



## Program Evaluation System

Report: **Graph Distribution**

Course:	<b>INTRO TO AMERICAN POLITICS (POLSW1201_001_2008_3)</b>
Evaluation:	<b>A&amp;S Course Evaluations: 1 Instructor and 1 TA Form</b>
Dates:	<b>December 01, 2008 - December 11, 2008</b>
No. of Respondents:	66
No. of Students:	101

**TA Effectiveness - David Joseph O'Connell****1: TA's ability to raise challenging questions**

n = 38

Poor	0%(0)
Fair	0%(0)
Good	3% (1)
Very Good	13% (5)
Excellent	79% (30)
Not Applicable	5%(2)

**2: TA's ability to help clarify course material**

n = 38

Poor	0%(0)
Fair	0%(0)
Good	0% (0)
Very Good	5% (2)
Excellent	92% (35)
Not Applicable	3%(1)

**3: TA's ability to encourage student participation effectively**

n = 38

Poor	0%(0)
Fair	0%(0)
Good	3% (1)
Very Good	11% (4)

Excellent  84% (32)

Not Applicable  3%(1)

#### 4: TA's responsiveness to student questions, opinions and criticisms

n = 38

Poor  0%(0)

Fair  0%(0)

Good  0% (0)

Very Good  3% (1)

Excellent  95% (36)

Not Applicable  3%(1)

#### 5: TA's feedback on assignments and examinations

n = 38

Poor  0%(0)

Fair  0%(0)

Good  3% (1)

Very Good  5% (2)

Excellent  89% (34)

Not Applicable  3%(1)

#### 6: TA's ability to communicate effectively with students

n = 38

Poor  0%(0)

Fair  0%(0)

Good  0% (0)

Very Good  5% (2)

Excellent  92% (35)

Not Applicable  3%(1)

#### 7: Overall effectiveness of the TA

n = 38

Poor  0%(0)

Fair  0%(0)

Good  0% (0)

Very Good	5% (2)
Excellent	92% (35)
Not Applicable	3%(1)

Report: **Comments**

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No. of Respondents:	66
No. of Students:	101
Percent Completed:	<b>65%</b>

### Comments on TA effectiveness - David Joseph O'Connell

I LOVED having David as a TA. He is probably the best TA ever and I truly mean that . I didn t do so well on the first exam and he arranged a meeting so that we could talk about how I could do better the next time and I did a lot better . I ve never seen someone TA or Professor who genuinely cares so much for his students. He always makes himself completely available to his students which I deeply appreciate. I looked forward to coming to his discussion sections every week. I wish we could have met more often because the discussion sections were awesome. Even if I hadn t done the reading for that week I was always totally engaged in David s lesson plans. His lesson plans were very effective. I like how he organized them giving brief summaries of each reading and clarifying any points that were unclear in lecture. What a dedicated TA. I only wish my other TAs could be as dedicated and awesome as David. Plus the snacks he brought were awesome

David was awesome. The best TA I have ever had. He was very helpful in ever aspect of the course. His review sessions were very effective and helpful. He is dedicated to seeing his students do well. He explained the material clearly and even did outside research on the classes behalf in the explanation of certain material as it relates to the course to help us understand it better. Thanks David for an awesome semester. Best TA ever

David is the best TA I ve had thus far. His energy in discussions is very helpful for raising student attention. Moreover his ability to synthesize course material and current events brings topics to life. Break-out groups and pop quizzes also helped to those of us who are shy to speak up clarify the readings.

Best TA I have had in my college career hands down. Balance of review and outside material was perfect both to keep things interesting and to provide the necessary clarification. David was exceptionally approachable and informative.

David was one of the most willing and involved TAs I have ever had. He was always available to meet discuss exams answers questions or anything else that was needed. He helped out a lot with review sessions and clarifying readings that the professor might not have touched on or had only touched on in lecture.

