

Evaluations for PHIL-232-01, Modern Philosophy

(Thomas Brommage, 2009_spring)

Summary

Table 1. Summary: 8 responses

	No Answer	1 (Poor)	2	3	4	5 (Excellent)
Prior interest	0	0 (0%)	3 (37.5%)	0 (0%)	2 (25%)	3 (37.5%)
Interest increased	0	1 (12.5%)	0 (0%)	1 (12.5%)	5 (62.5%)	1 (12.5%)
Effort	0	0 (0%)	1 (12.5%)	1 (12.5%)	6 (75%)	0 (0%)
Knowledge increased	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (75%)	2 (25%)
Challenge	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (75%)	2 (25%)
Overall rating	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (12.5%)	5 (62.5%)	2 (25%)
Preparedness	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (12.5%)	4 (50%)	3 (37.5%)
Clarity	0	0 (0%)	1 (12.5%)	0 (0%)	3 (37.5%)	4 (50%)
Feedback	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (12.5%)	3 (37.5%)	4 (50%)
Effectiveness	0	0 (0%)	1 (12.5%)	0 (0%)	5 (62.5%)	2 (25%)

All responses

Table 2. Response 1

Gender	M
Year	2010
Major 1	Physics
Major 2	Philosophy
Minor 1	Astronomy
Minor 2	
Reason to take course	Elective, Major/Minor
Prior interest	2
Prior interest fill-in	
Interest increased	4
Interest increased fill-in	
Effort	4
Effort fill-in	
Knowledge increased	4
Knowledge increased fill-in	
Challenge	4
Challenge fill-in	
Course strengths	Broad overview of philosophy of modern era.

Evaluations for PHIL-232-01, Modern Philosophy

Ways to improve course	To much information in too little time.
Overall rating	4
Overall rating fill-in	
Instructor strengths	He was willing to meet outside of class, and gave helpful instructions on the papers and on the reading.
Ways for instructor to improve	Take some time on complex theories.
Preparedness	4
Clarity	5
Feedback	5
Effectiveness	4
Effectiveness fill-in	
Other comments	
Identify by name?	N
Student name and email	

Table 3. Response 2

Gender	M
Year	2012
Major 1	Philosophy
Major 2	
Minor 1	
Minor 2	
Reason to take course	Major/Minor
Prior interest	5
Prior interest fill-in	
Interest increased	4
Interest increased fill-in	
Effort	3
Effort fill-in	
Knowledge increased	5
Knowledge increased fill-in	
Challenge	4
Challenge fill-in	
Course strengths	Teacher, material, structure.
Ways to improve course	Material graded structured slightly differently.
Overall rating	5
Overall rating fill-in	Modern philosophy is intriguing and Brommage is awesome.
Instructor strengths	Wit, knowledge of subject, ability to explain material.
Ways for instructor to improve	Assigning papers.
Preparedness	4
Clarity	5
Feedback	5
Effectiveness	4

Effectiveness fill-in	
Other comments	
Identify by name?	N
Student name and email	

Table 4. Response 3

Gender	F
Year	2011
Major 1	Philosophy
Major 2	Studio Art
Minor 1	Spanish
Minor 2	
Reason to take course	GE
Prior interest	5
Prior interest fill-in	Philosophy was my first major, and I have been trying to solidify my ground base in the subject for four semesters, and I thought that Modern would be a great overview course, which it was.
Interest increased	5
Interest increased fill-in	I understand the beginning and end of the Modern period and have contextualized the history.
Effort	4
Effort fill-in	The readings were ample and long, but I tried to keep up.
Knowledge increased	5
Knowledge increased fill-in	I had taken mostly overview courses with no specific aim to them before this class, and it really increased my knowledge of the subject matter to have this time period. Tom is incredibly knowledgeable about each philosopher we studied with regard to even more than what particular aspect of each's philosophy that we were studying.
Challenge	5
Challenge fill-in	Very very challenging. Some of the subjects were the most complicated I've ever encountered in philosophy, and I found it incredibly confusing.
Course strengths	The subject matter- I really enjoyed the class discussions.
Ways to improve course	Fewer topics. I felt like we had to stretch the semester to fit each topic and that we rushed through them.
Overall rating	4
Overall rating fill-in	I think that the course moved too fast for its level. We hardly had any repetition from the days prior, and for subjects like esse est percipi it requires more than one day's discussion.
Instructor strengths	Tom is very knowledgeable on the subject matter and adds life to it. He relates some of the most complex theories with more common life situations. He can cover a lot of ground in one class.
Ways for instructor to improve	I would like less reading aloud. The complexity of the readings necessitates a lot of passage specificity, but each passage is so stuffed with meaning that we really should spend more

	time on them. They should be read slower aloud.
Preparedness	5
Clarity	5
Feedback	5
Effectiveness	5
Effectiveness fill-in	
Other comments	
Identify by name?	N
Student name and email	

