

Report on History of Philosophy A CEQ's for year 2009-10

Lecturer: Nikk Effingham

Lecturer's comments are found in square brackets []

Question 1: Did you find the module... (1 = too difficult; 5= too easy)

45 respondents: 6 answered '2'; 34 answered '3'; 5 answered '4'.

Average: 2.98

Lecturer's Comments: If anything, a touch too easy.

Question 2: Did you find the module... (1= well organised; 5= badly organised)

45 respondents: 17 answered '1'; 23 answered '2'; 2 answered '3'; 3 answered '4'.

Average: 1.8

Lecturer's Comments: Marginal improvement on last year, so no action to be taken.

Question 3: Did you find the lecturer... (1=helpful; 5=unhelpful)

45 respondents: 7 answered '1'; 30 answered '2'; 6 answered '3'; 2 answered '4'.

Average: 2.01

Lecturer's Comments: Slight drop. Bit disappointing. No pertinent comments suggesting how I could remedy that.

Question 4 Did you find the lecturer... (1=clear; 5=unclear)

45 respondents: 17 answered '1'; 22 answered '2'; 5 answered '3'; 1 answered '4'.

Average: 1.78.

Lecturer's Comments: Acceptable score.

Question 5: Did you find the lecturer... (1=enthusiastic; 5=unenthusiastic)

45 respondents: 25 answered '1'; 16 answered '2'; 3 answered '3'; 1 answered '4'.

Average: 1.55.

Lecturer's Comments: An acceptable level of enthusiasm, apparently for all but one person.

Question 6: Was the opportunity for discussion... (1=sufficient; 5=insufficient)

45 respondents: 9 answered '1'; 14 answered '2'; 10 answered '3'; 10 answered '4'; 2 answered '5'.

Average: 2.6

Lecturer's Comments: I'm never sure whether this refers to discussion opportunities in seminars (which would be bad to stop) or lectures (which I have no interest in providing). So, as always, I don't really know what to do with the answer to this question.

Question 7: Did the series of lectures make sense as a whole? (1= well; 5=badly)

45 respondents: 15 answered '1'; 21 answered '2'; 8 answered '3'; 1 answered '4'.

Average: 1.89

Lecturer's Comments: Slight dip on last year, but still okay.

Question 8: Did you prepare adequately? (1=always; 5=never)

45 respondents: 5 answered '1'; 18 answered '2'; 19 answered '3'; 2 answered '4'; 1 answered '5'.

Average: 2.47.

Lecturer's Comments: (Barely) acceptable score.

Question 9: Was the library provision (1=adequate; 5=inadequate)

44 respondents: 5 answered '1'; 11 answered '2'; 19 answered '3'; 7 answered '4'; 2 answered '5'.

Average: 2.71.

Lecturer's Comments: Better than last year, but still crap. But what is weirder are the actual CEQs themselves. For instance, of the people who said it was utterly inadequate they also affirmed that there weren't any texts they had a problem getting hold of. How the hell does that work? Moreover, I just don't see how the library service can fail to be adequate for over 80% of the people. All of the books are on short loan – that remaining 20% would have to be eating the textbooks or something to keep them away from the other 80%. I don't know how to interpret these results.

Question 10 What was the most helpful aspect of the lectures/classes?

Nikk!; Lectures – helpful handouts that have all aspects of the lecture written out so when referring back was easy. Classes- lots of chances for discussion; powerpoints – clear. Module/coursepack clear outline of work; handouts; the handouts are great and the preparing questions for classes; the handouts from lectures help a lot; seminar prep; the printed lecture notes; hand outs; lecture notes were detailed, allowing for concentration on lecture, not note-taking; grasping the key concepts of arguments which then allowed me to expand on ideas suggested. Handouts!; seminar groups are well timed and organised; good handouts; handouts summarising points, powerpoints, enthusiasm of the lecturer – more interesting; [illegible] challenges in seminars both tutors and tutees; the handout; the handout; the classes gave a good chance to discuss issues. The lectures explained the handouts; lecture handouts and the coursepack; handouts are helpful; lecture slides; handouts are clear and make writing essays much easier; giving a handouts and having powerpoint available on webCT; the lecture ahndouts – I could highlight the bits I needed to work on; they were really well presented, Nikk caring about the topic made me care; clearly explaining ideas and theories; lectures – providing good background for further study/thought, presentations; the powerpoints and handouts; giving out the sheets with the structure of the lecture on them made everything so much easier; handouts; good handouts and a good level of discussion on everything; the lectures were relevant to the tutorials; great slide shows, lecture notes were really helpful; the sheets provided made reinforcing the lectures much easier – as did the work for seminars; the clear hand outs and points of where we must do further reading; handouts; good handouts to build on with notes; handouts provide a useful reference; the handouts → they give you the chance ot listen and understand in the lecture and then re-read over; the lecturer expands on the slide information even though initially it seems he is just reading off the slides; enthusiasm; the lecture notes.

Question 11 What, if anything, was least helpful about the lecture's/classes?

