

Barnard - Lecture/Seminar TA Fall 2013

POLSV3604_001_2013_3

Results of survey

Started: December 2, 2013

Ended: December 12, 2013

Reply rate: 76% (45 / 59)

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PLEASE NOTE: The question numbering will appear out of order due to a temporary error in the evaluation system.

What is at stake?

Barnard College seeks your assistance in enhancing the quality of its curriculum and instruction. Just as you uphold the Honor Code and resolve to refrain from every form of dishonesty in your academic life, we trust that you will be honest and thoughtful in your responses.

How is the information used?

Student feedback is used in two ways: i) The faculty incorporate student feedback as they continuously revise and enhance their courses. ii) Data from these surveys are key elements in how the College evaluates teaching during the reappointment, tenure and promotion processes.

How is my identity protected?

Your identity will be kept confidential. Responses will not be viewed by either the instructor or the department until after course grades have been submitted.

Note that multiple choice questions require a response. If you prefer not to answer a multiple choice question, select Not Applicable

Remember to click [Submit] when done.

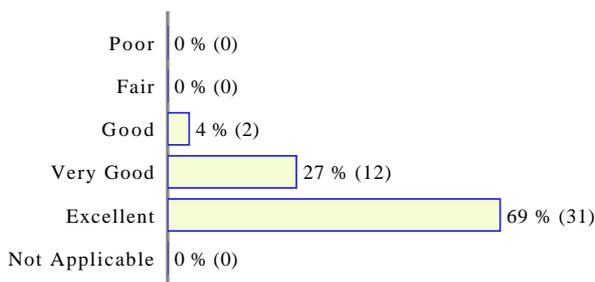
Course/Group Items:

COURSE

How would you rate this course on the following dimensions?

