

Teaching Portfolio

Matthias Brinkmann

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Please find attached a variety of evidence on my teaching effectiveness, assembled from several sources.

In **part 1**, you can find my general teaching philosophy.

In **part 2**, I have attached the feedback forms from the two most recent courses I taught at the University of Virginia.

Part 3 contains an overview of all structured feedback given to my courses at the University of Bayreuth (excluding teaching assistance).

Part 4 provides the unredacted feedback on the most recent course I gave at Bayreuth, on anarchism.

Part 5 gives you an overview of feedback on my teaching at Oxford, received through an anonymous online form.

You can obtain more information about my teaching, including syllabi to all my courses, on my website (www.matthiasbrinkmann.de).

OVERVIEW

Part 1. Teaching Philosophy

Part 2. Student Evaluations: University of Virginia (two most recent courses)

Part 3. Student Evaluations: University of Bayreuth (aggregate)

Part 4. Student Evaluations: University of Bayreuth (most recent course)

Part 5. Student Evaluations: University of Oxford (aggregate)

Teaching Range

Introductory Courses	General Introduction to Philosophy [†] , Academic Skills [†] , Mill [†]
Undergraduate Courses	Moral Philosophy [†] , Political Philosophy [†] , Philosophy of Economics [†] , Kant, Philosophy of Law, Philosophy and Public Policy
Graduate Courses	Normative Ethics, Topics in Social and Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Economics

[†] taught before

Statement on Teaching

Politics is important, and so is the quality of political argument. In my teaching, my aim is to improve my students' ability to state their own views in a way which combines philosophical sophistication with solid empirical foundations. In pursuit of this aim, I strive to implement five features in my teaching:

1. Interdisciplinarity. Wherever possible, my courses are interdisciplinary in content, or incorporate interdisciplinary aspects. In a course on democracy, for example, I combined philosophical literature on the nature and value of democracy with results from comparative politics—showcasing how different political systems work in practice—and results from social choice that deal with the properties of voting systems.

2. Wealth in Methods. I use a variety of teaching methods to activate all students, and enable different styles of learning. A recent course on libertarianism, for example, featured standard lectures and seminar discussion, but also an impromptu theatre play (enacting scenes from Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*), a role-playing game (simulating how social order might arise in a stateless society), and preparing a case before a “philosophical supreme court” (on what type of compensation former colonial powers owe to the colonized).

3. Strong Focus on Writing. I prefer assessing students through essays, and I put great emphasis on improving the quality of their writing. For example, I require all students to discuss longer essays with me at least once before handing them in, and my teaching tends to include extra sessions on the practical aspects of academic writing. Furthermore, I normally demand that students send me brief comments on required readings before class. This makes writing the norm, allows me to anticipate student questions, and ensures that everyone is adequately prepared.

4. Content Modules. I like to structure seminars, and especially lectures, into bite-sized modules rather than monolithic blocks. A one-hour lecture on the philosophy of economics, for example, would be segmented into three modules—one introducing the problem of unrealistic assumptions in economic models, one on Friedman's instrumentalism, and one on Popper's falsificationism. Each module can be expanded or shortened depending on discussion and student interest. This allows for greater flexibility and diminishes the effects of students' attention waning.

5. Welcoming, Interactive Atmosphere. I am convinced that philosophical learning can only happen in an atmosphere that embraces the diverse perspectives of each particular student. I try to construct balanced reading lists which represent a variety of perspectives. I take a very active role in guiding course discussions to ensure that everyone finds an equal voice, and to avoid that a few students start dominating debate.

PPL 4010-001 Research Seminar - Spring 2019

CGAS (13252)

