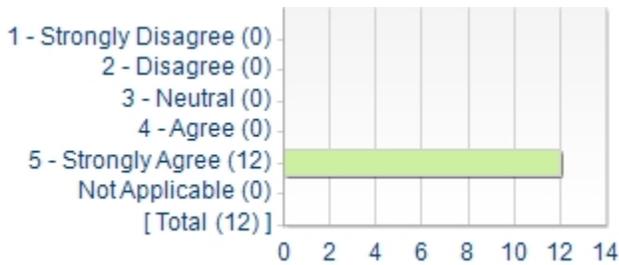
Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.00

2. The instructor explained what was expected of me in the assignments and assessments for this course.



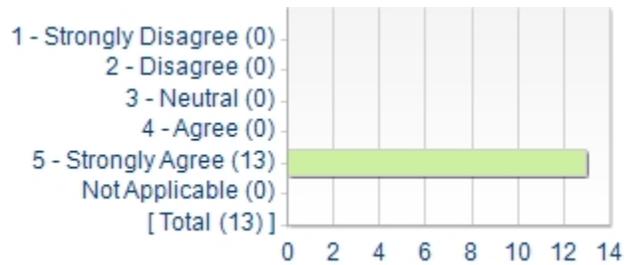
Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	4.92
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.28

3. The instructor encouraged critical, original, or creative thinking.



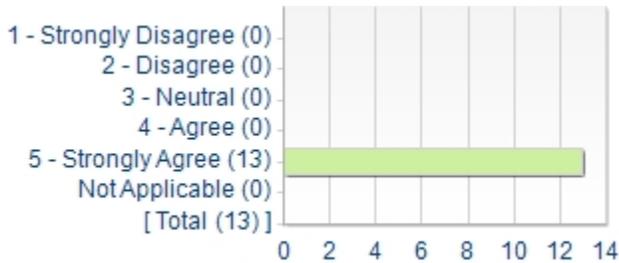
Statistics	Value
Response Count	12
Mean	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.00

4. The instructor demonstrated interest in students' learning.



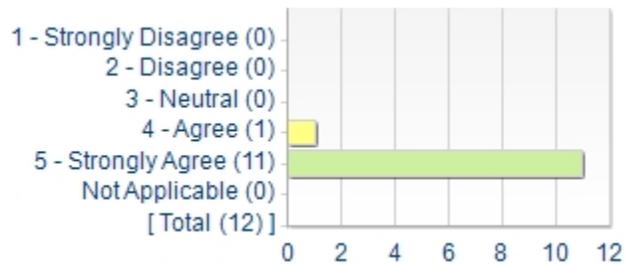
Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.00

5. The instructor used class time productively.



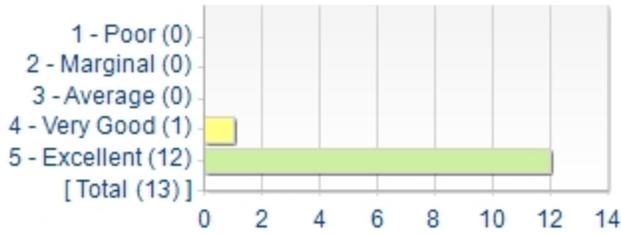
Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.00

6. The instructor created a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment.



Statistics	Value
Response Count	12
Mean	4.92
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.29

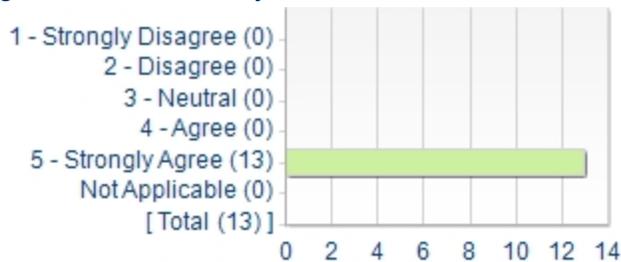
Overall, the instructor (Allison Anoll) was:



Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	4.92
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.28

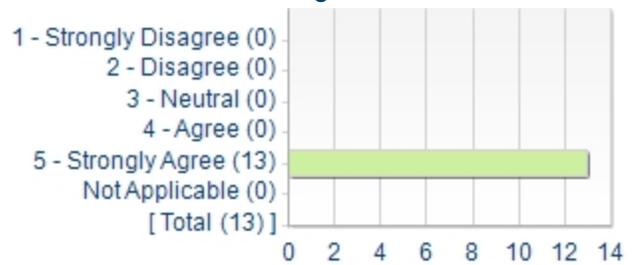
Questions About This Course (PSCI 3893 02):