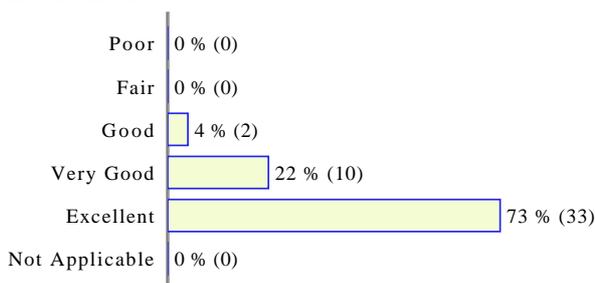
1. The overall quality of the course

45 answers, mean = 4.64



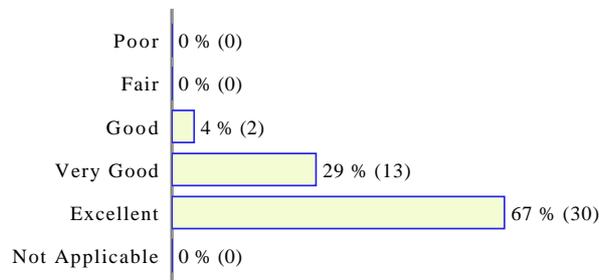
2. The clarity of course objectives

45 answers, mean = 4.69



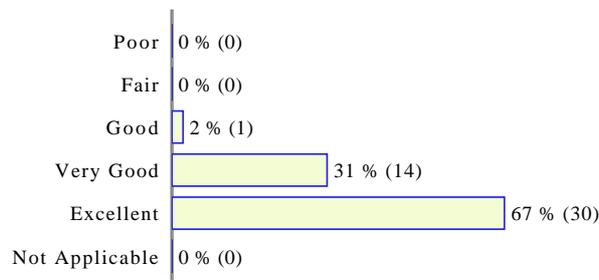
3. The organization of the course

45 answers, mean = 4.62



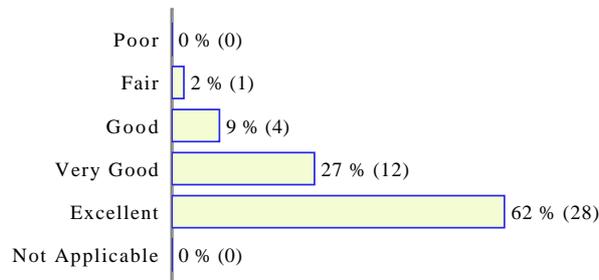
4. The clarity of course requirements

45 answers, mean = 4.64



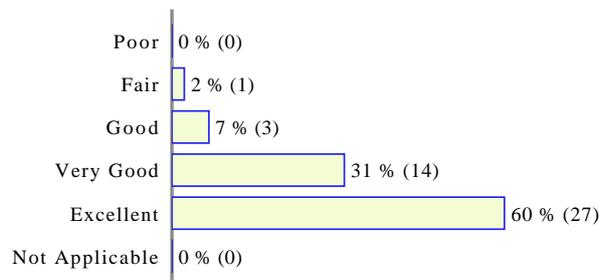
5. The clarity of grading standards

45 answers, mean = 4.49



6. The extent to which the class began and ended on time

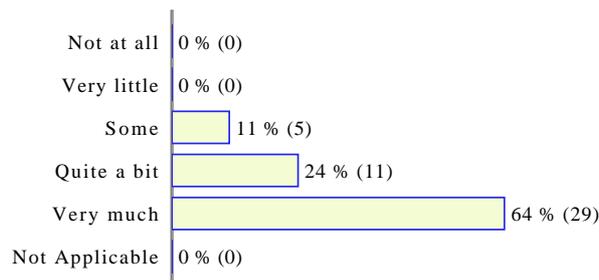
45 answers, mean = 4.49



How much has this course enabled you to do each of the following?

7. Increase your interest in the field

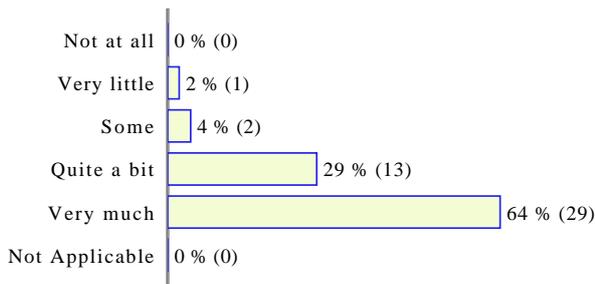
45 answers, mean = 4.53



8. Increase your understanding of the broader

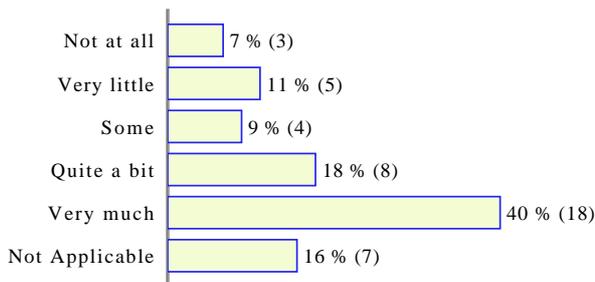
intellectual field

45 answers, mean = 4.56



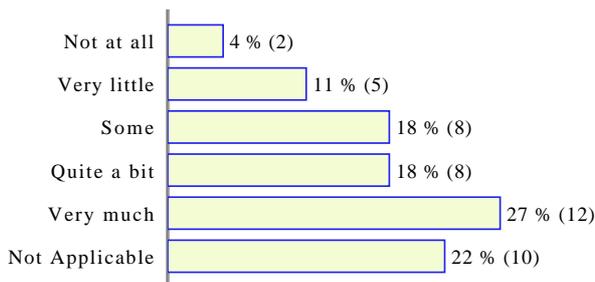
9. Improve your quantitative skills

38 answers, mean = 3.87



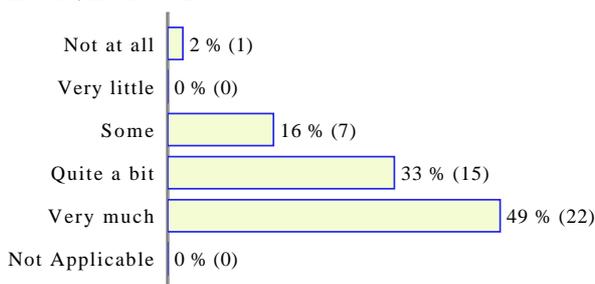
10. Improve your presentation skills

35 answers, mean = 3.66



11. Improve your writing skills

45 answers, mean = 4.27



12. Why did you take this course?

- Considered this course to be a good supplement to my Development Economic class
- strong interest in subject area
- MAJOR
- human rights concentration: I wanted to learn about Africa region, and issues of peace/conflict management
- Related to my major/personal interest.
- I took this course because I was considering pursuing a political science major.

