

## Teaching Evaluations

My approach to teaching has earned me consistently strong student evaluations across the various topics I teach. Students have noted my focus on understanding rather than memorization, my constant encouragement of questions, my careful preparation for lectures, and my use of specific real-world examples. I have received the *John Patrick Hagan Award for Outstanding Teaching* at UNC-Chapel Hill and highly positive reviews from peer observations at W&L. Below I provide a sample of open-response feedback provided by students on their evaluations of my courses.

### *Latin American Politics (POL 247), Fall 2022*

- This was a very important class for me to take for my majors and minor and I am coming out of this course feeling even more confident about what I want to do with my studies and career. I think the way the course was organized was perfect and though Latin America is a huge region, I think the professor covered so much in a very efficient way. Class discussion was easy to participate in and if we had any questions about the readings she would answer them in class.
- I really liked the lecture style of the class. Lectures were super engaging, and I found them very informative. This was a class that I was excited to attend every day. Great job professor!
- The professor's format of course lectures, which included group discussions followed by class discussions of questions sprinkled throughout, as well as explanations of concepts was very effective for me in learning. I think it broke up the lectures well. The professor was very engaging, which made it easier to pay attention and classes never felt long. I also enjoyed the time that we took in some classes to review previously taught material, which helped with my overall retention of the material. I wish that could be included in other classes as well.
- Zoila was incredible, she has such passion for her students and the subject material which made class super engaging.
- I really enjoyed the course. I particularly appreciated being seated in groups that stayed pretty consistent throughout the semester because we developed a group energy and cohesion which made our discussions really productive and engaging. I also really appreciated Professor Ponce de Leon's articulation of concepts/people/events/etc. in class lectures. Sometimes lectures can come across as monotonous and therefore uninteresting, but I found lectures in this course to be really well contextualized and thus engaging.
- Professor Ponce de Leon is a wonderful, engaging, and charismatic professor. She really inspires us to become engaged about the topics.

### *Global Politics (POL 105), Winter 2023*

- I loved this course. I loved it so much that it inspired me to take on a politics major. In this course, you learn a lot in a friendly environment and get to study a subject matter completely different from any other politics or history class you might have already taken.
- I really did enjoy this course. I felt as though I was able to freely speak my mind and that my opinions would be valued by the professor. Professor Ponce de Leon was very enthusiastic about the subject matter, which made me want to engage more and learn more about each of the topics. I could tell that she really cared about the material and wanted to answer all of the questions we had. She made learning the material fun, and I really did enjoy taking this class.

- Zoila is a wonderful professor who is clearly very passionate about the class that she teaches. She incorporated student feedback from students who felt that weren't able to speak up.
- Ponce de Leon was amazing. She was a very engaging professor and always showed her love for politics and her job. This was so encouraging as a student to have her care about what we are learning every day.
- Professor Ponce de León has been an incredible teacher to my class. She provides thoughtful feedback not only for assignments, but also to our discussions in class. She encourages us to think for ourselves and present our own thoughts/opinions, and she helps us relate our own ideas to topics in Global Politics. The course itself has been very interesting, and has encouraged me to pursue more politics classes.
- Zoila does an excellent job in her class of inspiring students to explore the world of politics. Her emphasis on participation ensures that all students remain engaged and active in class discussions, which only improves the quality of the class each day.

*Immigration Attitudes (POL 380), Winter 2023*

- I really enjoyed this course and felt that I learned a lot about immigration and the views surrounding it that I had never necessarily thought of before. Specifically, I found the way the class was formatted to be really helpful for long-term retention of information. Having students serve as the discussion leaders for each class incentivized closer, deeper readings and I think setting the class up this way made us all feel more open to more lively and productive discussions than in many other classes.
- Zoila's been a great professor. She has been very helpful in explaining difficult-to-understand concepts in class and is always willing to provide help during office hours.
- Professor Ponce de Leon was always professional and helpful in the classroom. I appreciate the format of the class by having students lead discussions every class. To me, this helped me stay engaged and increased my interest in the material.
- I personally enjoyed the class a lot. Although it was very challenging at times, I have learned new concepts and ways of thinking about immigration attitudes. Zoila is really good at making students feel comfortable with new topics (even when these are sensitive).
- I really enjoyed this class. Of the politics courses I have taken, this course had the most research emphasis. I think looking at research in a political lens was a really great addition to my major and brought new skills. I am now better able to read and analyze political science research with a critical lens. Professor Ponce de Leon did a great job organizing discussion and giving us the ability to shape the class.
- Overall, I really enjoyed the topics in this course. I also liked the teach-a-class format for all the classes. It was helpful to learn from classmates. Another aspect of the class that was helpful was the paper workshop classes. I really enjoyed having set aside class time to meet with you about my paper.

*Applied Statistics (INTR 202), Fall 2022*

- This course not only taught the basics of statistics and statistical analysis, but also forced us to apply the concepts to realistic situations. The labs were quite helpful in doing so, and forced us to think more deeply about the content and it forced us to go back and remember concepts from earlier modules. By doing so, all the information for the final stayed fresh.

- I believe Professor Ponce de Leon is a very valuable and talented teacher. She made the course very manageable and taught the material in a realistic, approachable way while making sure everyone understood what we were doing. She was also very understanding, supportive, and personable. I had always heard positive reviews about her prior to taking the course and they proved very true this semester. While the course was not easy, I felt like every assignment I did was actually teaching me something and I came away with new knowledge every time. I am now planning on adding a Data Science minor, largely due to this class.
- This course has been a really helpful introduction to Statistics. Professor Zoila does an amazing job of keeping things organized. It has been such a fun learning experience. The class is very balanced on labs as well as tests.
- Overall, I really enjoyed this class and it inspired me to pursue a minor in data science. She was extremely helpful and easy to understand. If I ever needed to go to office hours she would be excited to help me out. I learned so much and am able to apply it to my other classes.
- Professor Ponce de Leon's class is probably my favorite. She is engaging, returns assignments quickly, and her passion for her subject really shines through.
- Professor Ponce de Leon is an amazing professor. She is always available to help students on the labs, homework, etc. I enjoy participating in her course. I was scared to take a math course, but Professor Ponce de Leon made stats more enjoyable and less intimidating.