



WashU Fall 2018 Instructor Report for FL2018.L30.Phil.131F.03 - Present Moral Problems (Taylor Cyr)

Project Title: **WashU Fall 2018 Course Evaluations**

Project Audience: **42**

Responses Received: **39**

Response Ratio: **92.86%**

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: **Thu, Jan 03, 2019**

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		4.40
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Standard Deviation		0.67

1. I have found the course intellectually challenging and stimulating	2. I have learned something which I consider valuable
3. My interest in the subject has increased as a consequence of this course	4. I have learned and understood the subject materials of this course

Organization

Competency Statistics		Value
Mean		4.67
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Standard Deviation		0.51

1. Instructor's explanations were clear	2. Course materials were well prepared and carefully explained
3. Proposed objectives agreed with those actually taught so I knew where the course was going	4. Instructor gave lectures that facilitated taking notes

Enthusiasm (Taylor Cyr)

Competency Statistics		Value
Mean		4.19
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Standard Deviation		0.87

1. Instructor was enthusiastic about teaching the course	2. Instructor was dynamic and energetic in conducting the course
3. Instructor enhanced presentations with the use of humor	4. Instructor's style of presentation held my interest during class

Individual rapport (Taylor Cyr)

Competency Statistics	Value
Mean	4.51
Median	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	0.73

1. Instructor was friendly towards individual students	2. Instructor made students feel welcome in seeking help/advice in or outside of class
3. Instructor had a genuine interest in individual students	4. Instructor was adequately accessible to students during office hours or after class

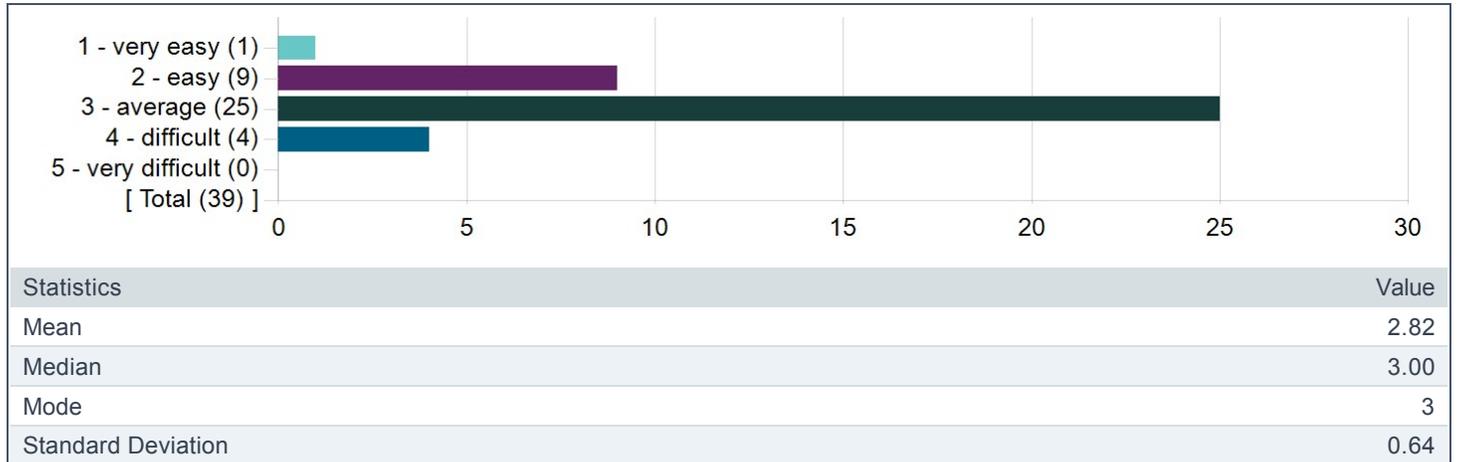
Comparison Detail for Course and Instructor Evaluation