INSTRUCTORS: **Brinkmann, Matthias (mb7tw)**

Respondents: 10 / Enrollment: 12

~ QUESTIONS AND DETAILS ~	~ ANSWER MATRICES ~						
<p>1. What are the instructor's strengths and weaknesses in this course?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">~ Question Type: Short Answer ~ <i>contributed by Brinkmann, Matthias (mb7tw)</i></p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" style="background-color: #333; color: white;">Results for PPL-4010-001, Brinkmann, Matthias</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;">Total</th> <th>Individual Answers</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><i>See below for Individual Results</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Extremely helpful inside and outside of class.</p> <p>Strengths: Very helpful constructive criticism about substantive issues, technical errors, and organizational structure. Very receptive to feedback about the structure of the class. Flexible. Engaging. Genuinely wants us to succeed. Weaknesses: none!</p> <p>Very knowledgeable on writing techniques and thoroughly researched. Weaknesses: none, absolutely perfect.</p> <p>Matthias did a fantastic job structuring the course and providing thorough feedback for each student.</p> <p>Matthias was a fantastic Thesis Seminar leader. He always made himself available to meet outside of class to address any concerns we encountered in the process of writing our theses. His comments were always extremely helpful with developing arguments and structure. Additionally, he really helped clarify what goes in to writing a good paper, which will be extremely helpful in the future as well. Overall, a very strong instructor.</p> <p>Matthias is really good at getting back to students in a timely manner and being really available to meet. He seems to genuinely care about his students and gives great feedback. He is good at helping you think through issues without leading you to conclusions he wants you to make or making you feel stupid.</p> <p>strengths - patient, leads the class very well, very helpful, so smart and well-read and can recommend an incredible amount of resources. weaknesses - gives us a touch too much freedom in choosing your own structure. I would recommend in the future forcing our hand a little bit (because we really don't know what works and what doesn't)</p> <p>Matthias is very clear in what he expects. He is always available to meet and provides very constructive comments on drafts. He is also nice, so that is a plus. The format he set for the course (with input from us) was manageable and useful.</p> <p>Matthias gives each student a significant amount of individualized attention and is frequently available to help outside of class.</p>	Results for PPL-4010-001, Brinkmann, Matthias		Total	Individual Answers	9	<i>See below for Individual Results</i>
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<p>2. Overall, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this course? What suggestions would you make for improving this course in the future?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">~ Question Type: Short Answer ~ <i>contributed by Brinkmann, Matthias (mb7tw)</i></p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" style="background-color: #333; color: white;">Results for PPL-4010-001, Brinkmann, Matthias</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;">Total</th> <th>Individual Answers</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><i>See below for Individual Results</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The structure of the course was very conducive to the thesis writing process. Each stage was manageable and made the process digestible rather than daunting. The smaller groups during the final two stages was especially nice since they made room for more nuanced discussions about specific parts of the paper. I did find the "future plans" not entirely necessary after each stage, however.</p> <p>Very helpful in thesis pacing and writing. Individual class sessions could have been more organized and productive at times.</p> <p>Small, intimate, detailed-oriented discussions/thesis feedback</p> <p>Strengths - well-laid out, easy to complete this mandatory component of the major lol Weaknesses - didn't love the time of the course, worksheets online would be nice</p> <p>a strength and weakness is that it is SO student-lead for ourselves; it really relies on us. That being said, we are old enough now where that is a really good parameter for what we have learned. I can tell that this was hard on some students but I figure that is a weed-out.</p> <p>Provided ample time (because I needed it) to work on my thesis. Made me a better writer, I think. Or at least made me more aware of better writing manners. Great guidance. Easy going atmosphere. No major complaints other than it being in the evenings.</p>	Results for PPL-4010-001, Brinkmann, Matthias		Total	Individual Answers	9	<i>See below for Individual Results</i>
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	<p>Strengths: peer feedback is very helpful Weaknesses: I strongly dislike how group D has a much later timeline from groups A and B. I wish there were a way to make it more even, but I can't think of a good solution.</p> <p>Feedback structure is great because it gets more focused as you go along</p> <p>This course significantly improved my thesis! It also motivated me to work on my thesis throughout the semester instead of putting it off. No suggestions for improvement, since Matthias made a point of incorporating recommendations into the class as soon as possible.</p>																																																
<p>3. The average number of hours per week I spent outside of class preparing for this course was:</p> <p>Question Type: Multiple Choice</p> <p>contributed by Office of the Provost</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="6">Results for PPL-4010-001</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Less than 1 (NA)</th> <th>1 - 3 (NA)</th> <th>4 - 6 (NA)</th> <th>7 - 9 (NA)</th> <th>10 or more (NA)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>1 (10.00%)</td> <td>4 (40.00%)</td> <td>1 (10.00%)</td> <td>4 (40.00%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="6">Results for Department of Philosophy - Spring, 2019</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Less than 1 (NA)</th> <th>1 - 3 (NA)</th> <th>4 - 6 (NA)</th> <th>7 - 9 (NA)</th> <th>10 or more (NA)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>412</td> <td>78 (18.93%)</td> <td>222 (53.88%)</td> <td>99 (24.03%)</td> <td>7 (1.70%)</td> <td>6 (1.46%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Results for PPL-4010-001						Total	Less than 1 (NA)	1 - 3 (NA)	4 - 6 (NA)	7 - 9 (NA)	10 or more (NA)	10	0 (0.00%)	1 (10.00%)	4 (40.00%)	1 (10.00%)	4 (40.00%)	Results for Department of Philosophy - Spring, 2019						Total	Less than 1 (NA)	1 - 3 (NA)	4 - 6 (NA)	7 - 9 (NA)	10 or more (NA)	412	78 (18.93%)	222 (53.88%)	99 (24.03%)	7 (1.70%)	6 (1.46%)												
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<p>4. I learned a great deal in this course.</p> <p>Question Type: Likert</p> <p>contributed by Office of the Provost</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="8">Results for PPL-4010-001</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Mean</th> <th>Std Dev</th> <th>Strongly Agree (5)</th> <th>Agree (4)</th> <th>Neutral (3)</th> <th>Disagree (2)</th> <th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>4.40</td> <td>1.26</td> <td>7 (70.00%)</td> <td>2 (20.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>1 (10.00%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="8">Results for Department of Philosophy - Spring, 2019</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Mean</th> <th>Std Dev</th> <th>Strongly Agree (5)</th> <th>Agree (4)</th> <th>Neutral (3)</th> <th>Disagree (2)</th> <th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>412</td> <td>4.13</td> <td>0.89</td> <td>155 (37.62%)</td> <td>184 (44.66%)</td> <td>52 (12.62%)</td> <td>13 (3.16%)</td> <td>8 (1.94%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Results for PPL-4010-001								Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	10	4.40	1.26	7 (70.00%)	2 (20.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (10.00%)	Results for Department of Philosophy - Spring, 2019								Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	412	4.13	0.89	155 (37.62%)	184 (44.66%)	52 (12.62%)	13 (3.16%)	8 (1.94%)
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<p>7. The instructor was approachable and made himself/herself available to students outside the classroom.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">~ Question Type: Likert ~ <i>contributed by Office of the Provost</i></p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="8">Results for PPL-4010-001, Brinkmann, Matthias</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Mean</th> <th>Std Dev</th> <th>Strongly Agree (5)</th> <th>Agree (4)</th> <th>Neutral (3)</th> <th>Disagree (2)</th> <th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>5.00</td> <td>0.00</td> <td>10 (100.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> <td>0 (0.00%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="8">Results for Department of Philosophy - Spring, 2019</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Mean</th> <th>Std Dev</th> <th>Strongly Agree (5)</th> <th>Agree (4)</th> <th>Neutral (3)</th> <th>Disagree (2)</th> <th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>411</td> <td>4.33</td> <td>0.85</td> <td>216 (52.55%)</td> <td>134 (32.60%)</td> <td>43 (10.46%)</td> <td>16 (3.89%)</td> <td>2 (0.49%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Results for PPL-4010-001, Brinkmann, Matthias								Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	10	5.00	0.00	10 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	Results for Department of Philosophy - Spring, 2019								Total	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	411	4.33	0.85	216 (52.55%)	134 (32.60%)	43 (10.46%)	16 (3.89%)	2 (0.49%)
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<p>9. Please make any overall comments or observations about this course:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">~ Question Type: Short Answer ~ <i>contributed by Office of the Provost</i></p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Results for PPL-4010-001</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Individual Answers</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>6</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><i>See below for Individual Results</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>matthias is great - very didactically competent :)</p> <p>The course is necessary for the PPL major. It was effective and well executed. Had this course not existed, I would have been doomed.</p> <p>Matthias is an excellent professor. He was always willing to provide feedback and structured classes to meet students' needs.</p> <p>Writing my thesis makes me sad and stressed, this class makes it better.</p> <p>This has been one of the best classes I have taken at UVA. The structure of the class was extremely helpful and made what was a daunting project manageable and (at times) enjoyable. Matthias was super understanding when students were struggling and is one of the kindest people I have ever met.</p> <p>Extremely philosophically and didactically competent! Very grateful for all the assistance and support provided during the (very) stressful thesis writing process! Great course.</p>	Results for PPL-4010-001		Total	Individual Answers	6	<i>See below for Individual Results</i>																																										
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Philosophy of Economics

