

# Northwestern

Individual Report for for U.S.  
Environmental Politics, Special  
Topics in Envi  
Policy(POLI\_SCI\_329-0\_20: U.S.  
Environmental  
Politics, ENVR\_POL\_390-0\_23:  
Special Topics in Envi Policy)  
(Matthew Nelsen)

Project Title: **Course and Teacher Evaluations CTEC  
Winter 2019**

Courses Audience: **39**  
Responses Received: **32**  
Response Ratio: **82.1%**

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## Report Comments

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Creation Date: **Tuesday, March 26, 2019**

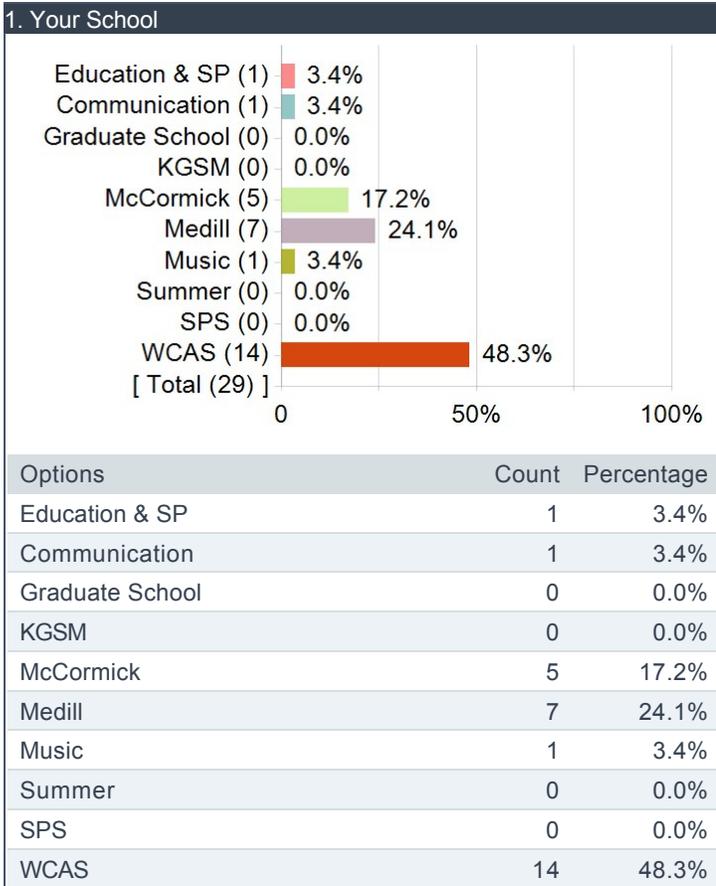
## Northwestern University

### Course Evaluations

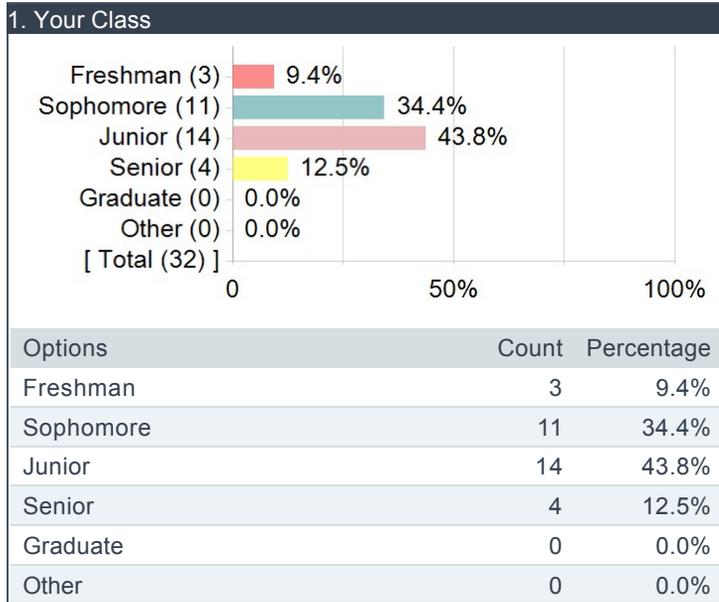
Teaching Assistant	Course
<b>Matthew Nelsen</b>	<b>U.S. Environmental Politics,Special Topics in Envi Policy</b>

