

Project Title: **University of Florida GatorEvals – Spring 2022 Main Project**Courses Audience: **23**
Responses Received: **19**
Response Ratio: **82.6%**Instructors Audience: **23**
Responses Received: **19**
Response Ratio: **82.6%**

Report Comments

INTRODUCTION

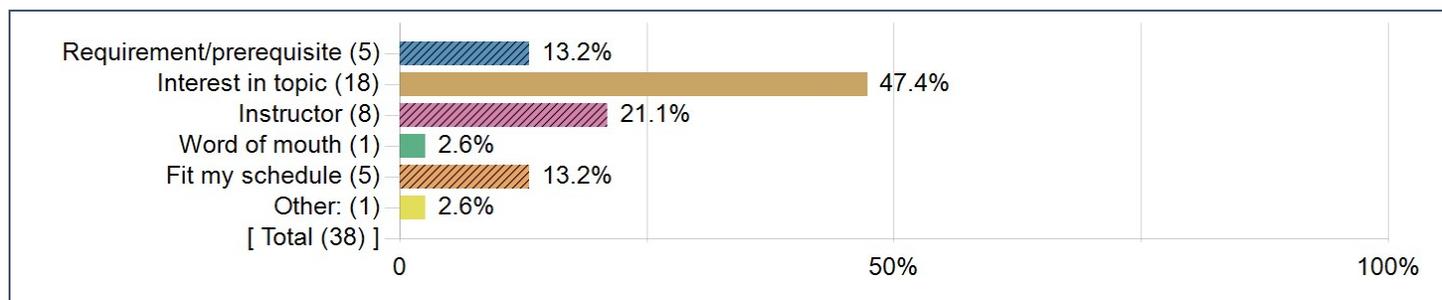
Teaching is a fundamental purpose of the University of Florida and the dissemination of new knowledge in our classrooms, studios, and clinics enables our students and trainees to fully explore their intellectual boundaries. Assessment and evaluation of our courses are designed to enhance instruction and maximize learning to meet the mission of the university. This report contains the results gathered through the new GatorEvals system. Students were invited to share their feedback on the teaching and course material. We invite every faculty member to examine the analysis in the report and utilize the resources provided in the report. Thank you for your continued great work!

Chris Hass, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs

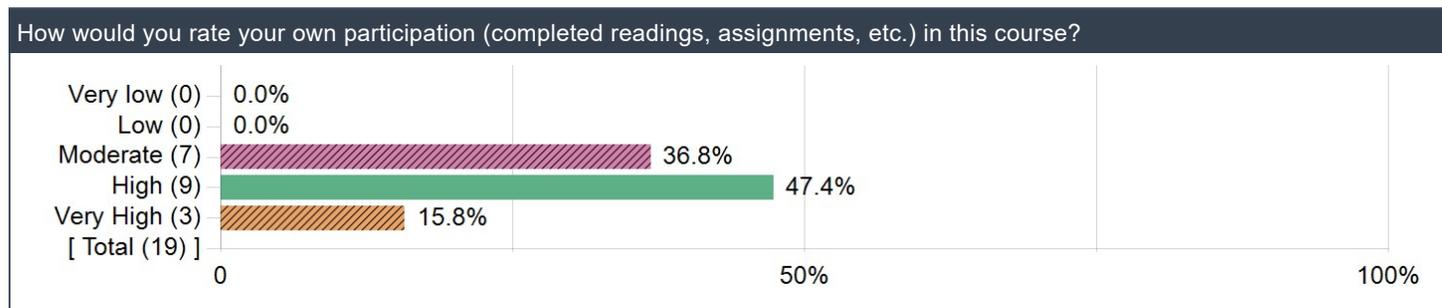


Student Self-Evaluation Questions

Why did you take this course?



How would you rate your own participation (completed readings, assignments, etc.) in this course?



