

Student comments- PHIL 220: Early Modern Philosophy (Spring 2016)

The comments provided below are complete and unedited (except when needed to protect anonymity).

-I highly enjoyed this course and because of how much I enjoyed it, I declared a minor in philosophy. It greatly challenged me and enticed me to be challenged further. Professor Smithson is one of my favorite professors that I've had. He took challenging material and made it interesting and clear to understand.

-Robert (he prefers that we use his first name) is a wonderful instructor. He is going to make a fantastic professor for whatever institution is fortunate enough to gain his services. He is SO excited about philosophy, and he goes above and beyond in terms of making time for students with questions, concerns, etc. He is always available through email and is also available multiple times per week to discuss coursework, or even anything related to philosophy. He is professional and respectful. This is my favorite course of all I've taken at UNC, because he isn't overly concerned with clobbering us with excessive busy work, but instead his assignments are poignant and meaningful throughout the course. He is fair, and he welcomes feedback. I've learned more in this course than in others because he finds a way to make sometimes "dry" material very fun and engaging, and by the end of class or just sitting at home you realize you've considered some deep topics in ways you might never have before. Now I look at everything differently in my world, and this is thanks to Robert. Another thing about Robert: he is VERY funny, and incorporates comedy into his lectures. I remember multiple times this semester where our entire class was in stitches, and it was always about philosophy. I never would have thought that possible prior to taking this course. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to learn from someone as gifted at what he does as Robert is. I wish I had more time here at UNC so that I could take more courses with Robert. I plan on remaining in contact with him and seeking him out as a mentor/resource when I have questions about my own independent philosophy reading, which I will now be doing because of the inspiration I've gained from Robert. UNC could only benefit from having more instructors like Robert.

-Robert is an excellent instructor and taught the course very well. If I was not a senior, the course was good enough that I would have considered majoring in philosophy. I would recommend both the course and Robert as an instructor to any of my friends asking me about it. Robert was able to break down the topics very nicely and was both clear and interesting. I enjoyed his occasional over the top humor and teaching style which made this class much better to attend in the morning. When ever I would come to office hours he showed enthusiasm for talking about the material and expanding on what we went over in class and putting it in context with other topics we had previously discussed as well as how modern philosophical thought relates to what we covered.

-This course was one of the best courses I have ever had at Carolina. Robert Smithson is a very good teacher. Philosophy isn't an easy subject to understand but he was great at teaching it. He is very easy to understand and does his best to help students when they need it. He is also really funny and that made the class really enjoyable. I enjoyed his class so much that I decided to enroll in another one of his courses next semester.

Hopefully that says enough!

-Challenging subject matter, but professor Smithson makes it engaging and understandable

-Good class. Instructor was enthusiastic, caring, and knowledgeable. I wish that he was able to engage the class more. While interesting, he mostly lectured the whole time. Some days there was more class discussion, but most days no one spoke much.

-Great course!

-He really loves what he's talking about which transfers to his students. He's infectious.

-Mr. Smithson is a very enthusiastic instructor, who shows that he cares for the topic at hand. He teaches his students with respect and helps those who need help with the best of his ability.

-Really enjoyed the lectures in this course. Professor Smithson was a great teacher that encouraged students to engage with class, made class fun and exciting.

-Really exciting class. Instructor made it fun and the material exciting to learn. Definitely will recommend.

-Robert may still be in grad school but he is one of my favorite instructors I have had at UNC. He is unbelievably engaging and enthusiastic. Im more awake in his 9:05 class than in all of my other classes which all start till after 10:00.

-The instructor was great but his grading methods made the subject matter harder to grasp or at least explain

-This class was engaging and fun, and made literature analysis accessible to everyone in the class regardless of their experience with it.

-Very good course with interesting subject material. The instructor was very passionate about the material and helpful in explaining it.