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To Whom It May Concern,

Following, please find qualitative evaluations, compiled by James Olsen for his PHIL-129 "Ethics: Global Justice" course, and his PHIL-104 "Ethics: Environmental Politics" course, both of which he served as the instructor. As verified by me, these evaluations are identical to Georgetown University's official reports for these courses. If you would like the actual evaluation forms for your review, please do not hesitate to call me at (202) 687-0067 to let me know, and I will gladly provide you with copies.

Sincerely,

Anne C. Haney  
Administrative Assistant  
Department of Philosophy  
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Student Evaluations - Qualitative Responses Transcript  
Phil 129: Ethics – Global Justice

**1. What am I (James Olsen) doing well in the course? (with all questions, please give specific examples if possible)**

- Lecture delivery is great and interactive. Reading selection is excellent. Lecturer availability and flexibility is great. Multimedia incorporation is helpful and entertaining.
- Your explanations & discussions are very clear & relevant to our topics of Global Justice. You show good humor and kindness.
- Explaining and simplifying concepts from our readings. Giving us clear instructions of expectations for assignments.
- Easy to understand summaries of concepts.
- Using very specific examples in class. Giving us the summary at the end of the week. Writing on the board to further explain. The discussion at the beginning of class.
- The lectures are interesting and pretty easy to understand. The homework points give us freedom to work at our own pace. No midterm.
- Providing information about the unit readings on paper. Allowing us to get homework points. Discussing a global issue in class → this motivates us to read about what's going on around the world.
- Setting up arguments and simplifying material.
- Good at initiating debates and getting us (students) to think of the material.
- Interactive and engaging classroom atmosphere.
- Explaining the readings in a clear manner that most could follow and understand. Promoting discussion in the classroom at beginning of class (Global issue of the day).
- Giving us summaries for each unit so we can make sure we correctly understand the material – if our notes are correct. Giving us options about the homework.
- Variety of assignments, vibrant classroom discussions.

**2. What would YOU change about the class?**

- Possibly the fact that it's a summer class. I think it would be better taught as a weekly (or biweekly) seminar considering the density of readings and lack of time for full discussions.
- Once a week have a class debate over a global issue.
- Add a class for debate.
- Less homework because it's summer and it gets overwhelming.
- Nothing, you are good.
- The essays: I'd rather have a # of pages than a word count, it is harder to do. Give us more time to debate global issues because the debates are heated and interesting.
- The readings are long and sometimes I don't understand the actual point. BUT, in class you break it down for us which is helpful.

- Rawls, Nozick and Sen are all important philosophers and are an important element to consider while building a foundation in a philosophy course in justice, but it was kind of a slow start in.
- Nothing. The material is great and teaches a lot.
- Nothing, honestly. I wish I can find an aspect of your teaching method to criticize.
- Spend more time discussing the readings with other students; it's interesting to hear others' thoughts. Use the readings as a guide for discussion, like the cosmopolitan/patriot vote and discussion that followed.
- The readings are long.
- Less homework assignments, 10 points as opposed to 20, so we can finish all on time.

**3. What specific changes or improvements could the instructor make (if different from 2)?**

- Same as 2.
- Bring in more examples from daily life and/or news to clarify concepts.
- You are kind of scary when it comes to the paper standards. Be less intimidating.
- When assigning essays give a limited # of pages.
- Maybe introduce class debates and allow us to talk about the optional readings.
- Tie the readings more to current global issues – more examples and applications.

**4. Have I made the material relevant to your life? Any suggestions on this point?**

- Yes, this is added to by the discussions about current events linked to the class themes at the beginning.
- Yes. They each share good lessons & ideas to consider.
- Yes.
- Not very, we need more examples from news to relate to concepts. This happens, but not enough.
- Not really no, more examples from the GCC and Middle East in general.
- Some of the global issues, yes. I enjoyed the discussion we had yesterday about Qatari attire since I am Qatari. Not so much about Rawls though. SINGER ✓
- Yes, but we want more topics about animals because they are cute. And my favorite reading was Singer. I told everyone (family) about his argument about absolute poverty & wealth.
- Yes, at first it was a bit slow but now we've really jumped into today concerns about cosmopolitan/patriotic societies and human rights.
- I gained a lot more perspective on other sides of arguments in this class.
- Yes. Nope.
- It has given me new perspectives on things in life, such as the different philosophical thoughts. I have learned new things which is always relevant to life.
- Yes, things have been very useful. But maybe spend more time discussing current issues.

- Yes. Useful for life experience plus academia.

**5. Do I manifest a concern for the students? Am I available outside of class?**

- Yes and Yes.
- Yes. You show great care & concern.
- Yes & Yes.
- Yes.
- Yes, you are available.
- Yes. Office hours.
- Yes.
- No. Always available.
- Yes.
- Yes, Yes.
- Yes.
- Available on appointment.