1. This course helped me appreciate the significance of the subject matter.



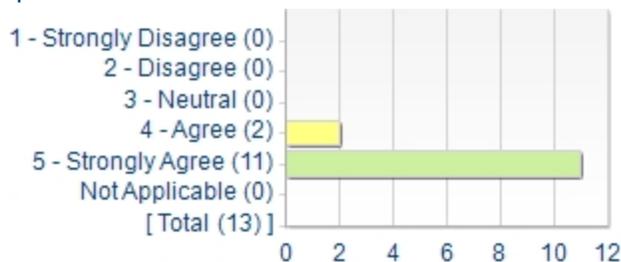
Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.00

2. The components of the course, such as class activities, assessments, and assignments, were consistent with the course goals.



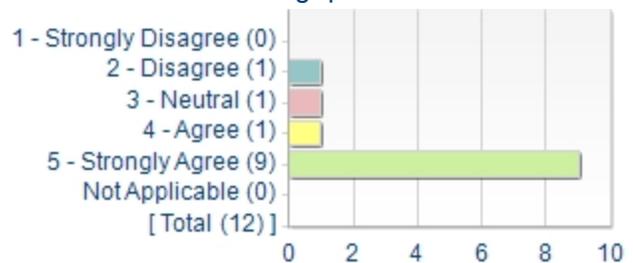
Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.00

3. The feedback I received during the course was helpful.



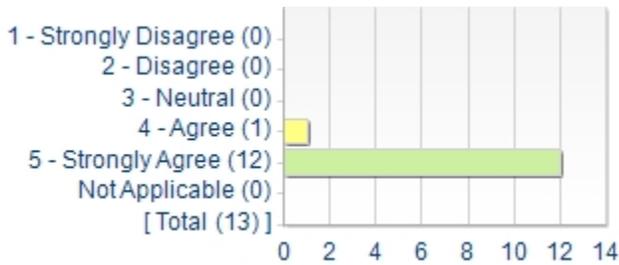
Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	4.85
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.38

4. I felt comfortable asking questions in this course.



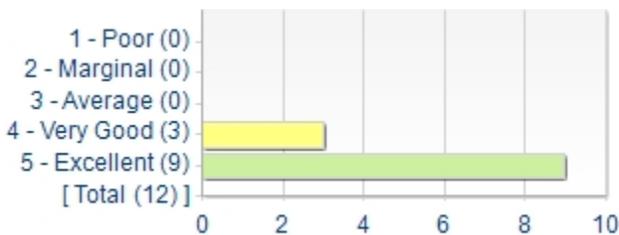
Statistics	Value
Response Count	12
Mean	4.50
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	1.00

5. This course helped me consider connections between course material and other areas of my personal, academic, or professional life.



Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	4.92
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.28

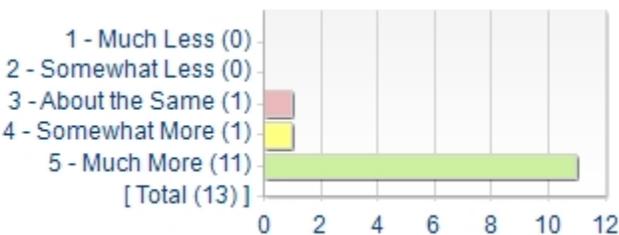
Overall the course was:



Statistics	Value
Response Count	12
Mean	4.75
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.45

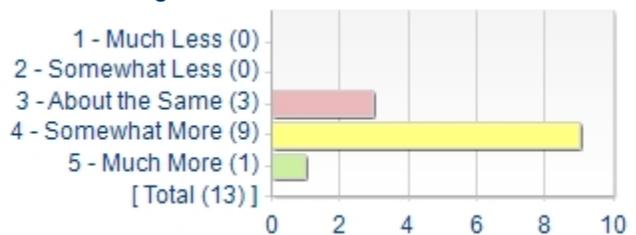
Questions About This Course (PSCI 3893 02):

1. Compared to other classes, the amount I learned in this course was:



Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	4.77
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.60

2. Compared to requirements in other classes, the workload assigned in this class was:



Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	3.85
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	0.55

What elements of the course (PSCI 3893 02) most contributed to your learning?

