

War and the Nation State (PLSC 27600/37600)

Winter 2025 · Prof. John J. Mearsheimer

TA evaluation (Adam Saxton, one of five TAs)

pp. 3, 6, and 8–10 of the official report

Names and comments of other teaching assistants redacted for their privacy.

Comments
History of Warfare in European history, especially WWI, different arguments in IR
n.a
Development of warfare from Napoleonic Wars through WWII. How each development from nationalism, industrialization etc has influence warfare today. Then going incredibly deeply into WWI + WWII's conduct, causes, and consequences.
Nationalism and the history of Europe between 1800–1945.
the isms – nationalism, liberalism. the different forms of war, causes and conduct of wwi and wwii.
like all of war from 1800–1949
How nationalism and industrialization changed warfare + how to understand and evaluate argumetns about causes of WW1 and WW2. especially enjoyed the section on WW1 bc the american education system usually skips over it! was also rly interesting to focus on WW2 from the perspective of the eastern front and the asia pacific rather than solely focusing on western europe
SO many things— loved learning about different takes on the causes of WW1 as well as just technical knowledge of history and warfare.
This course covered Napoleonic Wars, World War 1 and World War 2 through a realist lens.
Everything from 18th century–WW2 geopolitical, military and warfare dynamics. Fantastic course.
He was very amazing, I'd recommend taking him for FA.

Describe how aspects of this course (lectures, discussions, labs, assignments, etc.) contributed to your learning.

Comments
Professor Mearsheimer is a brilliant lecturer. Easy to pay attention and keep track in class which conveyed the bulk of content. Discussions were helpful to supplement what we went over in lecture and readings.
Lectures are basically it. Readings were extremely extensive but often summarized in lecutre.
The lectures provided the amount of knowledge that would then be better formulated into parts during the discussion
The lectures were entertaining and informative and the discussion sections were good too
Lecture/lecture slides
Lectures were overall helpful and engaging
Readings provided the information, lecture added the professor's views on the topics, discussions allowed us to interact with them.
The lectures were extremely engaging and the discussion sections were very helpful for further understanding the material.
Lectures were fantastics. Discussion section Q&A with Prof. Mearsheimer was good.
The lectures were always very informative, Professor Mearsheimer is truly one of the best. This University is very lucky to have him. [REDACTED]
The lectures were interesting, and the discussion section was useful in extracting the main points from the readings (which there were a lot of). [REDACTED]
Professor Mearsheimer's lectures were incredibly interesting and helpful. In addition, the TAs were extremely dedicated and tried to help the students in any way they could. The readings could be a bit overwhelming though.
The lectures were very engaging. Discussions were super helpful.
Lectures were great in the sense that he is a captivating speaker, but on content there wasn't really much to learn at the depth we studies.
Discussions were useful for more detailed responses to questions.
Everything was fantastic, top tier. The lectures, the readings, and particularly the discussion sections with Adam Saxton. He might be the best TA I have ever had.
Lecture was good but not excellent—often slow. Discussions were awful—despite the efforts of the TA, nobody in my section read any of the course readings, so they were completely pointless.
Great professor. Worth the history lesson
lectures gave great overview of history and IR theory
The reading was great.
Lectures are very dense and informative. Discussion sections are helpful as well.
The lectures are genuinely life changing and if you pay attention, you will walk out of the class very familiar with Prof. Mearsheimer's

Comments
lecturing
Lectures
Good lecturer
Adam Saxton's discussions were incredibly efficient and effective. He managed to concisely convey the key ideas of the course so we had time for discussion, despite how short the sessions were. I was impressed with how knowledgeable and charismatic he was.
The lectures were quite good.
slides
Lectures.
Mearsheimer is an excellent lecturer. He has so much knowledge and truly enjoys sharing it.
Prof. Mearsheimer gives the most amazing lectures. Go to the lectures and you will not regret it.
The lectures were enhanced by his very down-to-earth way of speaking which made all the concepts very easy to understand
the lectures, do make sure to attend them
Mearsheimer's enthusiasm and charisma.
The discussion and readings contributed the most, and class time helped organize the main themes of the readings
Mearsheimer is truly an incredible lecturer. He gave us the opportunity to ask questions in class and engage with his writing. His office hours were also incredibly helpful!
Incredible lectures
Clear lectures and slides.
JJM is a legend. Mad funny and I like it when he roasts students that ask goofy questions.
Incredible lecturer. Would recommend everyone take a Mearsheimer class if possible.
Mearsheimer is an old fashioned professor in the best ways possible. His lectures were the main part of the course, and I consistently got a ton from them.
lectures, his passion for what he is talking about, TA sessions
Mearsheimer is a world-class lecturer.
Excellent lecturing.
Mearsheimer is a great lecturer
lectures
Synthesis oof large amounts of reading into a cohesive narrative.
Lectures
his lectures were great!
lectures
lectures were great
Definitely lectures and the assigned readings were all extremely interesting.
LECTURES! Professor Mearsheimer is an amazing lecturer. Super engaging.
Incredible lecturer and storyteller
He was very amazing, I'd recommend taking him for FA.

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.69	5.00	1.82%	0.00%	1.82%	20.00%	76.36%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.74	5.00	1.85%	0.00%	1.85%	14.81%	81.48%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.40	5.00	3.64%	0.00%	9.09%	23.64%	58.18%	5.45%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.76	5.00	1.82%	0.00%	3.64%	9.09%	85.45%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.65	5.00	1.82%	0.00%	7.27%	12.73%	78.18%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.67	5.00	3.64%	0.00%	3.64%	10.91%	81.82%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.23	5.00	3.70%	1.85%	18.52%	16.67%	55.56%	3.70%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.70	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	5.56%	18.52%	74.07%	1.85%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.65	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	7.41%	20.37%	72.22%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.73	5.00	1.82%	0.00%	5.45%	9.09%	83.64%	0.00%

Please include the name of the TA/CA/Intern you are evaluating. What aspects of the TA's teaching contributed most to your learning? What could the TA modify to help you learn more? Please include any additional feedback for the TA/CA/Intern.

[illegible]

[illegible]

The head TA Randall was very helpful in dealing with administrative matters. He is always willing to help if you reach out. My TA Adam was also great. He led very engaging discussion sections. He is also very experienced and is willing to talk about non-course related materials (I personally asked his experience working in the law industry). It is clear that Adam cared greatly about the learning of the students.

Adam Saxton did a great job. He facilitated good discussion and added valuable input. Furthermore, he was very helpful in the life wisdom he dispelled about jobs and whatnot.

Adam Saxton

[illegible]

The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.76	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	4.00%	16.00%	78.00%	2.00%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	4.60	5.00	0.00%	2.00%	10.00%	8.00%	66.00%	14.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	2.00%	18.00%	78.00%	2.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.77	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	2.00%	18.00%	76.00%	4.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	4.76	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.00%	12.00%	80.00%	2.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.86	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	2.00%	10.00%	86.00%	2.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.77	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	4.00%	14.00%	78.00%	4.00%

How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	Mean	Median	No Gain	A Little Gain	Moderate Gain	Good Gain	Great Gain	N/A
Laboratory Experience	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%
Field Trips	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%
Library Sessions	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%
Review Sessions	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Writing Seminars	5.00	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%