

Spring 2017 Course Evaluations - Arts and Sciences and Engineering

Sp17-PS-0061-01-Intro International Rel

Michael Beckley

Results of survey

Started: April 21, 2017

Ended: May 4, 2017

Reply rate: 92% (109 / 119)

Spring 2017 Course Evaluations - Arts and Sciences and Engineering

Student Course Evaluations play an important role in the effort to assess and improve teaching at Tufts. Your honest, constructive, and detailed feedback not only is essential for evaluating the courses you are taking now, but also will benefit future students. Responses are confidential, and instructors will gain access to anonymous results only after final grades are posted. Thank you for your participation. Completing your course evaluations by the deadline will give you early access to view your grades, as soon as they are posted by the professor during the grading period. Students who do not complete all their evaluations by the deadline must wait to see their grades (by accessing their unofficial transcript on SIS) until after the grading deadline. Please note that official transcripts for enrolled students are never released until after the grading deadline. Plan ahead for opportunities that require an official transcript.

Course Items:

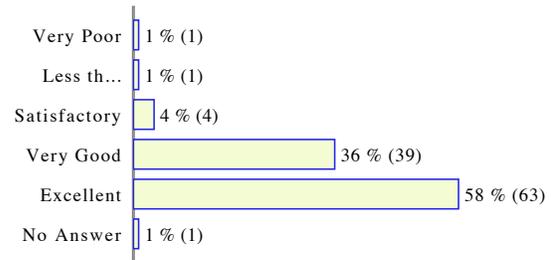
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Course Questions

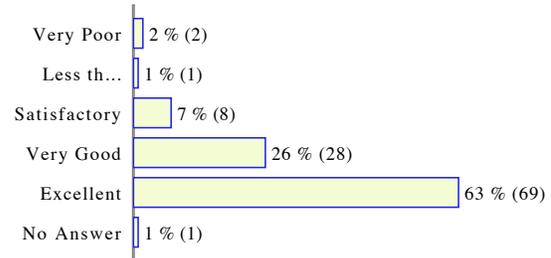
1. How would you rate the success of the course in accomplishing its objectives as stated on the course syllabus?

108 answers, mean = 4.50, std dev = 0.70



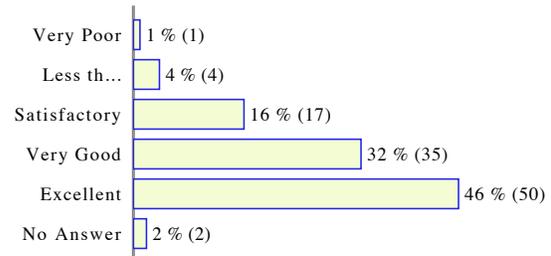
2. How would you rate the use of class time (lectures, discussions, demonstrations, labs, etc.) to promote your learning?

108 answers, mean = 4.49, std dev = 0.83



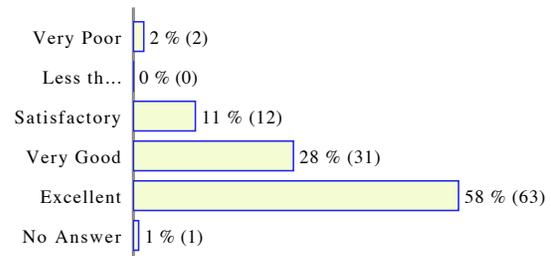
3. How would you rate the use of out-of-class activities (reading assignments, homework, papers, projects, etc.) to promote your learning?

107 answers, mean = 4.21, std dev = 0.91



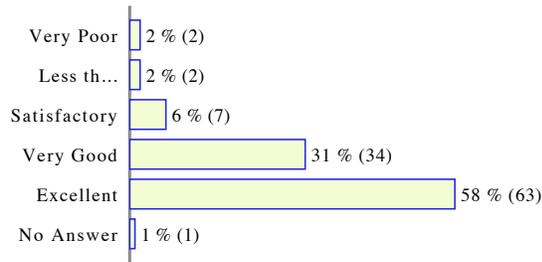
4. How would you rate the way the course engaged your interest?

108 answers, mean = 4.42, std dev = 0.83



5. Based on your answers above, and any other factors you consider important, please provide an overall evaluation of the course.

108 answers, mean = 4.43, std dev = 0.85



6. In what ways has this course made you think differently or more deeply? Please provide examples.

- Some recitations allowed for great discussion regarding the analysis of the material.
- This course has challenged many of my fundamental assumptions about global politics, ethics, and history. The effort of this course to explain seemingly irrational things (like war and violence) in terms of the behavior of rational actors in anarchy has really put a new lens on how I view almost everything. I think that this understanding that all states (and sometimes people) are actors working under conditions of anarchy and that this influences our decision-making has helped me to have greater empathy towards our opponents on the geopolitical stage; I hope that going forward I can keep this understanding and use it to more clearly analyze the actions of states both in current events and in my other courses at Tufts.
- I begin to hate ir
- Professor Beckley introduced IR concepts in an understandable and engaging way.
- It made me think more critically about the world around me and my possible impending doom from nuclear war, but also reasons for why it may not be likely!
- I now know that IR is the major for me
- I have learned how to analyze and evaluate other countries on an international stage.
- Professor Beckley teaches the information from a relatively unbiased perspective, denoting the pros and cons of every theory or belief and yet is very efficient in leading you to believe that one is the "more right" or more viable of the options available.
- Gives a good idea of what the field has to offer
- The course covered a lot of different areas of IR, so I was able to think differently about a wide range of things
- all concepts are interesting and have forced me to think about these theories in the context of the real world.
- It took history that I had learned all of my life and connected it through concepts that were made simple by professor Beckley's teaching style
- Simulation shows skills necessary for real world applications