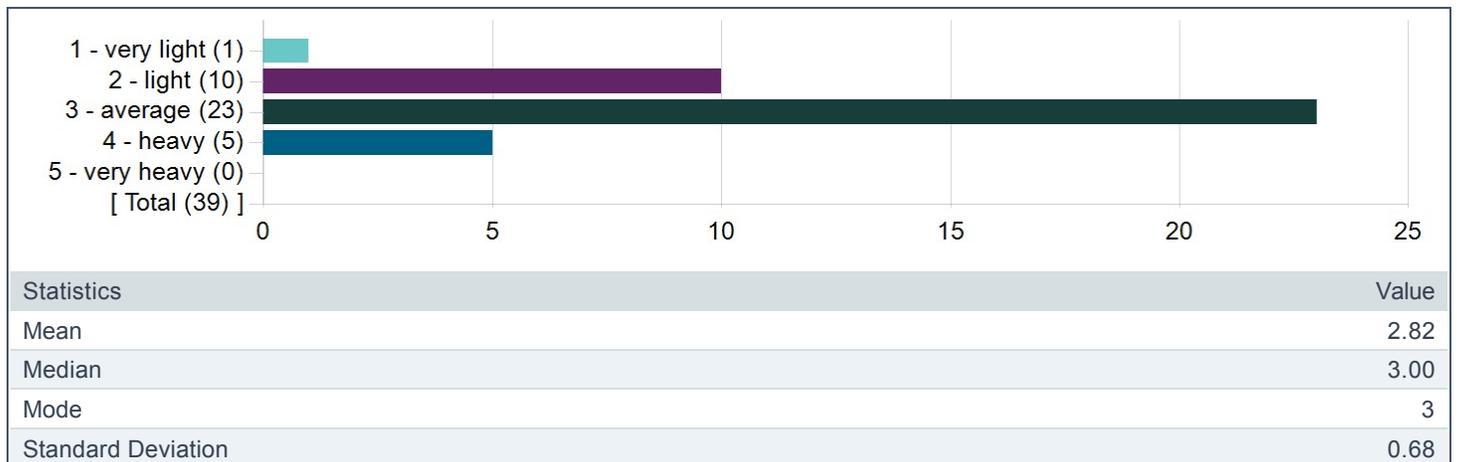
Varied Rating Scale Responses

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

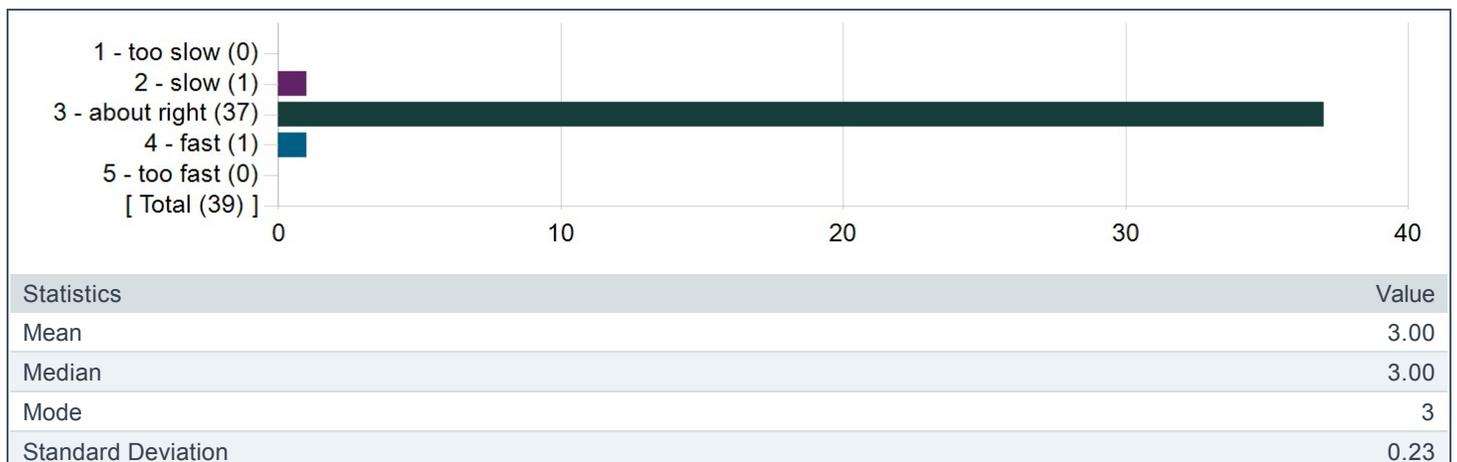
Course difficulty relative to other courses was