Comparative Evaluation Results

University Core Instructor Evaluation Questions

	Response Rate	Mean	IM	DPT Mean	DPT IM	College Mean	College IM
The instructor was enthusiastic about the course.	82.6%	4.95	4.97	4.69	4.83	4.47	4.72
The instructor explained material clearly and in a way that enhanced my understanding.	82.6%	4.89	4.94	4.44	4.71	4.22	4.56
The instructor maintained clear standards for response and availability (e.g. turnaround time for email, office hours, etc.)	82.6%	4.95	4.97	4.58	4.79	4.39	4.66
The instructor fostered a positive learning environment that engaged students.	82.6%	4.89	4.94	4.49	4.75	4.34	4.64
The instructor provided prompt and meaningful feedback on my work and performance in the course.	82.6%	4.89	4.94	4.24	4.64	4.16	4.54
The instructor was instrumental to my learning in the course.	82.6%	4.95	4.97	4.34	4.70	4.10	4.53

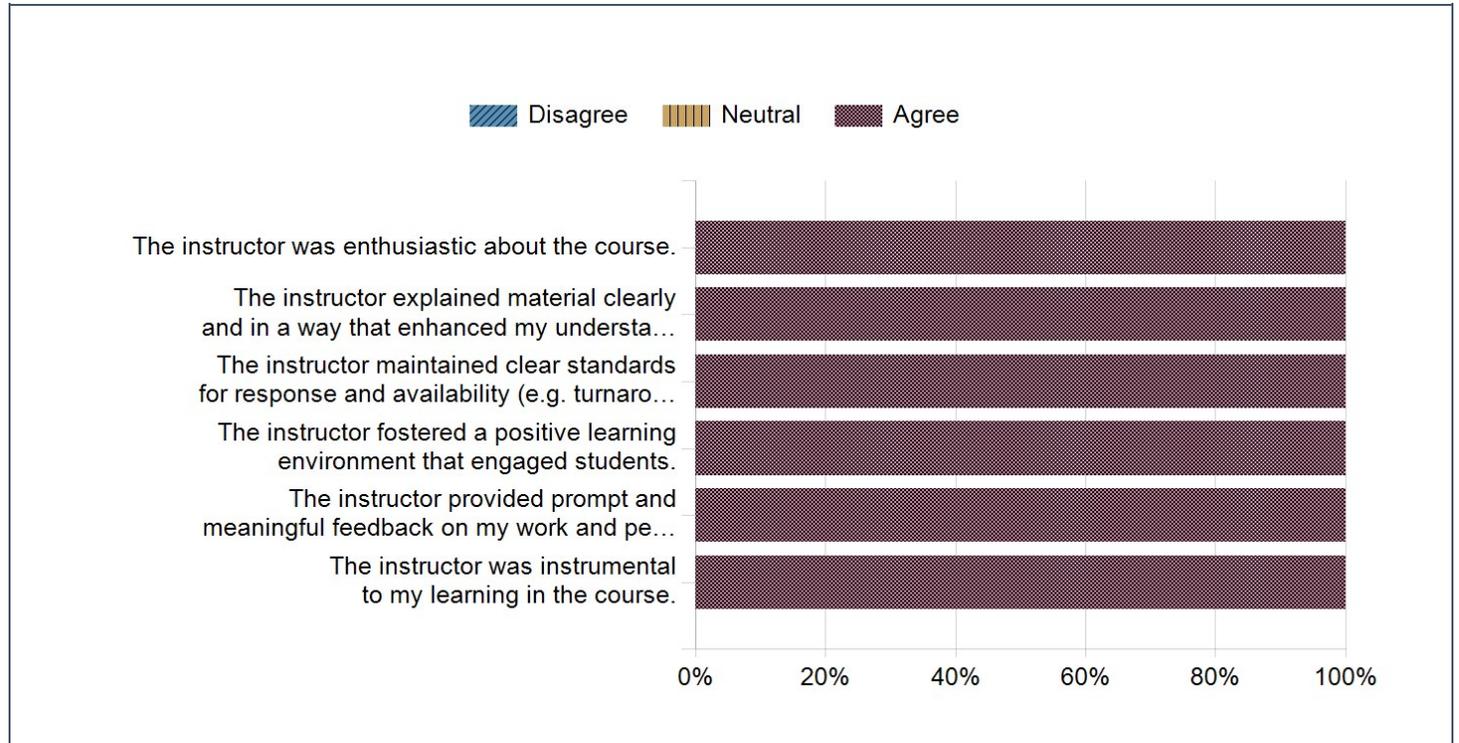
University Core Course Evaluation Questions

