

# Report from a semester at the University of California Los Angeles



Scott McIver

Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Relations

Global Political Studies, Malmö University

January 2014.

## **Introduction**

This text addresses the topics of interest that STINT have requested comment on. It is written as a personal reflection on my time at UCLA in fall 2013 with an 'Excellence in Teaching' scholarship. First I discuss pre-scholarship planning and then I address my role and activities at UCLA. A consideration of potential lessons follows and here I have underlined those that seem of greatest interest. The report ends by drawing some comparisons between Swedish higher education norms and my experience at UCLA and discussing an action plan of potential issues to address in Sweden. Where appropriate I have also tried to accentuate points of relevance for future STINT fellows.

## **Preparation and planning**

I was informed that I had been chosen for the Excellence in Teaching award in late December 2012 and was quickly given the name of a contact person in the International Institute there, Germán Esparza. We were in regular email and telephone contact from January through March when I visited UCLA for a week. During this initial period – and given my limited knowledge of UCLA - contact with Germán was invaluable. He helped reserve a room at the on-campus hotel for my visit and set up a schedule of both academic and practical meetings (child care, housing) for my time there.

During the visit I met the Dean of the International Institute, Cindy Fan, and the Director of the Burkle Center of International Relations, Kal Raustiala, who was my original academic contact. I also met with Mike Thies, chair of the interdisciplinary Global Studies program which I would teach on. Mike would also evolve into my substantive academic contact. I was introduced to the key administrators I would have contact with and welcomed warmly. I was given a tour of the campus by a student, met with one of the housing officers to view a potential apartment and visited possible childcare facilities on and near campus. I also took the chance to attend an International Institute workshop and a lunchtime seminar that were taking place during the period of my visit and this gave a strong impression of the academically eclectic and stimulating environment I was preparing to spend time in.

The period from March until my arrival at UCLA in late August was concerned with both academic and practical considerations. Regarding the former, Mike Thies had given me a free hand to develop a course that fitted the Global Studies profile and which I would teach as the sole instructor. I had discussed a variety of ideas with him in March and settled on a course entitled *Global Ideas: Policy Mobility, International Organization and Transnational Governance*. My aim was to bring together current debates and issues from three overlapping academic subject areas: international relations, comparative politics and policy studies. Doing this in one course was something that I had considered before and the freedom for new course development offered at UCLA provided a fantastic

opportunity to do so. Although new, putting the course together was a familiar academic exercise: choosing topics and literature, considering what tasks and assessments students would be set and creating a syllabus. As part of my preparation I was helped by UCLA's course administrators who provided me with a selection of course syllabi given previously in Global Studies and this aided me in gauging norms and expectations. I also sent first a short description and then a full syllabus to Mike Thies and received useful and encouraging feedback.

Practical considerations took up substantial time and I would advise future STINT fellows not to underestimate the work involved. The organization of insurance coverage, housing, leave of absence, visas, travel to Stockholm (for an obligatory visa interview) and UCLA related paperwork (health coverage opt-outs, international office registration) along with family arrangements was quite considerable. In addition it is worth noting that arrival brings a new wave of paperwork and logistics: university registration, access to instructor websites, requests for tax and social security numbers (despite payment coming from STINT), and the setting up of bank accounts, cell numbers, internet links etc. This is, of course, as one would expect when moving to a new country and something I have experienced before. But to emphasize: it is important to allow for the necessary time and costs of relocation and plan to give oneself some breathing space at the start of the semester.

### **Position, Responsibilities and Activities**

My principal task during the semester at UCLA was to teach the 'senior seminar' course that I had developed for the Global Studies program. The program has around forty senior (final year) students and covers what it describes as the three 'thematic pillars of globalization': Culture and Society, Governance and Conflict and Markets. My course represented the Governance and Conflict pillar for the senior students during the fall semester and I was the sole instructor. This involved teaching a three hour class seminar once a week to a small group of thirteen students. I had office hours available for student questions and discussion, administered the course website and weekly hand-ins of student work and performed other normal pedagogical tasks (preparation of the examination, marking and feedback etc.). Although I carried out this task individually I did ask for, and receive, advice from the program chair, Mike Thies, at different points during the semester. This concerned expectations at UCLA regarding the suitable academic level and student workload for seniors and also guidance on grading norms. These conversations provided important support for me.