- Real life examples, emphasis on polarity, reflecting on US hegemony and where the future is heading...
- I LOVE this course. I really love when you provide real world examples to the theories and concepts we cover in lecture. It is so cool to see how these theories aren't just some far away thing that no one listens to, but are actually being played out on an international stage. Also, the simulation does a great job illustrating these as well.
- This course made me read and think about issues or problems that I would not have researched on my own. Reading every week coupled with lectures introduced several ways of thinking about one issue instead of only presenting one school of thought. I was challenged every week to reevaluate my thoughts of the world and solutions to extremely complex issues.
- I was initially intimidated by the rigorous notoriety Intro to IR has at Tufts. Professor Beckley did an incredible job of spending all of class time thoroughly explaining all topics and relating them to current events that the students could relate to.
- Although we had to learn a lot of material, it was presented in a way that helped me make connections between topics.
- Every lecture challenged my thoughts
- I now see the world more within the context of international affairs.
- It grew my theoretical knowledge and vocabulary.
- Learning about the paradigms of international relation offer me a systemic way to look at international politics
- It made me more aware of how countries interact with one another throughout history and why they interact the way that they do.
- It taught me a lot of history I didn't know and made me think more critically about situations in the real world that are happening or have happened.
- It made me think more in depth about the news articles I read on foreign affairs and how many sides there are to every issue
- I've learned to read in a more efficient manner as a result of the heavy load, write more concisely because of time limits on exams for large topics and also the low maximum word count for the policy memo, and think more deeply because of debates we had during section.
- When professor Beckley provides counter arguments to his proposals, I am forced to think about opposing opinions. For example, when he discussed the Balance of Power Theory logic.
- It fleshed out my knowledge of the international system
- the recitations (with Meg) were very engaging and allowed

for deeper thought on issues, also learned a lot of fun stuff about the US Navy

- I believe I have a very solid foundation of knowledge about International Relations after this course. I feel much more confident going ahead as an IR major after taking Intro to IR. This course also did a good job of finding a balance between teaching theory and then relating the theory to actual events.
- This class really interested me and definitely gave me a better understanding on what to expect (as a whole) in the field of international relations and political science.
- This course allowed me to develop a broad base of knowledge, skills, and resources to draw from when evaluating topics in international relations. I also feel like the readings allowed me to better grasp not only IR concepts and key events, but also enabled me to gain better reading and critical thinking skills as well.
- This course provides a comprehensive overview of a subject that is often talked about, but not fully understood. Professor Beckley's lectures are packed with information, as well as references to current events that allow students to frame the academic content.
- Yes, it's completely changed my world view. Best class I've taken at Tufts.
- It provides me an opportunity to learn what international relations is. I love reading all the readings that have controversial opinions and thus be clearer about my thoughts.
- It covers a lot of topics in an engaging way
- good lectures
- The wide range of subjects learned throughout Intro to IR has changed my perspective on the world and on world government. I love that it was able to touch on so many different areas of the complex realm of international relations, offering something of appeal to every student in the course. Professor Beckley was accessible and broke down the material so that it was easy to understand.
- The simulation was a great way to see the methods and concepts we learned about come to fruition. Also, recitation always had really great conversations.
- The relevance to real world is my favorite part. Also the professor and TAs are so knowledgeable!
- This course has definitely made me think differently and more deeply about international relations and how diplomacy functions in the real world. The simulation at the end is also very interesting and helpful in terms of recognizing the kinds of skills that are needed and the situations that one would encounter as a diplomat in international diplomacy and international politics.
- Intro to International Relations is like, as Professor Beckley

described, Spanish tapas - introduction to many realms such as finance, power, war, etc. Because each lecture (or pair of lectures) was based on a certain realm, it provided students with many different, yet organized, examples and ways to interpret the rather-difficult information.

- Before Intro IR, I followed politics and foreign policy avidly - but what this class did for me was give me the vocabulary and concepts to understand some of the news I was looking at. It has certainly added new dimensions to my knowledge and my analysis, and solidified my liking for IR/Pol Sci.
- I especially appreciate the debate in the recitation as it helps me to look at the problem from more than one aspect, and debate is also a good way to apply what I have learned and read into defending one's view.
- Made me understand how world politics work
- This course pushed me to think deeper about the way our world works, and forced me to consider the "behind the scenes" of world policies.
- broadened my world view and gave me new lenses to look at world events
- -strategy and threat assessment great for personal conflicts as well as professional life
-readings were interesting and help me think more divergently/creatively about things I read on the news
- I have a depth of appreciation for International Relations now and am declaring it as my major
- It has made me realize how complicated and nuanced the international system is. There are many conflicting theories and it seems as if IR's theories have many contradictions. Everything seems to have an exception, making the course seem as if we are only dealing with abstract theories.
- Being in this class and participating in recitation really made me aware of how IR in itself can be very western and doesn't acknowledge many systemic failures (this could be just a time thing because Beckley really made sure to crack a joke here and there). Some opinions were clearly misogynistic, racist, and imperialist. Many people spoke about decolonization and colonization in very disrespectful lights and essentially white people exposed themselves in this class. Also, during the simulation someone said that enslaving people was good because you could get them (slaves) to do whatever you wanted....as if slavery is not a real thing that has generationally affected people. With this said, it is interesting to think that these may be future leaders of the free world. My interactions with people definitely shaped how I viewed and approached the material and other spaces at Tufts.
- I am a political science major; I took this course to satisfy my international relations requirement for the major. This class provided a thorough survey of the field of international relations. Obviously international relations is a field that

encompasses a broad array of topics; there's a lot to study. After taking this class, I feel I have a good idea of the subjects that the field touches on.

- Really made me consider aspects of IR I never thought about before and care more about the world, I loved the discussions in section and Beckley's organization and it all made me think
- It introduced a completely new topic that I knew nothing about and really peaked my interest.
- The course topic is incredibly interesting and it can be very engaging with a good teacher. It's given me a lot of perspective and knowledge that allows me to view the world on a global scale and in terms of politics, and international relations.
- I learned so much about International Relations and how each different actors in our world make decisions.
- It made me think about Politics as a brutal fight with no rules applied - which is what it is. A dismal outlook on the world but unfortunately accurate.

7. What aspects of this course worked best to facilitate your learning?

- The simulation allowed for an analysis of the material we learned throughout the course.
- Although the lectures were, by their nature, very large, the use of readings to introduce information and then recitation to reinforce the learning has really helped me to internalize many of the concepts taught in this course.
- I really appreciated Professor Beckley's lectures. Meg was an incredibly helpful TA who dedicated a huge amount of time to helping students and thoughtfully explaining difficult concepts. Meg also supported her students outside of class by attending a home track meet, for example. Getting to hear her ideas and about her work has made me more interested in IR while also making the class feel like a more welcoming environment.
- The lectures, the professor is a very good lecturer
- the recitations helped so much
- Reading work
- Recitation with Meg Guilford. Best TA I've ever had. She leads fantastic discussions and students are eager to debate and defend issues they learned in the previous class.
- Recitation
- The recitations and my TA, Meg Guilford, were the most helpful parts of this class. Professor Beckley was not helpful. A fantastic TA helped to make up for a very subpar, disappointing professor.
- Lectures were incredible and recitation discussions helped

enforce material.