- Political science requirement, general interest in Africa
- Because I am trying to decide between an Anthropology major and a Political Science major; and because I am interested in human rights and international politics.
- I knew next to nothing regarding Africa and I learned so much.
- Personal Interest
- I'm a political science major and have a deep interest in developing nations, so this class seemed perfect. I also used it to fulfill the IR requirement for the major.
- Strong interest in International Relations, Diplomacy and Foreign Service. Major in MESAAS (Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies).
- I have never studied anything related to the subject and was curious.
- I am interested in peacebuilding as a future career field.
- I chose this course because I'm really interested in the subject.
- Credit for my major but also because I have an interest in African Studies
- It sounded interesting
- General interest and to fulfill a concentration in African Studies
- I'm a political science major, and I had very little prior experience with coursework concerning sub-Saharan Africa.
- requirement
- n/a
- For my major and, because, I was more ignorant about Africa than other continents.
- Interest in Africa but no previous academic work in that region.
- Because I am a political science major and it fulfills my elective requirements, and I wish to study abroad in Africa.
- I took this course to fulfill a requirement for political science. This was a topic I knew nearly nothing about and was hoping also to get a primer in African conflicts
- In order to fulfill the elective course requirement for my Political Science concentration
- for my poli sci major
- I'm a political science major with a joint major in human rights studies
- As part of my major and to learn about Africa
- Never studied Africa.

- Wanted to increase knowledge of conflict in Africa and in conflict resolution in general.
- It is a requirement and I am interested in African studies

13. What did you value most about this course? In what ways did the course meet your expectations?

Explain why you would or would not recommend this course

- The structure and clear objectives. Stephanie did a great job at expanding the Professor's goals in her discussion sections.
- I learned an unbelievable amount
- what we learned and the way knowledge she had
- The organization and clarity. The course was through in covering the topics at hand, and met my expectations. I was nervous coming in because I knew little about Africa/conflict studies, but the course and instructor were instrumental in guiding me along the way. I feel like I understand the topic really well now. I also appreciated the freedom to choose a particular African country to focus on all year to analyze as a case study. I have recommended this course to multiple peers because of the interesting material, instructor quality, and thorough study.
- I learned a lot and it provided a really solid introduction to political science thinking even though I had never taken a political science course before. I would very much recommend the course and was really pleased by how much it improved my writing.
- I valued the professor and her teaching style. She spoke from personal experience and that was often very helpful in engaging the class with the material
- Severine's anecdotes, I would recommend it because it's interesting
- That there was such a range of topics and a great deal of depth allotted to each topic. The course covered many aspects of international inventions and civil wars and did so in an in-depth manner. This allowed me to learn a great deal on the subject.
- I learned much more in this course than I expected to. Most classes vaguely scrape the surface of topics, and this course was thorough and provided insight into specific issues.
- Incredibly interesting, very clear organization of concepts and theories, great case studies + supplementary material (videos, documentaries, guest speakers etc)
- Practical information, case studies, professor's extensive knowledge, structure and special guest(s).
- What started as curiosity turned into something much more. I was inspired by the way that both Prof Autesserre and Stephanie are examples of the way that academics have tangible real world applications that can play an important role in resolving some of the world's most devastating conflicts. I am now considering a career path that had never really crossed my mind before.
- I enjoyed learning about theory and using it to analyze cases in Africa.
- I've recommended this course to everyone I know. It's interesting and thought provoking; I can't believe how much I've learned and I feel really inspired to continue studying this topic. All semester I've been having way too many conversations with my friends and family about African civil wars, I think they're really starting to get annoyed with me.
- It introduced me to a lot of thinkers that I wouldn't have read otherwise, and gave me resources to point to in the future
- The material learned was very interesting and very clearly presented. The course gave us a strong foundation on civil wars in Africa and can serve as a good starting pint for any future interest in the topic.
- I appreciated the breadth of background on various country issues. I feel that Professor Autesserre and Stephanie Schwartz, in particular, are very passionate about this area of inquiry, and their enthusiasm for the topics helped to make a lot of the subject matter palatable and more accessible.
- I have never taken a poli sci class and learning how to write a paper for one was challenging, but good for me!
- n/a
- Effective teaching of civil war theories.
- Learning about various recent conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Completely recommend, Professor Autesserre is a dream professor. She is clear, timely, available, and engaged. For the first time, I have no critiques.
- I valued the wide array of theory and cases presented in the class. I learned so much about a field unknown to me and feel like I can use this theoretical framework to write papers in political science about African conflicts and many other topics
- The energy of the professor, it allowed for a more constructive perspective of comparative politics and international relations. I would definitely recommend this course, due to the aforementioned statements
- this course was HANDS DOWN the BEST class i have taken in college. I would most definitely recommend it because it has truly deepened my interest in the field by a mile.
- I loved the content much more than I thought I would!
- The grassroots experience of the professor.
- The ability to think like a political scientist