Matthias Brinkmann, University of Virginia, Winter 2018

Aggregate Results of Student Feedback

Scale: "1: poor, 3: average, 5: excellent"	1	2	3	4	5
Were the lectures substantive and thought-provoking?		1	1	4	14
Did the instructor clarify difficult points when asked to do so?			1	6	13
Was there an appropriate balance of lecture and discussion?			4	3	14
Were the reading rewarding?		2	5	8	5
Was the amount of reading appropriate for the course?		2	3	7	8
Did the writing assignments help improve your writing skills and analytical abilities?		2	3	6	9
Was the grading fair?			5	3	12
Were the instructor's written and oral comments on your papers helpful?			2	5	13
Was the instructor helpful in meetings outside of the classroom?			1	1	18
Would you recommend the instructor to other students?		2	1	3	14
Overall rating of the course			3	6	11
Overall rating of the instructor			2	4	14

1. What are the instructor's strengths and weaknesses in this course?

Strength: responds to class interests and teaches what students are most interested. Wrote so many comments on my papers, which were extremely helpful.
Strength: depth of knowledge Weakness: b/c of knowledge dismissive of budding ideas or objections to theories
Always well prepared for lecture/discussion Obviously well-educated about the topics we discussed At times dismissive of comments/work but typically the critiques were fair & useful
Strength: teaching style, very helpful and open, very approachable
Strengths: Very explanatory & extremely prepared for class Weakness: There was such a diversity of topics that it is hard to remember interesting points from all of them
The instructor explained the chosen topics clearly but lacked in summarizing
Very open to feedback and what students want to discuss Assignments were useful for learning Great overall structure and topic choices
Cohesive syllabus but flexible to student interest Wide variety of topics Caring & helpful towards his students Engaging class discussion & lectures Only weakness is time management sometimes
Very knowledgeable about the material, and fantastic at fostering class discussion. No apparent weaknesses.
Strengths: fair grader Excellent powerpoints Really good class dialogue Brought a lot out of the reading
Strengths: excellent distillation of complex ideas; excellent moderation of discussion (esp. when discussion could potentially become unproductive). Weaknesses: very close to none.
Strengths: The class material is very organized, excellent w/ logistics, all instructions are super clear. Very passionate about the topic. Weakness: so far can't think of any.
He clearly explains concepts, welcomes questions, makes engaging lectures/powerpoint

slides, isn't awkward. Sometimes he came off as a little harsh when people brought up dumb ideas.
Very clearly defined plans & well-managed scheduling; pace was very well. Problems are only that there may be a lack of unifying factors with the entirety of such a broad course.
Strengths: organization, depth of knowledge, humor Weak: perhaps too blunt – could be a strength also
Did a good job of trying to explain concepts clearly and foster discussion
Strengths. Included the class in discussions.
Very intelligent. Unclear at times Favoritism at times, it's beyond obvious
Strengths: well prepared. Thought provoking Weaknesses: not able to always clarify things
Extremely intelligent and knows topics, but leaves topics up to discussion and doesn't hit home point of readings

2. In your opinion, did the instructor welcome alternative viewpoints? Did the instructor treat all students fairly? Why do you feel this way?

