

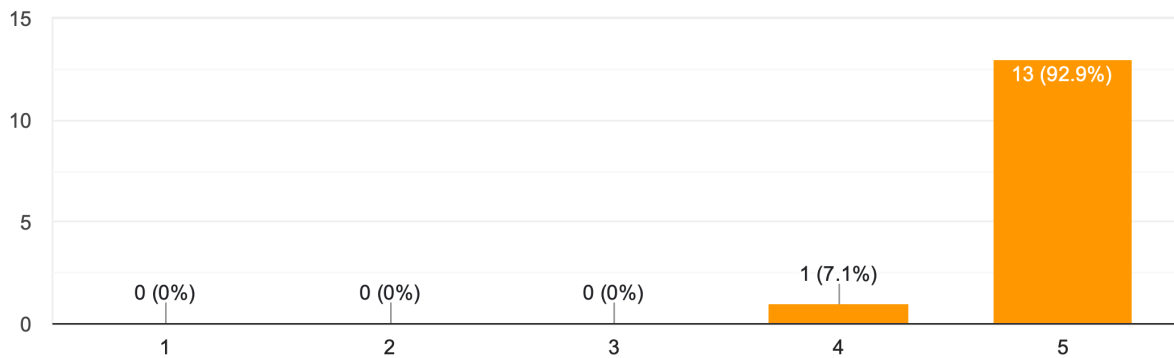
Student Satisfaction Report

Course Title: Russian Foreign Policy
 Instructors: Polina Beliakova (Monday), Christopher Miller (Wednesday)
 Term: Fall 2021
 Response rate: 14/28

Summary of Responses

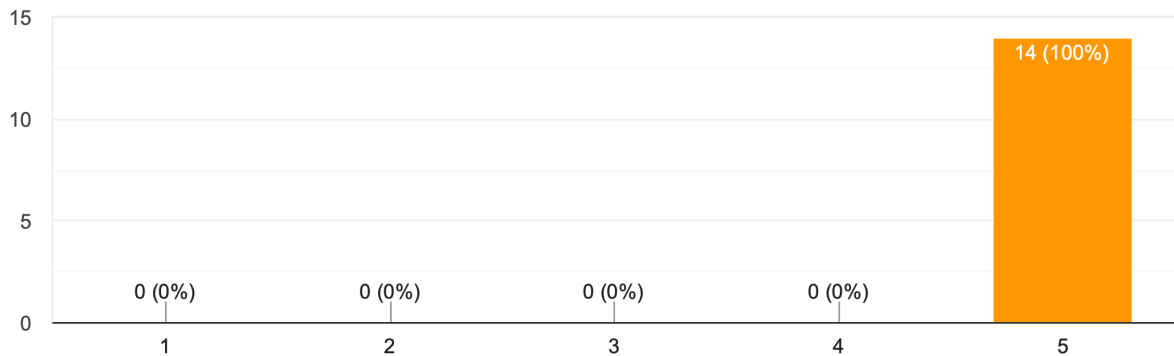
How would you rate the organization of each class?

14 responses



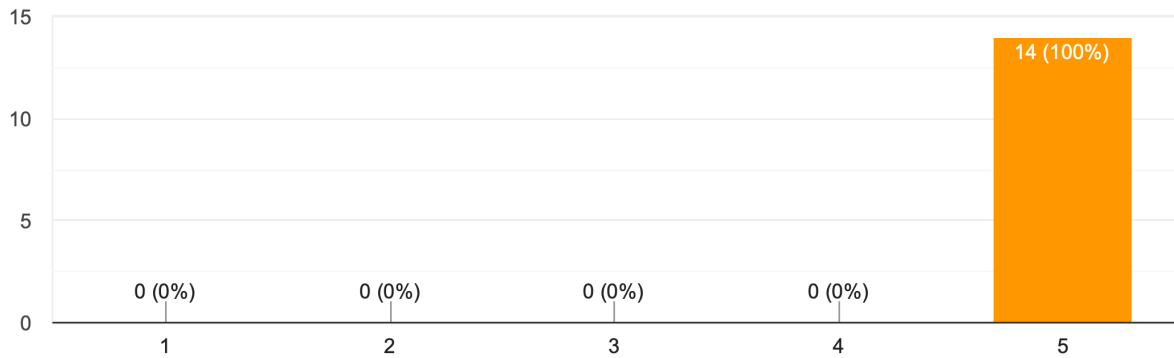
How would you rate the instructor's success in explaining concepts?

