College Course Evaluations

PSYC 22550: Is Nature vs. Nurture the Wrong Question?

Section 01 - Spring 2013

Instructor(s): Flaherty Molly
Number Enrolled: 25
Number of Responses: 14

Evaluation Comments

What were the instructor's strengths? Weaknesses?

- she was really good at facilitating discussions. it would have been nice though to have a brief 30 minute lecture on the first day of the week to help us gain more knowledge. overall though i loved this class

- Molly was very good at facilitating discussion and responding to student questions. I would have liked to hear her opinion a little more.

- She was very knowledgeable on the subject, but did not give her opinion much, if at all. She seemed excited to be teaching but seemed to have too high of expectations.

- Molly really is great! It's clear she knows her stuff. I think she should lecture more; we really don't need 2 whole classes to discuss 3-4 articles. I would love to hear more about different research and history from her.

- Nice and cared about material, but didn't lecture enough

- I really like the format of the class. I am really uncomfortable talking to class which can bit a problem in a disccussion based class. I thought it was a great idea to break us into smaller groups and froce us to get to know our classmates so that it was a really awesome and comfortable environment.

- Really great at leading discussion and presenting other interesting materials (such as videos) that were helpful for understanding the material and how the topic pertained to the nature/nurture debate.

- Molly was a really good lecturer. Usually, each class, she broke up us into groups and we discussed certain portions of the articles in groups, and then the entire article as a class. This way of teaching made it a lot easier to understand the articles and the way they connected to the nature vs. nurture question. The only weakness I could think of is Molly's grading. It wasn't, and still isn't, very clear how she graded the discussion papers and questions. It would be better if it was made clear, at the beginning of the quarter, what was needed to get an "A" on either the discussion questions or papers.

- Molly could have prepared better for lectures. It was more of a discussion class but it would have been nice for her to do some 'teaching' for a little bit or even a little 10-minute lecture to start the lesson.

- Molly had a lot of interesting things and experiences to contribute to the conversation, but I don't think she let us in on it often enough. She only brought up her fascinating work in the field (with Nicaraguan sign language) during the last few classes. I would have liked to hear more about her perspective as someone doing the kind of work we were reading about. That said, I appreciate that it wasn't all about her.

- Overall Molly is great. She is helpful,encouraging, and smart. She's great at stimulating discussion. That being said she's very rigid and I think it's unfortunate for the class. She was so against "lecturing" at us that I felt as if she didn't ever tell us anything. I know she's smart so I wish she would have taught us something. Mostly we learned from the texts which can be just as boring as all lectures. Balanced would be more fruitful.

- Molly was very enthusiastic and knowledgeable and was great to talk to. The main weakness of this class was the general lack of lecture. The class was almost entirely done by breaking up into groups and discussing the reading or answering questions about the readings. Molly was good at facilitating discussions, but class was almost all dicussions.

What were the teaching assistant's or writing intern's strengths? Weaknesses?

- n/a
- N/A
- n/a
- N/A

What, if anything, what would you change about this course and why?

- i would be a little more clear on what your grading system means. I think that some kids were confused by the grades because it was unclear that only a proportion of the class gets 3/3 each week. It was not fun to get 2/3 and think you are getting a C or something. But once it was made clear that this wasn't a terrible grade it was chill.

- I would like to get assignments back at a faster rate and more precise feedback on why points were taken off and what could be improved.

- I would add more lecture to the class. 50/50 lecture and discussion.

- we don't need 2 whole classes to discuss the same papers

- More lectures

- I would've liked to cover more cognitive psych topics, but understand that that was difficult given the length and number of classes.

- The biggest thing I would change about the course would the structure of the syllabus. As it stood this quarter, the syllabus outlined a bunch of readings for each week that did not connect to the final paper. They were kind of useless in terms of the final paper. I would make the paper wrote a little less (it's worth 50% now) and have a mini-exam or paper on the

articles read during the class, or have the paper be connected to the articles. The numbers of the readings were also really strange. One week there would only be one or two short articles and another week there would be five or six really long articles. It would be nice if they were spaced out a little better.

- More structure!!

- I would have had Molly speak more, because no matter how great discussion is, we don't know as much about the field as she does. More frequent insight on her part would have helped. Second I would have made the grading more clear. I was getting point value grades on posts and papers that were meaningless and I had no concept of how I was doing in the class even after speaking with her. Also her deadline times were always inconvenient choices and didn't make sense to me.

Is there any topic in this course that you wished you had had previous background in?

- none

- no.

- no

- no, really easy

- This class was meant for students with previous experience in psychology classes. I had very little experience and had never taken a psych class, but I felt like I was able to follow along and catch up, having to do minimum extra reading

- I've taken a lot of developmental psych classes that I think gave me an advantage over other students.

- Developmental psychology definitely helped

Which texts were most useful?

- all of them--the teacher did a good job selecting articles and studies

- They were all useful.