- Professor had first-hand knowledge and a strong viewpoint to share, supplemented by opposing ideas. We always learned about the various sides to things and evaluated each theory and approach for its merits.
- I value its African concentration. It met most of my expectations

14. What improvements would you like to see in the organization and content of this course?

- N/A
- perhaps either eliminate some of the case studies that do not involve much depth or provide more info
- Nothing
- more selective reading- some weeks have too much reading, not all of which is critical to understanding
- I wish that the course had included a bit more historical tracing of more civil wars in Africa before just diving into the theory, especially for people without a lot of knowledge about civil wars in Africa.
- Organization was perfect. Content seemed a bit sporadic, though. The course was organized thematically and not by country, which caused much stress when it came to writing papers. Most of the papers asked us to focus on a country which became difficult when all we had been doing was studying theory.
- Wider variety of conflicts
- More time to write the essays. A week is not sufficient for an in-depth 8 page paper.
- That is hard to say. I thought the course was incredibly well organized. I suppose the only suggestion would be to refine the lecture on peacebuilding regarding common tactics used, in particular elections. It became slightly repetitive and didn't offer as many viewpoints or room for critical thinking and debate on the subject as did other topics covered.
- I would have loved to spend more time on international intervention/peacebuilding/peacekeeping
- T.A. discussion sections (they are not always useful), evaluations (two, instead of three) + in-class exam, more case-based lectures
- None.
- N/A the class is great!
- Some of the readings were pretty dry. In terms of the readings, I would gladly have read a list of journal articles rather than delving into single books on a weekly basis. This also would have helped with the discussion sections - comparing and contrasting points of view presented in various articles rather than getting mired in the viewpoint of a single author.

- none!
- n/a
- More application of theories to specifics of Africa conflicts. If you wrote the papers on 1 or 2 countries, you could leave this class knowing the theories but not anything about Africa.
- Some of the theories tend to be pretty basic, I would have enjoyed more case studies on more conflicts to discern patterns in the conflicts.
- More links between case studies and theory. Organization is spot on.
- More case studies.
- None, its perfect
- Please refer to previous question.
- More west Africa
- We talked a lot about the theoretical benefits of grassroots, bottom-up peacebuilding efforts, but I felt that the methods of practical application were not clearly addressed.
- None

15. Did the course inspire you to put in extra time and effort, over and beyond what was required? Can you explain why or why not?

- Yes, because i was interested in the subject
- yes- I've read a lot of additional books/resources for extra research on papers. I put in a lot of time to papers not only to gather research, but also because I wanted to continue reading more about the issue
- Yes, absolutely. The readings were thoughtfully chosen, the assignments were challenging and intellectually stimulating, and I saw my writing improve immensely.
- Not necessarily - was very demanding as is.
- Yes, I wanted to watch documentaries to better understand the conflicts
- Yes, because the subject matter was fascinating and the professor was engaging.
- Certainly.
- Yes
- I spent a lot of time working on the essays and was really interested in my research for the two long-term papers.
- Yes. Because of the passion of the instructor. When it is so obvious that someone is so invested in their work it is inspiring. Furthermore, the fact that the theories and abstract academic concepts we studied have such clear tangible applications (as evidenced by all of Professor Autesserre's stories about her experiences in the field) is inspiring to

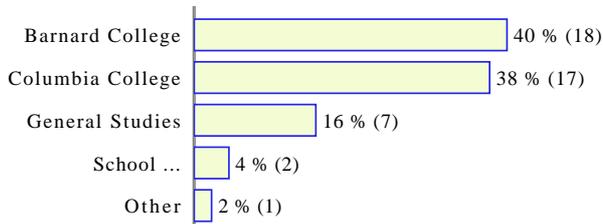
someone who, as much as I love school, is also interested in doing what I can to make the world a better place. I didn't really know if that was possible before, but now in Professor Autesserre I see a role model.

