

Spring 2015

Total enrollment: 21
 Number of responses: 21
Response rate: 100%

1. What is your overall impression of the instructor?

		Poor		Excellent	
n = 21		0	0	0	21
		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

This course:

Mean: 5.0 Median: 5.0 Mode: 5.0

Law school mean: 4.3

1L courses: 4.2
 Upper B median courses: 4.2
 Non B median courses: 4.5

2. What is your overall impression of the course?

		Poor		Excellent	
n = 21		0	0	4	17
		0.0%	0.0%	19.0%	81.0%

This course:

Mean: 4.8 Median: 5.0 Mode: 5.0

Law school mean: 4.1

1L courses: 3.9
 Upper B median courses: 3.9
 Non B median courses: 4.3

3. Please compare the workload for this course to the workload in other courses.

		Very light		Very heavy	
n = 21		0	3	9	9
		0.0%	14.3%	42.9%	42.9%

This course:

Mean: 3.3 Median: 3.0 Mode: 4.0

Law school mean: 3.4

1L courses: 3.4
 Upper B median courses: 3.3
 Non B median courses: 3.5

4. What were the best features of this course?

It was great that the class was a true seminar. Although there was required reading and an agenda for every class, it was nice that we, as a class, could often steer the discussion in ways that were more interesting and applicable to our lives.

The fact that the class was focussed around class discussion, with a lot of ability to raise personal opinions and theories regarding the reading.

The best features of the course were the readings, current events, and Professor Spencer's teaching. He is so passionate about the subject and is a wonderful professor.

Interesting classes, helpful professor

Professor Spencer has a distinct way of getting his students to understand the material and be involved without resorting to the "cold call" techniques that have become the norm. In a class of 20 or so students, nearly everyone participates and not once does he force it upon you.

The professor's enthusiasm.

Conversational nature; first assignment was practical

The start of each class with a short look at interesting news items on election law, was great. It was also nice to have the variety of having a guest speaker one week, and playing a game on gerrymandering the other week.

You make the material very interesting and easy to understand.

Small class size which was good for discussions.

I really liked the assignments, especially the complaint assignment, because it was useful and not overwhelming. I also really liked the discussion format of the class.

Small class, lots of interaction, timely and important topics, good exercises and assignments.

The professor was fantastic. There was a ton of material to cover but he was very reasonable and made the class entertaining. Each class included a discussion of current events.

Although I have relatively little experience with a large percentage of the teaching faculty at UCONN, due to the short time I have been attending, Spencer is, without a doubt, one of the best Professors that I have had. / As a student, it really is engaging when you can see just how interested your Professor is in a certain subject, and it was clear from the outset that Spencer was excited about Election Law, and that we all should be too. / The course was well structured, and not impossible to comprehend, and was taught in a way that made the materials understood and accessible to everyone. / / This semester, I think I had one of the oldest members of the faculty, and with Spencer I had one of the newest. It really was a breath of fresh air comparably. / Definitely a Professor that deserves tenure when he reaches 5 years.

In general, I think the class dynamic and discussion are what I valued the most. Given that participation was entirely voluntary, it would have been easy for people not to read and to spend class time disengaged. The fact that there was almost always active, respectful participation from the vast majority of the students is a testament to Professor Spencer. It's obvious how much he values and respects his students, and in return, students rise to the

occasion and work hard (not because they have to, but because they want to). He's incredibly dynamic, and his passion for the material makes those he teaches interested in it as well. He also encourages a higher level of thinking by pushing students to explain their comments and reflect on their greater meaning. That seems like something that is obvious to do, but few professors actually do it, which often leads to unproductive discussion. I always left class with a new conceptualization of that day's issues, which I really appreciated.

The professor is simply incredible. His ability to explain things clearly and in an engaging way is unmatched. The small class size enhances discussions and I loved the variety of viewpoints. Prof. Spencer lets the conversation flow - always keeping it relevant but letting it incorporate more than just the single issue on which it started. He starts the class with examples of recent news clips pertaining to election law and uses technology to break up the discussions. / Simply put, I loved this class! It is the best class I've had in law school

I enjoyed that the class was truly run as a seminar. Although we were guided by the selected readings we explored topics of interest to the students.

