

Some Recent Teaching Evaluations

Only remarks that mention other faculty or students by name have been edited out.

Course: LAWS 47411-1 Jurisprudence I: Theories of Law and Adjudication

Instructor: Leiter, Brian

Semester: Autumn 2010

of Students: 27

of Responses: 18

 [Print Friendly View](#)

[Course Evaluation Detail](#)

Filter View Course Results With Comments

1. Professor's Knowledge of the Course Material.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	0	1	17	4.94	5	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.56%	94.44%			

- I find Professor Leiter to be one of the clearest lecturers at the law school. This has a lot to do, I think, with how well he knows the material. His ability to recite all the major propositions of the author's discussed--and use the same exact words/definitions--each time is quite impressive, and helpful. (1)
- The course is taught with great clarity. Class time is well used. I appreciate the use of concrete examples throughout the course to illustrate some of the more abstract concepts. (2)
- Professor Leiter is obviously well-immersed in the field. (3)
- Prof. Leiter is at the forefront of scholarship in jurisprudence, and it is quite evident that he knows the ins and outs of the subject better than almost anyone. (4)
- It really shows he knows the subject at a beyond expert level, he explains difficult things in a simple manner. (5)

2. Professor's Organization of the Semester.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	1	6	11	4.56	4	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	5.56%	33.33%	61.11%			

- Each of the readings seemed to grow organically out of the one that preceded it (1)
- It might help to get a syllabus that lists reading assignments at the start of the quarter -- it was hard to read ahead for this class. (6)
- No complaints, but I suppose it may have been better. Sometimes it was unclear how ideas related to each other. (3)

3. Professor's Choice of Course Content.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	2	7	9	4.39	4	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	38.89%	50.00%			

- Variety of things we were asked to read was nice: cases (maybe could have been more of these), UCC, philosophy... (1)
- Perhaps less time on Finnis and Murphy. (6)
- Again, I have no complaints. But I don't know that it couldn't have been better. Some of the texts seemed tangential to a theory, and thus weren't the best introduction to the theory. (3)

- The material is dense, but Prof. Leiter does a fantastic job of clarifying during class. (4)
- My only repair with the course content relates with the amount of time spent studying Dworkin's criticism about Hart work. Considering that Dworkin arguments are finally dismissed by the class, I would have liked more attention to other naturalistic interpretations of the Law (Especially Finnis). By the way, that has been the position of the teacher himself in some of his published work (i.e. Beyond the Hart/Dworkin Debate: The Methodology Problem in Jurisprudence). (7)

4. Professor's In-Class Performance.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	1	0	3	14	4.67	5	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	5.56%	0.00%	16.67%	77.78%			

- I'm a fan of socratic because it forces me to prepare for the course and think through the material more for each class. i tend to zone out after a few minutes of straight lecturing. so in any class i would be zoning in and out about 10 times. (8)
- Tends to repeat the material in different or paraphrased terms. (I am in favor of this since it makes note-taking and summarizing easier.) (9)
- No cold-calling! (10)
- Very much appreciated the breaks after a given section to answer questions. Also appreciate the quick review of the previous class at the beginning of each new class (1)
- Professor Leiter has a great system of discussion followed by solicitation of student questions and comments. It's great that he waits some period of time (7 seconds or more) after soliciting student questions before moving on to the next topic of discussion. This practice gives students time to formulate questions they might have. (2)
- Always thoughtfully responded to student questions. (6)
- Did a great job of trying to understand students' questions and answer them clearly, fully and fairly. (3)
- This course covers very dense material, particularly for those of us without training in philosophy. Prof. Leiter does an exceptional job of clarifying the materials and concepts presented in the course. (4)
- Very considered, he answers all questions with lots of patience, and he is understanding with those of us that dont speak english as a first language. (5)

5. Professor's Relationship with Students.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	1	3	13	4.71	5	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	5.88%	17.65%	76.47%			

- Encourages questions and is always happy to answer them. Focuses on making sure students really understand the material. (9)
- Always approachable and open to outside of class consultation. Also very quick to respond to e-mails-- not all professors are. (1)
- Very good about being around after class to talk to students. (6)
- Prof. Leiter is one of the most accessible professors that I have ever had, and makes the class fully aware of his availability. He is always willing to meet with students to discuss course material or other topics. (4)
- One thing that is notable is that he clearly knew everyone's name from the first day onward. There aren't that many students in here, so that's probably part of it, but it is appreciated from someone who has had professors who struggle to recall names well into a semester. (11)

6. How would you rate the OVERALL TEACHING ABILITY of Professor?

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	1	3	13	4.71	5	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	5.88%	17.65%	76.47%			

% of rating selected for question			
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7. **I would recommend this course to other students.**

Course Results	- Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly + Agree	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question	0	1	1	7	9	4.33	4	5
% of rating selected for question	0.00%	5.56%	5.56%	38.89%	50.00%			