- Yes! I've been following up on peacebuilding/UN missions. I am reorienting my post-graduation job hunt towards international organization/humanitarian organization work.
- Honestly this class is really intense- it was pretty challenging for me to get all of the readings and essays done all semester, I'm not sure if I could have done more than what was required without negatively affecting my other classes.
- Yes, definitely.
- Yes, I sought out lectures and documentary material external to the class, in large part because these were pointed out to us by Professor Autesserre and Stephanie Schwartz.
- it inspired me to do more, but I had so much other work and other classes that I often couldn't do as much as I wanted to and couldn't keep up with the readings most of the time.
- n/a
- Somewhat. I would have been more inspired, if the paper requirements allowed for more originality.
- Yes, Professor Autesserre's devotion and passion was inspiring, and I wanted to put in greater effort as a result.
- I have been inspired to read additional books on new conflicts that we did not study
- Not really, but I was swamped this semester
- Definitely ,readings were dense but mostly interesting
- Yes, absolutely.
- Yes, because the topic was completely foreign to me.
- Yes because I had a bad first grade
- Yes - when Leymah Gbowee came to speak, I was inspired to read her book.
- Yes, because research was needed for papers and it was interesting material

STUDENT

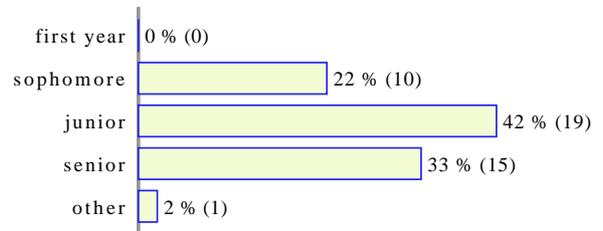
16. Institutional identification:

45 answers, mean = 1.91



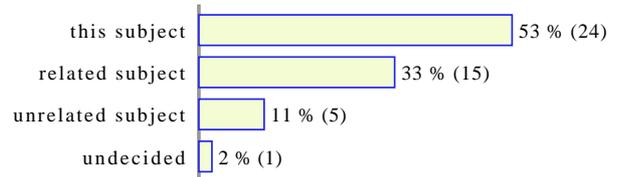
17. My class year is:

45 answers, mean = 3.16



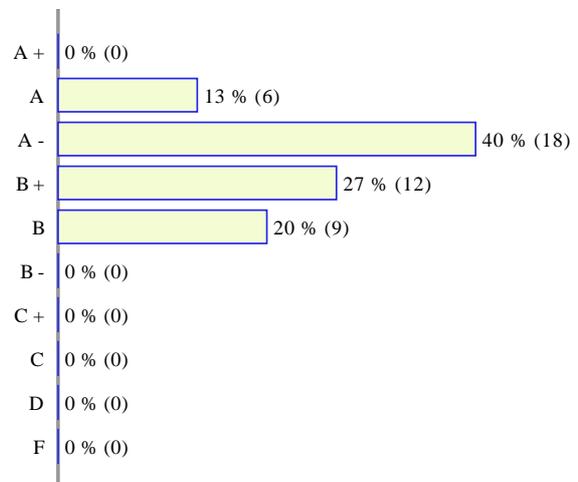
18. My major is:

45 answers, mean = 1.62



19. I expect to earn a grade of:

45 answers, mean = 3.53



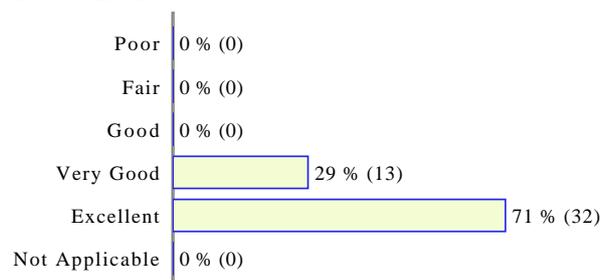
Thank you for helping to improve Barnard courses. Remember to click [Submit] when done. If you would like to opt out of this course evaluation choose N/A for all of the questions.

