

End of Term Course Evaluation – PHIL251, Fall 2019
Douglas Marshall

Note: The following are transcriptions of hand-written student evaluations. The students' responses to each of the survey questions are aggregated below that question. Some student responses have been corrected for spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Explanations included in bold and brackets.

1. List briefly the criteria you consider in judging the effectiveness of a faculty member at Carleton. What qualities are the most helpful to your learning?

#1 Openness to a variety of viewpoints, clarity of explanations, willingness to provide candid feedback, a desire to learn from students, a passion for the subject-matter.

#2 Knowledge of material, enthusiasm and ability to inspire students, approachability.

#3 Approachability, one-on-one effectiveness, ability to lead a discussion and explain complex ideas well.

#4 Interactivity, offering new ideas, encouraging students to engage directly with information and evidence, classroom atmosphere.

#5 Availability, openness to different ideas, willingness to allow students to discover an answer on their own.

#6 I think what usually feels most lacking in terms of professor effectiveness is the instructor's ability to sort of start out the class in a way that universally focuses the students on something. Giving introductions to exactly what we will be discussing in the beginning of class and making sure everyone understands or is ready to be led through a coordinated sort of discussion is very important in making class sessions worthwhile.

#7 Did I learn anything? Was what I learned relevant to the class/was this what I 'signed up for'? Were office hours helpful? Did I get excited about the class and the material?

#8 Ability to hear students' concerns and create a comfortable environment for students in classroom and office hours, ability to clarify readings and assignments in a more accessible manner.

#9 Questions on board to guide discussion, clear topics throughout term, directed conversations.

#10 Pick good readings, niceness, good at facilitating discussion.

2. Measured by these criteria, what are my strengths? How and how well did I help you to learn?

#1 You successfully met all these criteria, making this class a positive, enriching learning experience for me!

#2 Very strong knowledge of material, approachable/kind.

#3 Very good at discussion/lecture, a little less good at being approachable.

#4 Good interactivity and fostering friendly learning environment

#5 Very clear on when available, willing to allow for new/different ideas.

#6 You always gave attention to everyone's comments and tried to give equal focus/attention to everyone, always let students in on discussions readily, even if they appeared to not be paying attention or were unengaged beforehand. Pretty prompt at returning assignments.

#7 You met all of the criteria listed above. I learned quite a lot, especially about how to frame my thoughts with regards to science (the methodology, demarcation etc), and I tended to enjoy the readings. Office hours were A+, left me thinking, but very helpful.

#8 You are eager at helping students.

#9 Good at listening to questions and answering them appropriately, assigned appropriate amount of readings.

#10 You picked really interesting readings, you are extremely good at picking apart students' arguments and responding to them, you are really nice and approachable! Also, you did a great job of preparing (coming up with questions) for each class.

3. Do I have any weaknesses that affected your learning? If so, how?

#1 NA

#2 Sometimes the class discussions were not very lively.

#3 Sometimes intimidating to go to office hours.

#4 Readings did not feel essential and were tangential to learning/were explained in class anyway.

#5 Could have allowed for more discussion in classes.

#6 Sometimes cut off a student's perspective or wrong without explaining to them why it was wrong; overly brief commands on papers/no partial credit for partially wrong answers or take-home exam.

#7 No.

#8 You are very smart and I think need to work on simpler examples when explaining readings in class.

#9 I think it would be good if more assignments were given throughout the term about responding to HW readings to incite more thinking. I think it would be helpful if you gave simpler examples-- but I also feel like you did this more as the course continued.

#10 No!

4. Keeping in mind all the faculty you have had at Carleton, please circle the phrase that most closely reflects your rating of me (1-7).

Note: Students could provide ratings ranging from 1 for low quality teaching to 7 for high quality.

#1 7

#2 4 / 5

#3 5

#4 6

#5 6

#6 5

#7 5 (closer to a 5.5)

#8 3

#9 5

#10 6

5. What would you change about this course, if anything?

#1 It would be helpful if you included guiding questions meant to focus our reading of the text and help us connect a given text to previous readings and class discussions.

#2 I would get rid of the hurricane unit. Instead, I would have students identify a topic they'd like to write about related to evidence/confirmation in the sciences.

#3 It is great! I like how there are few small discussion groups.

#4 More small discussion groups.

#5 Try to allow students with different backgrounds and interests bring these more into class discussions.

#6 More focus on CONCEPTS, NOT individual philosophers' conceptions.

#7 Nothing.

#8 Cold calling students can make discussions [fall?].

#9 See first part of (3) [response #9 to question 3]. More group work and time to discuss with peers. I think it would be helpful if we talked more at the beginning about what Phil of Science is about and the range of questions that it attempts to answer...how it is distinct from other branches of philosophy.

#10 The course should have a different 2nd paper assignment. I thought the hurricane paper was a bit boring to write as it involved a lot of paraphrasing.

6. How was my feedback? Were the comments on the papers helpful? If not, why not? How could they be improved?

#1 The feedback helped me recognize inadequacies in my thinking and communication. I believe that your feedback has helped me grow intellectually.

#2 Feedback was very detailed and helpful.

#3 Feedback has been good.

#4 Pretty good -- more small paper feedback and earlier would be good, as we only really got feedback on 1 paper.

#5 It was good-- detailed without being overwhelming

#6 Sometimes a little short or lacking. Less “huh?” and more “What do you mean by this?”

#7 Very helpful. Sometimes hard to understand, but office hours would clear that up. I liked your two section way of grading (did well and could improve).

#8 Feedback helpful and is also where you are most clear.

#9 Very helpful! You were also very helpful in office hours.

#10 Very helpful and specific feedback on papers.

7. Do you have any other feedback about the course or about the way I taught it?

#1 N/A

#2 N/A

#3 I think it is a really good course.

#4 Thanks for encouraging discussion and students to bring their own ideas into play!

#5 N/A.

#6 Just try to collect the classes' mind in the beginning of the class to directly engage and focus everyone.

#7 No, thank you for the class.

#8 I think that men with voices that are taking up a lot of space in philosophy tend to find ways to make assumptions and take up extra space in this class. Something to think about in general in philosophy and how to address this.

#9 I learned a lot and appreciated the flow of the coursework. Thank you! I especially liked the careful thinking we did about inductive reasoning.

#10 N/A.