8. **Additional Comments**

- I don't even need to say anything. We all know that Leiter is a force to be reckoned with. He is the ONLY professor that I can say I actually really enjoy just listening to him talk about a subject. I have had him for Evidence too, but Jurisprudence is a special experience. He is like a book--you ask him to repeat something and he literally can repeat it back verbatim--but he is the best book you have ever read. I have never even spoken to him before! Even so, he is AWESOME! (12)
- Professor Leiter has the incredible ability to explain complex ideas in ways that are easy to understand. He can answer any question on the spot and with illustrative examples. I really enjoyed this class. (13)
- If you liked the theoretical and philosophical aspects of Elements of the Law first year then you will probably like this course as well. (9)
- I did not quite see how Leslie Green fit in with some of the authors. If you are looking to cut authors, this might be a place to start. (1)
- Professor Leiter is, in all seriousness, the best professor I have had in law school. His mastery of the subject, combined with his refusal to employ the insipid Socratic method, makes for interesting and entertaining classes. That being said, praise by itself is rarely useful so perhaps a suggestion is in order: the professor could set up a forum on Chalk or on one of his blogs in which he could answer other questions from students. This would prove more useful than e-mail exchanges and office meetings because it would allow all members of the class to benefit from individuals' questions. (14)
- Not a very satisfying course, unless you're into philosophy. It would have helped if the course description more clearly described it as a philosophy course. (3)
- Prof. Leiter is not only the best professor that I have had at the law school; he is the best professor that I have ever had. I wish that I had the opportunity to take more courses with him this year. (4)
- I really enjoyed professor Leiter's jurisprudence course. The transition over the materials was very smooth and the professor explanations were always precise and very sharp. From my all 4 courses this autumn quarter, Jurisprudence has been my favorite class. (7)
- I wonder if there is a different way to present the material in the course, other than strictly lecture. Especially for students who do not have previous exposure to philosophy it can be difficult to grasp concepts just by doing the reading and listening to lecture. Understanding that this is a philosophy of law class, perhaps there could be some more practical application or concrete examples. (15)

Note: Numbers in parentheses after a comment refer to the nth student that submitted the evaluation.

Course: LAWS 47411-1 Jurisprudence I: Theories of Law and Adjudication

Instructor: Leiter, Brian

Semester: Spring 2010

of Students: 34

of Responses: 21

 [Print Friendly View](#)

[Course Evaluation Detail](#)

Filter View

1. Professor's Knowledge of the Course Material.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	0	3	18	4.86	5	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	85.71%			

- Very good at making very dense readings seem intelligible. (1)
- Professor Leiter always gave insightful and helpful answers to questions posed in and after class. (2)

2. Professor's Organization of the Semester.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	0	10	11	4.52	4	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	47.62%	52.38%			

- It wasn't until the last week or so of the course that things started to come together. I think that it would be been helpful if Prof. Leiter had stressed the dialogue between the different authors sooner. (3)

3. Professor's Choice of Course Content.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	2	9	10	4.38	4	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	9.52%	42.86%	47.62%			

- Probably some introductory material regarding relevant philosophical topics (e.g. moral objectivity) at the beginning of the quarter would be helpful. This can be optional since some of the students have philosophy background. (4)
- I wasn't clear why we read what we did and what the final implications are. It would have been very useful to have a "summing up" class and a big picture description at the end. (3)
- What perhaps might have been interesting would have been to look at theories of civil disobedience. (5)

4. Professor's In-Class Performance.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	2	5	13	4.55	4	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	25.00%	65.00%			

- It was sometimes hard to differentiate based on lectures what the authors actually were saying from his views about what they would have said (6)
- Prof. Leiter's lectures were clear and well structured. (3)

- Each question taken seriously and careful considered answers to queries made for better understanding of the subject or topic in question. (5)
- I greatly enjoyed the course and feel that I have little to add in the way of constructive feedback. The only thing that might make a difference is beginning each class with a brief 5 minute overview of how the days particular topic relates to the order and themes of the course. Particularly after we covered Dworkin and Hart, I think it would have been clarifying to have a big-picture view of the themes before diving into the details of the particular author's argument. (7)
- Professor's focus on extracting relevant points from reading materials was very helpful in understanding the course. (2)

5. Professor's Relationship with Students.

Course Results	- Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question	0	1	0	4	15	4.65	4.75	5
% of rating selected for question	0.00%	5.00%	0.00%	20.00%	75.00%			

- Since it was a lecture, it was hard to gauge (8)
- No Socratic method was different. The only drawback is that classes would start off slowly sometimes, and it would feel like it would take a while to pick up. But it always picked up, so this isn't a real complaint. And the lack of Socratic didn't hinder the ability of students to ask questions more or less whenever they wanted. (9)
- Particularly enjoyed theories as to why legal realism has not yet caught on in England - relating to a somewhat deficient higher education system. (5)