I was placed within the International Institute at UCLA and given an office in the Bunche building where the Institute is located along with a number of social science departments and research centers. Initially the office was to be available to me on Monday, Wednesday and Friday but by mid-term I had still not met my proposed office mate (!) and I used the office at will. The International

Institute<sup>1</sup> describes itself as 'the hub for teaching, research and engagement in international affairs at UCLA'. It acts as an umbrella administration for a large number of principally area-specific research centers, currently around twenty. It also provides administration for Interdepartmental Programs (IDPs), of which Global Studies is one of three undergraduate programs offered.

My placement there had both pros and cons. Initially, I saw it as very positive – the International Institute administered Global Studies and being there placed me organizationally close to Germán (my administrative contact) and Kal, deputy Director of the Institute and my official academic contact. However, I realized quite quickly that there were no other teaching faculty – physically or organizationally - within the Institute. The Institute acts as a hub which provides managerial and administrative functions to the interdepartmental programs and research centers but the concrete teaching and research work done by these is carried out by affiliated faculty from across UCLA's social science and humanities departments. My office was situated on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor, amongst some of the International Institute administrators. They were extremely welcoming, knowledgeable and helpful in answering any questions I had. However, over the semester I regretted somewhat that I had not been placed in the Political Science department, which would have been my natural home. I could join the Political Science mailing list and this kept me informed of events taking place there and provided some information and insights into the working of the department. Given its nature the International Institute did not have departmental meetings or any meetings of teaching staff to give a coherent sense of identity. There was however a strong organizational culture amongst the research center directors and administrators and I could attend some pan-Institute social events which were valuable for building contacts.

I also participated in a number of seminars and workshops during the semester. These covered diverse themes, from the humanitarian crisis in Syria to the increasing antagonism of US voters' views towards those supporting the opposing political party. Since I was teaching my course alone it seemed worthwhile to observe the teaching of some other courses at UCLA and on the recommendation of my students I attended and observed a couple of other classes. One of these in particular was very useful; a political communication course entitled 'Public Diplomacy'. It was fascinating to see how the course head, Judy Milestone, and her teaching assistant (TA) successfully cooperated and shared the workload. They were convivial and open towards me and I gained much insight from a long conversation about their pedagogical strategy for the course and the role of TAs more generally in undergraduate education.

In November, I was asked if I was interested in developing a proposal for a summer course; opportunities for new courses were being promoted by the International Institute. I put in a proposal

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://web.international.ucla.edu/institute/home/>

and although this was unsuccessful in the competition the process of preparing it was very useful. It helped to further develop contacts and a more nuanced awareness of the operation and objectives of the institute. Apparently, the content of the proposal was well-received but the costs associated with external faculty counted against it. Nevertheless it has helped to underpin ongoing contact with UCLA and particularly Mike Thies and the interdisciplinary programs. It has also left open the potential for some form of collaboration in future.

### **Important lessons**

The simplest lesson is that once institutional norms and bureaucratic restrictions are stripped away then things can be done very differently. In my home department we are substantially constrained in what and how we can teach. Programs, course-plans and even the important specifics of 'intended learning outcomes' (*lärandemål*) need to be decided and catalogued many months in advance. There is a rather resigned acceptance of committee-based quality control which discourages individual lecturers from rapidly and simply updating or adjusting a course. There is also a lack of recognition of the importance of student choice. We tend to provide a lengthily prepared set-menu (the best of course!) rather than allowing students to choose how to whet and then meet their intellectual appetites.

This is unfortunate because it means that although students have chosen a program, the reason that they attend any particular class tends to be because the program structure says that they must. In contrast, the students I taught in *Global Ideas* had actively chosen to be there. I do not believe that they were necessarily intellectually sharper than my students in Malmö, but on the whole they were 'better students'. By this I mean that they were somewhat better prepared, better read and more willing to participate in discussion. My sense is that this is a result of them having made a proactive choice to be there; and with that comes responsibility and commitment. Attendance during the semester was over 90% and although one or two pieces of course work were submitted a few hours late, all were submitted. Every student submitted their end-of-term paper and every student did so on time.

This context of student choice rather than obligation had a subtle impact on my pedagogical role. It removed the need for regular reminders, harrising and the management of 'make-up assignments'. During the semester we discussed nineteen scientific articles and twenty-six student papers and I could trust that the students' papers would be submitted and that the students – or at least a critical mass of them – would come prepared to engage in the discussion that the seminar was founded on. Ideally, this of course becomes a positive cycle: student commitment encourages higher instructor expectations which in turn lead to more active and more engaged students.