14 responses



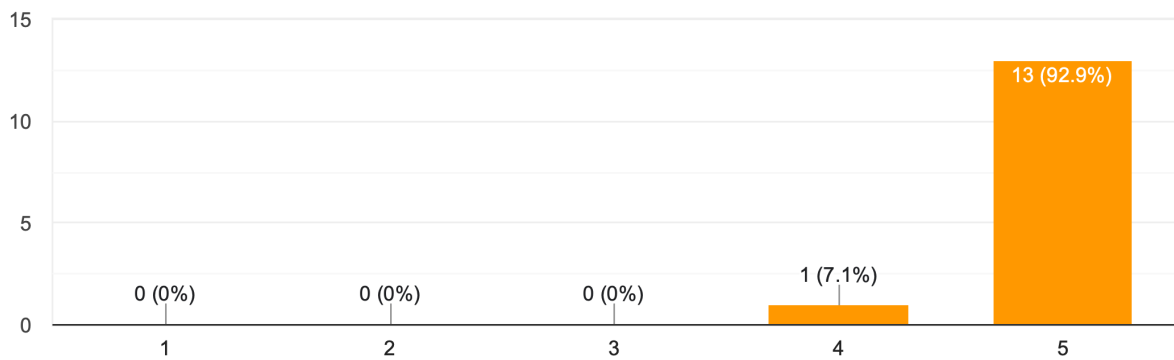
How would you rate the instructor's success in creating and maintaining an inclusive class, respectful of all students?

14 responses



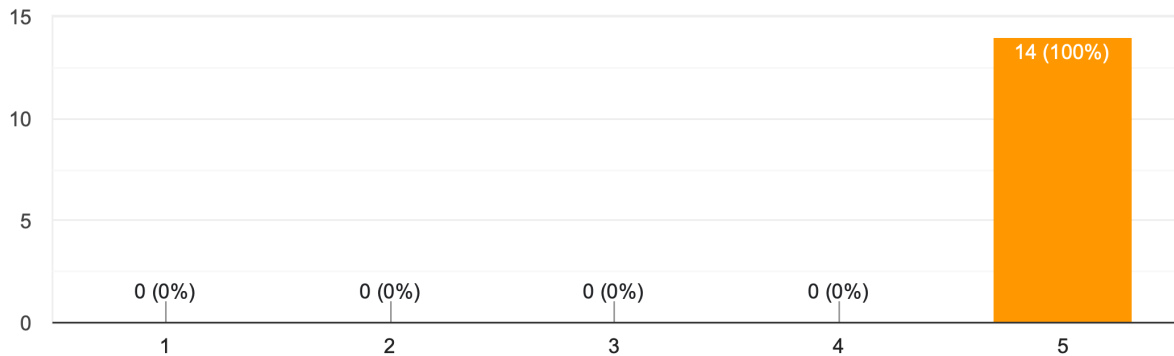
How would you rate the instructor's communication with you outside of class?

14 responses



Based on your answers above, and any other factors you consider important, please provide an overall evaluation of the instructor

14 responses



Open Questions

In what ways has this class made you think differently or more deeply about Russian foreign policy? Please provide examples.

I have a clearer understanding of what Russia's Foreign policy goals.

The interwoven theories on Russian FP has allowed me to see each decision in a different light, as opposed to understanding it through a narrow lens. It also makes Putin's current decision's a little easier to understand, historically speaking.

Professor Beliakova did an amazing job of summarizing the driving forces of Russian foreign policy throughout the centuries and showing how they remain consistent up to today. She also did a great job of challenging my previous assumptions.

Professor Beliakova's did an outstanding job of tying Russian foreign policy to concepts en ground in the Kremlin's view of the world. Her insights into Russia's quest for a "seat at the table" proved especially useful.

This class did an amazing job in having students critically think from the Russian perspective as well as continually outlining Russian foreign policy concerns and policy throughout history.

I can more clearly see the ways in which Putin has weaponized Russian culture to support his objectives in Eastern Europe.

I appreciated how class materials and discussions were a) related back to core concepts introduced at the outset and b) structured so that students were forced to think on their own.