- The engaging lectures, the ways that we were encouraged to engage through recitation
- Simulation, recitation discussions
- Incredible TA's
- Recitation with Sydney was really helpful!
- The lectures. they were amazing.
- The readings, although very long, were very helpful. Some of them were dry but there was something to learn from every article we read. It did not feel like busy work or unnecessary.
- As lengthy as the readings were, it was a great way to reinforce our learning and understanding of materials.
- the simulation
- Simulation
- The sections were particularly helpful.
- The recitation structures (debates, small group discussions, etc.) allowed me to benefit from the perspectives of students who had different opinions.
- reading through all the interesting readings
- The recitations were very helpful in further explaining course concepts. The lectures were extremely interesting.
- detailed lectures
engaging recitations
motivated peers
- Simulation, recitation when it was used to review reading materials
- Professor Beckley's lecture style
- I loved the simulation at the end where we got to apply our learning.
- The lecture time was absolutely utilized!
- Lectures and powerpoint
- i like reading articles, some might suggest a succinct textbook, but reading the actual texts, and reading authors who honestly believe what they say lends authenticity to professor beckley's version of Intro to IR.
- lectures and recitations
- The recitations really helped me get a better understanding of the readings and the debates in class helped me see the theories from all different angles.
- Recitations were very important/helpful. Meg Guilford is an amazing TA.

- The recitation sections were helpful in facilitating learning. By talking over and debating the readings and lecture material, I felt I was able to develop a more full understanding of each of the themes of key ideas of the course.
- Small group recitations are helpful for applying/discussing the material from lecture.
- Engaging lectures, challenging and interesting readings, applicable content
- The readings and lectures are all very good.
- Recitation was a great way to go over interesting elements of the material
- good prof
- The lectures and subjects were very well-taught and well-explained. The slides were easy to follow and Professor Beckley was a very engaging speaker. The required participation in recitation also made me more confident in my voice and contributions.
- Recitation was a great way to help learn the concepts in the readings and anything from the lecture I found to be confusing. It was really helpful.
- Recitation sessions were crucial. They forced me to engage with the information we learned in lecture, and prepared me to write critically on tests.
- Everything! The lecture is very clear and engaging. The simulation is very rewarding on my thinking of the real world. The recitation helped me understand the readings better and the lecture introduced me to a wide range of topics.
- I really liked the simulation and also thought that the lectures were helpful for understanding readings and content. Sometimes the recitations would also help with understanding the readings.
- Lectures paired with recitations worked very well. Sydney (my TA) did a great job in picking up, and sometimes going into more detail, where Professor Beckley left off. Whether it was a debate, conversation, or review session, Sydney did a great job of helping me further-internalize what Professor Beckley talked about in lecture.
- The lectures by Professor Beckley were clear, concise, and understandable, a mark of great teaching on difficult subjects. The recitations, taught by the amazing Meg Guliford, were superb in helping me pin down concepts and learn more about the topic, and the readings were all very useful and specific. Finally, the simulation where we got to put our IR concepts to use was enjoyable and really informative.
- The simulation near the end of the course really helps me to apply what I have learned into the solving of problems between nations.
- The lectures and simulation
- My TA, Meg, was incredible and the lectures were always straight forward and well laid out
- I enjoyed the recitations and thought that the TAs were very helpful. I also appreciated how the presentation slides were not too text heavy- it forced me to internalize and understand the information in a personalized way.
- Recitations and dissection of readings
- - lectures were informative, attention-holding
- readings were NOT just a repetition of the lecture, which I appreciate
- professor's willingness to meet with us + prompt response to emails
- Lecture, recitation and readings. Also gigantic shout out to the TAs especially Meg
- Recitation discussions were helpful when the content was related to the reading
- The lectures were very informative and also managed to be engaging at the same time. The professor introduced these abstract theories while also providing tangible, real-world examples.
- I really thought the recitations were helpful. Meg Guliford as a TA is amazing and truly wants her students to succeed in this class.
- The lectures and the recitations. Professor Beckley is a clear, succinct, engaging lecturer. He broke down the complex topics touched upon in this class well. The recitations were also immensely helpful in facilitating my learning. Meg was hands down the best teaching assistant I have had in my two years at Tufts. I have never had a TA that was so invested in the success of their students. In recitation, Meg was great at pushing students to participate and engage with the subject matter, clarifying students' questions, and driving home the important information.
- All of it honestly
- The simulation and lectures did a great job of covering the material.
- The simulation was the best part because it let us learn a lot about diplomacy and how a lot of the topics we learned about have real life use.
- I liked the TA run recitation discussion about our readings and things we learned about in lecture.
- Not really any of them. Professor Beckley's lectures often did not help promote my understanding of the course material, recitation did little to further my knowledge of international relations, the reading was a varied and dense myriad of different thoughts and theories, and the exams were a test to

see how much you knew specific random words scattered throughout the course.