Comments

the size of the classroom and Anoll's high expectations

Professor Anoll is by far the most thoughtful, organized, and engaged teacher I've ever had. Not only is she so passionate about the subject matter, but she also truly cares about our own personal growth, both in learning how to think critically/be a social scientist and understanding the long-term political implications of the carceral state. Each reading was chosen with care, as were the reform project assignments. Furthermore, she led the class by encouraging us to practice our discussion and debate skills while skillfully integrating the readings and her own lecture buddies. I single-handedly cite her as the reason for my current career path and I can't stress enough what a transformative effect Professor Anoll has had on my college and overall learning experience.

The course's mix of lecture and group discussion significantly helped my understanding of the course content and how each topic covered fit into the politics of police, prison and the carceral state. Professor Anoll thoroughly answered every student's question and would adapt her lectures to

Professor Anoll is excellent at leading discussions and organizing lessons, to the point where I wish I could recommend that some of my other professors sit in on her class and follow her examples. She does a good job of clearly assigning multiple, relevant readings and asking the class to put them in conversation with one another, as well as stepping back and facilitating class discussion rather than relying on her own comments. I've had a million professors who say that they prefer to let the class discuss topics rather than standing in front of a room and lecturing on them, but Professor Anoll is one of the few who does this well.

I was also especially impressed with Professor Anoll's upfront focus on humble confidence in discussions. By regularly calling out that goal and keeping us accountable to it, I think she did a better job than most professors of facilitating quality discussions and forcing people to improve.

The third and final thing is that the way Professor Anoll asks us to think about problems is actually very similar to the sort of thinking that I was asked to do in my internship setting this past summer (which had absolutely no connection to the material in this class). The way that Professor Anoll asked us to apply problem solving and storytelling techniques to this academic subject convinced me, perhaps more than any other academic experience, that a liberal arts education really can do a good job of preparing you to succeed in any context.

Great readings, really focused discussion.

I really thought it was great having guest speakers come in to talk about their experiences alongside what we had been learning about in class.

Each assignment was designed to not only assess our knowledge of the material, but to equip us with tools for our other academic pursuits and future life. For example, the concept map assignments were so helpful because I will always have course content readily available and organized, but also because I was able to apply concept mapping to my other courses, which enabled me to succeed in those as well.

The unique assignments and interesting class discussion really helped me to apply and understand the class concepts.

The organizational structure of the course in 4 parts made the content very digestible and easier to compartmentalize, even when we were thinking about larger topics that seemed to all inter connect and overlap

Inclusive classroom where she really encouraged us to focus on own discussion skills!

The discussion style class really helped me grapple with the material, along with the specific questions that the professor would ask us to consider during discussion. I also really enjoyed the concept maps. While they were difficult and a bit confusing at first, they ended up really helping me consolidate my ideas and opinions and provided a helpful way to look back on what I had learned.

The way in which the course was relatable to real life through the opportunity to do a research paper, submit an op-ed to a newspaper, and speak with guests who interact with this topic in different ways.

What improvements to the course (PSCI 3893 02) would you recommend?

Comments

I found Professor Anoll to be brilliant and engaging, yet quite intimidating. The assignments and readings were, at times, too much to handle. This class is definitely worthwhile, but has been such a struggle.

Sometimes it is difficult to integrate all the readings, especially if there's only one class period between the last readings of the unit and when the concept map is due. Maybe I would recommend maybe giving two class periods before its due?

Look, I just wish we had been in a bigger room so that we wouldn't have been so squished in that circle.

I also would say that I sort of got tired of the IV/DV format of analyzing articles after we had done it a few times, but I don't want to say that you should cut back on it, since it's probably very useful.

Also, maybe I should just accept that Michelle Alexander covers difficult topics and be grateful for the chance to tackle those, but I think that the days I had the most trouble finishing (rather than skimming) the readings are the days that we read excerpts of The New Jim Crow in addition to other pieces. That work takes a long time to digest, so it can be a lot more difficult than its page count might suggest. But then again, it's all valuable information, and I'm really mostly saying this so that I can say I offered SOME constructive feedback in addition to praise.

Opportunity to do main paper work on theoretical topic of interest rather than solely on a reform topic. E.g. theories on abolition etc, understandings of capital punishment.

It is definitely very reading heavy.

Although I enjoyed every topic we covered, I felt like because there so many we couldn't go as in-depth with some as I would have liked to.