He did this in an okay manner. I think a more accepting conversational environment would have been [?]
Yes, he welcomed alternative view points but was quick to shut down flippan comments or ungrounded thoughts
Yes, Yes he seemed to enjoy the debate whatever it may be eventhough at times he didn't agree w/ other viewpoints we discussed them at length
Yes, he did.
Yes, and Yes. Prof. Brinkmann was always respectful and unbiased. He did a great job at letting students explain themselves & respond to the material
Yes, there was much discussion in class and I feel that each student's opinion was tolerated and given attention
Yes and Yes. The professor did a great job of pushing back at bad arguments but ultimately respected the values and viewpoints of the students.
Yes – we could always debate & post our personal reactions to any topic online
Yes, Yes. Every idea anyone had was discussed at length.
Yes. Yes.
Yes. He provided room for disagreement, but held this disagreement to an appropriately high argumentative standard. He made an active effort to show and balance various conflicting viewpoints.
Yes. Yes. I sometimes raised opinions disagreeing with what others students said. The instructor welcomed such alternative views.
Yes. He tried to get a mix of people talking.
Did a good job tackling every question & opposition given in class, and spent a good amount of time on it.
Yes although not afraid to critique. He is German.
Yes, we had a lot of discussion on the subjects and disagreement/debate was encouraged
Yes
Impatient at times Tends to favor students who participate more constantly
He did. He created a good environment for discussion.
Absolutely and yes because of classroom experience

3. What are the strengths or weaknesses of the readings in this course?

None of them were unbearably long. Some were just complex.
--

Strengths: various and contrasting viewpoints Weakness: dense & long
At time dense but overall helpful & well-sequenced. They built off the previous reading
Some readings are a little difficult to me.
Strength: very informative & philosophically interesting. Weakness: There was a lot of readings which were not connected to each other so it was hard to keep track of all the information.
Background reading would have been immensely helpful to the actual reading of the course, but I did enjoy that we were reading articles w/ opinions and arguments (not trying to be a neutral textbook)
They struck a great balance between getting into the technicalities of economics without getting too technical. They gave a great framework for discussion.
Very interesting! Thematic A little econ heavy -> would love a little more philosophy/history
Some readings were excessively ambiguous or confusing, while others were clear and thought provoking. Overall the readings were fine.
Some readings needlessly dense/opaque Overall, however, readings were excellent and excellently chosen
Strengths: covering many topics Weakness: I hope there could be a little bit more work from economics or even scientific research. I feel very inconfident when trying to make any claims about the development of economics or science in general. Hope I could have more knowledge in the substance before proceeding to philosophical analysis.
They were usually pretty interesting but too long. I doubt many people read to the end of most of them.
Readings may be too broad or dense, and too technically demanding for beginners. Otherwise, they were thought-provoking and accurately encompassed the subjects.
Strength: good balance of philosophy + econ, influential Weakness: some too technical/dense
Most readings were interesting, though some were particularly technical, long, or dense.
Hard to read some of them even as an econ major
Overall quite good
Informative/constructive
Amount of reading results in surface level understanding of papers

4. Overall, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this course? What suggestions would you make for improving this course in the future?

The workload was appropriate. Basic understanding of ECON is necessary.
Strength: breadth of material Weakness: couldn't go too in depth b/c of amount of material
Great analytical challenge for both Phil & Econ majors. At times felt students w/ Philosophy background had significant edge in discussion/assignments.
Strengths: course structure, instructor's teaching style, readings
Strength: great introductory course to the topic of philosophy & economics Weakness: the course often like it was lacking a clear message, in spite of Brinkmann's meticulous preparation for each class
The strengths is the attention given to certain debates in phil. The weakness is the lack of general background/overall knowledge behind the specific issues in students.
If anything, the topic of the "philosophy of economics" is so broad that I would have liked two semesters' worth of material. If Philosophy of Economics 2 is ever announced, I'll sign up!
I would incorporate some more real world examples/historical implications of the theories

& topics that we studied
This course is a great examination of philosophy's interactions with economics, and shows how each discipline can learn from each other. Only improvement is more ethics and rationality stuff.
Strengths – Varied topic matter. Interesting ramifications for economics Weaknesses – too generalized contents of econ at the beginning
Strengths: excellent subject matter with interesting applications Weaknesses: none
Strength: engaging topics, very well organized Weakness: Wish we could have read more economics & then proceed to philosophy
The mix of lecture/discussion was good. It was really engaging. Sometimes I felt like it was a little to philosophy of science & not applied enough to econ.
Spend more time on the rationality topic (contrary to the changes made haha). Have more unifying examples like Hotelling's model for different topics.
Good course – finding ways to make more people participate would be nice.
I thought many of the readings were boring (mostly first half of course), but maybe this wasn't the right course for me
Good powerpoints Good discussion Sometimes discussions go on and on and on Grading extremely ambiguous
Economics was not given a fair chance but that was mostly due to student's lack of exposure towards that discipline.
Professor was good but grading of essays was different from every other philosophy professor at UVA

5. Would you recommend this course to others? Why or why not?

I would recommend this class to ECON majors. This should be crosslisted as an ECON class.
Yes
Absolutely. Despite the challenge I faced trying to learn these philosophical concepts on the fly it was a great challenge & I feel more enlightened as a result.
Yes, only if students are interested in learning the philosophy within economics
Yes, I thoroughly enjoyed the course and its introduction to a new subject
I would if the person was interested in either philosophy or economics and had a background in at least one of the two. I think a future student would need knowledge of at least one of these fields to participate in class discussion + form an opinion
Absolutely. It was very intellectually rewarding.
Yes! So worthwhile for econ & phil majors alike But if phil major, I recommend at least 1 semester of micro before this course
Yes I would 100% recommend this to others. It provides a new perspective on economics that's rarely seen elsewhere.
Yes. The Econ. Dept. hasn't shown enough self-reflection to get these ideas elsewhere
Yes. It provides economics students with a critical view of their discipline and provides philosophy students with an excellent opportunity for interdisciplinary application.
Yes, this is definitely one of the better courses I have taken in the Phil department.
Yes. A very good course in seeing the practical side of philosophers, for economics or not.
Yes. Necessary for any PHIL or ECON student.
Yes. Interesting, relevant, accessible to most students of any level.
If you are interested in learning about science, then yes. If not, then you might not be that motivated for the topic.
No. Prof. Brinkmann could be a brilliant researcher/writer given that I actually read his dissertation on his web page, just not a good teacher – the fact that U.Va. has a post-doc teach a 3000 level class is astonishing

I would except for non-econ majors as they will likely leave with the wrong impression of what economics is like.