Educational structures and contexts push lecturers into playing a variety of roles in their relationship with students, and as these evolve the balance between the roles changes. Our work involves the role of teacher and instructor but also of administrator, deadline controller and even pseudo-parent. There is much discussion in my home institution and in Swedish higher education generally about how lecturers increasingly find themselves playing these rather unwanted latter roles. The experience of my small class at UCLA was that of being freed to do what a teacher most wants to do: discuss the substance of my subject, facilitate understanding and encourage student learning. I believe that autonomy was crucial in providing a foundation for this – the independence I was given in designing my course and the choice and responsibility that students were given in being able to choose (or not choose) to take it.

It is important to emphasize that I am not claiming that this is ‘typical’ of UCLA or of US higher education generally. My experience obviously results from a context that combines UCLA *and* being a STINT scholar, hence an outsider, relatively unconstrained by institutional norms. I also had much more time to devote to teaching than is normally the case. Nevertheless, a key and very simple lesson is found here: the benefits of trusting lecturers as professionals and students as competent. UCLA trusted that an incoming scholar could design a new course and successfully teach it to senior students and gave me a freehand to do so. Unfortunately, such a degree of freedom is rarely afforded to me and my colleagues in Sweden.

A further interesting aspect of my teaching was the surprising homogeneity of my class in comparison to my students in Malmö. My students were ‘ethnically’ diverse and this is the terminology that UCLA uses to describe its student body - as amongst the most ethnically diverse in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, although I had students with Jordanian, Iranian, Chinese and Russian background all but one of my students were born in the US, had English as a first language and viewed themselves as American. In addition and despite being seniors, all of my students bar one were aged 20-22 (the outlier was 26). Reference points and starting assumptions are inescapably important in studying and talking about international politics and this impacts on teaching and on student learning. I found it intriguing to teach a group so different from what I was used to in terms of their knowledge and assumptions about the world, and who shared a lot of commonalities: be it books, films, websites or news sources. The student groups I teach in Sweden tend to be much more mixed in terms of national background and identity and somewhat more so in terms of age (students in their late 20s and 30s are common). This creates challenges for teaching: little can be assumed as common knowledge and inter-student conversations based on cultural difference and distinct life

---

<sup>2</sup> On its website UCLA describes itself as the most ethnically diverse university in the U.S. but also notes that (in 2011) 89% of the students come from California while only 7% are foreign ([www.aim.ucla.edu/profiles/main.pdf](http://www.aim.ucla.edu/profiles/main.pdf)). This may be changing as the number of international students applying for undergraduate degrees multiplied threefold between 2010 and 2013 ([www.admissions.ucla.edu/Prospect/Adm\\_fr/Frosh\\_Prof.htm](http://www.admissions.ucla.edu/Prospect/Adm_fr/Frosh_Prof.htm)).

experiences are frequent. In my UCLA class students learned about global diversity at arms-length (through ones studies, or stories of ones parents or of those who had travelled) rather than experience it first-hand in the classroom as my Malmö students do. Despite encouragement and the very global nature of the topics they were writing about there was only one of my UCLA students who listed a foreign language source (one) in the term paper's bibliography.<sup>3</sup> One reflection on this is that it is undoubtedly useful for STINT to encourage greater recognition of the current heterogeneity in many Swedish universities and to continue exploring mechanisms that support the potential benefits of this. Reflecting on the make-up of my UCLA and Malmö students emphasizes a self-evident truth – that one does not always have to personally cross borders to experience difference and profit from it. A potential advantage for Sweden and its higher education institutions is surely tied up with the question of how universities can make the most of globalization and internationalization from within?<sup>4</sup>

The small seminar structure of my class allowed me to utilize a pedagogical format that I sympathize strongly with but have often not had the resources to utilize. Every week two to four of the students wrote 'Reaction Memos' analyzing the relevant academic texts. My instructions were for them to analyze the methodology, theoretical assumptions, hypotheses, arguments, results etc. and to conclude with three relevant questions for the class to discuss. The students' memos were posted on the course webpage 36 hours before the class and then formed the starting point for seminar discussion. This format allowed for rather non-hierarchical seminars; while I facilitated and helped to navigate discussion, the purpose was for students to raise and push points of interest or difficulty themselves. Such an approach was not new to me, but again the trust and resources afforded by UCLA (and STINT) provided a foundation that allowed me to use it unreservedly.