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

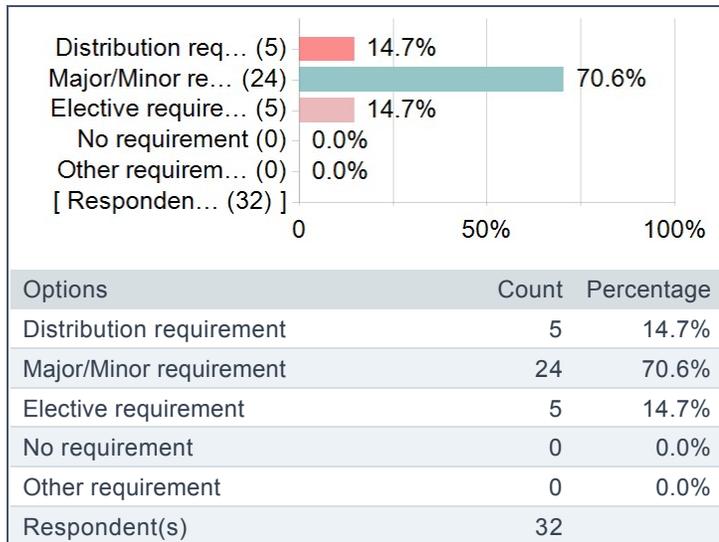
#### Your School



## Your Class

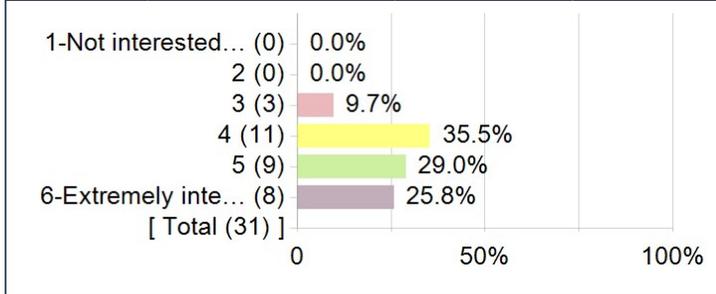


## What is your reason for taking the course? (mark all that apply)



**What was your interest in this subject before taking the course?**

1. What was your interest in this subject before taking the course?

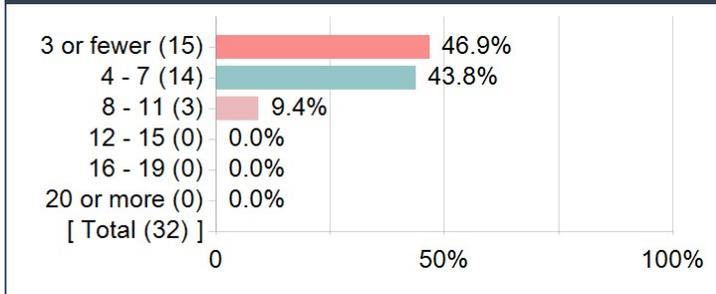


Options	Count	Percentage
1-Not interested at all	0	0.0%
2	0	0.0%
3	3	9.7%
4	11	35.5%
5	9	29.0%
6-Extremely interested	8	25.8%

**TIME-SURVEY QUESTION**

**Estimate the average number of hours per week you spent on this course outside of class and lab time.**

1. Estimate the average number of hours per week you spent on this course outside of class and lab time.

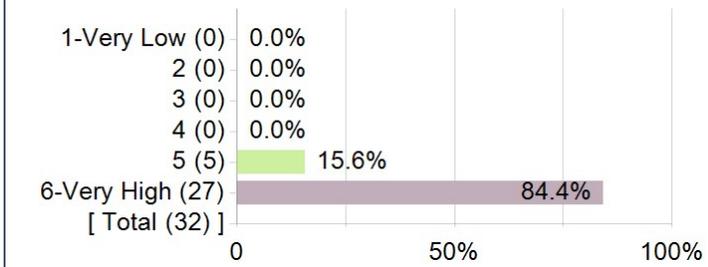


Options	Count	Percentage
3 or fewer	15	46.9%
4 - 7	14	43.8%
8 - 11	3	9.4%
12 - 15	0	0.0%
16 - 19	0	0.0%
20 or more	0	0.0%