Kind of quiet when you're sitting at the back [there are four empty rows at the front. I have a suggestion...]; seminars 0 always go off topic to irrelevant discussions. Don't go through set work; the seminar leader is not helpful and dismissive; the seminar leader and monoton of lecture slightly dismissive [this comment was hard to parse]; sometimes the questions are very hard → and sometimes the subjects in classes for discussion are interesting but get away a bit from the core topic; N/A; lack of explanation of tricky concepts; no talk of texts to look up or journals etc.; where is Plato and Aristotle? I was expecting some ancient Greeks in a Hist of Phil course [we've got 20 credits, I can't cover it all so decisions were made on what to cover. Medieval was in; Greeks were out. Sorry if you wanted the Greeks]; the room is too hot; if you don't understand something there's not much opportunity for discussion [as yet I do not believe any first year student has used one of my office hours for such discussion. So the opportunity is very much

provided, but not being used]; the powerpoint/handout combination – it's much easier to listen and learn when there are just a few slides and the lecturer explaining them rather than the lecturer reading slides which explain the handouts; over heated rooms and broken slides; lecturer assumed everyone had already done philosophy and so did not explain key terms, so I struggled as I was unfamiliar with terms [I deny this, and don't know what key terms I failed to explain]; I didn't think the seminar leader was helpful at all (KS) – he seemed slightly arrogant and was aware I am doing this as an MOMD; the screens sometimes didn't work. Discussion wasn't available; For 5 mins at the end of each topic could discuss if you were to write an essay on this topic 'This is a good way to approach it...' [I'm not providing essay plans at the end of each lecture. This would be spoon feeding and a dead cert way to produce 80 identical essays]; N/A; N/A; N/A; N/A; quiet voice, too hot rooms; More structured seminars, focusing on the questions asked; seminars should relate to questions; It doesn't help with reading [illegible] for seminars [Not sure what this means, at least three of the lectures were nothing but close reading of the seminar readings]; No extra info to jot down that's not on the lecture slides; None.

Question 13: How many hours a week, on average, did you spend preparing for classes/seminars?

42 respondents:

1-2 hours	11 people
3-4 hours	22 people
5-6 hours	8 people
7 hours	1 person

Average: 3.4 hours

Lecturer's Comments: This is about right, although slightly high in some cases.

Question 14: Were there any specific texts that it was difficult to get hold of? Please give details.

N/A; No, most texts were in the coursepack or in the compulsory book that we had to buy; YES for the essay the further reading for topics was impossible to find; No; N/A; N/A; No; Kaye, initially [this was a bookshop problem that was resolved]; Ethics and morality information; ones which weren't in the handout [? I don't know what this means. I didn't think there were any books in the handout]; library books often only a couple of copies of each book so hard to get hold of [a couple of copies is pretty good going]; Anything relating to adultery, books evaluating medieval philosophy were sparse, internet resources sparse too; No; Sometimes the books listed in the bibliography are listed in the library but not actually there or there aren't enough or they are there [I suggest that they are there, and you are looking in the wrong place]; No; Yes; It was hard to know what to look up; The Kaye took a while to arrive; No; Practically every book on the reading list to help with my essay; N/A; regarding the problem of evil essay, the only available books were reference books so I couldn't take them out of the library; N/A; N/A; Too few books to do with essay titles available; No; The ones that have to be downloaded via the library; None so far; None

Question 15: What changes, if any, would you make to this aspect of teaching and learning?

N/A; Sometimes it seems as though the lecturer just reads from the powerpoint; seminars should be more structured and reach a conclusion – groups should be smaller; the seminar leader!; the seminars leaders [illegible], and less slide based lecture I more like Joss; maybe try to keep discussions in seminars with Kirk more to the point and what's relevant to the core topic; None; Little more explanation in lectures; Greeks; more help with essays; N/A; maybe a bit different to

just powerpoint every lecture; less reliance on powerpoint; none; explain key terms and mention key dates; Nothing really, I've enjoyed it; more discussion, but we do have seminars; More opportunities for questions; more weekly seminars in the lecture; N/A; N/A; N/A; N/A; None; more analysis on course texts than overview; more info to make lecture worth coming to that can't be found on webCT; none.

Question 16: Please add any other comments.

All good!; I don't feel I accomplish anything in seminars; get rid of seminar leader; get rid of seminar leader!!!; None; essay was a problem as no example essays or mentioning of the essays was given. Did not realise essay was due until 2 days before and struggled to know and how to write with no guidelines [the module guide contains all important information for the essay, such as the due date. The study guide contains many pages of information advising you on how to write an essay. As discussed in the first lecture, you must familiarise yourself with both of these things. You did not, thus had a problem. In future, carry out instructions and you will be fine]; It's just a shame the lecturer can't do the seminars; to know basics and the structure of the lecture before it starts helps a lot – spesh [sic] when you haven't done philos before; N/A; N/A; N/A; N/A; Nikk's lectures are always enjoyable!

Overall

No major gripes. Two quick notes

Discussion during lectures: I'm not a big fan. I believe that a lecture is the one chance to introduce the material to students, and find it tricky enough to do that in a 50 minute time slot. With a class of ~100 students, if even 10% of those ask questions, each taking 30 seconds to ask and a minute to answer, then that lecture time is reduced to a mere 35 minutes. Far better, in my eyes, to retain such discussions for the appropriate contact hours (office hours, after lecture, seminars etc.). Hopefully that should explain the reasoning behind the general lack of interaction.

Seminar issues: Some people had problems with the seminar leaders. I'll look into it.