The implications of students reading a number of courses in parallel are also worth noting. All of my students were concurrently taking a course in research methodology and most had two further electives in a wide variety of academic areas such as developments studies, political communication, social psychology and such specific topics as water management. All of the aforementioned came up in seminar discussion and provided distinct and fascinating perspectives with regard to my own course's focus on the mobility of policy ideas and practices. In my home department we have started to introduce some parallel courses and I notice that the benefits of intellectual cross-comparison

---

<sup>3</sup> A substantial caveat here is that I only taught a small group which could well be unrepresentative. The other classes I observed seemed to be broadly similar in make-up although this still leaves the possibility that the homogeneity – early 20s, American born - says something specific about the social sciences (potentially that social science, with its rather opaque career path, becomes less attractive for foreign students when substantial fees need to be paid).

<sup>4</sup> These issues are covered to some extent in STINTs 'Strategic Grants for Internationalisation' and partially explored in the document 'Strategic Internationalisation in Sweden 2012' where a distinction is made between cross-border internationalisation projects and those that focus on internationalisation at home. (See [www.stint.se/eabf-d43596f0b1-b48d6b856f0d4bc5](http://www.stint.se/eabf-d43596f0b1-b48d6b856f0d4bc5))

have often been mentioned in reports by previous STINT scholars. This may be a useful lesson from abroad that can be widely flagged in Sweden. Parallel courses help to encourage curiosity, self-discipline and early interdisciplinary. Such a model indicates that academic studies need not be a series of prescribed, tightly-bound and sequenced academic packages but rather a variety of interplaying, overlapping and potentially infinite studies that may well lead to specialization, but should also be viewed logically as a whole.

Lastly, it is worth noting the experience of my students which was articulated in both written evaluations and oral comments. UCLA's official electronic evaluation is attached below as an appendix and interestingly this had to be completed before the students submitted their term papers and was only released to me after the grades had been registered. Initially unaware of this standard evaluation I had already carried out my own evaluation which all thirteen students answered. In all, I ended up with a lot of useful evaluation. This showed that the students' expectations were high. They expected to be pushed, to be active in their studies, to need to prove that they had done the reading and to frequently produce written work. They liked continuity with their instructor and liked that I was a professor teaching the course wholly myself and not using teaching assistants (TAs) as seemed to be very common. They were in the process of engaging supervisors for their senior theses and some were disappointed that there was no opportunity for me to play this role given the limited period of my stay. They were positive about a class based on seminars, student work and discussion as opposed to lectures. They liked that the course content seemed relevant to potential future post-university work and they were pleased that I cared about them gaining understanding of the material and not just passing the exam (a position I was aided in by the resources available).

### **Comparison between the foreign and the home institutions**

Substantial aspects of this are already covered above but I will add additional issues here. I have earlier discussed the *relation between teacher and student* in rather abstract terms. In day-to-day meetings and contact with students I found that there was little difference to Sweden. Students were slightly more formal than Swedes, some were happy to call me Scott, some stuck to Professor McIver. As I noted they were pleased to have a working relationship with a 'professor' and mentioned that often their principal classroom contact was with TAs. A useful norm in the US is 'office hours'. I had a couple of hours every week when students knew they could find me to talk about any aspect of the course, or indeed their wider studies. I was already familiar with 'office hours' from the UK and have used them in Sweden. However, to the best of my knowledge it is still unusual in Sweden and it might be usefully promoted. Even although all students do not make use of these hours having them sends a useful signal that teachers are available.



The freedom in course design that I discussed above is potentially very positive in supporting *the use of research in teaching*. I was free to finalize the reading (and indeed even the themes) in the course until just a few weeks before the course start and this gives teachers the opportunity to include the most relevant up-to-date publications. The flexibility in the course plan also means that lecturers can easily integrate discussion about their own work and its relevance in the context of the course. This was something I did and saw others do in the classes I observed.

