



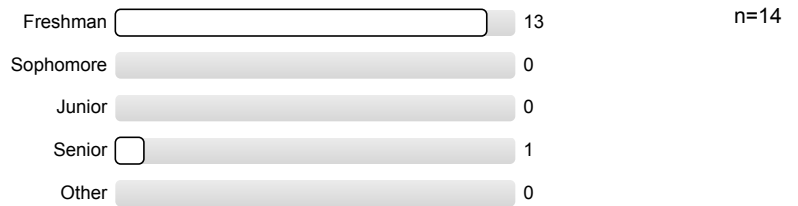
D. FESSLER Evaluation of Instruction Program Report

17W: ANTHRO 19 SEM 1: FIAT LUX FRSHMN SEM
 No. of responses = 14
 Enrollment = 20
 Response Rate = 70%

Survey Results

1. Student Demographic Information:

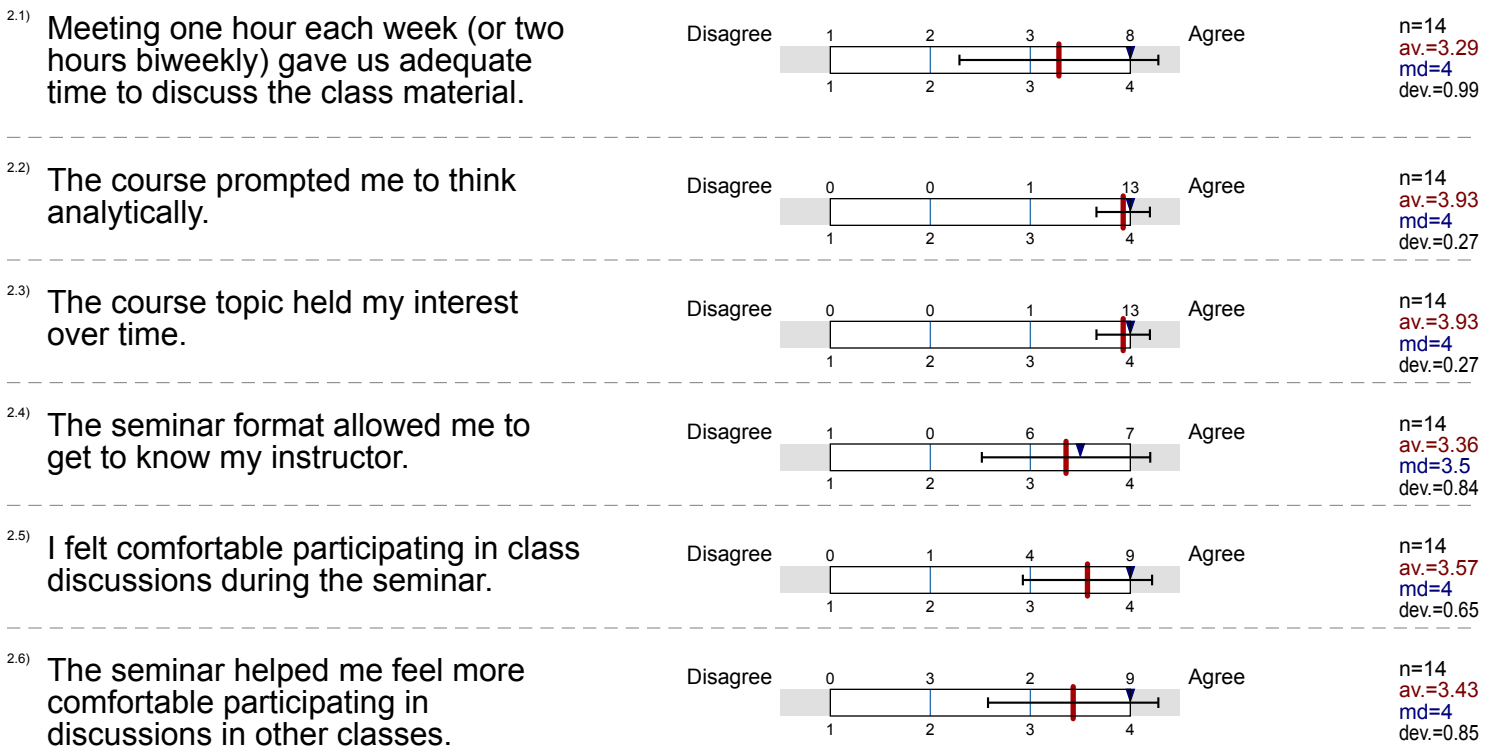
1.1) Year in School:

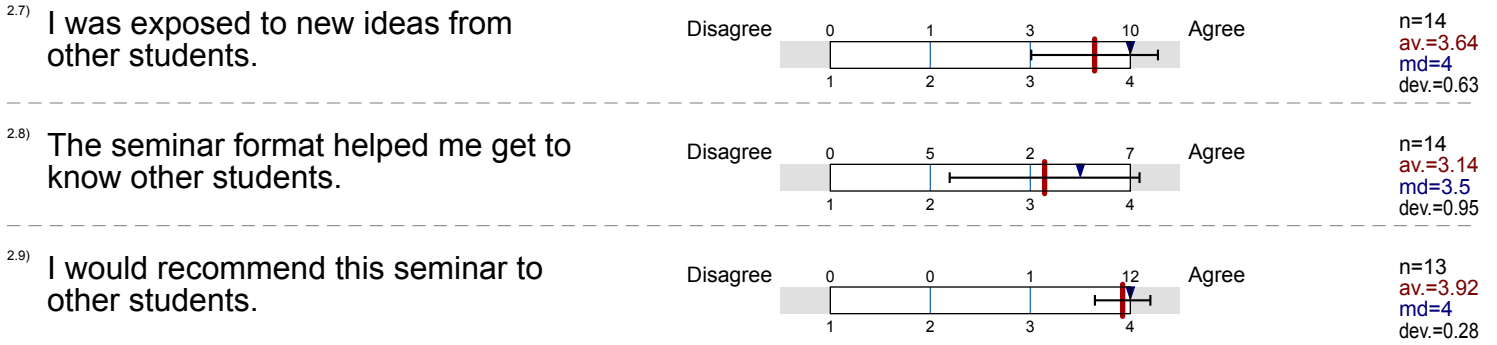


1.2) Gender:

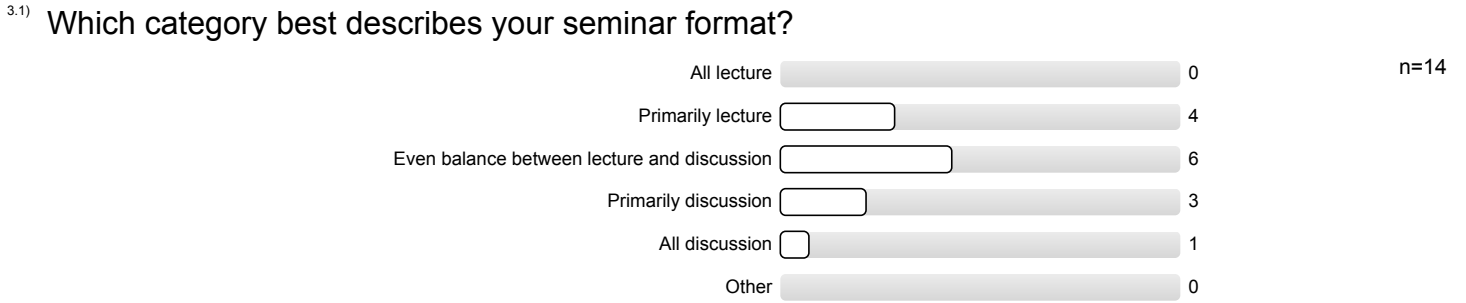


2. General Questions:

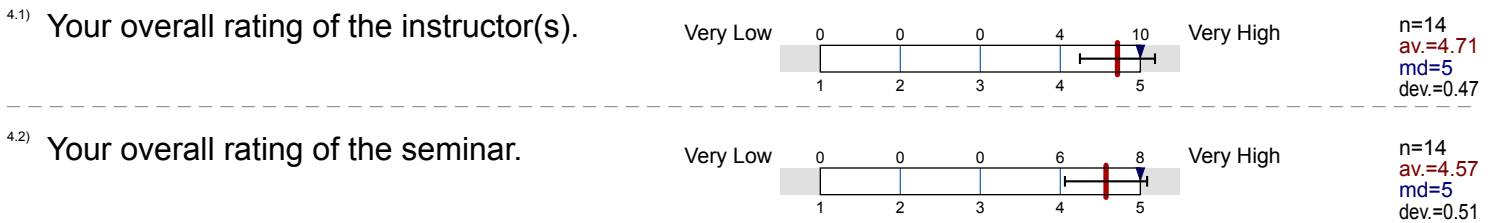




3. Seminar Format:



4. Overall Rating:

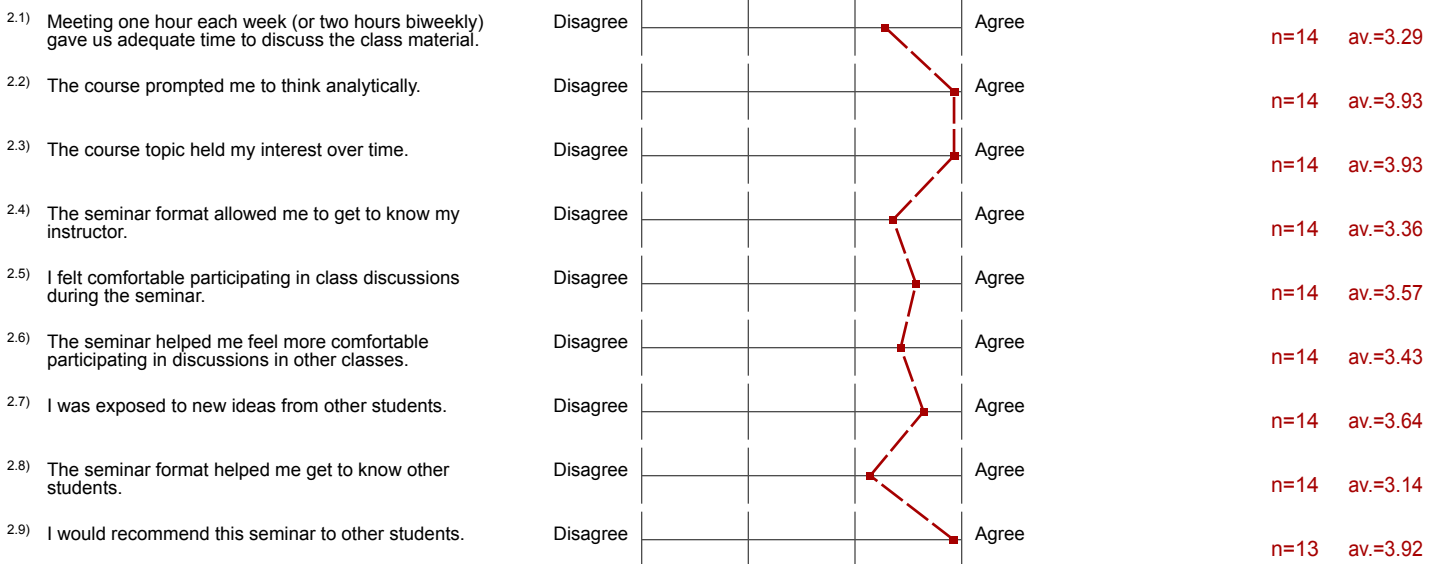


Profile

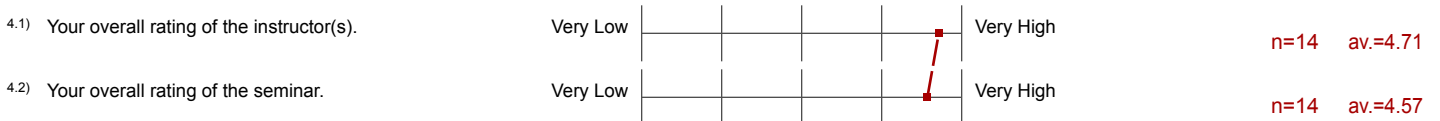
Subunit: ANTHRO
 Name of the instructor: D. FESSLER
 Name of the course: 17W: ANTHRO 19 SEM 1: FIAT LUX FRSHMN SEM
 (Name of the survey)