8. What suggestions do you have for improving this course?

- Grading of exams and papers consistent
- Perhaps the addition of some guidelines of "good speaking" or "good participation" in recitation would be helpful at the beginning of the course, or a reading on the matter before the first recitation - if you're not from a background where debate and speaking was emphasized, this recitation, while a highly valuable learning experience, can be a bit like being thrown head-first into the deep end.
- This was an excellent course, I have no suggestions.
- Having more assessments, I did not do as well as I had hoped on the midterm, and I now have to do extremely well on the paper and final.
- none
- Video homework
- A longer simulation period, though I know that's not likely.
- Make it more personal, the recitation is the best part
- More engaging lectures: Beckley used pop culture references which helped, but his classes consisted of him lecturing with unhelpful images on the board. I also had issues with one of the TAs (Not Meg) who just didn't put comments on my midterm. This was very frustrating and was not adequately addressed by Professor Beckley. The buck stops with the Professor, and he did not handle things well.
- would like for the memo assignment to be explained more clearly - maybe give an example. Also should be a midway evaluation of how students are doing in recitation.
- If at all possible, more discussion time
- Putting the slides up on Trunk to review
- I feel like recitation is more intense than it needs to be, something about it needs to change.
- none.
- I think that forcing participation in recitation leads to a higher concern on quantity of participation rather than quality. During our fifty minute recitation, most of it was spent reiterating verbatim what the readings said rather than individual thoughts and opinions.
- I honestly have very few issues with this course. Sometimes it would be hard to follow Professor Beckley in class if he spoke quickly and I had to scramble to jot down my notes. Maybe having key ideas on the powerpoint would be helpful.
- i think if this class was split up into smaller classes, we could get more hands on practice
- None
- Lower the stress level and competitive nature of the class. It was not conducive to a positive educational experience.
- If the slides could have a little more content on them, that would be great. Beckley had a lot of fun pictures and stuff but very little content. Also, if they could go on trunk after every class, that'd be great.
- The class would be more effective and engaging if it is smaller
- For lectures, having powerpoint slides with lists of ID terms would have been helpful considering how many terms are thrown out there without any text on the slides.
- Definitely put more words on the powerpoints during lectures...I would also suggest trying to bring the recitation groups closer together...I still don't know the majority of the names of my peers that were in my recitation.
- higher focus on reading materials during class time to ensure understanding
- Some topics felt like they needed more time devoted to them
- N/A
- The recitation grading system of 3 points was absolutely unfair to those who have speech fright- but may still have ideas. Participation should be graded more leniently and with a more casual atmosphere.
- -
- maybe fewer texts to read... though honestly i feel this might be the right balance; it always feels like too much right before the final!
- Maybe provide some lecture slides on trunk so that we have a source to go back to while revising for the exam. Some past exam paper examples would also be helpful in understanding how to revise/what to expect.
- While this is more a criticism of intro classes in general, I would have loved to look more in depth at certain issues, but only got the opportunity to experience a surface level overview of many different topics.
In addition, I think that more assignments could have potentially facilitated learning even more. The simulation policy paper forced me to apply the different concepts and paradigms from the class in a practical scenario, and this approach was a good shift from the more theoretical approach we had taken thus far.
- Keep teaching it!!!
- N/A
- I'd suggest a research paper, not only a security brief!
- If anything, add more opportunities for grades.

- Not much. Maybe a class about global health?
- 1. I realized I am bad at writing when taking the midterm. Maybe practice exams and sample answers to the ID and essay questions would be helpful. Or make some short assignments of editorial or short papers. (I am not asking to increase workload but some writing assignments would be helpful.) 2. Also, I wish there is more time in recitation/group office hour to discuss on recent events with TA/Professor/fellow students.
- Eliminate the 3-point system that is used for determining participation in recitations. I think that the 3-point system is very arbitrary and only causes everyone to compete to speak in class. As a result, I think that often the recitation environment becomes one in which people are just competing with one another to get 3 points for participation during that one recitation. While I think that the 3 point system was put in place to encourage students to think more deeply about what they say in recitation and to be more thoughtful with their participation, I think that the recitation environment that the 3-point system creates is pretty harmful because it puts unnecessary pressures on students to say something extremely insightful or to always be correct. I think that in general, recitations should be a more open and comfortable space for students to voice their opinions, to ask questions, and to have discussions. I did not feel that I could have those kinds of open and comfortable discussions in recitation and felt pressured and limited by the 3-point system as well as the impact that this 3-point system would have on my grade because class participation is 25% of our grade. Towards the beginning of the semester, our TA also told us that even if we received 2 out of 3 points for every recitation, we would still receive a D for our class participation grade. I would definitely want this course to reconsider how it measures class participation and either change and/or eliminate the 3-point system or make class participation worth less in the course.
- Nothing to say here. Grading is fair and distributed among many different areas. PS61 rocks.
- I like the structure of the course as it was taught to me (with one midterm, one final, and the simulation) but I would not be averse to having two midterms as it might allow students to retain more of the material. Otherwise, this class was great!
- A great course.
- None, it was amazing
- would be a chore for the ta's, but maybe require some notes on each of the readings, like 3 main bullet points for each and a question. makes the students actually have to understand the readings
- The recitations were very helpful but also competitive and stressful since each was worth 3 points. I think if there was a less stringent grading system for recitation would be less

stressful and more holistic and engaging

- - Next time in recitation, for the "writing workshop", have a graduate writing consultant from the ARC come in. I did not find discussing strategy with my peers to be helpful; in fact, I think it probably homogenized our papers
- in the future, review sessions should be jeopardy style; i think this works better than writing and discussing terms on the board
- More connections between the lecture concepts and readings + more connections to current events
- The amount of reading assigned for the course was very strenuous. Perhaps less assigned reading could improve comprehension and increase participation in recitation.
- I would suggest making the recitations longer or keep them at the same length but make the groups smaller.
- There were a few assigned readings that were never discussed in recitation or applicable on the exam. I would recommend cutting those from the syllabus (but I'm a student so of course I'd recommend that). Also get a less cramped room for recitations.
- None - great course
- Ensuring that reading is not given for the sake of more work. Only assigning relevant materials.
- One of my critics would be the reading. It's clear that some of the articles are more important than others. Whilst I believe it is a good skill to be able to do a lot of readings quickly, I do not think I actually gained anything out of trying to read a million articles a week. In fact, it took away from my ability to read the most important texts well, so I feel like I do not have a ton of knowledge about seminal IR works. My time had to be spread thin, which did not lead to quality absorption, which is a way that this class could use work. Yes, Intro IR should have a lot of reading, but it needs to be considered at what point does this hinder our education.

My other issue with the class were the recitations and the way the TAs operated. I did not find recitation to be particularly helpful. For one, the TA clearly favored one side of the class, and I feel that even though I was attempting to contribute, my TA would 9 times out of 10 call on the same people instead of allowing me to participate, which definitely may affect my grade. If someone is raising their hand and they have not spoken, they should be called on. Also, I wasn't pleased with the way that the TAs graded the tests. It was pretty clear that some of the TAs graded more harshly than the others. If I meet with a TA and they tell me "I know I graded more harshly than the other TAs, and this was actually an excellent answer," but does not actually do anything to amend it, then there might be a problem. Perhaps the TAs need to meet together more to discuss grading standards. Otherwise, it is unfair to students that worked

hard, but were just unlucky based on who's grading their test.