	Response Rate	Mean	IM	DPT Mean	DPT IM	College Mean	College IM
Course content (e.g., readings, activities, assignments) was relevant & useful.	82.6%	4.84	4.91	4.38	4.55	4.20	4.31
The course fostered regular interaction between student and instructor.	82.6%	4.68	4.82	4.28	4.48	4.00	4.20
Course activities and assignments improved my ability to analyze, solve problems, and/or think critically.	82.6%	4.53	4.64	4.35	4.54	4.16	4.31
Overall, this course was a valuable educational experience.	82.6%	4.79	4.87	4.28	4.54	4.18	4.36

Aggregate Evaluation Results

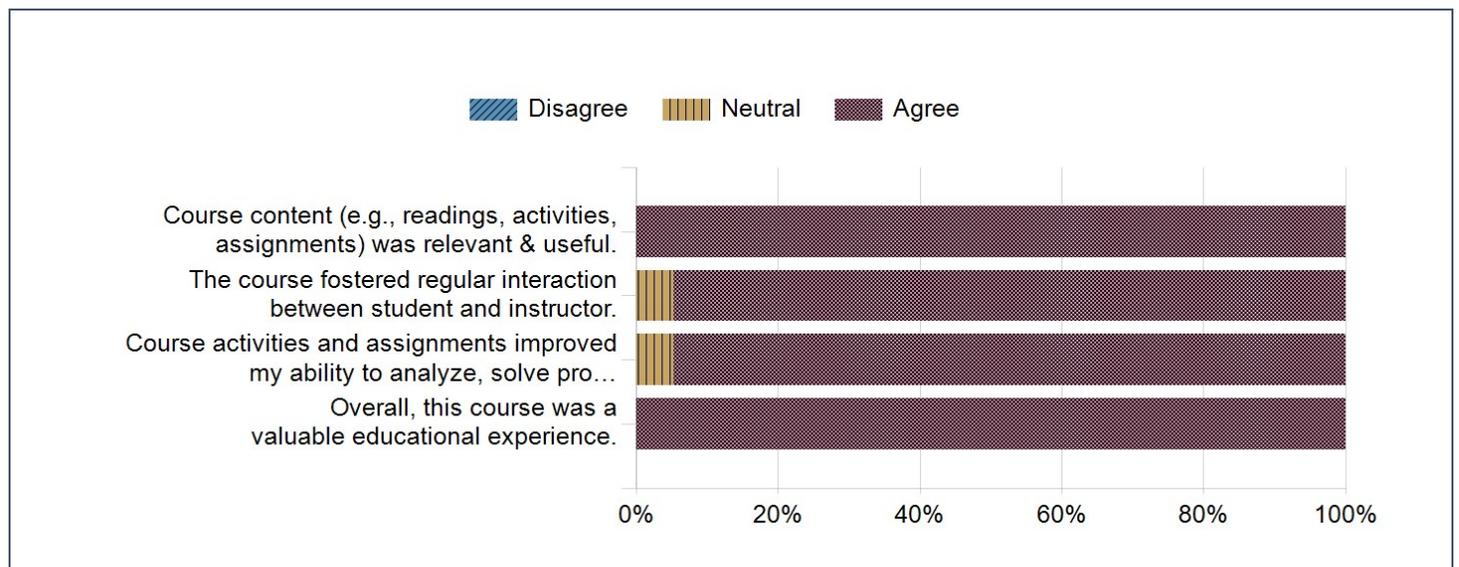
University Core Instructor Evaluation Questions - Aggregate Chart

Note that in the following aggregate chart "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" have been grouped together as "Agree" while "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" have been grouped together as "Disagree".



