

Report on Knowledge and Reality A CEQ's for year 2008-09
Lecturer: Nikk Effingham

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

51 respondents: 6 answered '1'; 17 answered '2'; 27 answered '3'; 1 answered '4'.

Average: 2.5.

Lecturer's Comments: Whilst it demonstrates that the course errs on the very edge of the comfort zone, I'm relatively happy with this score.

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

52 respondents: 13 answered '1'; 30 answered '2'; 8 answered '3'; 1 answered '4'.

Average: 1.9

Lecturer's Comments: Acceptable score.

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

51 respondents: 18 answered '1'; 25 answered '2'; 8 answered '3'.

Average: 1.8

Lecturer's Comments: Acceptable score.

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

51 respondents: 23 answered '1'; 22 answered '2'; 5 answered '3'; 1 answered '4'.

Average: 1.7

Lecturer's Comments: Acceptable score.

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

51 respondents: 30 answered '1'; 19 answered '2'; 2 answered '3'.

Average: 1.5

Lecturer's Comments: Acceptable score, with a nice spread.

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

50 respondents: 7 answered '1'; 22 answered '2'; 15 answered '3'; 4 answered '4'; 2 answered '5'.

Average: 2.3

Lecturer's Comments: Many of the comments on the CEQs indicated that students were unsure whether this question concerned the lectures or the seminars. Indeed, I too am unsure. Either ways, the score indicates to me that I shall continue the policy of using lectures solely for lecturing, and leaving all discussions to the seminar.

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

51 respondents: 12 answered '1'; 33 answered '2'; 5 answered '3'; 1 answered '4'.

Average: 1.9

Lecturer's Comments: Acceptable score.

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

51 respondents: 1 answered '1'; 16 answered '2'; 26 answered '3'; 7 answered '4'; 1 answered '5'.

Average: 2.8.

Lecturer's Comments: Below the level of acceptability. I will look at the register details to see if this lack of preparation is reflected in the number of students excluded from the seminars. If not, then either this course is too easy to prepare for (unlikely given the score and spread of question 1) or the policy of booting poorly prepared students is not being implemented correctly. I will discuss such details with the TA, although I am inclined to believe that the register details will confirm this lack of preparation resulted in appropriate seminar exclusions.

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

51 respondents: 8 answered '1'; 9 answered '2'; 21 answered '3'; 12 answered '4'; 1 answered '5'.

Average: 2.8.

Lecturer's Comments: Not a great score. I believe this may be a reflection of student's misunderstandings of what the library is intended to provide (see below).

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

The lecture notes and the lectures themselves; lecturer very explanatory; handout; handouts; classes – more detailed; lecture – humour and examples; classes –rediscussing lecture notes; lecturer making the topic easier to understand by examples; Simplicity in lectures/discussions in classes; Very clear powerpoint presentations that highlight key points; handout and powerpoint in sync; handouts and powerpoints online for later reference; discussion in seminars; Having presentations and handouts to refer to online. Coursepack is fantastic as well; Having access to the slides online afterwards; Good lecturer and powerpoints with an easy-to-follow structure; Having coursepacks saved time and money!; Powerpoints; Having a seminar tutor to lead us through difficult ideas in a more personal environment; Handouts; Their existence/web resources/coursepack; Powerpoints and lecture notes; the detailed handouts in lectures; discussions in seminars were helpful to clarify what was in the lectures and readings; coursepack and questions for seminars; the discussion; Powerpoint presentation; handouts in lectures; powerpoint; the slide shows are on the internet, so the fast moving lecture can be caught up on if a slide is missed; the slideshows being on the internet; seminars; handouts; going through the lecture in the seminar helped me to understand more; open discussion; putting slideshow online – being able to refer back – use of examples; Powerpoint/handout; learning resource; explanation through modules – organisation of handout and powerpoint; the lectures were clear and did make some sense of what I found to be a very difficult module; clear format with powerpoint presentation and handouts complemented lecture well; slides; good handouts every lecture;

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

The discussion in seminars is not great, I don't always leave fully confident; reading; depends on the people; nothing; not really; reading lists for essays – only one copy of books in library and mainly in short loan, need more copies of key texts and in long loan!; the lack of structure to seminars; explaining/clarifying the reading and theories; the classes didn't seem to always have an ultimate aim, was more a general discussion, which although is useful could be adapted; they are quite fast moving – sometimes hard to keep up with; reading was sometimes difficult to understand, seminars did usually make things clearer though; originally, lectures were organised after seminars; sometimes I just didn't understand; lectures/classes sometimes feel focused on person/individual (philosopher) rather than topic;

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

Less than 1: 2

1-2 hours: 18

3-4 hours: 17

5-6 hours: 3

Enough: 1

Average: 2.6

Lecturer's Comments: Extraordinarily low, being less than half of what is required, with a bulk of students doing less than a third.

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

Myth of the Given; Myth of the Given – long and written in a complex manner; Nothing; No; No; Most texts on the reading list had already been taken out of the library; Audi; All library *not* well equipped; Any of them – the library is useless!; Some books are rare in library (most of books from coursepack); Some books on the reading list for the essay titles were all taken near to the essay deadline; some texts on the reading list were either not in the library or had been taken out i.e. Goldman; Analysis of Gettier counterexamples; the texts on the reading list when trying to write essays – out on loan. Reference room only had a couple; high demand texts and lots of people trying to get hold of limited copies; Gettier related texts; AJ Ayer 'Language, Truth and Logic';

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

The seminars could be improved → more open discussion and more time; None; More seminar time, weekly perhaps?; Personally, I do not like the seminars due to James, so get rid of him; Make the end of course aims and examination help at the beginning of the course rather than the end so that one can tailor their study accordingly; a more basic introduction – Gettier is terribly advanced for the first week!; the work could have been

spread out over more lectures – a lot of info was crammed into one lecture; seminar every week;

Question 16: Please add any other comments.

Just want to know what types of questions are expected in the exam, and also how to tackle the questions [NB: these issues are covered in the final lecture]; All handouts should be sent to students via mail or webCT just after a lecture (in case someone misses the lecture); put handouts/presentations on webCT; put handouts and presentations on webCT;

Overall

Acceptable scores, and no large number of grave misgivings. Three issues bear commenting on.

As with History of Philosophy A, the library appears to be a problem for some. Whilst all texts from the module guide *are* present in the library (contrary to some comments from above – I don't know why they were unable to locate them on the system) it seems that getting hold of them has proven difficult for some. As with History of Philosophy A, it is not feasible to fill the shelves with multiple copies of the numerous textbooks, although in some cases the number of texts don't reach the multiple stage so more copies will need to be ordered. I'm also reluctant to have them on anything other than short term loan, and will impress upon people the need to photocopy relevant portions (within the CLA guidelines) and return the book rather using the library to get a single text out for the whole term (which, given the class sizes, is not feasible). The purpose of the library, on a course this size, is not to make available texts for long loans – there are over 150 students registered, and so it'd be difficult for such an exercise to be carried out. Given the course size, the only purpose of the library is to make material available for copying (again, within the scope of the CLA guidelines).

The low number of hours of preparation might dovetail with the alleged difficulty of the course. When the essay results come in, we will be able to better gauge whether the material on the course is suitably testing. If the marks are particularly high, then as the average preparation is rather low, it would appear something has gone wrong somewhere. Similarly, if the marks are lower than expected, then we have an explanation.

Finally, following the comments I will attempt to wrestle with webCT and put the course information online there. In the meantime the public URL will have to suffice.