Values used in the profile line: Mean

2. General Questions:



4. Overall Rating:



Comments Report

5. Open Questions:

5.1) What did you learn in this seminar that you consider valuable?

■ As a pre-veterinary student, our reading of Temple Grandin's "Animals in Translation" was extremely informative and thought-provoking in the subjects of animal behavior, animal food production, ecology and evolutionary biology, and autism and other human disorders. Nevertheless, I believe Professor Fessler's lectures and questions directed towards the class were actually the most beneficial of all, expanding on Temple Grandin's arguments, dispelling false ideas in the book, and passionately and thoroughly introducing us to a wide range of sociological issues and past research experiments that left me excited to come back next week. As someone unable to fit a sociology or anthropology course in my degree plan, this class was an incredible introduction to these topics from a wonderful professor and lecturer.

■ Get to know how animals perceive the world.

■ I learned a LOT about evolutionary biology and about mechanisms that drive it. I learned about animal cognition and autism, sure, but that was mostly through the assigned reading (the eponymous Animals in Translation by Temple Grandin). The seminar itself involves Dr. Fessler briefly discussing the chapter of the week, pointing out where Grandin simplified things or was just plain wrong.

He'd follow this by going through questions we ask about the book, selecting a few of them, and elaborating on those few in class. Oftentimes we'd drift far from autism or animal cognition into other topics within evolutionary biology, but always in an interesting way. We learned plenty about human cognition, too. It was fascinating to witness to the collision of psychology, anthropology, and evolutionary biology that is this class.

Also, we learned how to escape a water buffalo if we ever need to. Run in a zigzag. Their momentum doesn't shift easily and their eyes are not built for that kind of chase.

■ I learned a lot about evolutionary psychology and why animals behave the way they do. A lot of cool concepts in psychology were discussed like theory of mind and language. I also learned to run in a criss-cross if you're ever getting chased by a water buffalo.

■ I learned a lot about how to think critically and ask meaningful questions which is something that I can take into other classes and discussions. I also learned a lot about the seminar topics of animals and autism which are very fascinating even if the information isn't as applicable to other classes.

■ I learned a lot about the origins of certain typical and autistic human behaviors, as well as that of animals. I was introduced to many different experiments and although I most like won't be able to remember most of what I learned in a few weeks, I felt like the class was enjoyable and informative throughout the quarter.

"You don't go to college to learn information/facts; you go to college to learn how to think." - Dr. Fessler

■ I learned how expansive human perspective is and how my perspective is just one of many.

■ I learned so much about autistic individuals and how their minds work. The comparison between an autistic individual's mind and that of an animal was also extremely interesting.

■ I learned the different aspects of Autism and its relationship with animals by reading the book Animals in Translation and going to all the discussions.

■ In this course I was able to expand my knowledge about autism, the animal brain, behavior, and evolution. Although Professor Fessler emphasizes that it's not what we learn, but rather that we learn to think analytically, I really value the information that we covered. I think it gives me a broader knowledge

for animal behavior and how both humans and non-humans think and act. I also value how it made me consider & think about things that I may not have considered on my own. It also supplemented some of my learning from other classes, and I think it was great to see how subjects can intertwine.

5.2) Please comment on the amount and quality of intellectual engagement you had with other students, noting what effect the exchange of ideas had on your seminar experience.