University Core Course Evaluation Questions - Aggregate Chart

Note that in the following aggregate chart "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" have been grouped together as "Agree" while "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" have been grouped together as "Disagree".



Percentages Evaluation Results

University Core Instructor Evaluation Questions

	%(1)	%(2)	%(3)	%(4)	%(5)	Count	Mean	Median	SD
The instructor was enthusiastic about the course.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	94.7%	19	4.95	5.00	0.23
The instructor explained material clearly and in a way that enhanced my understanding.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%	89.5%	19	4.89	5.00	0.32
The instructor maintained clear standards for response and availability (e.g. turnaround time for email, office hours, etc.)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	94.7%	19	4.95	5.00	0.23
The instructor fostered a positive learning environment that engaged students.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%	89.5%	19	4.89	5.00	0.32
The instructor provided prompt and meaningful feedback on my work and performance in the course.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%	89.5%	19	4.89	5.00	0.32
The instructor was instrumental to my learning in the course.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	94.7%	19	4.95	5.00	0.23

University Core Course Evaluation Questions

	%(1)	%(2)	%(3)	%(4)	%(5)	Count	Mean	Median	SD
Course content (e.g., readings, activities, assignments) was relevant & useful.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.8%	84.2%	19	4.84	5.00	0.37
The course fostered regular interaction between student and instructor.	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	21.1%	73.7%	19	4.68	5.00	0.58
Course activities and assignments improved my ability to analyze, solve problems, and/or think critically.	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	36.8%	57.9%	19	4.53	5.00	0.61
Overall, this course was a valuable educational experience.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	21.1%	78.9%	19	4.79	5.00	0.42

For additional information and resources in each of these question areas, please visit the GatorEvals Website at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/resources--policies/question-set/>

Free Response Section

Please identify the instructor's strengths that contributed to your learning in the course.

Comments
Chris fostered a good learning environment for his course. He explained things thoroughly and always found different ways to approach questions and concerns about the course material.
Dr. Dorst did a very good job of posting the required readings and summarizing/explaining the concepts in the readings during class time.
Professor Dorst's notes are unmatched. The notes reflect the content of the assigned readings in a manner that makes difficult concepts easily digestible. Professor Dorst also encourages participation via question prompts and general discussions – this was particularly effective in terms of forcing me to engage with the course material critically. I also think he responds to questions in a very clear and direct manner which is super helpful to understanding the material. Really enjoyed the course.
For the first time teaching this course, the flow of the curriculum was cohesive and smooth. As someone with limited knowledge in quantum mechanics, leaving the course I now feel qualified to explain several theories of QM. Dr. Dorst is a nice guy who obviously loves philosophy of science. His feedback on take home tests was constructive, and despite not going to office hours, I was able to see what I needed to improve upon.
He was very responsive to the feelings of students towards the content he was trying to convey. For instance, he often asked us to rate on a scale of 1–10 how we felt about what he just explained. If even a few people had unsatisfactory responses, he would stay on that topic and explain it multiple ways until they felt better about it.
Professor Dorst is incredibly charismatic, and beyond that, he is immensely knowledgeable about the material. This was evident in how he was able to simplify extremely complicated, difficult concepts and problems, so that even someone as ignorant as I am in scientific discourse was able to approach the content in a meaningful way. His charisma and passion for the material, his knowledge and ability to simplify concepts, and his patience were certainly strengths that helped me make it through a class of such a high caliber.
Very engaged in the topics at hand, willing to go back and explain concepts if not fully understood, thorough teaching and available often.
very open to discussion
I really enjoyed how professor Dorst wrote on the white board. It helps to see how he thinks through things instead of just reading off a PowerPoint. Professor explained things very clearly and constantly made sure everyone in the class understood the material. I thought he picked great readings and supplemented them well with his lectures. Overall, one of the best professors I have had at UF.
Dr. Dorst could not have fostered a more positive and engaging learning environment. His explanations of concepts were simple enough to understand without losing the complexity of the material, and he made it fun and interesting by being very genuine and always stopping to see if anyone had questions. His ability to read the room was great, whether the energy was low and he needed to quickly get our attention back or if many students were having trouble understanding, he was able to tell and react to what we were giving him. His passion for the subject is also undeniable; he was always excited to give us the "punch line" of certain lessons that had an exciting point to be made, and since I took this class solely based on my interest in the subject, this made it very fun to attend. His responses to personal questions after class were also extremely helpful when I was confused about something small and specific. I will remember Dr. Dorst as an encouraging and valuable teacher whose class I was lucky to experience.
Very enthusiastic and not too serious, encouraged discussion and active questioning.
The instructor's enthusiasm for the course material influenced me to be more engaged with the material.
Chris always did a good job at keeping everyone engaged and checking our understanding of some difficult concepts, but this always made me feel comfortable with asking a follow question on something that I wasn't sure I understood correctly. Having drawings and notes on the board also greatly helped clarify things I were confused about or just helped me follow along.
He is very passionate and knowledgeable of the class
Dr. Dorst is awesome. He is personable and fun to listen to in lecture, I really liked learning with him this semester.

