

**Midcourse Review for Dr. Jason Todd
XCOR 1000
Fall 2020
Conducted by Dr. Elizabeth Yost Hammer**

SUMMARY OF STUDENT COMMENTS

What's working/Helping Learning:

Themes that emerged:

- The vast majority of the students mentioned something about the group discussions, peer interactions, group chats, and breakout rooms. It is clear they enjoy working with their peers and hearing the opinions of others. They like having time to read and then discuss when they come together. Students indicated that this helps them learn and also exposes them to different perspectives.
- They appreciate the organization of your course and the fact that you make your expectations clear. They like the “system” you have in place—organizing information on Brightspace by weeks and clearly stating what needs to be done before, during and after class. This helps them stay on track. Several students also mentioned that the close and “constant” accountability check-ins helps them stay on track.
- Finally, students mentioned specific assignments and instructional materials as helping them learn, including the learning reflections, your slides, the quizzes, and the readings.

Not Working/Hindering Learning

Themes that emerged:

- The vast majority said “nothing” or “NA.”
- A significant number mentioned that they struggled with the online format and they prefer to learn in person, but they acknowledged that it comes with the COVID-19 circumstances. A few commented on having wifi or technical difficulties that hurt their ability to engage with the course, you, or peers.
- A couple of students mentioned intrapersonal issues, such as time management, pacing, and reading comprehension.

Suggestions

Themes that emerged:

- There were many comments along the lines of “continue as is” or “NA.”
- Many students also mentioned the desire for full-class (as opposed breakout room) discussions. They noted that there is not a lot of communication in the class unless it is in the smaller groups, and they would like students to discuss the book more in the full class. (Note: This is addition to breakout rooms, not instead of them.) Several students suggested this as a way to increase “student involvement.”
- Several students suggested meeting in person again if at all possible (but they recognized that might not be possible).
- A few students mentioned typical issues—less assignments, making the weekly writing assignments a little shorter, make assignments due at 11:59 PM, meet twice a week—but it was only one or two students per issue.

My Comments

You had a 56% response rate to the survey. Your feedback was quite positive, especially given that it is a required, Freshman course. They recognize the effort you put into organizing the course. They appreciate that you are an “available” teacher. Students repeatedly reported that the peer

discussions helped them learn, and they asked for more discussion at the larger class level. Many also admitted that they struggle with the online format. Overall this class seems to be going really well. Keep up the good work!