Instructor/Evaluatee: Severine Autesserre
INSTRUCTOR

How would you rate your instructor in the following areas?

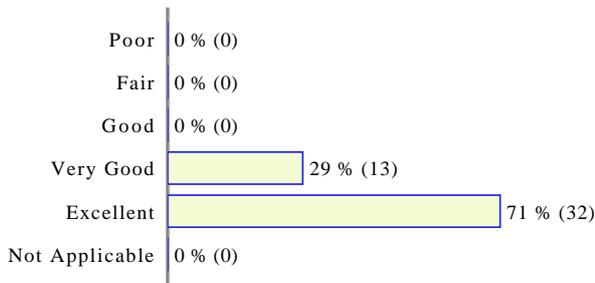
20. The overall quality of the instructor's teaching

45 answers, mean = 4.71



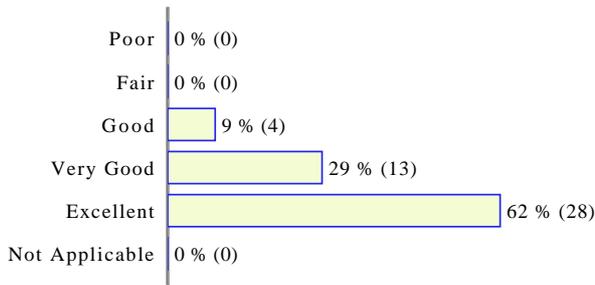
21. The instructor's effectiveness in communicating the subject matter

45 answers, mean = 4.71



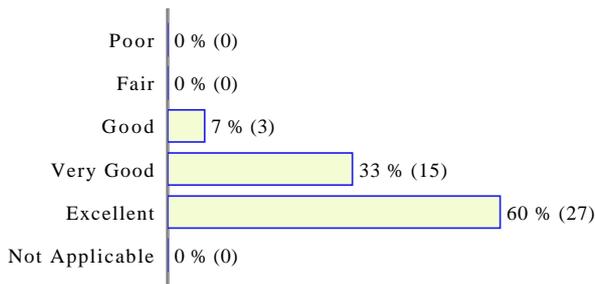
22. The instructor's ability to stimulate your intellectual curiosity

45 answers, mean = 4.53



23. The instructor's ability to stimulate student participation in class

45 answers, mean = 4.53



24. The instructor's effectiveness in answering questions

Font Definitions

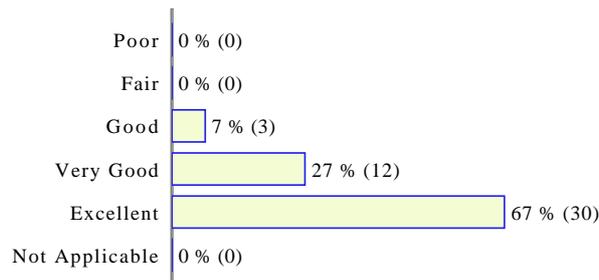
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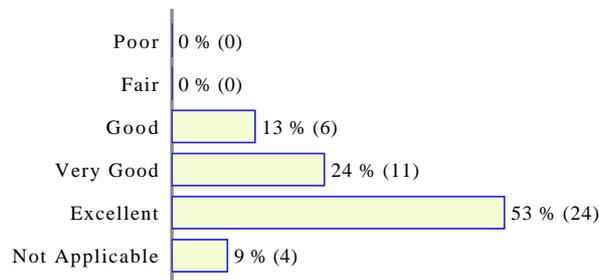
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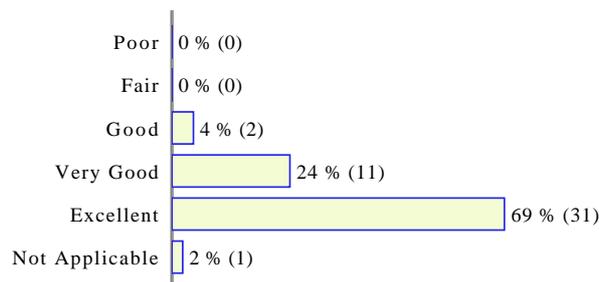
25. The instructor's feedback on your work