David is BY FAR the best TA I ve ever had the pleasure of being in discussion section with. He clarifies all material from lecture extremely well answers any and all questions that students have ALWAYS makes time for out-of-class appointments goes out of his way to do so even on short notice holds the most extensive and helpful review sessions I ve ever attended and is overall a really funny and charismatic guy. I can t say enough good things about David and I think that everyone else in the class feels the same way. Oh and he brought us food Which was incredibly nice and extremely appreciated. Truly the best TA I ve

ever had and he is undoubtedly the reason that I understand and remember the material from the textbook lecture etc. He also does tons of outside research and brings in graphs polls etc. to clarify and enforce the information that's discussed in lecture textbook including a class spent on the current state of the economy which everyone enjoyed and found useful. Thank you so much David.

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David was the best TA I have ever had. I enjoyed the format of section: a quick summary of the readings and then moving on to the thought-provoking questions he raised. David also made himself completely available to give students help with the material and prepare for the exams. He seemed to really want students to succeed if they were willing to put in the work.

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Great enthusiastic unfortunately a Dolphin's fan really his biggest flaw.

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Unfortunately I did not participate that much in my discussion section. I am very very shy and I generally do not feel comfortable discussing my thoughts in front of people that I know are much more gifted than I am. Nonetheless David was an amazing TA. He was a tough grader but he got me to clearly synthesize my thoughts in my essays. His discussion sections were very engaging and very interesting. He would send out videos and interesting articles to help us better understand the material. I also contacted David to help me out on a research paper for another class. He basically was the one that shed light onto my thesis. He is very approachable knowledgeable and funny. If he were to teach a course I would sign up and take it right away.

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His nickname was miracle TA. I have been in many different education type settings and I have yet to meet such an incredible TA. He knows the material inside and out. He stimulates conversation and makes you want to study. He is there for you 24/7 sits hours on end to help us know the material and makes himself available always while pushing us forward. As I said miracle TA.

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If there were a category for ability to communicate effectively and overall effectiveness better than excellent David would deserve it. Not only very friendly and personable David's discussion and review sections made clear that our class was his top priority. In discussion sections David did an excellent job summarizing readings and offering his own insights as a political scientist while opening the floor to debate on the issues being studied. He also brought in relevant outside material that gave further insight into the material. He offered several review sessions and extensive office hours and seemed always more than willing to meet with students for any reason.

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There is no TA who takes his job more seriously than David. Amazing in and out of the classroom. The student will not be denied.

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The most approachable TA I've ever had in Columbia. Very knowledgeable and always accessible to the students. David is also very good at helping students understand course material and readings. However David sometimes speaks too fast. Nevertheless an amazing TA.

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David O'Connell is the best TA I have ever had at Columbia. He could not be more dedicated to this course and he has really helped prepare the class for the exams. He also brings in material outside to the class and is willing to accommodate discussion of important current events that sometimes lie outside the material covered in the class. David is really just amazing. Thank you so much.

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David O'Connell is the best TA I have ever had and most likely the best one I will ever have. He is incredibly prepared, goes beyond what would ever be expected and really wants all of his students to succeed. My knowledge of American politics has been enriched by his teaching and expertise.

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Great TA, the best educator that I have had at Columbia in my two years here. He brings a real passion to the course and you can really tell that he loves doing what he does. He brings in outside information and current affairs to help clarify the material being learned in class and is always available to meet. His knowledge of the material is outstanding and is

always able to answer all of our questions.

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I have never had such an amazing T.A. Not only did he know the material he was always available and prepared for class above and beyond anyone's expectations. I would take any class he was T.A.ing or teaching

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Very enthusiastic and willing to meet outside of class. Clarified course material but often rushed through the readings understandable given the limited time and many readings.

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Best TA I have ever had and based on what I have heard will ever have. He was available all the time always helped us prepare for exams and seemed to give every ounce of himself to this post. I fear that all this energy now may cause his enthusiasm to wane one day but as of right now I think he is a fantastic TA who knows his subject incredibly well and who knows how to make the subject come alive. As for the sections I would have liked a few more written exercises just to get into the mindset but that's just a personal thing.