Class discussions

5. What were the least successful features of the course?

sometimes, class would be the same people talking over and over again. Not to suggest that cold calling should be adopted, but some way of getting more people involved would be better.

Often there was large quantity of reading that was sometimes a struggle to complete.

I don't think there were any features of the course that were unsuccessful. I thought everything worked well for the purpose of the class.

None.

Sometimes we didn't reach what we were assigned to read....

Final assignment too long for a 2 credit course

There's really not much negative for me to say about this course, apart from the fact that it would have been fun (especially for me as an international student) to maybe prepare and do a short presentation about (a certain aspect of) election law in my own country. I was asked to do this in two other courses and it was both instructive and fun!

Too much time spent on the VRA.

As the semester continued, it became increasingly difficult to catch Spencer during his office hours without other students. / But he did always offer one to one meetings at other times if we felt like we needed them. Which was really appreciated.

I'm really not sure there were any. One thing I would encourage is to continue starting each class with relevant current events, because I think that really is the perfect catalyst for class discussion.

Nothing. Even the large amounts of reading we had some time were completely worth it.

I thought the course was great. I wouldn't really recommend making any changes.

6. Further comments that might be helpful to the instructor.

The writing assignments were helpful, different, and the FEC complaint gave us very practical experience. It was nice to have writing assignments that were structured differently and it kept things interesting.

Perhaps think about reducing the reading requirements per week, only because not everything that is read is covered fully in class.

I think that the most interesting topics were things like campaign finance and one person one vote that students are not as likely to be exposed to in other classes, rather than some subjects that could have been repeats of con law.

Very engaging, even when I come in lacking attention it is hard to keep that up- enthusiasm for the topic is catching / I really liked the one page syllabus with extra info about page numbers. written Assignments were interesting and feel more useful in the long run than traditional tests papers etc. Seems to give a little more pushback than last year, but I like to be pressed more when I comment to think through issues with whatever I am posing, and the legal practicalities (both those he agrees or disagrees with). Definently does do it sometimes just not always or completely /

Nice job of including all of the students in the interaction.

I think it is important to note that Professor Spencer's approachability is fairly unique. In my experience, many professors are somewhat inaccessible outside of class or are uneager to field questions, but Professor Spencer always goes above and beyond to help his students, even when the questions are unrelated to the class itself. He treats his students with respect and genuinely seems to value their input. I wish every student at UConn had the opportunity to have a resource on campus as invaluble as Professor Spencer. He really is a cut above the rest.

Having the shorter assignments throughout the semester instead of one big final paper or final exam was unique and really allowed me to explore topics in depth.

By far my favorite professor líve had thus far at UConn, Prof. Spencer brings an energy and enthusiasm to class that is very refreshing. Much of Election Law is grounded in Constitutional Law, which can be rather dry, but Prof. Spencer makes it interesting. This class had some of the best discussions out of any of the seminars líve taken and I think that speaks to the level of engagement Prof. Spencer has with the class. I canít say enough good things about the class; I was very pleased. Keep up the great work.

7. Additional comments on the work required for this class.

Sometimes the workload was a lot- however it was nice knowing that we did not need to know every detail of every assignment.

Too much reading. If you gave less reading, more people would read it which would foster a more active conversation in class.

Sometimes there was a lot of reading, but most of the times it was alright if you just made sure that you had a sense of what the cases/articles were about and what the main arguments were.

Amount of reading was about right for a 3 credit-hour course, but too much for a 2 credit-hour course. 30% reduction would be appropriate

The reading was very heavy in a few weeks, but the Professor was aware of this and often amended the syllabus as was necessary. / Textbook was dense, but then, we're at Law School and the majority of them are.

The work required for the course is largely dependent on what the student puts into it. That said, the assignments are interesting and I think most students this semester seemed to work hard on them. Professor Spencer always emphasized that skimming certain articles was acceptable if there was a lot of reading for a given week, so the workload was completely manageable.

It varied week to week, but I felt the reading and assignments were fair.