Maybe because prof. was good

6. Please provide any additional comments.

Great class, give Matthias a promotion.

Dr. Brinkmann is a great instructor

It would also have been nice to talk more about economic institutions, including, of course, capitalism

Econ majors should love this class! (& PPL) It was one of my favorites

More 'real football' examples

Mr. Brinkmann is a uniquely phenomenal instructor who places utmost importance on constantly improving his own teaching style. Despite being the first offering of this course, it always ran smoothly and productively.

Brilliant, energetic professor w/ influential readings

Overview: Teaching Evaluations at the University of Bayreuth

Matthias Brinkmann

1 Courses Taught

I have taught a total of ten courses at the University of Bayreuth as a primary instructor.

Level	Courses
Master Level	Advanced Introduction to Philosophy (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)
Bachelor Level	Democracy (2012), Consequentialism (2015), Moral Contractualism (2016), Libertarianism (2016), Collective Welfare (2018), Anarchism (2019)

2 General Information

The University of Bayreuth uses a standardised, 15-question evaluation form for all of its courses. Students choose responses on a five-point scale, which is marked as “++”, “+”, “o”, “-”, and “--”.

The response rate is close to 100%, as evaluation forms are completed on paper in the last class session. Unfortunately, the University does not provide comparative statistics.

3 Overall Evaluation

In question 15, students are asked “how do you evaluate the course overall?”. Around three quarters of all students gave the highest grade in their overall evaluations, which I believe shows excellent overall feedback.

Question 15: Overall, how would you judge the course?							
Course	Year	++	+	o	-	--	Replies
Bachelor Level							
Democracy	2012	8	9	—	—	—	17
Consequentialism	2015	6	9	—	—	—	15
Contractualism	2016	6	6	—	—	—	12
Libertarianism	2016	18	2	—	—	—	20
Collective Welfare	2018	16	1	—	—	—	17
Anarchism	2019	15	3	—	—	—	18
Master Level							
Advanced Introduction	2013	9	—	—	—	—	9
Advanced Introduction	2014	3	2	1	—	—	6
Advanced Introduction	2015	8	—	1	—	—	9
Advanced Introduction	2016	11	3	—	—	—	14
Total		100 (73%)	35 (26%)	2 (1%)	0	0	137

4 Specific Questions

The aggregated results across courses for the other 14 questions are summarised in the table below. In all but one question, the majority of students gave the highest mark. The exception is question 8, where a slight majority of students (51%) give the second-highest grade (“+”) in assessing the quantity of material covered.

Question	Replies	++	+	o	-	--
Questions concerning course						
1. Are concrete aims specified in beginning?	141	58%	40%	1%	—	—
2. Is the course well-structured?	142	79%	18%	3%	—	—
3. Is the content important for your studies?	138	65%	32%	3%	—	—
4. Can you make connections to your other studies?	138	66%	29%	5%	—	—
5. Is difficult content clarified through examples?	139	73%	24%	4%	—	—
6. Are students included well?	141	78%	19%	3%	—	—
7. How much did you personally learn?	138	51%	41%	8%	—	—
8. How was the quantity of material covered?	140	29%	51%	12%	8%	—
Questions concerning lecturer						
9. How academically competent is the lecturer?	140	82%	18%	—	—	—
10. How didactically competent is the lecturer?	140	76%	19%	4%	1%	—
11. Were course materials provided well?	141	82%	17%	1%	—	—
12. Did they present in an understandable way?	141	72%	24%	3%	1%	—
13. How motivated were they?	141	82%	16%	2%	—	—
14. Did they react well to students' concerns?	139	73%	22%	4%	1%	—

5 Improvement over Time

We can split courses into two time periods, those taught in 2012–2015, and those taught in 2016–2018. Doing so, a clear improvement over time can be seen: in the early time period, students give the best mark 61% of the time; this increases to 81% in my later teaching.

Question 15: Overall, how would you judge the course?						
Courses	Replies	++	+	o	-	--
Taught 2012-2015 (5 courses)	56	34 (61%)	20 (36%)	2 (4%)	—	—
Taught 2016-2018 (5 courses)	81	66 (81%)	15 (19%)	—	—	—

For both time periods, I have also computed how often students choose the highest mark (“++”) for each of the other questions. The results can be found in the table below. Overall, I believe these numbers are evidence of (i) a general improvement in my teaching skills, and (ii) successfully tackling specific weaknesses, especially in teaching methods.