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Does a great job of helping us prepare for the midterms. Always willing to help.

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He was literally the best TA I have EVER had. He helps out so much especially in review sessions because he takes the time to make sure EACH student understands the material before moving along. He is VERY passionate about politics and it shows through every day. Plus he was too kind because he actually brought snacks to every single discussion section. He is a great TA and will make an awesome professor one day

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David was great. He went above and beyond what was required of him in order to help his students succeed. His discussion sections were always exciting and interesting and I always left feeling like I had participated in a very good discussion that led to a better and deeper understanding of the material.

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David was literally the best TA I have ever had- he made the course material more interesting and clear and was always available for questions or assistance.

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Very energetic and fully engaged in the class. Made me want to work harder in the class just by witnessing the enthusiastic effort he put forth leading the discussion sections. The best TA I have had in my 5 semesters at Columbia so far. Only thing I can think of to critique is sometimes he gets going and starts talking too fast to take notes on what he is saying. However this was more because of the large amount of material we needed to cover in a short time. He would gladly repeat what he was saying without a problem if you asked.

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What can I say he began the semester by stating he would be the best TA we've ever had and by all accounts it is true. He approached every session with the right attitude to engage and excite the students and he went out of his way consistently to help us with any class-related issues. Most significantly he was able to clarify the lectures into an easy to understand and retain form. It is this last feat that separates him from a dependable and eager TA to one that has the gift of teaching information to others. Many professors and faculty members are brilliant in their field but are unable to impart their knowledge. David does not have this issue and often times I wondered how did other sections fare on exams because our TA was just so extraordinary.

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David is always available and ready to help his students. He is willing to meet with students and help them understand the material.

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David is truly one of the smartest nicest entertaining and most approachable guys I've ever met. I do not refer to him as a teacher because despite his incredible ability to make up for the ambiguities in Dr. Phillip's lectures his great analysis of the additional readings and his rare ability to ask stimulating questions that all students are opinionated and vocal about he also makes the recitation section more like a group of friends than a teacher and his students. Not only did he demonstrate his fabulous teaching skills in the classroom but he also gave comprehensive insightful review sessions that really helped everyone on the exam. More than anything David is dedicated. He is always free to meet with his students and the night before every exam he would sit in the library for over 5 hours explaining last-minute details to confused students. If David were ever to teach a class at Columbia I would

sign up for it immediately--however I would probably still have trouble getting into it because everyone I spoke to in the class spoke just as highly of him as I do. David deserves to teach a political science class and if Columbia doesn't let him and he goes somewhere else we have really lost a great teacher.

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He is the best T.A. ever. He makes everything interesting and reviews all the readings and even lecture sometimes.

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All excellent. Class participation and engagement very good review sessions excellent. Food for class is nice but really you don't have to worry about bringing stuff every time. Talked a little fast often but not necessarily something that needs to be amended.

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David is by far the best TA I've ever had. He's understanding, rigorous, fair, and kind. He goes to great lengths to make the material relevant to the lives of even those who aren't particularly enthused by politics and works hard to make every section interesting. Section with David was something that I looked forward to every week. It should also be noted that David goes way and beyond the call of duty. He uses his own money to pay for snacks for every section, provides multiple extremely helpful and thorough review sessions before each exam, and made himself available for around five hours in the library if anyone has additional questions. He encourages his students to come to his office hours, and while I never went myself, from what I hear he actively and helpfully engages with those who do. I took this same class last semester with a different professor but wound up dropping it, and I was also in David's section last year. Even though I was only in the class for a few weeks, as soon as David saw me in lecture the first day of classes he immediately came up and said hello to me. He was also extremely helpful when I was unable to sign up for a section that fit with my existing schedule. If it had not been for David's help, I would have been forced to drop this class yet again and take it next semester.

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David was honestly the BEST TA I have ever had at Columbia. He was organized, insightful, posed thought-provoking questions, and made himself available to anyone who wanted needed help. His ability to provide relevant examples and use various activities to help the class understand concepts made for a great learning environment.

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