

Midcourse Review for Dr. Jay Todd
XCOR 3010-09/11
Spring 2022
Conducted by Dr. Elizabeth Yost Hammer

What's working/Helping Learning

There was a lot of good information here. Overall students really like the course--the organization, pace, assignments, and the ungrading.

- The majority of the comments mentioned something about the videos you make (e.g., I like watching the videos you post and the Edpuzzles are fun, The pre-reading YouTube videos and the discussion posts are helping me learn the materials for the class, I believe the video discussions and assignments are mostly helping me learn the material in an engaging way as opposed to just reading materials, The thorough videos Dr.Todd posts when he is explaining the subject(s) at hand that we're learning, and the comments go on and on.)
- A significant number of comments also mentioned the assignments—annotations, blog post, reviewing work with peers, and voicethreads (e.g., Doing the readings and applying what I learn from the readings to the required blog post, the Voicethread assignments where the class can share open thoughts about the topics we are covering each week, the annotations are useful in the readings, Annotation and Research Exercises work well together.
- There were many comments indicating that students appreciate the organization of the course (e.g., taking everything one step at a time, when I break up the assignments in days according to the list I am able to make sure I am retaining the information that I'm learning, how everything is due on one day which allows me to get it done before the due date and throughout the week, having multiple assignments that tie into the overall topic for the week but approaches it in different ways is helpful to understanding how we can apply what we learned to different topics, The structure of the class and how repetitive the assignments are, like I know each week I have a blog post, weekly post and possibly an annotated reading, The ability to work at my own pace with one assignment due mid week, and the comments continue.)
- Students responded positively to the ungrading (e.g., the ungrading scale! When I submit assignments, I always put in my best effort; however, the ungrading system makes me feel less anxious about the work and allows me to really focus on learning, I like the way the class is set up and how things are graded.)
- There was also some mention of the asynchronous format being beneficial (e.g., Not feeling under any pressure. I honestly think completing my assignments way ahead of time have helped me learn the material, Since the class is asynchronous it helps relieve the stress of keeping up with other classes.)

Not Working/Hindering Learning

- Many students put N/A or indicated that nothing is hindering their learning. (e.g., There is nothing hindering my ability to learn in this course. Dr. Todd is a very detailed explainer and makes sure that we are aware of deadlines, activities, and any changes that occur).
- The biggest theme that emerged was around the "excessive" amount of work and the number of assignments required for the course (e.g., The readings on top of all the assignments are a little overwhelming, Keeping up with the assignments, research exercises and the readings were a bit too much, especially only having a week to do all, With other classes, work and balancing everything else, the required assignments for the course was a bit overwhelming, The amount of course work for this class, Way too much work and extremely time consuming. I feel like XCOR classes should not be this excessive, and so on).
- Interestingly, several students mentioned their own behaviors as hindering their learning (e.g., I think a lack of motivation is preventing me from learning the material that I am expected to learn in this class. I am not saying that I am not learning anything, I am simply saying that I am not motivated and I am not enjoying it as much as I should be. This is not the case for this class only this is the case with all of my classes as well, The only thing that is

hindering my ability to learn is that I am a procrastiantor and usually prioritize my major classes over the elective classes, I think the fact that we do not meet in person makes me forget about this class sometimes. I have to personally remind myself, The weekly assignments are a bit much however that may also be my fault partially because I wait to the last minute). And this one, which I am sure refers to procrastination, really made me chuckle—My habit of procreating hinders my ability to learn the material.

- A few students mentioned the group work, but only because it was difficult to connect with their group in the asynchronous setting.
- Some students mentioned specific assignments here and there (e.g., blogposts, research, annotations), but not enough to emerge as a theme.

Suggestions

- There were many responses of N/A, no changes, and fine as is. There were even some comments about it being “perfectly” structured and you being “accommodating.”
- Most suggestions centered around less work/fewer assignments (e.g., I don't think it would necessarily make the class better, because it is an enjoyable class. However, possibly less assignments during the week. I think most students complete the assignments for completion rather than actually doing them to actually the material, Allowing us to read 20-30 pages a week rather than 3 chapters every week on top of the writing assignments, Maybe scratch of two assignments for each week and this class would be perfect!, and similar comments about reducing work in some way).
- Others that might be useful:
 - A more solid definition of a dystopia could be helpful
 - Maybe more reminders for assignments.
 - The deadline should be Sunday at 11:59pm for the assignments. Another: I think having the due dates for certain task be due on Sunday night would be better than on a Saturday at 10:00pm
 - I think this class can be better by doing group check ins.
 - A few students mentioned making the podcast project an individual one as opposed to a group project (e.g., the podcast project is it bit hard since we don't see each other in actual class so I would make the podcast project an individual thing).

My Comments

Forty-six students responded, and the comments were overwhelmingly positive (e.g., class layout is great. love the grading system. amazing topics. Even better professor. He's amazing.) One student said, “I wish I had more professors like him when I first started college. I believe I would have been more engaged and I would have grasped more with his teaching style. 10/10” This is really good feedback from an XCOR class. The thought and care you are putting into your assignments, structure, and feedback seems to be paying off. The major concern seems to be that workload (one student said they were “surprised” by the workload. Much of this is probably compounded by it being an XCOR, being online, and COVID. There was some concern about the groupwork for the podcast. Keep up the good work!