- all

- I enjoyed all of the studies we read.

- all those on language

Which least?

- none

- The long theoretical papers.

- the Chater and Christianson is still very confusing

- the gravity paper

How productive was class discussion?

- really productive. but i often felt like some kids never did the reading which seemed annoying... but that being said molly had weekly discussion questions which i think made people more engaged

- Class discussion was very productive but got a little monotonous after a while. I would have liked it to be broken up a little more with background information and more videos and examples. But the structure of the discussion was very good for getting those shy people (myself) to contribute in a comfortable way.

- decent. It's way too early in the morning for a truly engaged discussion

- Not interesting

- I really appreciated breaking up into groups to allow everyone to participate and quickly review the papers so that there was enough time to discuss the readings in depth.

- Usually, very productive. There were some classes where no one really talked, but for the most part, everyone participated and Molly didn't have to call on people.

- The class was mostly centered around discussion so it was very productive I guess. Sometimes it would been better to simply open up discussion to the whole class instead of the smaller groups but overall great discussion class.

- Class discussion was interesting and I think we touched on most of the relevant themes, but I don't think we ever finally addressed the title of the course definitively.

- We had good and interesting discussions but not always productive. Sometimes they just went no where for too long.

How has this course contributed to your education?

- a lot--it was one of the better psych electives! EVERYONE SHOULD TAKE IT

- gave me some interesting insights into child development

- Gave me a better understanding of cognitive development literature and discussing research

- I know a lot more about the nature/nurture debate.

Why did you take this course?

Core requirement	0 / 0%
Instructor Reputation	0 / 0%
Faculty member recommended it	0 / 0%
Concentration Requirement	0 / 0%
Meets at a convenient time	0 / 0%
A student recommended it	0 / 0%
Topic interests me	0 / 0%
Concentration elective	0 / 0%

In summary, I had a strong desire to take this course

Strongly Agree	4 / 29%
Agree	7 / 50%
Neutral	2 / 14%
Disagree	1 / 7%
Strongly Disagree	0 / 0%

How many hours per week did you spend on this course?

Low Answer	3
Average Answer	5.3
High Answer	10

What proportion of classes did you attend?

All	8 / 57%
75%	6 / 43%
50%	0 / 0%
25%	0 / 0%
None	0 / 0%

Were the time demands of this course reasonable?

Yes	14 / 100%
No	0 / 0%

The Instructor

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Organized the course clearly.	0%	7%	0%	0%	**43%**	**43%**
Presented clear lectures.	21%	7%	7%	14%	14%	**29%**
Held my attention and made this course interesting.	0%	0%	0%	14%	**43%**	36%
Stimulated and facilitated questions and discussions.	0%	0%	0%	7%	14%	**71%**
Responded well to student questions.	0%	0%	7%	7%	7%	**71%**
Was available outside of class.	14%	0%	0%	0%	14%	**71%**
Was helpful during office hours.	14%	0%	0%	0%	14%	**64%**
Motivated independent thinking.	0%	0%	0%	0%	21%	**71%**

The Readings

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Fulfilled the objective of the course.	0%	0%	7%	7%	29%	**50%**
Were reasonable in number.	0%	0%	7%	21%	14%	**50%**
Were appropriately difficult.	0%	0%	0%	14%	14%	**57%**

Approximately how much of the reading did you do?

	N/A	None	25%	50%	75%	100%
	0%	0%	0%	0%	43%	**50%**

The Assignments

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
How helpful were the lectures and discussions in preparing for exams and completing assignments?	21%	0%	7%	21%	14%	**29%**
How appropriately were the requirements of the course proportioned to course goals?	7%	0%	7%	29%	14%	**36%**
How well did the requirements contribute to the goals of the course?	0%	0%	0%	21%	29%	**43%**
How timely and useful was feedback on assignments and exams?	14%	14%	14%	**29%**	7%	14%
How fairly were the assignments graded?	0%	0%	21%	14%	**36%**	21%

Overall

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course met my expectations.	0%	0%	7%	7%	**50%**	29%
This course provided me with new insight and knowledge.	0%	0%	7%	7%	21%	**57%**
This course provided me with useful skills.	0%	0%	7%	14%	**36%**	**36%**
The content of this course was presented at an appropriate level.	0%	0%	0%	0%	29%	**64%**
I put my best effort into this course.	0%	0%	14%	7%	**43%**	29%
The class had a high level of morale/enthusiasm.	0%	0%	7%	0%	29%	**57%**

The Teaching Assistant(s)

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Were available outside of class.	**93%**	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Were helpful with assignments.	**86%**	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%

Discussion Sections, Problem Sessions, Writing Tutorials

	N/A	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Were well coordinated with this course and contributed to it.	**57%**	0%	0%	0%	14%	14%
Provided well-designed materials.	**64%**	0%	0%	7%	7%	7%