In terms of *breadth versus specialization in education* I believe that one can argue that UCLA actually offers both in a way that is lacking from the educational programs I am familiar with in Sweden. Again, this issue is related to the choice that is offered to students. My students had all chosen to be Global Studies majors but they had previously studied a veritable smorgasbord of different courses and subjects; from obvious partner subjects like economics, sociology and history to more distant Russian, Spanish, environmental studies and even biology, pre-medicine and maths. Thus, students can experience breadth in experimentally reading different subjects while choosing very specialized courses within their major. My own course was more detailed and exhaustive than a 7.5 point module would be in Sweden and amongst the huge variety of courses students could also have chosen were classes such as: 'Postmodernism and the Third World', 'Critical Issues in US-China Relations' and 'International Trade Theory'. These sorts of specialized courses are, of course, taught in Sweden but unfortunately not often as part of an undergraduate program; they tend to be non-program courses (*fristående*) or potentially offered within Masters programs.

Although the choice of courses for students was both richer and deeper than I have experience of in Sweden this does not mean that education was valued more highly than research. Conversation with colleagues about the *relationship between education and research* suggested that *pedagogical merits* were acknowledged but viewed as of less importance than ones research portfolio. During my time at UCLA 'job talks' were taking place for a new appointment in the Political Science department. These are open meetings for departmental faculty to meet prospective candidates for a new position. From my conversations with departmental members it seems that it was very much ones research background and potential that was emphasized.

- **Action plan**

The topics which I believe are of interest to discuss and possibly introduce in Sweden build on the discussion above. In terms of my personal pedagogical methods I found the use of 'Reaction Memos' very beneficial. It gives students a chance to regularly write on the subject they are studying and provides me as the teacher with a more detailed understanding of how they are engaging with the course and how their knowledge is developing. This is in line with a pedagogical approach called 'Writing Across the Curriculum'. Interestingly, this has its roots in the US, is currently gaining traction

in Sweden and has been a focus of discussion recently within my home university in Malmö. An increase in the frequency of written work and the potential it gives for feedback is something that we have worked to implement in the programs in my department and my experience at UCLA gives further support for this. Additionally we are currently rolling out a new program structure in International Relations that uses longer-term parallel courses rather than short sequential blocks. Relevant lessons from UCLA include the importance of early information to students on when assessments are due along with a clearly communicated expectation that they can competently time-manage overlapping tasks.

Additionally I believe that my own department, Global Political Studies, and the university as a whole should consider ways to introduce greater flexibility in course development and greater student choice within degree programs. This is potentially difficult given current objectives which emphasize the need to fix the content of course-plans and programs long in advance - in order to meet administrative deadlines for university course catalogues and application deadlines. The argument is that students should know the detail of what they will be studying. Important as this undoubtedly is, it needs to be counter-balanced with the clear pedagogical gains that were apparent at UCLA and which came from greater contemporariness and flexibility in courses and from increased student engagement through responsibility for their own course choices.

A further aspect of improved student choice that I will push for in my own institution is with regard to thesis supervision. As noted above, at UCLA students substantially drove this process – they concurrently developed potential ideas and asked for meetings with potential supervisors (some of my own students asked as early as October if I was a prospective supervisor). In my experience of Swedish academic institutions this process has been somewhat topsy-turvy. We have a planning system based on a fixed number of work hours and this may dictate that lecturer A can only supervise 2 students while lecturer B needs to fill the necessary hours in their work plan by supervising 10 students – regardless of how well student and faculty research interests fit together.

In sum the action that needs to be taken is related to the two aspects I have discussed at length above. Firstly, a recognition that quality in teaching is not always guaranteed by meticulous guidelines and one-size-fit-all procedures but that good pedagogy and successful learning also relies on flexibility and the potential for both the teacher and the students to *own* the course. This combines with the second feature of undergraduate education at UCLA that differed from Sweden, the deep-rooted student choice. A strong memory of my final days on campus is that of walls, pillars and noticeboards covered by a bustle of posters advertising the content of forthcoming courses and competing for registrations as students made final decisions on the future semester's electives. This

made plain that quality management was not just a task for university bureaucracies, but also involved active participation and consequential feedback from students themselves.