The last thing about the recitations: I think it is good that they are a debate style recitation, but the class can move quite fast, so for someone that has no experience in that type of environment, there is no learning curve. Yes, it can be good to put students in challenging situations, but students also should not be left behind. Keep the debate style, but maybe find a way to actually teach students how to formulate thoughts quickly, instead of just working with those that have that experience and leaving behind those that do not.

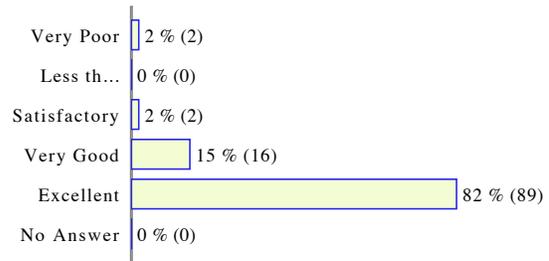
- I would change the assignments. I would have less readings and more alternative style of assignments. I would also have more assessments in total.
- I am done with the course and have received one grade all semester - which was a C- on the midterm that I originally received a B on until it was unfairly lashed because the average was TOO HIGH. I have never heard of an institution EVER cutting grades because kids did too well? I knew the course material well and successfully answered most of the exam in a correct manner and had my grade cut down because other people knew it too. First suggestion, make more tests and quizzes and papers, I could fail this class or get a B and I have no idea which. Second suggestion, DON'T DECREASE PEOPLE'S GRADES BECAUSE THE AVERAGE IS TOO HIGH. Curve it up if people did bad, but let the students do well. My entire existence in that class is determined by a letter grade which is then given a represented number. DO NOT FUCK WITH THAT NUMBER. I show up every day and do all the work and participate as much as I can and if I'm in the middle of the pack exam wise you just say "eh, C" - yeah that's a 2.0 GPA, which is NOT an average, middle of the pack GPA. Third suggestion, tell your students what you want them to know! Don't lecture for hours about international politics and then make a fourteen point question on the exam about some random theory in one of the readings that was not very important at all. The exams are a horrible misrepresentation of what this class suffered. An expert in International Relations would have failed the exam because of how atrociously specific it was to random terms and theories. Fourth suggestion, make participation actually plausible, you give As in participation to the three kids that "lead recitation" and then Ds to the kids that "speak occasionally" and then 30% to kids that are quiet and shy but still show up every damn time. How about you make a grade that's actually representative of a student's work and not fucking them over in every aspect. I participate a lot and my participation grade is going to LOWER MY FINAL GRADE. I show up every day and talk frequently and put in all the work and I get a D on participation and a C on the exam? Honestly, redo everything or scrap the class, because it was horrible and there is a lot to fix.

Instructor/Evaluated: Michael Beckley

Instructor Questions

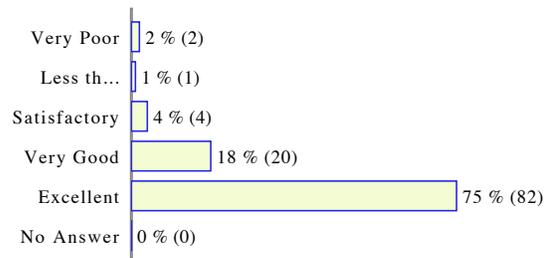
9. How would you rate the instructor's organization of each class?

109 answers, mean = 4.74, std dev = 0.67



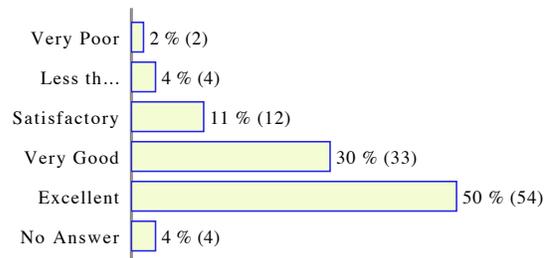
10. How would you rate the instructor's success in explaining concepts and ideas?

109 answers, mean = 4.64, std dev = 0.76



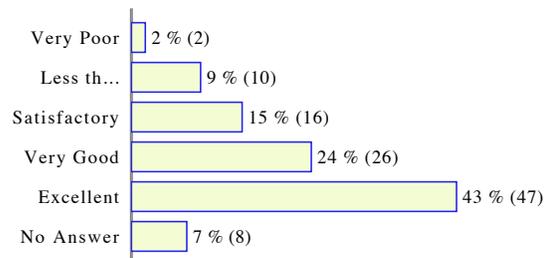
11. How would you rate the timeliness of the instructor's feedback on assignments, exams, and other work?

105 answers, mean = 4.27, std dev = 0.94



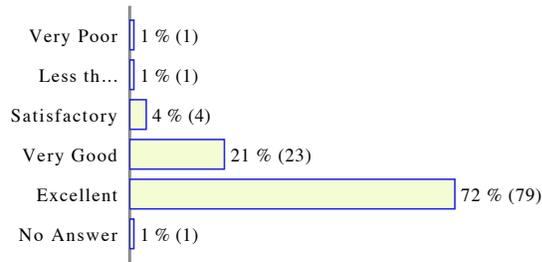
12. How would you rate the usefulness of the instructor's feedback on assignments, exams, and other work?

101 answers, mean = 4.05, std dev = 1.10



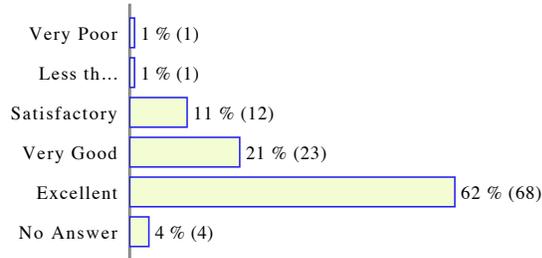
13. How would you rate the instructor's success in creating and maintaining an inclusive class, respectful of all students?

108 answers, mean = 4.65, std dev = 0.69



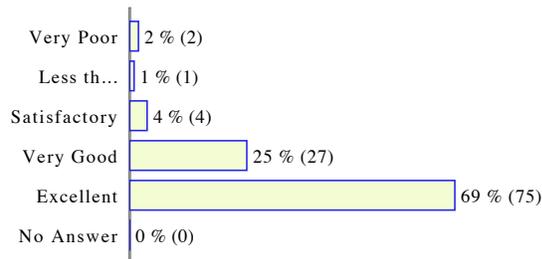
14. How would you rate the instructor's communication with you outside of class?