Question	Percentage of best mark (++)		Percentage point change
	2012-2015	2016-2019	
Questions concerning course			
1. Concrete aims specified in beginning?	43%	69%	+26
2. Course well-structured?	72%	83%	+11
3. Content important for your studies?	55%	72%	+18
4. Connections to your other studies?	54%	74%	+20
5. Difficult content clarified through examples?	69%	75%	+6
6. Students included well?	74%	81%	+7
7. How much personally learned?	36%	62%	+26
8. Quantity of material covered?	25%	33%	+8
Questions concerning lecturer			
9. Academic competence?	79%	85%	+6
10. Didactic competence?	52%	92%	+40
11. Course materials provided well?	76%	87%	+11
12. Presents in understandable way?	62%	78%	+16
13. How motivated?	67%	92%	+24
14. Reacts well to students' concerns?	70%	76%	+6

6 Further Information

You can find syllabi for all courses I've taught, some sample teaching materials, as well as raw data for student feedback I received at Bayreuth, on my website (www.matthiasbrinkmann.de). Contact me if you have any further questions.

Seminar: “Anarchism”

Universität Bayreuth, Summer 2019

Full Student Feedback

Course	++	+	0	-	--
Concrete aims specified?	11	6	0	0	0
Course well-structured?	11	6	0	0	0
Content important?	13	4	0	0	0
Connections to your studies?	14	3	0	0	0
Difficult content clarified?	13	2	0	0	0
Students included well?	16	1	0	0	0
How much personally learned?	11	6	0	0	0
Quantity of material covered?	7	7	2	1	0
Lecturer	++	+	0	-	--
Academic competence?	10	7	0	0	0
Didactic competence?	17	0	0	0	0
Way materials were provided?	15	2	0	0	0
Present in understandable way?	14	3	0	0	0
How motivated?	15	2	0	0	0
React well to students' concerns?	14	3	0	0	0
	++	+	0	-	--
Judge all things considered?	15	3	0	0	0

Interessantes Seminar. Man merkt, dass du viel Arbeit reingesteckt hast, danke. Ich habe viel gelernt, wäre an manchen Stellen aber gerne noch mehr in die Tiefe gegangen (moral foundations).

Super war auch die abwechslungsreiche Gestaltung (Gruppenarbeiten/Spiele/Präsentationen) – so fiel es mir leicht, immer aufzupassen & nicht abzuschweifen. Außerdem toll, dass du so spontan & flexibel auf unsere Vorschläge reagiert hast!

Insgesamt ein sehr horizonterweiterndes & gleichzeitig anspruchsvolles Seminar.

Insgesamt fand ich das Seminar sehr lehrreich (und freude bringend!)

Die verschiedenen Arbeits-/Lernmethoden haben sehr geholfen theoretisches Wissen besser zu verinnerlichen und anzuwenden. Durch die aktive Anwendung und den Austausch zwischen Studierenden konnte man viele verschiedene Dinge lernen, ohne, dass es zu anstrengend wurde.

Insgesamt also bin ich sehr zufrieden.

Auch die Art, wie auf Vorschläge und Anmerkungen reagiert wurde, hat viel zum positiven Charakter der Veranstaltung beigetragen.

Man hat gemerkt, dass Sie sich viel Mühe bei der Vorbereitung gegeben haben.

(Auch wenn der workload der Vorbereitung mit entsprechenden Deadlines sehr anspruchsvoll war.)

(+) abwechslungsreiche Struktur + Methoden

<p>(+) viel Aufwand vorher, aber Seminar selbst angenehm</p> <p>(+) Verbindung zu P&E & beyond</p> <p>(+) gute Atmosphäre</p> <p>(+) gute Balance von min. Autorität + Beiträgen der Teilnehmenden</p> <p>(-) no „Anarchy in Bayreuth“ :(</p>
<p>Sehr gut waren die verschiedenen didaktischen Methoden, dass der Dozent sich nicht strikt an den Plan gehalten hat, sondern eher dem Fluss der Gruppe Raum gab.</p> <p>Viel Freiheit, was dem bei dem Thema des Seminars angebracht war.</p> <p>Dass die Studierenden auch viel gefordert sind sich in bestimmte Positionen hineinzudenken.</p> <p>Weniger gut war die behandelte Menge an Stoff, das nächste Mal vllt. Eher weniger, dafür tiefer in die Materie.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lots of interesting group work and experiments, very interactive - Very broad topic: maybe focus on part? - Very engaged - Much work, but lukrative
<p>I loved that the seminar was very interactive it made it very easy to participate in discussions while being informative. For me the general structure was perfect because it wasn't strict but flexible. I liked that we didn't really have rules and still everything worked in order and I think its good to make everyone prepare alot before the seminar although it is important that the red line where it's just too much isn't crossed. I'm not sure the order of topics is ideal, maybe the historic examples would have helped our discussion but with the flexible structure it still fit.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sehr interessante Aktivitäten - Interessante Texte
<p>Ich hätte gerne mehr zum historischen Anarchismus gelesen (Proudhon, Kropotkin, Bakunin, Stirner), und den politischen Anarchisten (Goldman, Gandhi, ...) und dafür nur ein Text zu Anarcho-Kapitalismus.</p> <p>Die Gruppenarbeiten fand ich sehr gut, besonders, weil es häufig darum ging, wie und welche des Anarchismus gerechtfertigt werden kann und man beginnt, einen eigenen Standpunkt zu entwickeln.</p> <p>Auch die Spiele waren eine gute Idee.</p> <p>Manchmal hättest du, finde ich, etwas mehr auf inhaltliche Aussagen der Studierenden eingehen können (das wurde manchmal etwas übergangen).</p>
<p>Positive Feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nice preparation literature which benefits the seminar - Variety of methods, especially games! - Not too analytical, but enough in the right moments - You accepted wishes from us and inserted them into the syllabus - You gave us the opportunity to be pro-active - Topics: games, public goods, state legitimacy <p>Negative Feedback (though constructive, helpfully ;-))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neglected topics: economical arguments, anarchism and deriving direct action - Discussion style: maybe recommendable to direct where to dig deeper and where to stop if not related
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Really interesting and useful incorporation of simulations/roleplaying/etc - Preparation does cost time but is necessary for a good seminar in my opinion - Challenging, but not overly hard, diverse and fun in methods and content

(+)

I thought the absence of constant lecturing was very much contributing to participation of all and to the level of concentration upheld during the seminar.