In closing I want to add a few words about what, in retrospect, I might have done differently in the hope that this is of aid to those holding future STINT fellowships at UCLA or elsewhere. I taught a course which I designed and for which I had full responsibility. However, despite all the advantages of this outlined above, if I were given the time over then I would consider additionally teaching another half course jointly with a colleague or indeed solely engaging in joint teaching. The major benefit of this – at least theoretically - would have been an immediate close working relationship with an insider at the institution. Teaching individually I was left more or less to my own devices, in good faith that I knew what I was doing and could deliver. As I discussed above, this was admirable in terms of academic trust and highly suitable as a foundation for the academic working environment. It is something that Swedish academia can potentially learn from. Nevertheless, teaching alone creates additional challenges when the goal is not just to teach but also to gain insights into the foreign environment that one has a limited time in. For many of my UCLA colleagues working with TAs was a major part of teaching; yet this was something I did not experience. Much can be learnt from talking to others and observing other classes but without some sort of official relationship this is always a little hit and miss, reliant on goodwill and readiness to give up precious time to explain ‘this is how we do it here’. So, on reflection a closing word of advice: do at least some joint teaching or, at the very least, request a frequent meeting with the official academic contact to discuss issues and reflections regarding teaching and the academic environment.

Lastly, I wish to express my gratitude to STINT, UCLA, MAH and the individuals in all three organizations who have helped me to manage and enjoy what was a wonderful and productive opportunity.

Att.

Appendix: UCLA Evaluation of Instruction Program Report

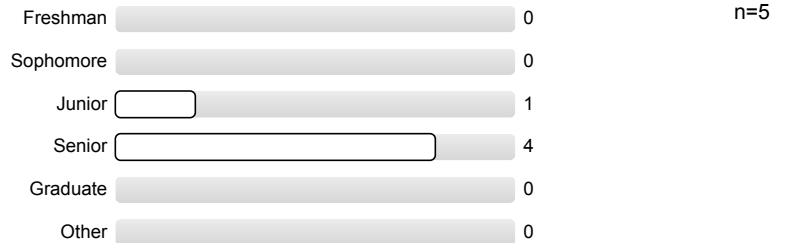


**S.I. MCIVER**  
**Evaluation of Instruction Program Report**  
 13F: GLOB ST 191 SEM 2: SENIOR SEMINAR  
 No. of responses = 5  
 Enrollment = 13  
 Response Rate = 38.46%

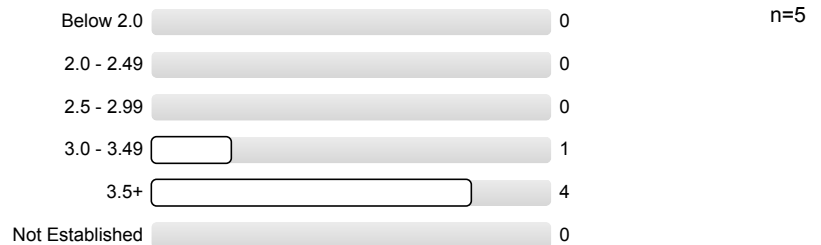
Survey Results

1. Background Information:

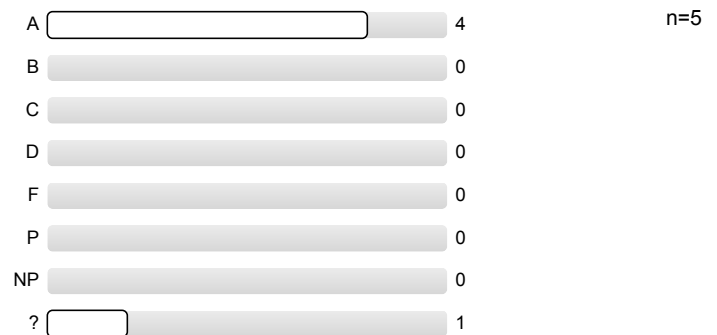
1.1) Year in School:



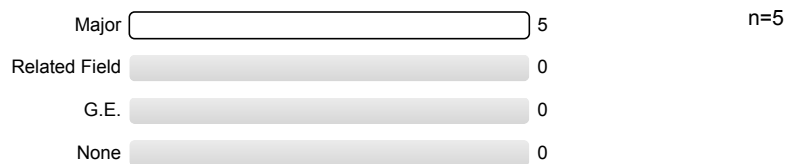
1.2) UCLA GPA:



1.3) Expected Grade:



1.4) What requirements does this course fulfill?