What additional constructive feedback can you offer the instructor that might help improve the course?

Comments
Posting extra notes online or recording lectures would be very helpful. Often I found myself lost to the point where I couldn't keep up with what was being said in class. If I had a way to look back at lecture notes (that are more in-depth) I feel like my understanding of the material would've been better.
None
None. I think the course was a fantastic experience, and I hope to take more courses with Professor Dorst in the future.
The only qualm I had in the course was during the section on mathematical formalism. I do not believe it is integral to understanding the majority of what was covered in the course or the test material. For a "philosophy" class there was a large bleed-in of linear algebra and vector interactions. Dr. Dorst did express how that section was painful for a philosophy class so it was clear he understood it may take time to digest, and thankfully did not ask many questions on the topic. But as someone who has a grasp of the various interpretations learned and can not explain what an operator is, I do not believe the brunt of that section is necessary. I believe understanding bra-ket notation and a brief explanation of eigenstates is good enough to understand the rest of the course material.
I cannot think of a way to improve his teaching style. He writes down nearly everything he says, and some students are deterred by that, however I feel as though that is one of the things I like most about his teaching style (that way you can easily see the thought process without having to focus on immediately writing it out yourself).
Not much. I recognize the difficulties in attempting to teach mathematical formalism to students who are largely in the humanities. But indeed, it was the formalism and the science itself which I found most difficult, at times almost alienating, to approach in a way that would contribute anything at all to the discussion. Maybe start at an even easier level; when we started at the "beginning" (vector math), I was already lost—I haven't seen vectors since I was a junior in high school, almost three years ago. To build upon something I already didn't know made the entirety of the formalism difficult to utilize. Unfortunately, that was reflected in the exam grade that largely tested our knowledge of the math and science of the course.
More time spent working on the mathematical formalism would have been helpful for the interpretations that followed.
we could stick less to the textbook and bring in more philosophical thinkers/concepts for discussion
None
I felt that the course design was perfect. The more you put into it, the more you got out of it, and I never felt lost or unsure of where I should be spending my time outside of class.
n/a, he is awesome. I loved this course!

What constructive suggestion(s) do you have for improving the course materials, organization, and assignments?