41 answers, mean = 4.44



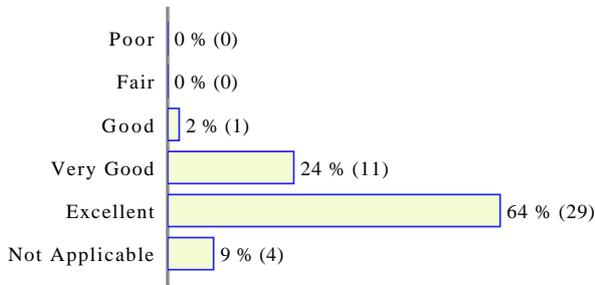
26. The instructor's timeliness in returning your work

44 answers, mean = 4.66



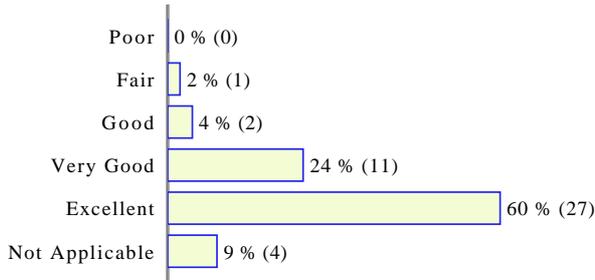
27. The instructor's availability during scheduled office hours

41 answers, mean = 4.68



28. The adequacy of scheduled office hours

41 answers, mean = 4.56



29. What did you value most about your instructor's teaching methods?

- Case studies.
- She was clear, to-the-point
- Prof. Autesserre was one of my most enthusiastic professors - this allowed me to engage in the subject matter and care about it because she genuinely seemed to care about it. very detailed and informative. welcomes debate and questions at all times - extremely important part of the course. I learned a lot. one of my favorite classes, despite being one of my worse grades (at this point)
- Open to discussion and new ideas. Always Helpful
- SO thorough! She is so effective in clarifying course material and assignments, and so open to all questions. She is very approachable, and made the complex topic of African violence understandable and enjoyable for a new comer like myself
- I really appreciated how knowledgeable, dedicated, and organized the professor is!
- I loved that she was truly passionate and extremely professional.
- Her field experience
- Her strong ability to encourage student participation
- Professor Autesserre is engaging and thorough in her teaching style. She is a wonderful professor, and I learned soooo much in her class. She had definitely sparked an interest in African affairs. I was also very impressed by the clear and thorough organization in which the course material was presented. This has certainly been one of my favorite college classes thus far.
- Always answered questions
- Always available for office hours
- Able to lecture and have class discussions
- Very clear presentations
- Prof. Autesserre was very clear and organized in how she presented the theories and concepts which could often be confusing in the readings.
- Professor Autesserre's passion and first hand experience inspired an interest that I never would have expected to develop in the topic. I feel lucky to have taken a class with someone who is so clearly invested in her material, both as an academic and someone who continues to deal with these issues first hand in her work in the real world, so to speak.
- I liked that we would always try to have a discussion rather than a lecture
- Professor Autesserre is very enthusiastic and loves what she does! It's one of the best classes I've ever taken at Columbia. She is an amazing professor!
- I really liked the level of class participation in the lectures and I also really enjoyed the structure of the class in general- the material could be really complex but I felt like I understood everything because Professor Autesserre did such a great job of explaining and contextualizing in class. I also really appreciated how enthusiastic she was about teaching us the material, I really looked forward to this class each week.
- Her topics were very interesting and intriguing. Class discussion was not boring. She adjusted her class according to what the students asked for (ie. After midterm evaluation she uploaded the ppp)
- The variety of the ideas that were presented with equal fervor
- The fact that lectures are so well organized and that she makes it very clear what is expected of students during the semester. The detailed syllabus and assignments were also helpful
- Well-organized, concise lectures
- Prof Autesserre is truly amazing. She's incredibly intelligent and surprisingly funny! It was truly a pleasure taking her class.
- n/a
- Comprehensive covering of important theories.
- The clarity of the professor's lectures, ideas, and plans, is unmatched by any previous professor I have ever had. I didn't mind taking handwritten notes because I always knew where the lecture was going, and I didn't need to copy/paste notes because her format was clear ahead of time. She always had the same pattern of giving us an overview of the daily lesson, reminders about assignments, asking for questions, etc, which was extremely considerate and helpful for many.