2. To What Extent Do You Feel That:

2.1)	Instructor Concern – The instructor was concerned about student learning.	Very Low or Never		Very High or Always	n=5 av.=9 md=9 dev.=0
2.2)	Organization – Class presentations were well prepared and organized.	Very Low or Never		Very High or Always	n=5 av.=8.8 md=9 dev.=0.45
2.3)	Interaction – Students felt welcome in seeking help in or outside of the class.	Very Low or Never		Very High or Always	n=5 av.=9 md=9 dev.=0
2.4)	Communication Skills – The instructor had good communication skills.	Very Low or Never		Very High or Always	n=5 av.=8.8 md=9 dev.=0.45
2.5)	Value – You have learned something you consider valuable.	Very Low or Never		Very High or Always	n=5 av.=8.8 md=9 dev.=0.45
2.6)	Overall – Your overall rating of the instructor.	Very Low or Never		Very High or Always	n=5 av.=9 md=9 dev.=0
2.7)	Overall – Your overall rating of the course.	Very Low or Never		Very High or Always	n=5 av.=8.8 md=9 dev.=0.45

3. Your View of Course Characteristics:

3.1)	Subject interest before course	Low		High	n=5 av.=2 md=2 dev.=0.71
3.2)	Subject interest after course	Low		High	n=5 av.=2.8 md=3 dev.=0.45
3.3)	Mastery of course material	Low		High	n=5 av.=2.4 md=2 dev.=0.55
3.4)	Difficulty (relative to other courses)	Low		High	n=5 av.=2.4 md=2 dev.=0.55
3.5)	Workload/pace was	Too Slow		Too Much	n=5 av.=2 md=2 dev.=0
3.6)	Texts, required readings	Poor		Excellent	n=5 av.=2.4 md=2 dev.=0.55

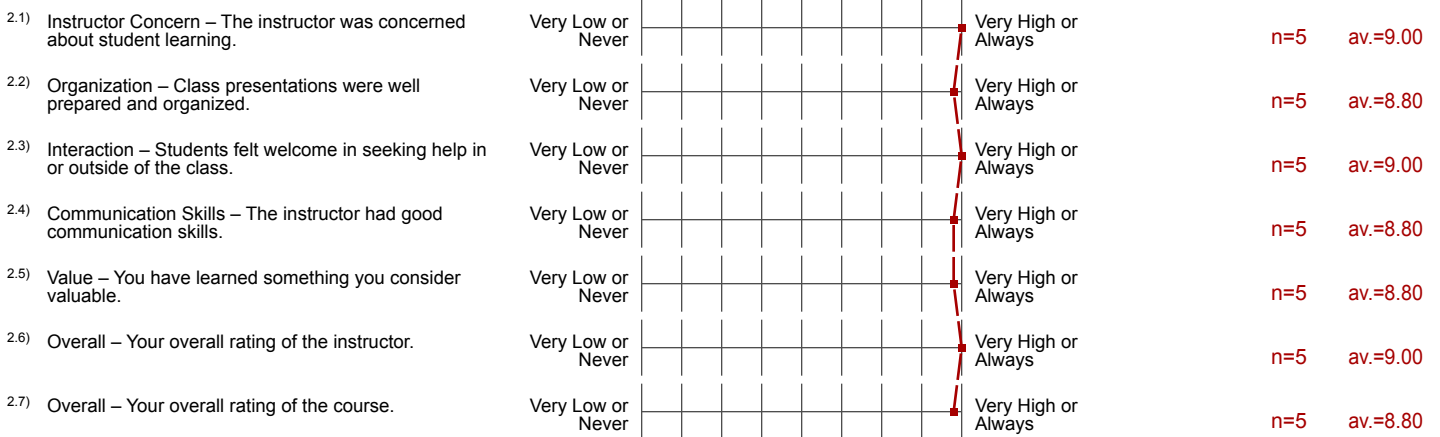
3.7)	Homework assignments	Poor		Excellent	n=5 av.=2.4 md=2 dev.=0.55
3.8)	Graded materials, examinations	Poor		Excellent	n=4 av.=2.25 md=2 dev.=0.5 ab.=1
3.9)	Lecture presentations	Poor		Excellent	n=4 av.=2.5 md=2.5 dev.=0.58 ab.=1
3.10)	Class discussions	Poor		Excellent	n=4 av.=2.75 md=3 dev.=0.5