105 answers, mean = 4.49, std dev = 0.81



15. Based on your answers above, and any other factors you consider important, please provide an overall evaluation of the instructor.

109 answers, mean = 4.58, std dev = 0.77



16. Please provide any additional comments regarding the instructor.

- Professor Beckley is probably the best organized professor that I've had at Tufts - he always gets all the information he state the intention to teach at the beginning of lecture into that lecture, never going over or under time. My complaint about the usefulness of feedback on assignments is related to my TA who, being used to grading graduate level work, did not leave comments on my first exam and then left what seemed to be rather perfunctory remarks when asked to do so. (This is likely more a reflection on the circumstance than the TA, though - she's really been an excellent instructor as well. The matter of the exam comments was merely frustrating at that time.)
- Thank you for a great semester!
- N/A
- Hard to provide an impactful learning environment with 120 or so students. I suggest that they break up the sections
- Spiteful, aloof, and generally unhelpful, Professor Beckley proved to be a huge disappointment. He came in with a good

reputation, and he did not live up to it whatsoever. I would not recommend any course taught by him. I have been to his office hours, and these were very unhelpful--it felt like he didn't have time for his students. Thankfully, he has not killed my love for IR, but he will certainly be someone I avoid in the department. I was very disappointed with his poor teaching and management.

- Professor Beckley is incredible. Beckley is by far the best professor I have had at Tufts so far. His enthusiasm, positivity, and clarity make IR a pleasure. I have heard such horrible things about intro to IR as a class, but Beckley made it my favorite part of the week. The lectures were incredibly engaging and I really appreciate the structure. I love how the slides only have a general outline because it forces me to engage and focus on what he is actually saying. Could not express how incredible and important this class has been for me.
- My favorite professor this semester! I'm not an IR major and wasn't exactly looking forward to this class, but his teaching made it my favorite!
- You are an INCREDIBLE professor, thank you for an amazing semester!!
- Great professor and TA's. The lectures were never boring and were very engaging.
- we didn't get feedback on our midterms, but beckley is an excellent lecturer!!
- Amazing professor
- N/A
- I have answered these questions with respect to the TA where applicable; i.e. questions 11, 12, and 13.
- Professor Beckley is clear and humorous
- He's a great lecturer! Considering that this is an intro class, he did well in terms of covering broader concepts.
- engaging professor, I appreciate the humor he can incorporate when discussing serious topics
- I did not like his use of powerpoint. He should have included key terms and phrases rather than clip art. He should have also slowed wayyy down when describing key topics so that everyone could take notes
- N/A
- excellent lecturer, very engaging and funny. can make even the boring stuff interesting.
- maybe keep away from the gruesome nail-in-the-eye chess examples, but other than that i loved the metaphors!
- Before taking this class, I was rather nervous and had heard how overwhelmingly difficult it is. However, Professor Beckley was incredible at teaching the material in a clear and

concise way that made it very easy to understand. He truly wanted his students to succeed and to understand the basics of International Relations.

- Professor Beckley is both knowledgeable and approachable. He did a good job of concisely explaining key concepts and ideas, in an impressively organized manner. He is friendly, receptive, and has fantastic powerpoints.
- Professor Beckley is deeply engaged with his students—a unique quality for an intro-level course. He displays a mastery of a wide range of subjects and makes them easily accessible for students.
- Pay this man more he is a BLESSING to this earth and every time I enter the classroom I feel as though I have been graced by the presence of an angel.
- N/A
- The TA's grading was inconsistent. I'd suggest enforcing a stricter system of grading, and be a little less harsh, it's only an intro course! If students mention authors and concepts to support their thesis, you should allocate more points for that. Don't expect perfect essays!
- Professor Beckley and all three of the T.A.s were fantastic and excellent role models to look up to. Not only were they approachable and accessible, I would say that all four of the people who influenced my semester of learning introduction to International Relations are what I and others aspire to be later in our careers in International Relations.
- I love Michael Beckley with all my heart.
- Professor Beckley was great. His lectures were very engaging, and he was both informative and personable. The Teaching Assistants also did a superb job leading recitation sections.
- Everything is great! The only thing is I hope there is a chance to interact with professor and TAs more casually in a group setting. Maybe a fishbowl talk about recent events, his research, etc. Office hours are one-on-one and also very limited.
- Professor Beckley was great and I really enjoyed his lectures! They were usually interesting and engaging.
- Professor Beckley is awesome. Short and sweet. He is knowledgeable, witty, serious when he needs to be, and open to questions. His knowledge and approach to lectures makes him the perfect professor for Intro to IR - despite this, I'm sure he would be great for all other classes, too. Finally, Professor Beckley gives examples, is open in office hours, and is always willing to help with things outside the realm of PS61. He rocks. The end.
- Professor Beckley is funny, approachable, and dedicated to teaching both his intro IR students and his research- I would love to take classes with him in the future. Can't stress it enough,

this was great.

- This is a very interesting course. And I really appreciate the sentence you said in front of the class "Don't be evil," a sentence which resonates with me so much. Thank you!
- Beckley is a great professor, very engaging and made me enjoy the lectures.
- Incredible!!
- He is an amazing instructor and very personable guy. I would highly recommend him across the board.
- Sometimes when the definitions of concepts are taught through an example, the actual definition is unclear.
- Professor Beckley did a good job, and Meg Guliford, my TA, is the best instructor I have ever had. However, I had my midterm exam graded by Sydney, who was incompetent and unhelpful and should not be responsible for determining such a large proportion of a student's grade for the course. Her failure to provide any feedback whatsoever and her massive grade deductions without any rationale are unacceptable in an institution of Tufts' caliber.
- PhD
- - thanks for believing in us!
- I hope I can get to be in a class taught by Professor Beckley again! Sad to see him go.
- Michael Beckley was an amazing professor. I loved Intro to IR and I am convinced that it is because he was my professor. Beckley introduces information in a clear and concise way and his occasional jokes and passion for his subjects really help the lecture flow. Also, his great sense of humor was featured on many of my snapchat stories and I will forever encourage people to take Intro to IR with Professor Beckley. It's honestly surprising that he doesn't have tenure yet *hint* *hint*
- Professor Beckley was a good lecturer, was very good at breaking down complex topics into plain and understandable terms; he was also very approachable. Lectures were clear and well organized; occasionally had some great jokes thrown in too.
- Literally one of the best professors I've had at Tufts - something difficult to accomplish in a 170 strong class. Beckley is charming, smart, and perfect to teach this class. Having heard horror stories from everyone about previous IR classes and professors, Beckley made it fun and kept up the standard of learning and work
- Super easy to follow lectures even though it was a lot of material to cover
- Love Beckley!
- Beckley was terrible. He didn't give a shit about us, the class, the TA's, our knowledge, our grades, or helping us out. He