**6. Would you recommend me to a friend (why/why not)?**

- Yes, because I have been greatly educated not only on the philosophy of justice/ethics but also on proper writing and reading skills. It is also a very relevant and fun class.
- Yes. Because you are easy going, direct, use relevant material and understanding.
- Unsure.
- Yes, simplifies philosophy which is a topic that not many people understand easily since it's sometimes abstract.
- Yes I would, I enjoy your class greatly.
- Yes, because since it is a phil class (which is usually hard) you make the lectures quite easy to understand. You are able to take a difficult topic and make it interesting. Calvin & Hobbes = Awesome!
- Yes, unless I find out that the teacher is extremely harsh when it comes to grading and the final grade. Sorry.
- Yes. You're class structure (homework, discussions, papers) keep you engaged throughout the course while at the same time not be overwhelming which is important in a philosophy course.
- Yes, your class is friendly and relaxed. Students speak their mind and are constantly challenged to take their opinions even further.
- Yes, if your course is offered in the Fall or Spring semesters I myself would be interested in taking your class again.
- Yes. 1. You will learn interesting new things. 2. There isn't much pressure or stress; fair in homework and readings. 3. There is discussion.
- Yes, it's an interesting class.
- Yes, because the debates are interesting and assignments are relevant, but the readings are long.

Student Evaluations - Qualitative Responses Transcript  
Phil 104: Ethics – Environmental Politics

**1. What am I (James Olsen) doing well in the course? (with all questions, please give specific examples if possible)**

- You discuss the readings in class extensively which allows us to make notes and be able to understand properly. Ask for student input→class discussions. Projects make us change our perspectives, become aware, hands on experience. Really like the field trips→I'm a visual person so learn more with physical stuff. Like your sense of humor.
- You are asking the right questions, getting us to think about the topic at hand in a different light. The readings you have selected are very informative and enjoyable to read. You don't belittle any of our arguments, create an environment that allows us to feel at ease.
- You give examples to back up each argument you make; you go thoroughly through the readings; you explain very well and consider all questions.
- You present the theories well by breaking down complexities and relating them to things we understand, such as religion. Also, you do well with keeping students engaged. Best of all, you consistently play devil's advocate, challenging students' perceptions and social norms in relation to the environment.
- I think you do an excellent job at giving structure to the readings we do – I really appreciate that because sometimes when there's a lot of readings its nice to dissect the main point during class.
- You do well
- You do well on going in depth of readings & analyzing. You give good, real-life examples; group exercises.
- Explaining the complicated readings we have. Sometimes, the philosophical readings you are able to summarize them into simple bullet points and diagrams.
- The class is interactive, discussions are always interesting. Real application in life (personal projects, natural location, institution visits (in the future), response weekly). Variety of readings.
- Teaching in class lectures are very interesting and easy to understand from instructor.
- Discussions are always great; you always give good feedback; challenging us (projects) true learning experience.
- Allowing for class discussion
- Organized. You know what you are doing. Everything you say in class is clear and makes sense; provide interesting readings for the course.
- As a professor you are very good, thorough and clear especially given the complex philosophical materials. You are also easily accessible and often found in your office when needed.
- The lectures are always interactive and easy to follow and engage in. Also, the material is made relevant to students so they don't feel they are learning something useless or inapplicable.

- I generally enjoy the course because of the more creative and relevant way that the course is structured. I especially like the fact that the personal projects, field trips and reflection pieces on newspaper articles are a part of the curriculum. In class you do a good job summarizing the main focus of the articles and guiding discussions, especially through the philosophy module.

## 2. What would YOU change about the class?

- The readings are too long sometimes and sometimes confusing. So less reading. Have documentaries watched in class.
- It would be interesting to incorporate our weekly posts as part of the class discussion. Or we can be assigned a specific topic, or theme to post on and then that can be reflected in our class discussion. So to integrate our blog posts more into our discussion.
- I would do discussions of the readings on Wednesday (but it would be impossible as each day = a reading)
- Personally, I find the policy side least interesting, but I wouldn't take this out of the class because I understand how crucial it is in terms of binding the international community from making changes
- Nothing really, it's a good class – sometimes weekly blog posts can be daunting, but it helps that the reading load is balanced – I really appreciate when professors give a reasonable amount of readings – yours is perfect, don't add more!
- I would change nothing about the class.
- Personal presentations of the readings or responses on the readings may make it easier for us to read, in the first place, and have our own interpretation.
- Until now, I don't have anything that I would want to change in class.
- Maybe more videos or documentaries will help
- Nothing, I am enjoying this class a lot.
- Nothing. I like the dynamic of class – different from all other classes with weekly responses, projects, and field trips
- Did not like some of the philosophical readings. Not really a fan of the institutional field trip we will have to go on. It'll even be boring even for you because you'll be pretty much reading the same thing.
- The class is relatively demanding as a freshman class in terms of weekly reports, and the amounts of readings some weeks.
- Require more constructive participation from the students, so that they are encouraged to speak up in class.
- One of the main reasons I took this class is because I wanted to understand environmental issues from the perspective of policy in the Gulf, as well as hear about perspectives from students living here. Though this has come out through the reflections/discussions, etc., I would put more emphasis on issues in the Gulf. On this note, I especially enjoyed the Islam reading. Is it possible to look at a case of interstate conflict as an environmental issue?