Table 5. Response 4

Gender	M
Year	2010
Major 1	Physics
Major 2	
Minor 1	Astronomy
Minor 2	Philosophy
Reason to take course	GE
Prior interest	4
Prior interest fill-in	
Interest increased	4
Interest increased fill-in	Increased some, but not too much.
Effort	4
Effort fill-in	Most work was reading which is very low effort work. Class discussions were easy to follow as well.
Knowledge increased	4
Knowledge increased fill-in	
Challenge	4
Challenge fill-in	This class required critical thinking skills in order to analyze the readings effectively
Course strengths	This course provides a thorough introduction into modern philosophers. It covers the most prominent names in philosophy in the given time period.
Ways to improve course	
Overall rating	4
Overall rating fill-in	
Instructor strengths	Dr. Brommage has extensive knowledge of philosophical history. He has a remarkable ability to relate those authors we are reading to those that we are not in order to provide both context and interest for the class.
Ways for instructor to improve	Often times Dr. Brommage can get on a roll and begin covering topics extremely quickly. His classes would benefit from him slowing down some.
Preparedness	5
Clarity	4

Feedback	4
Effectiveness	4
Effectiveness fill-in	Overall, Dr. Brommage is an excellent professor. his energy and interest in his own subject transfers to the rest of the class keeping them engaged even to the end of the long 1.5 hour period.
Other comments	
Identify by name?	N
Student name and email	

Table 6. Response 5

Gender	M
Year	2010
Major 1	Philosophy
Major 2	
Minor 1	English - Literature
Minor 2	Latin
Reason to take course	
Prior interest	5
Prior interest fill-in	
Interest increased	4
Interest increased fill-in	
Effort	4
Effort fill-in	
Knowledge increased	4
Knowledge increased fill-in	
Challenge	4
Challenge fill-in	
Course strengths	The material in the course was presented in a very orderly and logical fashion, proceeding through the key philosophers of the period at a steady and reasonable pace. The readings and class discussions were also very well chosen and well done.
Ways to improve course	I would have liked perhaps a bit more reading in certain philosophers and a bit less in others to balance things out, but on the whole I think the important philosophers were covered fully.
Overall rating	5
Overall rating fill-in	
Instructor strengths	Dr. Brommage is great at being friendly and casual in class and as a result is easy to discuss topics with and get feedback and answers for questions from.
Ways for instructor to improve	The only real improvement I could say would be to space the papers out a bit more over the course of the semester, as the end of the semester seemed considerably more stacked than the rest of it.
Preparedness	5

Clarity	5
Feedback	5
Effectiveness	5
Effectiveness fill-in	
Other comments	
Identify by name?	N
Student name and email	

Table 7. Response 6

Gender	F
Year	2011
Major 1	
Major 2	
Minor 1	
Minor 2	
Reason to take course	Major/Minor
Prior interest	2
Prior interest fill-in	
Interest increased	1
Interest increased fill-in	I don't like modern philosophy.
Effort	4
Effort fill-in	Lengthy daily readings.
Knowledge increased	4
Knowledge increased fill-in	If you did the reading, you learned a lot. If not, you wouldn't get much out of class time at all. To do well in this course takes a lot of personal motivation and time outside the classroom, which is appropriate for a college course.
Challenge	5
Challenge fill-in	Long and difficult readings. The course content is inherently dense and complicated.
Course strengths	It was only twice a week, and between classes we were expected to read quite a bit. Therefore, the student was working consistently for the class even though we met only a couple times each week. The papers we wrote focused mainly on textual accuracy, which forced us to work on careful reading and extrapolation skills.
Ways to improve course	We covered a LOT of text. It was sometimes overwhelming and discouraging. Maybe in the future the readings could be shorter and class discussions more focused.
Overall rating	3
Overall rating fill-in	Lectures were often confusing.
Instructor strengths	Professor Brommage is great at answering specific questions raised by the students. The best teaching he does is in dialog. He has a good attitude and makes the class atmosphere comfortable and open.
Ways for instructor to improve	Professor Brommage tends to rely too heavily on reading aloud directly from the book. While this is helpful at times, a

	simplification and break down summary of the passage is much more effective. He sometimes seems unsure of the material himself.
Preparedness	3
Clarity	2
Feedback	4
Effectiveness	2
Effectiveness fill-in	Professor Brommage responded well to questioning, but without that, the material was often presented in a confusing and disorganized manner.
Other comments	After honing a couple skills in conveying information to college students, I suspect Prof. Brommage will excel greatly in teaching.
Identify by name?	N
Student name and email	