As we discussed, I was a little disappointed not to have more time to engage with each other on our individual reform projects, and think spreading out the presentations would give us more time to ask questions

Keeping up with the reading was a little difficult at times, and I can't imagine how it would have been with a full course load

Not the biggest fan of concept maps

Do you have any other comments?

Comments

Thanks again for such an amazing class experience!

I don't want the uninterrupted series of 5s I use in this evaluation to come across as if I didn't think critically about this evaluation. Professor Anoll is probably the most engaging and effective professor I've ever had, an especially impressive feat given that she has only been on the job for a couple of years.

Also, maybe tell your future students that the law school has free printing (if you're even allowed to say that - I'm sure they wouldn't necessarily appreciate it, but I DID spend a fortune in Commodore cash on printing this semester).

Professor Anoll is by far the best professor I have had thus far at Vanderbilt. She's passionate and incredibly knowledgeable about the subject matter. She's phenomenal at presenting it in a way that is very conducive to actually learning everything and in a way that really makes one care about the subject material.

Dr. Anoll is one of the best, if not the best, instructor at Vanderbilt. As a senior, I've had a lot of instructors in a lot of departments, many of whom have been great. Almost across the board, though, they pale in comparison. The way Dr. Anoll combines her passion for her work with her commitment to undergraduate teaching is nearly unmatched. She walks the line between caring for her students and professionalism quite well, and easily commands great respect in the classroom without having to demand it. She's incredible and should be given tenure (immediately) if she doesn't have it already and as much funding as she wants because Vanderbilt is very very lucky to have her.

This class was one of my all time favorite courses during my Vanderbilt career. Professor Anoll is so insightful, organized, well-spoken, and provokes us to think critically not just about the material but about how it applies to our passions and choices in a career. Her lecture/discussion style class led us to the themes and questions in the most natural way, and I wish everyone could take a course with her. Most political sciences courses leave me hung up on theory and a lot of content that often doesn't seem to connect well, and giving me no real skills to actually use in a day to day political job. I believe all other classes should be modeled after her structure and class design, as I felt more ready to tackle these issues though policy changes and the way to go about making an impact on multiple levels.

This was honestly the most well taught class I've had in my four years at Vanderbilt. It was obvious that Prof Anoll was passionate about and well educated on the subject matter. She had really great guiding questions and ideas, but still left plenty of room for us to develop our own thoughts and influence the discussion. Often times classes that put so much focus on discussion and participation end up being just a reiteration of the readings over and over again by students trying to get participation points and little expertise from the professor, but I actually felt like I learned as much from Prof Anoll as I would have in a lecture style class while also getting to exercise productive discussion techniques. The content of this class was also incredible, and has done the best job yet at making me actually care about what I am reading about and sparked a desire in me to do something to change it.

Prepare yourself for a long review.

Professor Anoll is simply the best. She was incredibly understanding of outside circumstances I had going on but she was still challenging and set high expectations. Not only did I learn about the course material but from watching Professor Anoll teach and handle the classroom I also effectively learned strategies in leadership that I hope to carry into the real world. There was one instance, for example, where a guy in the class wrote something on the board as a joke (he did not mean any offense by it but I was really disturbed by the situation because I believe that if Professor Anoll were a man, this student would not have done this) (this very well could just be me extrapolating from the situation but I really did not like what this student did because I viewed it as somewhat sexist and taking away from Professor Anoll's authority to make an classroom joke, it was rather high school-ish). Rather than directly call out the student in class, she spent a decent amount of time during the next class talking to all of us about effective social science dialogue. She did not make this student feel uncomfortable for what he did but she taught all of us about how we should be focusing our efforts in our readings and our discussions. Professor Anoll could not have handled the situation any better and I definitely learned from it as one day I'm sure I will have to deal with people (whether it is unintentional or not) who will undermine my authority. Aside from this, this was absolutely the best class I've ever had in terms of real-world applicability. Professor Anoll challenged us to conduct research on a topic of our choice and then to focus this topic on a region of our choice so that we can submit an op-ed to a newspaper from this area. She also offered us extra credit for voting and challenged us at the end of the course to continue working toward at least one method we believe would effectively change the problems with the system we discussed in class. As someone who is generally very nervous to speak up in class, Professor Anoll made me feel comfortable and I really worked well with her system of participation. Professor Anoll encourages us to work toward a "humble confidence" level of participation and evaluates our participation based off our progress throughout the semester. She is unbelievably smart and amazing at what she does; I wish all professors taught like her.