

Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

Daniel Blinderman

Below you will find a summary of responses from my teaching evaluations for my first two semesters as a Postdoctoral Fellow and instructor of record at the University of Virginia and my five semesters as a Graduate Student Instructor at the University of Michigan. Each set of evaluations is summarized and presented in similar ways. First, each chart below contains the average numeric ratings I received, in comparison to both the department and university-wide mean (for UVA) and just the university-wide mean (Michigan). Michigan did not compile mean department ratings. All questions were asked as five item Likert-scale questions where students were asked to pick from a set of options ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). For each institution, in addition to these quantitative ratings, I have included a selection of individual, qualitative comments that students submitted as part of their evaluations.

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Evaluations from the University of Virginia

Student Evaluation Item	My Mean Rating	Politics Department Mean	University Mean
This course increased my enthusiasm for the topic.	4.46	4.26	4.02
Through this course I gained a deeper understanding of the subject matter.	4.78	4.49	4.33
I had access to the course materials I needed to learn, including access to required textbooks, course readings, technology tools, and other materials required for class assignments and projects.	4.9	4.60	4.48
The instructor clearly communicated the course schedule and expectations for participation (e.g., readings, discussions).	4.68	4.54	4.44
The instructor clearly communicated the course learning objectives.	4.74	4.49	4.38
The instructor implemented learning activities and assignments that allowed me to demonstrate understanding of the course material.	4.62	4.38	4.32
The instructor provided me prompt and useful feedback on my learning.	4.65	4.21	4.11
The instructor provided opportunities for my active participation.	4.84	4.44	4.34
The instructor was available to help support my learning.	4.81	4.45	4.36
The instructor fostered an environment where I felt valued as an individual and that I belonged in the class.	4.71	4.44	4.34
Overall, the instructor was an effective teacher.	4.62	4.46	4.32

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The instructor created an environment that respected difference and welcomed diverse perspectives.	4.68	4.43	4.31
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Student Feedback – Selections from both courses I taught as an instructor of record at the University of Virginia in the 2025-2026 academic year:

I loved this course! I think it completes a very hard task of talking over all of America's history in a couple months. Readings are extremely heavy but informative. Great class for an overview on American politics.

I truly loved this class. I think it was intriguing, and I always looked forward to it. I think the readings are a little heavy sometimes, but that's just because I am a first-year student taking a level 2k class, so I am just not used to it yet. Overall, I would recommend this class to my friends interested in learning more about the American Political Tradition or majoring/minoring in a government field.

Professor Blinderman is very understanding and patient. He cares about this course and his students a lot.

This has by far been my favorite class at UVA, due to Professor Blinderman's enthusiasm and expertise on the topic; it would be difficult not to feel engaged with the course material.

I really enjoyed this course and if I wasn't a fourth-year I would definitely take more politics courses—wish I hadn't waited so long to take some. I think this class is incredibly important for every student at this university to take, especially as we head off into a world so saturated by politics.

This class was super interesting, and the content we looked at showed a lot of care in the subject matter from the professor.

Professor Blinderman never made me feel as though my opinions were not welcome or respected. He always prefaced when talking about controversial topics that we needed to be mindful of others.

At the beginning of the course, policies were outlined in order to foster productive, civil discussion regarding topics and politics that individuals may feel strongly about.

Professor Blinderman always wanted to include everyone in the class discussions and made sure everyone's ideas were listened to.

Professor Blinderman strongly believed in asking questions that would allow students to discuss a variety of viewpoints that others may not have previously considered.

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Dr. Blinderman is clearly passionate about this topic and communicating it with students. When he lectures in class, I think it's fascinating.

Professor Blinderman was an excellent instructor. He was really passionate about state constitutions and American political development, which made the learning experience fun. I truly enjoyed my time in his class, and I hope that he can share his passion in future semesters.

I really enjoyed the course. I came into it interested to learn more about state constitutions after taking so many classes on national politics, and I'm leaving the class with a fuller understanding of state constitutions as well as an interest in learning about them more.