Comments
I would suggest that the discussion posts can be swapped out for some alternative assignment.
I think posting the notes to Canvas might help if you miss class. Otherwise, the course was very straightforward and well-organized.
Shorten the unit on mathematical formalism, perhaps include more points to display understanding of material, and include a general rubric for take home tests.
None, he is very clear about what he wants from students and consistently updates the syllabus throughout the semester as the class progresses.
None. The class was excellently organized. I think the impromptu class discussions could at times be cruel—there was one or two times that my group and I were absolutely lost in the discussion and it was precisely at that moment that Prof. Dorst decided to give us a discussion grade. Those who were compsci majors or physics majors could navigate those well, but sometimes it felt like a catch 22; answer wrongly, which was almost certain in a class about quantum mechanics without experience in such a subject, and get a bad grade, or remain clueless, and get a bad grade. As an assignment based around examination, that seemed cruel before we had actually talked about the material. But at the same time, I understand it was to get us thinking about a problem. If that were the case, though, it would still be cruel to grade harshly arguments outside the norm.
It was easiest to understand some of the more complex topics when diagrams were used, and I think they were very helpful for my understanding early on. More of these diagrams could be helpful.
n/a
I would've just liked to have heard more about where we are now in the research of QM. I know we've gone over most of the theories, but I would like to here more recent papers maybe at the end of the course. Everything else was great!
It could have been interesting if, on the discussion posts, we were required to post both a question and attempt to respond to another classmate's question. Just an idea to foster more student-to-student discussion. But, overall, I really enjoyed the group work in class and assignment structure.
I really liked the group discussions as they tested our understanding immediately after being presented with a new concept and personally helped me realize that I didn't have a full understanding of particular content and helped me come up with questions that furthered my understanding. However, I'm not sure if the discussions ever impacted my grade in any way and I was never sure if they were meant to, so I'd recommend making the impact of these assignments clear.
Some of the material is VERY confusing. No idea how to fix that, though, its kind of the nature of the discipline.

Please identify the topics and/or skills you learned in the course that you believe will have the highest application for future courses or professional growth.

Comments
I learned to wrap my head around abstract topics that might not always be intuitive or seem right.
Learning different ways of interpreting quantum mechanics will benefit me in my physics career because it gives me alternative ways of looking at such a complex subject.
I think critically engaging with technical material is important. I was forced to critically engage with topics I was completely unfamiliar with and build my knowledge base from the ground up. I think this is a critical skill in terms of almost learning how to learn in a sense.
I don't think QM lends itself nicely to this question, haha. Implicitly, I now know that philosophy of science is not my cup of tea, if that counts.
As someone who wants to go into quantum/particle physics, having a base understanding and foundation on how previous theories have been interpreted will greatly improve my ability to work towards new theories and possibilities within the field, or to possibly support that one of the current theories is true.
The reason I took the class is because I intend to be a critical theorist. As such, it will be important to make metaphysical arguments concerning the world. In most critical theory departments, there is a huge emphasis on the literary, on the artistic, on the political, but not much inquiry on the scientific. So to be able to practice that side of it, and to be able to utilize those terms of the argument as well, will greatly expand my argumentative and conceptual ability.
Some of the conceptual problem-solving exercises involving the gaps in each interpretation will translate well to problem solving in other subjects.
confidence to explore difficult topics
Probably just thinking through so much theoretical content in my head. Picturing all the math stuff and thinking about everything has made me a better thinker overall. I also have definitely developed an interest in a topic that I will try and follow for the rest of my life.
I feel that this class improved my critical thinking, my ability to understand complex subjects, and of course my knowledge on quantum mechanics. I have always been passionate about quantum mechanics, just in the sense of being interested in watching youtube videos etc. on the subject. However, now I feel that I have a thorough understanding of the basics of philosophical discussion surrounding the subject, which I am excited to share with people who may not have had the opportunity to take a class like this.
Having to have a concise enough understanding of a given topic in order to include only relevant information, and being able to provide examples that showed how I understood the material is something I enjoyed doing in order to show my understanding and I hope to have more courses that push those skills further as this one did.
Thinking about the philosophy of science is very fun and something I found to be engaging. I think it will be of immense help to me in graduate studies.

Free Response Section