was a VERY good speaker, but everything he spoke about we were not tested on and he just made us think some things were important and then tested us on different things. Also, on the rare occasion that he did look at someone's exam, he cut their grade down more and was annoyed that they wasted his time with something so unimportant as THE NUMBER THAT CORRESPONDS TO YOUR ENTIRE EFFORT IN A SEMESTER LONG CLASS. He cut peoples grades who appealed their unfairly graded exams to incentivize others to steer clear of him so he wouldn't have to do ANYTHING for us. I bet he's really happy when he sees how much everyone hated the class and how poorly everyone did because I think he's actually just a giant asshole. That or he tortured us all year and then is gonna give everyone a B because he doesn't want them to complain.

- I loved this class. One of the best lecture classes I have had at Tufts! Excited to take Professor's Seminar class!

Spring 2017 Course Evaluations - Arts and Sciences and Engineering

Sp17-PS-0189-01-Sem In Int'l Relations

Michael Beckley

Results of survey

Started: April 21, 2017

Ended: May 4, 2017

Reply rate: 62% (8 / 13)

Spring 2017 Course Evaluations - Arts and Sciences and Engineering

Student Course Evaluations play an important role in the effort to assess and improve teaching at Tufts. Your honest, constructive, and detailed feedback not only is essential for evaluating the courses you are taking now, but also will benefit future students. Responses are confidential, and instructors will gain access to anonymous results only after final grades are posted. Thank you for your participation. Completing your course evaluations by the deadline will give you early access to view your grades, as soon as they are posted by the professor during the grading period. Students who do not complete all their evaluations by the deadline must wait to see their grades (by accessing their unofficial transcript on SIS) until after the grading deadline. Please note that official transcripts for enrolled students are never released until after the grading deadline. Plan ahead for opportunities that require an official transcript.

Course Items:

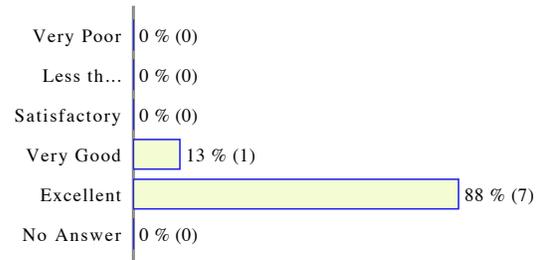
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Course Questions

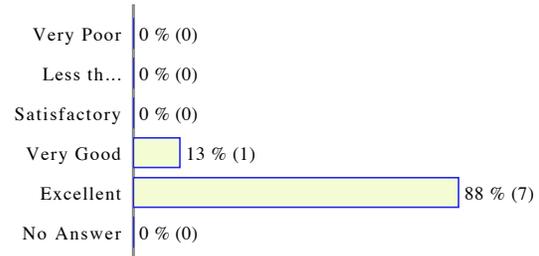
1. How would you rate the success of the course in accomplishing its objectives as stated on the course syllabus?

8 answers, mean = 4.88, std dev = 0.35



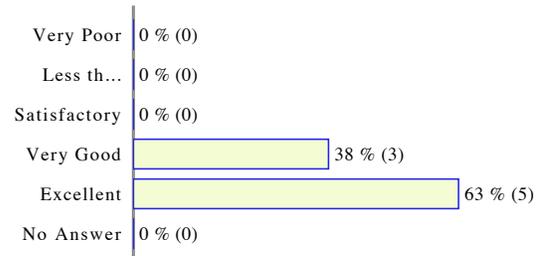
2. How would you rate the use of class time (lectures, discussions, demonstrations, labs, etc.) to promote your learning?

8 answers, mean = 4.88, std dev = 0.35



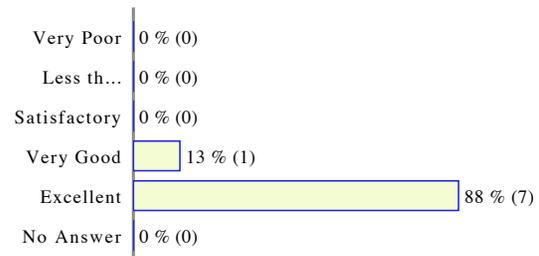
3. How would you rate the use of out-of-class activities (reading assignments, homework, papers, projects, etc.) to promote your learning?

8 answers, mean = 4.62, std dev = 0.52



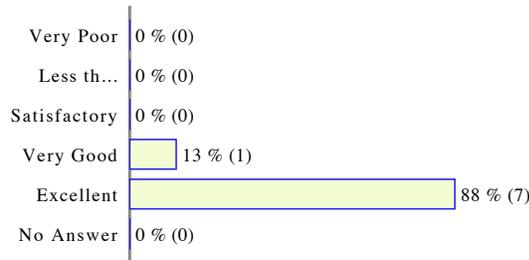
4. How would you rate the way the course engaged your interest?

8 answers, mean = 4.88, std dev = 0.35



5. Based on your answers above, and any other factors you consider important, please provide an overall evaluation of the course.