- I enjoyed the conversations that I had with other students in the seminar, and I am glad that I was able to learn from their comments and questions as well. Since everyone came in with a different background and experiences with either animals or autism, I think it provided a diverse foundation for discussion where we were able to openly talk and share.
- I had some engagement with other students, but the main source of intellectual engagement was from the professor, which makes sense because he is an expert.
- I was able to learn and understand other people's experiences as well as hear their interesting stories about the topics that we discussed.
- Most discussion was primarily between student and instructor. If one student want to talk about another student's comments, they would need to connect it also to what Professor Fessler said after he says something.
- Most intellectual engagement was not between students, but when it was the exchange of ideas was progressive and helpful but inevitably shallow since we all didn't know too much about the subject.
- The engagement with other students were mediocre.
- The environment was open and nice. Professor Fessler is incredibly intelligent, but does often get distracted when a new topic is introduced. This isn't bad, as when he goes onto something new we get an in depth perspective.
- The students ask questions on the assigned chapters each week on the discussion forum, but this had the feeling of people speaking to the air. Most, if not all, of the contributors were posting in order to fulfill the weekly assignment. This led to some very insightful questions, which were elaborated on in class as the basis of the course, but also led to very little discussion between students.
- The way that it was structured involved not very much interaction or discussion between students, it was mainly the professor posing a question, having a student partially answer it and then start to lecture on that topic. Having minimal interaction with other students made the seminar experience a little less enjoyable because I felt like I didn't really get to know anyone better or have any particularly engaging discussions.

5.3) Please comment on the amount and quality of interaction you had with your seminar instructor, noting what effect it had on your seminar experience.

- Dr. Fessler is knowledgeable and personable and really fun to listen to! He knows his stuff, and is happy to share it anecdotally and otherwise. Having him for this seminar made it really fun to be in a 10am, just to get to learn about evolution and cognition and anthropology from someone that clearly loves the study of all of those things.

(His dogs are cute, too! Always a plus!)

- I had a good amount of interaction and learned a lot about my instructor over the semester.
- I really enjoyed how Professor Fessler specifically addressed students' questions that had been posted on the question forum. It made it so he actually addressed what we wanted to talk about from the book, along with adding his own expertise into the conversation. I appreciated how he would always answer

my questions from in-class and also address students by name which makes it much more personal for a class of 20 compared to larger lectures.

- The actual interaction with the professor was pretty minimal, the majority of the interaction was online turning in homework questions. The professor lectured a lot, he would get very into a topic and then talk about it for the majority of the class with little student engagement. This made the seminar less interesting since I didn't actually get to participate much and since I didn't get to know the professor at all during the 10 week period.
- The majority of the discussion would be of the instructor. He frequently asked for students' opinions, but then he would elaborate on the students' answer, which is not a bad thing. It allowed me to see the world in a different light.
- The professor was very easy to interact with and the exchange was also intriguing and positive. He worked to address students in particular and the whole class evenly.
- There was a lot of interaction with Professor Fessler and learning about his research really intrigued me. He is very knowledgeable on the topic and hearing all that he had to say was truly an honor.

^{5.4)} How could your seminar be improved?

- Honestly, the course was a pretty good time and I learned a lot. I might change the way that we receive credit (maybe allow credit for answering questions instead of just asking them on the forum?). But there's very little room for improvement. This was easily the most interesting class I've taken so far at UCLA. I should add, though, that I'm a freshman. Can't speak too soon.
- I think that having more student engagement would make the seminar more interesting, although the the professor was very knowledgeable on many subjects and could talk for hours about different subjects relating to the book we read.
- If discussion was open to more student-student interaction, it could be more effective. We could have less discussion on Professor Fessler's part and allow students to respond to one another.
- More discussion time for each meeting because there is just SOOOO MUCH to talk about in this class.
- More structure, like activities in class every once and a while.
- Overall, I really liked the structure of the seminar. I think that having everyone post 2 questions for the corresponding chapter each week really encourages the students to read the book, which makes for a more detailed discussion during class. I can't think of anything that should be changed in the seminar, and I would definitely recommend it to anyone else who is interested in the topics.
- The only concern I can think of is to try to encourage students to be more engaging. This is not Dr. Fessler's fault because he did try, but that is an area that could be improved.
- Very well done class. No suggestions