Group work/Plenums discussions/games/presentations very well distributed and balanced.

General structure and Handout.

“Worksheet” helped greatly.

The task given for group sessions was always very clearly and understandably formulated—that made group-work very fruitful and structured.

(-)

The amount of material we tried to talk about might have been a little too ambitious.

Some of the (old and new) positive ideas of anarchists could have been discussed for practical implications.

(+) good introduction into topic—everything was touched upon

(+) diverse methods: not boring/tiring

(+) you asked us what to do

(+) good environment for discussions (that you created!)

(-) I don't know whether this is true for anarchist theories in general but there was a big focus on one type of anarchism

(-) I had the feeling that some discussions went off-topic (e.g. methods of anarchism discussion, public goods discussion). => A little more guiding/focus would have been good.

Mir hat die Interaktivität gefallen.

Eine gute Stimmung unter Seminarteilnehmern. Dass es viele (mehr) weibliche Teilnehmerinnen gab.

Vlt. hätte man nach den Spielen noch genauer herausarbeiten können, was das mit Anarchy zu tun hat.

Mir hat gefallen, dass die Deadline verlängert wurde und dass wir zwei Wahlmöglich. Hatten, welche Texte wir lesen.

Mir haben die Seminarzeiten gefallen.

Mir hat gefallen, dass wir draußen waren und die Personenspiele dort gemacht haben.

Mir hat die offene Redeatmosphäre gefallen (auch als niedrigere Semesterin hatte ich das Gefühl genauso mitreden zu können).

- Die Methodenvielfalt war sehr gut! Vortrag/Präsentationen/Marketplace/Games/Discussions
- Die Möglichkeit, das Seminar thematisch zu beeinflussen hat mir gut gefallen
- Die Kommunikation und Absprache vor dem Seminar via Email war hilfreich und ist nicht selbstverständlich
- Besonders das Spiel & der Marketplace haben mir auf Grund der kommunikativen Komponente gut gefallen.
- Der Workload hat mich etwas geplättet. Es war super, dass wir alle vorbereitet waren, jedoch hätten es 2 Texte weniger auch getan. Mein Kritikpunkt wäre hier: Pflichtlektüre auf essentielle Texte (Bsp. Fiala Text) zum Verständnis begrenzen.

(+)

Einbettung der Theorie in Simulationen/Spiele

Gute theoretische Vorbereitung

Offenheit der Lehrinhalte/Formen: Freiraum zum Mitgestalten der Form u. Inhalt u. Ort: im Grünen

Thema: fundamentales Hinterfragen der Autorität

Duzen

Behandlung Anarchismus in ihrer Komplexität (Idee, Aktiv., Econ, Pol, ...)

Klarheit der Struktur und Grund/Interesse des Seminars

I really much enjoyed & learned from the group activities* (simulation, trying to formulate the arguments, ...). It was very helpful to get the little tasks (i.e. focus questions 1-5) for those group works as an orientation & clear structure (of thinking).

I want to thank alot for the open atmosphere we had ("Du", setting our own seminar rules, being flexible with the schedule, allowing & welcoming discussions, group developments, ...)

I found the content very structured & clear, especially concerning the arguments from political philosophy. As this topic touches so many other areas (history, economics, sociology, psychology, ...) I am eager understand more about the other dimensions of this theory(ies).

* But also the "theory sessions" and your moderating comments were always a very helpful support to gain a base upon which we could talk.

Like:

- Many varying formats (games, group discussions, etc.)
- Surprisingly interesting topic
- Very engaged "lecturer"
- In-depth preparation results in good theoretical foundation
- Good working/discussion atmosphere
- Interdisciplinary approach (maybe some more philosophical discussion appropriate)

Dislike:

- Less presentations by students (if they don't fit the schedule)
- Involve somehow more students in discussion (may be difficult without coercion)

(+)

Sehr interaktiv, verschiedene Methoden => gut, weil Blockseminare immer anstrengend sind

Breites Themenspektrum => man hat einen sehr guten Überblick gewonnen

(-)

weniger philosophische Grundlagen/Themen als erwartet

Teaching Feedback: University of Oxford

University of Oxford

The University of Oxford uses no standardised form across the university to evaluate teaching. I have given all my students the opportunity to evaluate my teaching anonymously through an online form.

Did the tutorials help you to strengthen your interest?

Yes, they greatly strengthened my interest	9
Yes, they somewhat strengthened my interest	7
The tutorials didn't much change how interested I was	—
No, and they somewhat dampened my interest	—
No, and they greatly dampened my interest	—

How helpful did you find the written feedback on your essays?

Very helpful	8
Somewhat helpful	8
Somewhat unhelpful	—
Very unhelpful	—

Do you think the tutorials were ...

much too difficult	—
slightly too difficult	—
roughly on the right level of difficulty	15
slightly too easy	1
much too easy	—

Do you think the tutorials had a good (welcoming, friendly) atmosphere?

Yes, I strongly agree	12
Yes, I somewhat agree	3
No, I somewhat disagree	1
No, I strongly disagree	—

Were the questions and concerns you had usually answered in the tutorials?