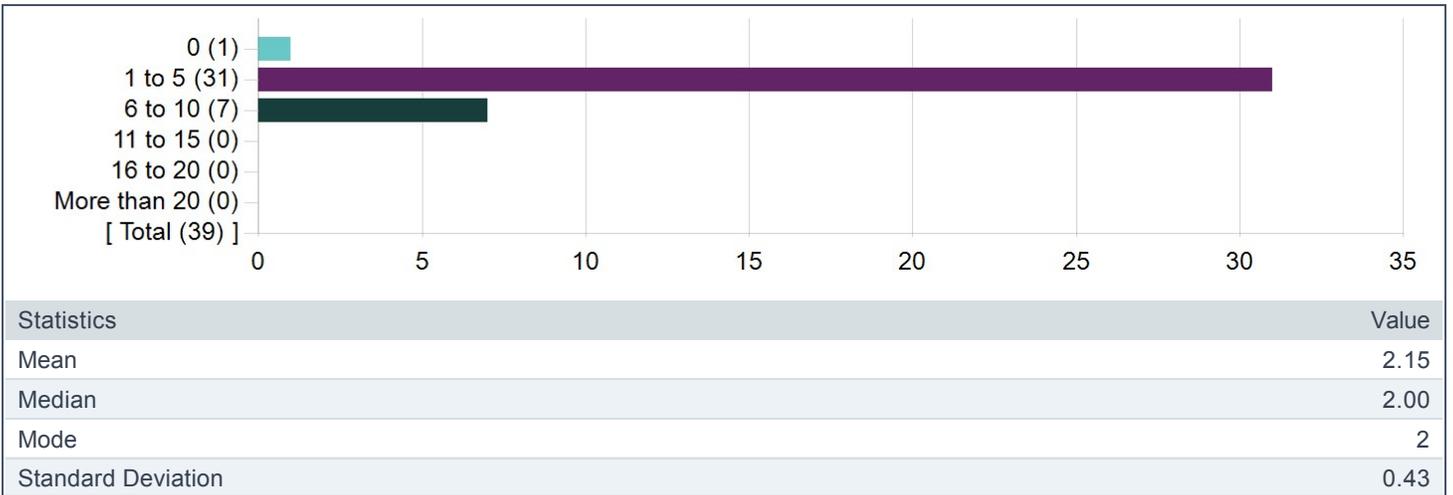
Course workload relative to other courses was