Table 8. Response 7

Gender	M
Year	2011
Major 1	English - Literature
Major 2	
Minor 1	Philosophy
Minor 2	
Reason to take course	Major/Minor
Prior interest	2
Prior interest fill-in	I did not know much about this time period in philosophy. epistemology and metaphysics were not high interests for me.
Interest increased	3
Interest increased fill-in	I am glad i read and learned the philosphies that we covered. I still am not that worried about metaphysics, but this class was cool and interesting nevertheless and definitely helped me know more about modern philosophy.
Effort	2
Effort fill-in	I should have tried a lot harder. I spent a good deal of time on the writing assignments, but i should have read two or three times are much in order to participate in class more.
Knowledge increased	4
Knowledge increased fill-in	Despite not exactly becoming fluent in any of the philosopher's languages, so to speak, i did get more than a simple gist of their ideas. I now know who they are and what they are about.
Challenge	4
Challenge fill-in	The texts are hard and require a great deal of time, concentration, and creative thinking. A lot of the time, i simply chose to NOT to put forth the effort i thought would be required of me to really succeed.
Course strengths	the brilliant philosophers covered. Brommage's good under-

	standing of each philosopher and ability to put on and take off a "hat" in order to better explain the texts and ideas. I really liked the occasional handouts too, which i found to be helpful in condensing key arguments in the texts.
Ways to improve course	Maybe have 4 short reading responses, set to be due after the 3rd, 6th, 9th and 12th weeks of class. Make the final paper have to be on Kant, who, afterall, is the one most students need to get a better understanding of and would benefit the most from writing about. I also think this class would work better as a monday, wednesday, friday class. The gap from wednesday to the next monday is too large and let me too easily "set aside" the class. I liked the small class size--i would hate to take this course with more than 18 students (this kinda goes for all non intro philosophy classes)
Overall rating	4
Overall rating fill-in	Brommage seemed to know his stuff. He graded pretty fairly. He has a good sense of humor and report with students. He did his best to make the philosopher's writings make sense.
Instructor strengths	See above.
Ways for instructor to improve	He could have done a little better of a job telling us what to focus on when doing the reading. In class, he definitely highlighted what he found to be important. I just think it would have helped me to know some general ideas that i should have been paying especially close attention to when reading prior to class. ...I also would have liked him to hand back papers a little more quickly. His grading style makes sense, but i wish he was a little more specific about what things he found to be good and bad in my writing and thinking.
Preparedness	4
Clarity	4
Feedback	3
Effectiveness	4
Effectiveness fill-in	He did a good job engaging the class and getting us to understand. I much preferred his style of teaching to Moller and Vogel--the only other philosophy professors i have had a class with, here.
Other comments	With nearly 50% of my graded assignments still yet to be written and graded, i hesitate to declare the above evaluation of the course, my self, and the instructor definitive.
Identify by name?	N
Student name and email	

Table 9. Response 8

Gender	F
Year	2010
Major 1	Women's Studies
Major 2	Philosophy
Minor 1	
Minor 2	
Reason to take course	Major/Minor

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Prior interest	4
Prior interest fill-in	
Interest increased	4
Interest increased fill-in	
Effort	4
Effort fill-in	
Knowledge increased	4
Knowledge increased fill-in	
Challenge	4
Challenge fill-in	
Course strengths	
Ways to improve course	
Overall rating	4
Overall rating fill-in	
Instructor strengths	His teaching has improved significantly since the last (Fall '08) semester. He is more open to considering student's ideas, and explains the text to the class rather than merely reciting specific quotes or passages to us. Last semester, he would read a few quotes out loud, ask us what we thought, and would then insult our responses--which was entertaining, but not practical in terms of learning...or self esteem. This semester, however, he was better at helping us translate and understand the text, wrote important points on the board, asked us what we thought and considered our arguments and validated our efforts. He's a great guy--bright, good sense of humor, unabashedly anti-Republican, etc. So my critique of his teaching Fall semester was not meant to be a critique of him as a person. Overall, I'm very impressed with how much his teaching has progressed in such a short period of time.
Ways for instructor to improve	
Preparedness	4
Clarity	4
Feedback	4
Effectiveness	4
Effectiveness fill-in	
Other comments	
Identify by name?	N
Student name and email	