## 3. What specific changes or improvements could the instructor make (if different from 2)?

- Do more group exercises, helps a lot with understanding policies. Watch videos related to enviro ethics.
- Have the paper #1 submitted in class, not a fan of submitting proper papers online.
- With regards to the course material, I think the choice of articles has been excellent, but I do not particularly enjoy the Global Environmental Politics book. It is extremely informative and gives good background knowledge, but it is not particularly useful (in my opinion) as a conceptual study.

**4. Have I made the material relevant to your life? Any suggestions on this point?**

- The readings make us realize our actions and we now are more aware.
- Yes you have. Talking about Qatar in class makes it very relevant to me. Also, understanding our personal projects adds a sense of reality to the greater issue of the environment
- Yes, I am more aware of the environment, more careful with waste, energy consumption, but I will never give up on meat (sorry); no suggestions so far.
- As I mentioned in question 1, you have been very successful making the material relevant to our lives through religion and relating logic to historical trends such as the changed norms about slavery. Also, through your personal projects make the issues present in our lives directly.
- Yes, the personal projects are really eye-opening, but maybe you can explain in class what impact they have on the environment – I don't feel most people have a grasp of why vegetarian is good for the whole environment, not just cows/chicken.
- Yes, all readings have always been interesting, easy to follow & understand & could relate to life & other classes.
- Yes, personal projects in particular made me think more about my inconsiderate lifestyle.
- Yes, you have made the material relevant to my life: personal projects; discussion of the Gulf States made it relevant to this region; reading articles for weekly responses tied the class to current issues in the world.
- I think they have.
- Yes very relevant to everyday life.
- Yes, through theological discussions and discussion about personal lifestyle and impacts.
- Yes, we submitted articles that were based on the Gulf. Also, going on the field trips and doing the personal project made the class very relevant to our life.
- To an extent, yes. But as an individual I am not hugely concerned with the philosophy of environmental politics but rather the policies thereof which I assume we will be covering in the future.
- Yes, though I am not a total vegetarian, I eat less meat for other alternatives. I'm also more aware of sustainability and have a want to learn about the environment.
- As per (1), you have made the material very relevant to my life.

**5. Do I manifest a concern for the students? Am I available outside of class?**

- I really like how you have a genuine care for the students and are very caring. Really fast email replies
- Yes you are. You make it very easy for us to contact you with our thoughts, concerns and suggestions, not limited to our class topic, but to actually get your input on other projects we are involved in.
- Yes you are available, it is very to talk to you if needed
- Yes, you do. Thank you for everything!
- Yes you do, I really appreciate that. Also, class attendance policy is excellent and you do a great job at trying to understand students' situations & accommodating to them without going against class values.
- You are committed, on-time, a student can rely on you & trust your words.
- Yes, you are available for students.
- No. Yes, prompt reply through email; time out of class (paper 1 discussion)
- Until now I have seen you very helpful and easy to talk to. Some rumors that you are a tough grader. But until now I think you have been very helpful.
- Yes, you are available and helpful.
- Yes, always available when needed and quick response on emails.
- Yes, I was extremely impressed when you replied when I emailed an hour before the paper #1 was due.
- Yes.
- Yes, reachable in person and otherwise by email.

**6. Would you recommend me to a friend (why/why not)?**

- YES! I found you way more interesting than my other phil professors and you actually listen to the students and are not rude. Your class is interesting and current. I've already recommended you to my friends.
- Yes I would, because I feel like my friends will really enjoy the conversation that takes place in our classroom. And to become more environmentally aware of what is going on in the world, both on a personal and political level
- I would because I find the course very interesting: your evaluation system; your class is different (field trips + personal projects); you are an awesome professor
- Of course! I would do so because you make the issues relatable and cause students to challenge the fundamental ways we think. Thank you!
- Yes, I learned a lot & you're a very structured professor, unlike some messy, moody professors. You're also very tolerant with the fact that environmental knowledge is not so widespread in the region. You're educating a future generation of environmentalists!
- Of course. You are fun, direct & interesting to listen to. You are very lively in class & makes matters less dull.
- Yes, I have already recommended you and your course to my students because of the variety of ways of learning you offer, inside and outside the class.
- Yes! Because the style of teaching in this class is engaging, the material for this class is great. There is genuine care for the class and students.
- Yes, because they can actually learn and discuss in a friendly environment.



- Yes because it is an interesting course and its new as well and is more interesting than other philosophy courses. The class's environment is very relaxed.
- Yes, because of the different class dynamic.
- Yes, interesting, clear, helpful. However, a little too much of different material covered over a short period of time.
- Yes. In general, it is interesting subject material and is well taught.
- Yes, because the material is relevant and the grading fair. The learning environment is relaxed yet constructive and calls for student initiative.
- Yes I would. This course is interesting both in content and in form, and you do a good job conveying the key issues. It has been a refreshing course within Georgetown.