Course pace was

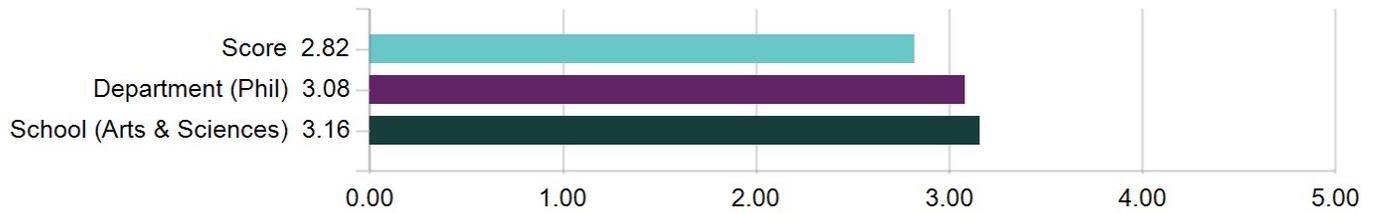


Hours per week required outside of class

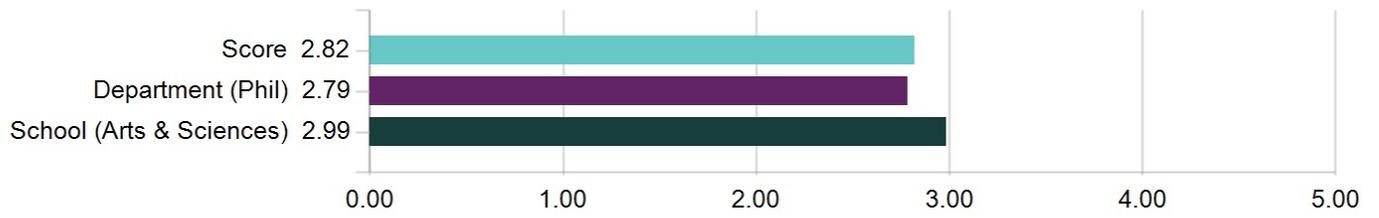


Comparison Detail for Varied Rating Scale Responses

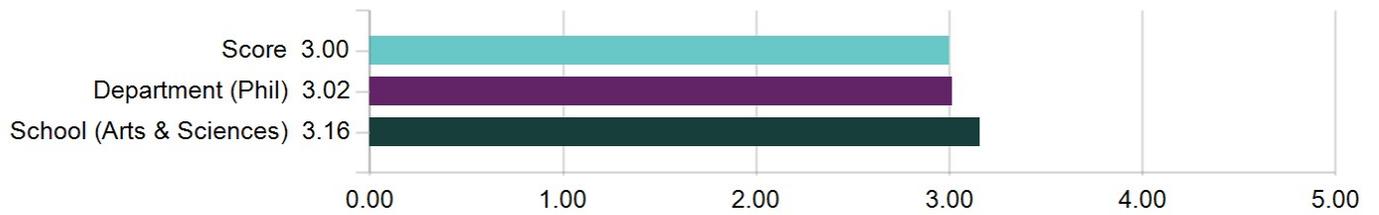
1. Course difficulty relative to other courses was



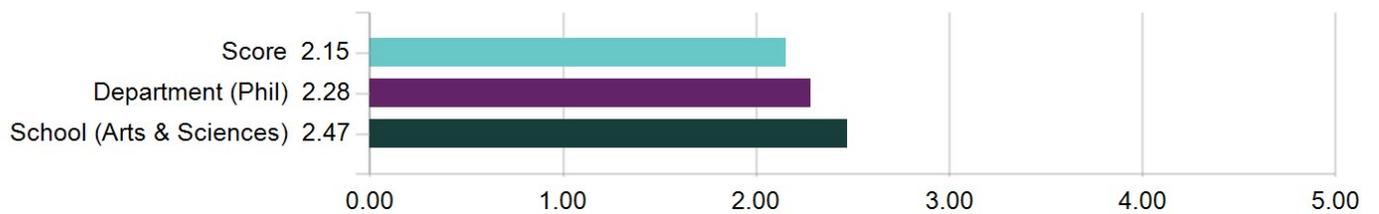
2. Course workload relative to other courses was



3. Course pace was



4. Hours per week required outside of class



Short Answer Responses

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

Comments
the content is very interest, but I think I was expecting it to be smaller and more discussion based. While I still enjoyed the content and thought the teacher was dynamic, I do think the class could of benefitted from a smaller class size.
This course really opened up how I think and was definitely interesting. The readings could be a little long and it wasn't run in a very dynamic way.
Take it if you enjoy philosophy
This is a really interesting course and if you pay attention in class and do the homework you will do well in the class
I would tell other Wash U students that this course is definitely one you should take because Dr. Cyr is an outstanding teacher who is extremely engaging and thoughtful in his classes.
I think this course was quite interesting. I would recommend taking this to challenge or even strengthen your opinions on certain subjects.
This course was extremely interesting and explored a variety of different controversial issues in todays society. It was a good first philosophy course taught at a perfect pace and manageable workload.
It's very interesting and relevant to a lot of contemporary issues. The class isn't unnecessarily difficult or stressful. I'd recommend it.
Make sure you do the readings so that the lectures can land with extra weight rather than just being an introduction to the topic.
I think it is a really good class to take because it is interesting and a size that is not too overwhelming.
Put in the time, and read.
I really enjoyed Present Moral Problems. It was a solid introduction to philosophy. It was also possible to do well on the midterms if you were committed to studying in advance.
As Long as you keep up with readings, take good notes, do a decent amount of studying, your grade will not go below a B
It is pretty interesting if you like philosophy. If you don't, you will likely be bored
it is less discussion based than you'd think but if you want to just learn dynamic view points about interesting current topics this is a good class to take
The class is a good introduction to philosophy and how philosophy is relevant to modern topics and the professor cares about students' learning and experience
This course is well designed and offers an introduction to relevant problems today.
Take it it's a great class
It's important to know that this course is very lecture-heavy. Most of the course is spent listening to Professor Cyr present on the reading from the night before and the topic of the day. It is important to take notes and pay attention throughout the lecture because his explanations of the concepts are very helpful and can be useful on the exams. It is also crucial to do the nightly readings, both so you understand the material and so that you can be prepared on the days when there are reading quizzes in class.
take it. its important to have a background on important problems and really analyze them from a philosophical perspective
Take it! Very interesting and covers a lot of topics.
readings are hard but its worth it
Very interesting and worth-while if you are interested in philosophy, ethics, or law.
This course does not explore the stances of present moral problems in the "real world" as much as a thought it would. It is mostly just how the problem relates to philosophy.
Interesting class – liked the discussion of ethical theories then present moral problems – good introduction to philsofhy
Really interesting introduction to applied ethical issues (independent of political arguments)
You have to stay on top of the material. It is very easy to fall behind if you do not stay up to date with the syllabus.
If you are interested in philosophy, then you will like this course. It is really lecture focused.
I would definitely encourage students to take this course. We went over a lot of interesting information and I think it is very applicable to the real world. The topics that we talk about are very relevant in today's society, so it is good to be up to date and know what is going on.
Be sure to read very carefully.