## TA QUESTIONS

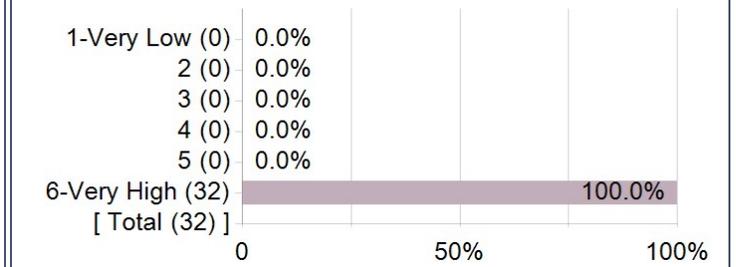
Please rate the TA on the following criteria:

1. The TA was able to answer the students' questions adequately.



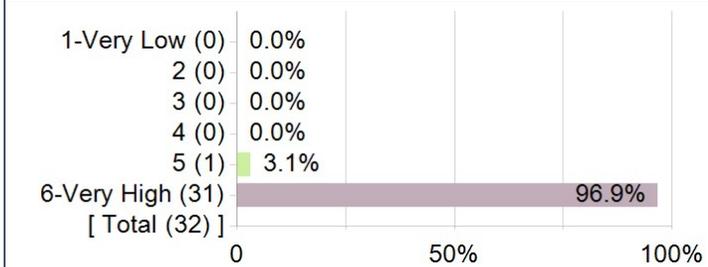
Options	Score	Count	Percentage
1-Very Low	1	0	0.0%
2	2	0	0.0%
3	3	0	0.0%
4	4	0	0.0%
5	5	5	15.6%
6-Very High	6	27	84.4%
Statistics	Value		
Response Count	32		
Mean	5.84		
Median	6.00		
Standard Deviation	0.37		

2. The TA was well prepared for each session.



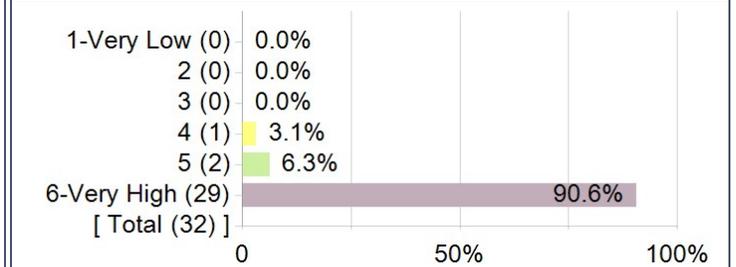
Options	Score	Count	Percentage
1-Very Low	1	0	0.0%
2	2	0	0.0%
3	3	0	0.0%
4	4	0	0.0%
5	5	0	0.0%
6-Very High	6	32	100.0%
Statistics	Value		
Response Count	32		
Mean	6.00		
Median	6.00		
Standard Deviation	0.00		

3. The TA communicated ideas in a clear manner.



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
1-Very Low	1	0	0.0%
2	2	0	0.0%
3	3	0	0.0%
4	4	0	0.0%
5	5	1	3.1%
6-Very High	6	31	96.9%
Statistics	Value		
Response Count	32		
Mean	5.97		
Median	6.00		
Standard Deviation	0.18		

4. The TA showed strong interest in teaching the course.



Options	Score	Count	Percentage
1-Very Low	1	0	0.0%
2	2	0	0.0%
3	3	0	0.0%
4	4	1	3.1%
5	5	2	6.3%
6-Very High	6	29	90.6%
Statistics	Value		
Response Count	32		
Mean	5.88		
Median	6.00		
Standard Deviation	0.42		

## OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

**What are the primary strengths and weaknesses of the teaching assistant?**

Comments
Super helpful and organized! I really appreciated the feedback he gave regarding all the writing assignments.
Matt was super prepared for all of our discussion sections. These were a great supplement to the lectures. He was also a fair and attentive grader
I've had Matt for the past two quarters and while he doesn't have the strongest background knowledge on environmental politics, he was able to answer the majority of questions I had on these issues. If I didn't know him before, I would have guessed he was studying environmental politics.
Great TA! Always organized and responsive.
Strengths: very prepared for each class and discussion, knowledgeable of subject matter, willing to engage students Weaknesses: a little overzealous about monitoring participation/engagement in lectures
He was very well prepared.
Did a good job of listening to student feedback and was very knowledgeable about the material even though it was outside his expertise
Strengths: Organization, passion, commitment to each student and to environmental politics in general
He was great at explaining our readings and putting them in a broader context of environmental policy. He always made sure that there were no disparities in his grading, and I enjoyed the fact that he was transparent.
Matthew was the man. Always understanding, prepared, and smart. Really liked the guy and respected what he had to say, his investment into the students, and his email response time.
My only suggestion would be to try harder to remain politically neutral. Not so much in your lecture points, but in the jokes you laugh and engage with sometimes with the students. You were very personable, but sometimes I think your genuine like and openness for the students made conservatives the butt of jokes a little too often. Didn't bother me personally, I'm registered under the green party. But I think you could maintain a little more professionalism there. Even at Northwestern in an env class, it is not fair to assume the class is unanimously liberal. Perhaps made a couple kids feel at a distance from you and the material, which I know was not at all your intention. So kindly pointing it out! good luck in your studies and career.
He was very enthusiastic, willing to provide feedback and assistance, and very clear about his expectations. He made section really enjoyable and I have never enjoyed a section in my life.
Matt is by far the best TA I have had at NU. His passion, organization, and effort are unparalleled.
Matt was great; he was always super prepared for discussions and made it clear what his expectations were. He was always ready to clarify any misunderstandings students have about course material while making discussions fun and engaging.
Great TA, wish I had him for all my courses
No real weaknesses. Matt was very organized and always had enthusiasm for the subject material. He was particularly good about answering student questions in a meaningful and clarifying manner. Great TA!
Matt did a great job clarifying the nuances of all of the readings, and his grade breakdowns were extremely helpful. I would have liked a little more discussion time to review the midterm, but that's about it in terms of weaknesses.
Matt is well prepared for section. He makes beautiful slideshows where he clarifies leftover questions from lectures and includes supplemental materials, and shares those slideshows with students. He is extremely available via email and office hours. He's very kind and inclusive, and even explained to us that he did not find huge variances between men and women while grading our midterms. He returns all assignments within a timely manner and includes very helpful comments along with his scoring. He really enhanced this class for me.
Very willing to help students both inside and out of the classroom.
Very clear and to the point, committed to evaluating student feedback through post discussion surveys, dedicated to helping students learn the content
Matt was a great TA. He answered all of our questions very concisely and efficiently, but also noted when he lacked the proper knowledge and adjusted accordingly. Although his discussion sections were a bit stiff, I did feel that they helped with overall course comprehension. The one piece of advice I would have is to have a more natural way of conducting discussion sections. Reading questions from a slide and then having groups answer them is perhaps my least favorite way of discussing things. I find that engaging a group with questions and adapting to their interests based on their responses is best. Matt definitely exhibited this skill when we had larger group discussions, I just wish he used it more.
He is so friendly and willing to answer questions. He was enthusiastic about the content even though it isn't his main area of study.
Matt was the best
Matt was one of the best TAs I have ever had – he came so prepared to every discussion, took our questions from the previous week and answered them in detail, led discussion about the readings/class material, and made himself very available outside of class for help. I could tell that he knew a lot about the subject.

Comments
You did great! I like that you were very organized and always trying to gauge the classroom's reactions. Also your statement after we got the first short paper grades back about how we should always ask about gender differences in grading kind of blew my mind.
Really enthusiastic and approachable, incredibly helpful with essay feedback which makes it seem like he really cares about students' learning and success
Matt was a phenomenal TA! He made incredible PowerPoint slides for each discussion section and then emailed them to us. He also asked for feedback weekly from a Google Form, so he really tailored discussions to what students needed. I literally wish he was my TA for every class!!!!
Matt was wonderful! He was prepared for each discussion section and was able to answer any questions we had. He also was willing to explain concepts thoroughly and provided valuable feedback for our response papers and exam essays.
Wow I have never had a TA as engaged and prepared as Matt. So so great! He leads comprehensive discussions, makes excellent use of time, and really communicates ideas well.