8 answers, mean = 4.88, std dev = 0.35



6. In what ways has this course made you think differently or more deeply? Please provide examples.

- The readings and discussion questions really made me think about potential threats to American Primacy.
- Has certainly expanded my understanding of the threats the United States faces and given me renewed faith in some solutions
- I learned about all kinds of things that I'd never really thought about, and the format made me engage with and think about those topics in a complex and nuanced way.
- Many aspects of the course brought to light alternative viewpoints to major topics such as nuclear proliferation, climate change, the different strategies of containment and foreign relations in general triggering a personal change in opinion in some cases.
- Class discussions have redefined the way I look at policy--our class discussions and debates show that sides of arguments I typically agree with (re intervention, environmentalism, etc.) are not black and white

7. What aspects of this course worked best to facilitate your learning?

- In class discussions.
- Though I loved debating, the discussion is where I found myself learning the most because we were able to informally take (and switch) sides and bring in new examples while defending our beliefs or playing devil's advocate for fun
- I loved the format, seminar-style, use of class time, readings, weekly papers. All was good.
- The class discussions about the reading assignments were the "times" when the learning took place, The plurality of opinions really put things into perspective and brought about a deeper understanding of events that one person reading the articles alone simply can not do.
- This was the most difficult class I took at Tufts, but it was also the most rewarding. The group discussions, debates and papers all really facilitated my growth as a thinker and a writer.

8. What suggestions do you have for improving this course?

- Give better criteria for how we should evaluate others response papers.

Also make it clear what both sides of the debate are defending - otherwise you get a weird advocacy where the opposition can change the status quo in a way that the proposition cannot plan for.

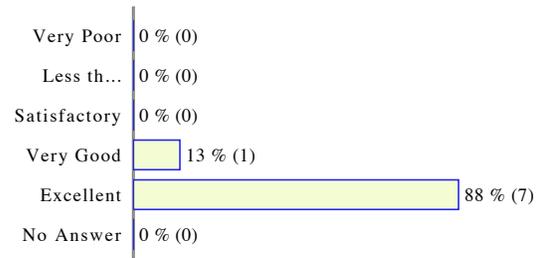
- This class is gold as is
- I felt like there wasn't enough feedback on my written work from the prof. beckley going into the midterm. Having it be just the peer-edited papers makes it more difficult to understand the professor's expectations
- A little less reading is my only suggestion as to improving the course.
- It was a lot of reading--almost unmanageably so.

Instructor/Evaluated: Michael Beckley

Instructor Questions

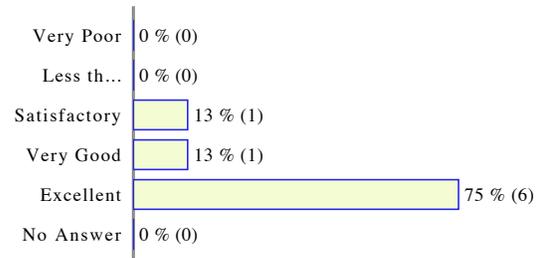
9. How would you rate the instructor's organization of each class?

8 answers, mean = 4.88, std dev = 0.35



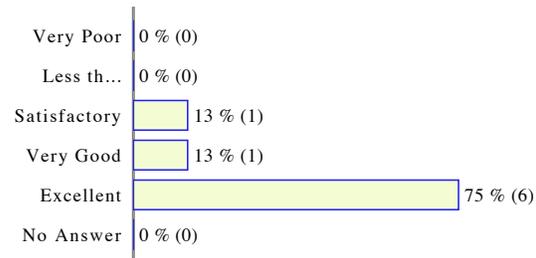
10. How would you rate the instructor's success in explaining concepts and ideas?

8 answers, mean = 4.62, std dev = 0.74



11. How would you rate the timeliness of the instructor's feedback on assignments, exams, and other work?

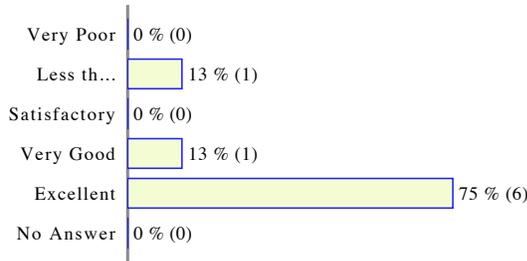
8 answers, mean = 4.62, std dev = 0.74



12. How would you rate the usefulness of the instructor's feedback on assignments, exams, and

other work?

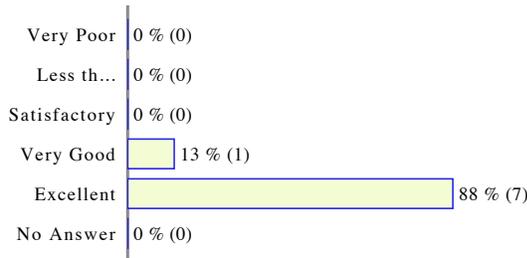
8 answers, mean = 4.50, std dev = 1.07



- B(a)eckly is an incredible professor and person.
- Professor Beckley is a true expert in the field of International relations and released much of his experience and knowledge to the class through his interaction with students during the discussions. His habit of pitting students vs. students in debating situations where they had to argue opposite to their obvious opinions was both fun and inspirational.

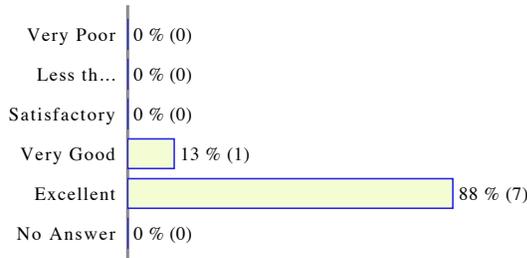
13. How would you rate the instructor’s success in creating and maintaining an inclusive class, respectful of all students?

8 answers, mean = 4.88, std dev = 0.35



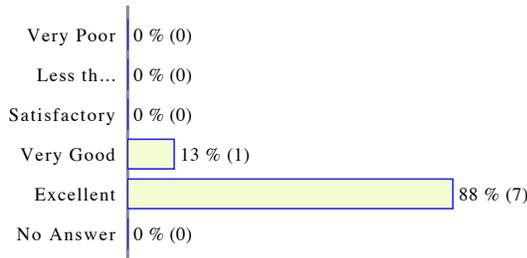
14. How would you rate the instructor’s communication with you outside of class?

8 answers, mean = 4.88, std dev = 0.35



15. Based on your answers above, and any other factors you consider important, please provide an overall evaluation of the instructor.

8 answers, mean = 4.88, std dev = 0.35



16. Please provide any additional comments regarding the instructor.

- Michael Beckley to teaching is like what Michael Jordan was to basketball. GOAT.
- Beckley is to teaching like Tenoch is to Davis Square restaurants- best in the business. Seriously though, an excellent professor.