Describe at least one thing about this course that helped you learn.

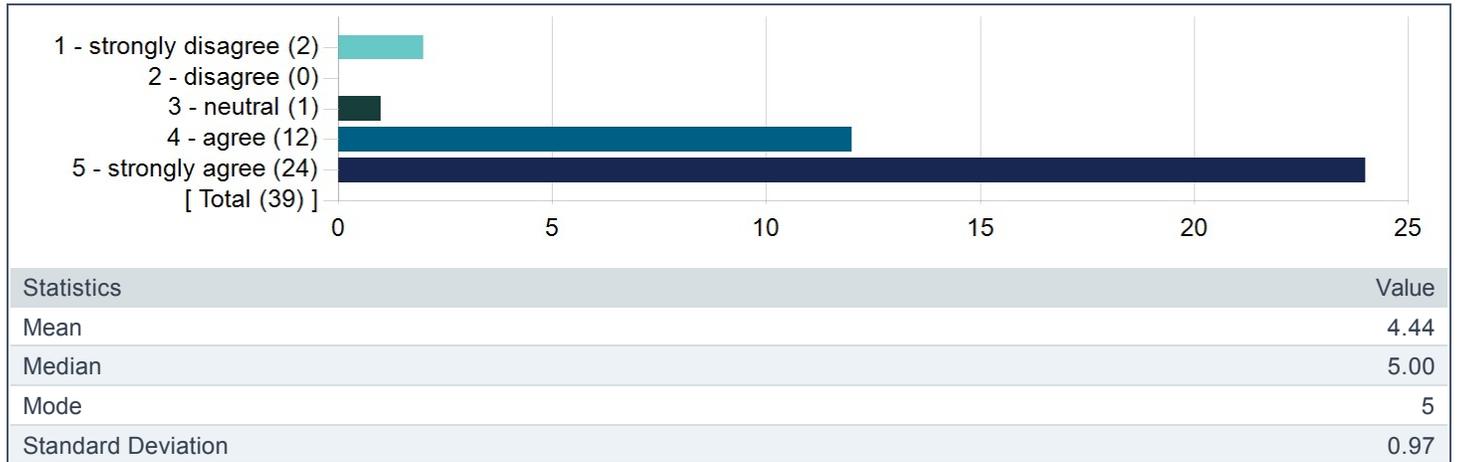
Comments
The powerpoints were very in depth and clear
Dr. Cyr was very helpful when meeting outside of class. He was always available to make meetings even when I couldn't attend office hours and he was good at answering questions.
Arguments for controversial topics
The power points were well set up and the whole course was well organized
I think the way the slides were presented and the way they were formatted with questions helped me learn new material.
When the slides were posted, I could refer to them outside of class.
Having readings due before we discussed the topic in class was helpful to have somewhat of a basic understanding of the subject.
Dr. Cyr was very good at clarifying the readings in class.
It helped me learn how to read philosophic arguments and understand my position relative to the readings.
Going over the readings was really helpful and having outlines for the test.
The study Guides
Prof Cyr did a great job of summarizing and explaining key points of the often very confusing, dense readings during class.
Reading Notes
How to use case studies to demonstrate philosophical points
how objective he was about each topic, he took a controversial topic and spoke of it exactly as the author did and did not input his bias
The lecture slides are always clear and detailed
Well written notes and clear study guides.
The organization of the slideshow in class was very pleasing to the eye and very helpful to me throughout the course. I really enjoy when a teacher structures a course and material in a logical manner, and it was very easy to follow the logic behind the arguments and material when Prof. Cyr presented them in class. I loved taking notes and enjoyed Prof. Cyr's additional examples and explanations.
going over readings in class
When the powerpoint presentations were posted on blackboard and I could follow along with the discussion and write down conversations more than just furiously typing down the slides.
having to do the readings and making a study guide
Reading quizzes made sure I stayed on top of my work.
Completing the study guides.
Note taking during class
The study guides were useful.
Something that helped me a lot during this course was the outside readings that we had to complete. For each topic that we covered, we had to read (more or less) one reading arguing one side and one reading arguing the opposite point. It was nice to read these essays individually and then discuss them in class to ensure that we understood what we had read. It also helped me keep up with the material we were learning in class.
The lectures and asking direct questions helped immensely.