Yes, I almost always received good answers	10
Yes, I usually received good answers	2
Yes, I often received good answers, but there were also some bad ones	1
No, I usually received unsatisfying answers	1
No, I almost never received good answers	—

How much do you think you learned through the tutorials?

I learned very much	8
I learned a decent amount	8
I learned a bit	—
I didn't learn much	—

Do you think the tutorials were interactive enough?

Yes, they were very interactive	15
Yes, they were somewhat interactive	—
No, they were a bit too one-sided	1
No, they were much too one-sided	—

If you had to form an overall judgment of the tutorials, you would say that they were ...

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Excellent	8
Good	7
Decent	1
Average	—
Flawed	—
Bad	—

Written Feedback

The 10 most recent responses to each question are shown without any redactions.

What were your overall impressions of the tutorials?

- I very much enjoyed the tutorials. I thought they were at the right level in terms of difficulty and amount of reading. Matthias was engaging and able to lead a fruitful discussion, knowing when was appropriate to raise questions or issues.
- The tutes were interesting, I felt we went over quite a lot of ground pretty quickly. It was particularly useful to round up at the end, summarising the main arguments. Overall they were well balanced and helped greatly with understanding the material.
- I mostly enjoyed the tutorials. The discussions are very detailed and are very helpful in terms of equipping me with logically thinking skills. I understand that given the breadth of each topic and the limited time we have for each tutorial, we can only focus on examining a small aspect of the readings. However, I deem it helpful if you could briefly walk us through the key debates in each topic either before or after a more focused discussion.
- Interactive and stimulating. Responding to others' essays and presenting was a natural way to start discussion.
- Very welcoming and engaging, but still delivering a lot of content which was particularly useful. Coupled with the additional examination-prep session, I felt like these tutorials prepared me and challenged me a lot more than any other classes.
- I found the tutorials really enjoyable, they were both challenging and engaging. I felt that I was able to build on my substantive knowledge of the topics whilst also becoming better at developing my reasoning skills through being pushed to defend arguments. They were definitely the most interesting tutes I've had.
- I learnt far more in the two tutorials that I had with you than I learnt in a whole term at St. Catz. I found the tutes very engaging and interesting and have almost certainly saved me for my final exam.
- Very much a discussion rather than a lecture, which was great. I felt like I was being stretched which helped me see the mistakes that I had made, but also in defending my point of view, I became more confident in what I had written.
- Mostly okay.
- Enjoyable, engaging.

How can the tutorials be improved?

- I felt that sometimes the essay questions/tutorials did not link fully with the reading list. If we could maybe have more structured reading list or more guidance with it it would be helpful.
- I can't think of anything that would improve it - it was excellent.
- Potentially having a 20 minute discussion at the end of the last tutorial to link up the various weeks work to get an overview could be helpful. I.e. discussing how would utilitarianism work in a broader, more complete picture, drawing from the various discussions had.

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- Having slightly more time to round up, maybe after a certain section. Sometimes we seemed to go off on a tangent which is interesting but easy to lose track of the main lines of argument.
- As above.
- At the end of each tutorial, highlight the aspects which are key to a successful exam answer and which are interesting but superfluous.
- It would be helpful if, after an essay is read, you made your own brief criticisms before the others in the room - although the reader has already seen these, it would stop the subsequent debate being based on a mistaken theses or argument, which occasionally happened in our group.
- I'm still a bit nervous about how to actually show what I know/can do in an exam situation. However, we do have our revision class this week which might address this. Other than that I wouldn't change anything.
- No negative comments.
- Perhaps there could be a greater level of critical analysis when we make a point that you think is not fully justified, because we often come away having an interesting chat but not necessarily with too much conviction about where the argument is strongest.

What aspects of the tutorials did you like?

- The atmosphere was very good, I felt I could easily ask any questions, and they were good at making me think through the issues.
- Essay feedback was very helpful & your engaging discussions.
- The amount of time you spent explaining vs asking us questions I thought was good. Also it was useful to have something on the board, a couple of hints to keep things structured.
- I like how you always probe us with basic questions and allow us to think things through ourselves. I like the idea of presenting our work as it really helps us to write argumentative rather than descriptive essays and forces us to write in a clear and logical way.
- Allowed us to explore key ideas and understand your points through questions and examples, rather than lecture style responses. Helped us to develop/refine raw ideas to come to more sophisticated positions.
- (Definitely despite the above), I thought that structuring tutorials around a particular essay was incredibly useful in forcing us to improve our writing style itself, something which in legal topics tends to be neglected in favour of simply reaching the 'correct' answer. Stressing the importance of simplicity was central to this, and your pre-tutorial notes on the questions, the material and a general essay structure were invaluable: I know most tutors did not give their students such guidance, and they have found it much harder to change how they approach an essay. Thank you!
- I liked the framework of having one student present their essay and the other reply to it. I also liked the freedom of the tutorial to develop views and arguments about the key questions rather than having shallower discussion of every bit of material.
- I enjoyed that you seemed genuinely enthusiastic about teaching and that you explained things in such simple terms. The structure of the tutorials was also very good, a quick run through followed by time for some more in depth discussions if needed. I appreciated that you always allowed students a chance to answer before you gave your own point of view, it allowed us to work out where we were going wrong.
- I really appreciated the frank and honest assessments of my work which I think really helped me to improve.
- Liked the balance between talking between the tutorial partner and talking with you. The format where one presents an outline seems a good method to explore the question while also picking out the parts that we found most interesting.