# Profile

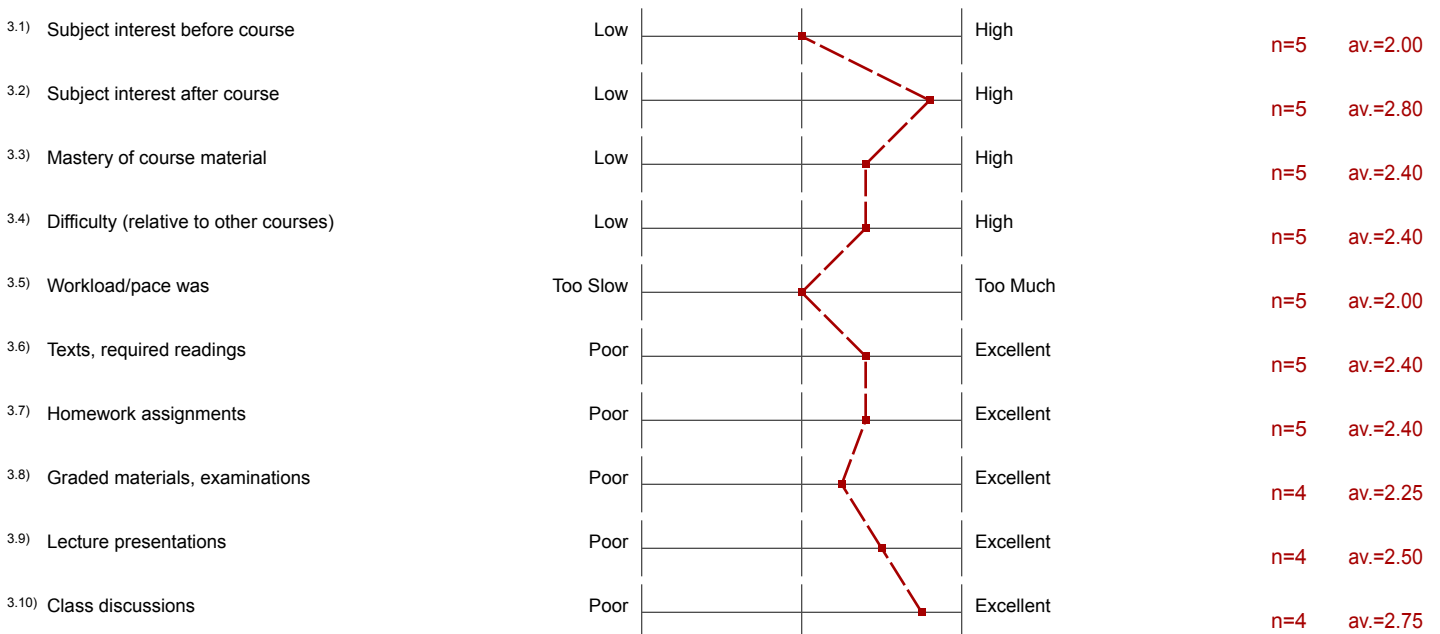
Subunit: GLBL ST  
 Name of the instructor: S.I. MCIVER  
 Name of the course: 13F: GLBL ST 191 SEM 2: SENIOR SEMINAR  
 (Name of the survey)

Values used in the profile line: Mean

## 2. To What Extent Do You Feel That:



## 3. Your View of Course Characteristics:



## Comments Report

## 4. Comments:

- 4.1) Please identify what you perceive to be the real strengths and weaknesses of this instructor and course.
- Professor McIver is great: he's really flexible with the design of the course, and always kept us in the loop on what's going on and where the course is going. By virtue of this being a senior seminar, I really liked our small class size-- and he did a great job facilitating discussion every week. I also liked the reaction memos, since I think they really kept us informed week to week about our readings. In sum, Professor McIver is great and I'd take another class with him if he teaches one in the future.
  - Scott did a great job allowing us as students to look at theory and methodology in a critical light. I haven't had too many experiences of that kind of learning in previous courses, and very much appreciated it here. He also made difficult theory palatable and understandable for us. I enjoyed the structure of the course, and felt like it helped us understand the course material. He can work on reducing his tangents, which are always interesting but detract from discussions about the course.
  - Scott had a teaching style unlike any professor I have ever experienced in college. He very genuinely cared about each of his students and their success. Not only did he just care about the students' success in the class, but he cared about the students' success of understanding the material and future application of the material. This in my personal opinion is what is lacking in UCLA classes today. This class was directly applicable to our majors and to the work we are looking into after college. He was always present, alert, and knowledgeable, and I cannot stress the importance of this enough.
  - Scott really cared about the students and took time to choose interesting readings. He facilitated the in-depth class discussions, and I learned a lot from him. The 3hr seminar format would've been more effective had it been broken up into 2 1.5 hr sessions.