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

Comments
I wish the course were smaller
Please make it essays and not tests—the tests encourage memorization over any sort of meaningful engagement with the texts
I wish that the class was more interactive. I had a hard time fully grasping concepts just through a powerpoint.
More engaging lectures with more discussion or group activities
I liked everything about the class
At the beginning of the class, not all of the slides were posted and I think this would have been helpful for studying for the first test.
I think the incorporation of more videos would be helpful to the course.
Discussing the readings more in depth would have been beneficial.
It would be fun and useful to have more class debates or discussions about moral issues.
Some questions on the exams seem very specific (multiple choice) even if one has read the readings. That could also be due to lack of rigorous studying so take that with a grain of salt.
No pop quizzes!
readings
I wish there was more of a focus on discussions. This definitely improved in the 2nd half of the semester, but could be more prevalent.
Trigger warnings
a little less repetitive with the method of learning(the PowerPoints are long and sometimes repeat unnecessary information)
More discussion and breaks in the lecture
more discussion based, more small groups talking about and debating our input
I would like to have more discussions in class
All was fair.
More discussion
I don't think there is much about this course that needs to be changed! I think the only possible addition could be more time for questions about the material from class, but Prof. Cyr does give us some time for questions and will always take questions if we raise our hands. Maybe some worksheets throughout the course so we could practice retrieving and going over the information that we learn? It could be a good idea to give three questions from the reading that we have to answer in a few sentences for each class if you're thinking of adding more homework! This could help us actually try and understand the readings more
more examples
More discussion–based class in a circle? Less people in a class and more sections to provide more input from all individuals rather than a key few.
less reading required
More group discussion perhaps.
More discussions would have provided a better understanding of the subjects.
Could be more discussion based – was very lecture/powerpoint heavy
Less stress on the reading quizzes.
In the lectures, we discussed a lot of ways to interpret and understand the readings, but that discussion obscured test questions, because we are forced to ignore the lectures to answer questions. The multiple choice/false questions were unclear and had many correct answers, which made it difficult to find success regardless of how much you prepare.
Moreover, a lot of the class material was very triggering, but there was never a trigger warning. We spent two weeks on death, which presented a range of difficult topics. My mom has been battling cancer and it was incredibly hard to sit in class and watch the documentary about PAS. There was never a trigger warning and I already wasn't doing well in the class, so I felt obligated to stay. It would have been nice to have content warnings and alternative assignments to get around sitting through those experiences.
One thing that could be changed about the class could be more class discussions. I think there were a lot of times that the professor wanted to have more discussions but we just didn't have time, so I think if there is free time it should be used for allowing the students to discuss the material amongst themselves.
The reading quizzes could be more general overviews of the essays.

Classroom Environment

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



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

Comments
He treated everyone equally
Dr. Cyr provided time in class for all students to share their own beliefs and contribute to the class discussion in a meaningful way.
The topics were sometimes sensitive but I think we were given unbiased lessons and readings from both sides.
The course topics discussed issues of race and gender respectfully
Students may not want to but maybe it would be a good idea to encourage students to share if they have been affected or know people affected by the issues we cover in class; this could encourage empathy & understanding (hopefully)
he was very inclusive in all discussions
In the course, we often discussed many sensitive subjects and Dr. Cyr handled the situations well and professionally.
He didn't discriminate against anyone.