I enjoyed this course. I definitely learned a lot about the role of state constitutions and lawmaking throughout American history, which was a lot greater than I had anticipated

Class discussion was rich and facilitated extremely well by the Professor; assigned readings were meticulously planned and left little out of the conversation.

Going over the readings in class in both small and big groups really helped with understanding the material and how they relate to each other/ the broader unit.

The group discussions were incredibly helpful to help me digest the dense readings.

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Evaluations from the University of Michigan

Student Evaluation Item	My Mean Rating as a Graduate Student Instructor (GSI)	University Mean
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.5	4.3
Overall, Daniel Blinderman was an excellent teacher.	4.7	4.6
Daniel Blinderman seemed well prepared for class meetings.	4.9	4.8
Daniel Blinderman explained material clearly.	4.8	4.7
Daniel Blinderman treated students with respect.	4.9	4.9
Daniel Blinderman stressed important points in lectures/discussions.	4.7	4.6
Daniel Blinderman was willing to meet and help students outside class.	4.8	4.7
Daniel Blinderman set high standards for students	4.5	4.5
Daniel Blinderman suggested specific ways to improve written work.	4.4	4.5
I knew what was expected of me in this course.	4.4	4.5
My interest in the subject has increased because of this course.	4.3	4.2

Student Feedback – Selections from the five courses in which I served as a Graduate Student Instructor at the University of Michigan

“I really appreciated Danny and not only his passion for the subject but his commitment to making sure our section understood the material. I also noticed he made a lot of effort to engage our class in activities that are not typically part of discussions.”

“Danny overall did a really good job as a GSI. Our section felt very comfortable asking questions and expressing our opinions which is important in a discussion class. Danny sent out an agenda before each section, which was helpful to know what we would be focusing on beforehand. It was overall a really well formatted discussion and definitely beneficial in addition to lecture.”

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"Danny really helped my understanding of course materials and helped me prepare for all of the assignments. He was instrumental to my success in this class. He made many accommodations for students to talk to him outside of class. He had a good working knowledge of the material and was able to answer any questions. He made the class even better than it already was."

"Danny is an AMAZING gsi. One of my favorite GSI's I've had at the university so far. Was open to meeting outside of class, was always open to answering my questions, and genuinely helped me with improving my essays. He always introduced interesting material/exercises during the section that helped to contextualize the material."

"I thoroughly enjoyed this class and the format. I have always felt invisible in class especially big lectures but Professor Zeisberg really brought the students together to learn the material and collaborate. Danny was amazing, his lecture about judicial review changed the way I think!"

"Danny is the single best GSI I have ever had and I would gladly take any other courses he taught"

"I liked how the instructor sent us an email a day or two before the section so that we knew what to expect and could plan accordingly. He did a great job of facilitating and guiding the discussions as well. I also appreciated how Danny invited us all to a one-on-one, causal meeting at the beginning of the course to see how we were doing."

"I thought Danny was such an excellent GSI. Not only was he incredibly nice and supportive, but very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about helping students outside of class. Genuinely one of the best GSI's I've had in the political science department."

"Danny was always prepared for each discussion section. He did an amazing job of explaining and simplifying key concepts and helping us make connections between various ideas (so we could see the bigger picture). He genuinely seemed to care about our success and our well-being. He always expressed his willingness to help."

"Daniel was very receptive and accommodating in class and he was always ready to help with any issues in class."

"I really enjoyed taking this course. Danny was always prepared and provided really useful comments on my work. This class definitely increased my interest in comparative politics and political science as a whole."

"Danny clearly knows his way all around this material and it's evident he has taught the class before. As a teacher, he's composed, respectful, and engaging. Overall, he runs the classroom well, makes it basically impossible to not know what's going on with his clarity and clearly cares about the students and coursework."

"Danny was well-prepared for discussion sections and used class time to elaborate on important material discussed in class while also incorporating hands-on and interactive experiences."