I think the way the Prof Beliakova structured the syllabus and her half of the material was extremely helpful. By presenting us with the big drivers of Russian Foreign Policy at the beginning of the course, and then presenting more specific areas in the following weeks, I was able to continually use the core concepts to inform my understanding of various different areas of Russian foreign policy as the course progressed.

It dispensed with universalist explanations for Russian international relations, wherein rational actors are all assumed to be operating from the same calculus. The students were instead given a culturally-based construct that more effectively explains Russian actions in international relations.

Polina's approach made us think critically about the core drivers of Russian foreign policy and examine the historical trends and context for them. The concept of "derzhava" for example, was a key one, and could be found everywhere once we learned about it

This class taught me how to shed my western perspective and think from the perspective of Russian policy makers which gave me an entirely new lens through which to view Russian- us relations

The first few weeks of class setting up the Russian perspective and then demonstrating this perspective throughout the class was very interesting and helpful. I also especially enjoyed the Wilsonian Bias lecture since I feel like discussions around this theme/theory come up often in U.S.-based foreign policy discussions on Russia.

Understanding the persistent drivers of Russian foreign policy, and the desire for historical continuity (despite often lacking coherence), helped me better understand Russia's contemporary foreign policy and strategic goals.

What aspects of the class worked best to facilitate your learning?

Discussion with the professor and other students

Combining historical context and examples with FP theories creates a better environment, personally.

Professor Beliakova did an excellent job of steering each class in a way that there was debate and thoughtful conversation. She would challenge students to bring out better arguments or point out where they were wrong. Her class management and presentation style were fantastic, and I hope every educator adopts similar practices.

Class discussions, open questions.

I absolutely loved that the class was cotaught. Professor Beliakova and Professor Miller's specialties and way of teaching made for the best class I've taken at Fletcher.

The readings were well chosen, built on lesson objectives, and complemented the lecture and discussion

The discussions and engagement with students were great, but I enjoyed all aspects of the course.

"I thought the readings were excellent and very manageable. In other courses, when we are given an overwhelming amount of reading, I feel like I do not fully engage with the material and only have enough time to get a cursory understanding of the readings. The readings in this course were manageable, but more interesting and really helped to drive discussions in class.

The class discussions were also great, and I felt there was good balance of discussion vs lecture."

I thought there was an effective balance between assignment workload, reading in preparation for each class, lectures by the professors, and the emphasis on student participation in discussions. Don't change a thing.

The interaction between the class and Polina was especially useful for critically examining Russian foreign policy, once we had a basic understanding of the material from lectures and readings.

I liked having two professors. The different teaching styles kept me engaged

I enjoyed the discussion style format of the classes after some background/lecture to start the session.

Thought exercises that challenged students to think as senior Russian decision-makers helped crystalize the concepts introduced throughout the course.

Please, provide any additional comments regarding the instructor

Professor Beliakova brought tremendous energy, professionalism, and experience to the classroom. Injecting her lived experiences and deep understanding of Russian and Ukrainian culture into the curriculum, she deepened our learning. She is a wonderful professor!

Professor Beliakova is, without a doubt, an amazing contributor to the Fletcher School faculty. Her knowledge and passion for the subject she taught was clear and inspiring. Her classes were extremely well organized, and she did an amazing job of fostering debate and discussion. She was also very willing to discuss things after class on her own time, and I often found those discussions to be just as educational and enjoyable. I genuinely looked forward to her class every week. She did an absolutely wonderful job

this semester, and I hope I can continue to take classes taught by her in the future. Fletcher should know how lucky it is to have her.

Professor Beliakova's teaching style is impeccable! She is incredibly knowledgeable, open to students questions and thoughts, and incredibly funny. I wish she taught more courses at Fletcher!

Great instructor, really appreciated her insights.

This class was outstanding and it was the one I enjoyed most this semester. It was incredibly useful considering current events, and Prof Beliakova's lectures were always extremely engaging and interesting. I will definitely recommend it to all of my classmates.

Professor Beliakova is sharp, clear in her explanations, and skillfully leads the students.

Polina's teaching style and the material used for learning contrasted well with Professor Miller's. Additionally, her dry sense of humor lent itself perfectly to the seemingly inconsistent Russian, and Soviet, approach to foreign policy

I appreciated that Polina had high standards for our preparation and discussions, especially once we finished the early part of the course and knew what to expect.

This was a great class I hope to take another class with Professor Beliakova in the future.