6. How would you rate the OVERALL TEACHING ABILITY of Professor?

Course Results	- Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question	0	0	2	5	14	4.57	4	5
% of rating selected for question	0.00%	0.00%	9.52%	23.81%	66.67%			

7. I would recommend this course to other students.

Course Results	- Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly + Agree	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question	0	0	3	7	11	4.38	4	5
% of rating selected for question	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	33.33%	52.38%			

8. Additional Comments

- It should always be one of the 1L electives. (4)
- The course was a pleasure. (10)
- Professor Leiter has a very good knowledge of the material and teaches it really well. He gives a very fair assessment of the views of conflicting authors, and offers his own insight in appropriate ways that help illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of an author without proselytizing or discouraging probing or challenging questions. I wish he could find a way to incorporate something like a Socratic dialogue into the class, because I think it would encourage better interaction with the material. The general structure of lecturing and then asking for questions is fine when the class members are willing to contribute with questions and pointed discussion, but other times it makes classes less interesting. (11)
- Overall an enjoyable course. Thanks Prof. Leiter. (9)
- Thoroughly enjoyable course, with some extremely interesting course material. Many thanks. (5)
- While the lecture format sometimes makes it harder to pay attention than other classes, I understand that this simply may be due to the content of the course and the difficulty of using a "Socratic" style of lecture. It might not be a bad idea, though, to make a few people responsible for class every day and solicit answers from them as so break up the lecturing a little bit with some more active participation from the class. (7)
- It was so refreshing to not have the Socratic method and not have to listen to other students opine on this subject matter. Instead, we got to listen to Prof Leiter talk for the full 65 minutes each class, which

is great because he is very knowledgeable and a great lecturer. One of the best classes I have taken. He makes complicated materials very simple to grasp. (12)

- Professor Leiter is great. I specifically took this course because he was teaching it and I really enjoyed it. (13)

Note: Numbers in parentheses after a comment refer to the nth student that submitted the evaluation.

Course: LAWS 41601-1 Evidence

Instructor: Leiter, Brian

Semester: Winter 2010

of Students: 78

of Responses: 54

 Print Friendly View

[Course Evaluation Detail](#)

Filter View

1. Professor's Knowledge of the Course Material.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	2	12	40	4.70	4.25	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	3.70%	22.22%	74.07%			

- Always extremely well prepared for class (1)
- Always very prepared. If he couldn't answer a question on the spot, always was sure to have an answer ready by next class. (2)
- Actually asks the casebook authors if he can't answer a question, which is pretty cool. (3)
- Knows a lot even outside of the lecture material, so good at answering curveball questions from students. (4)
- Very prepared and clear explanation of difficult questions. (5)

2. Professor's Organization of the Semester.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	4	16	34	4.56	4	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	7.41%	29.63%	62.96%			

- Very organized syllabus - only wish it was posted online as well. (6)
- I felt like the quarter seemed somewhat out of order. I think the rules of evidence could have been taught in a manner that would enable more understanding. (7)
- I'm not sure what can be done about it--but it feels like we spend a lot of time, especially towards the beginning of the course, saying "we'll get to that later." It's hard for concepts to click when you keep postponing them. (8)
- Well-organized. About two-thirds of the course is about hearsay. (Syllabus: "Students generally find hearsay to be the most difficult topic in evidence.") (4)
- I really appreciated the syllabus and letting us know when we would be on-call. (9)
- Very organized, was able to outline off of the lectures. The confrontation clause and Hearsay Exceptions were slightly difficult to follow because we learned the confrontation clause after going through the hearsay exceptions, although the hearsay exceptions were dependent on the confrontation clause understanding. However, I don't know if there is a better way to organize this. (5)

3. Professor's Choice of Course Content.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	7	20	27	4.37	4	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	12.96%	37.04%	50.00%			

- A little light on Daubert and the industry that it has occasioned, for a school whose students will wage many Daubert battles over the course of their careers. I didn't love the casebook, with all its annoying

- rhetorical questions. (10)
- I liked the hypotheticals too. (11)
- This casebook wasn't the greatest. Not sure what else is out there. The book raised an enormous number of questions, but didn't provide nearly as many answers. (2)
- Doesn't waste time on a survey of state law, but provides a little common law background--good balance. The casebook is annoying though; the authors write in rhetorical questions for some reason. (3)
- This is probably a matter of the nature of hearsay rules, but I felt as though I understood the contours of hearsay a lot better when we finished the hearsay section than after we went over the seemingly endless exceptions. This isn't a comment on Professor's Leiter's choice of content (since he has to teach hearsay and its exceptions), it's more a complaint about the doctrine. (12)
- Some actual cases, but primarily about simplified-but-interesting hypotheticals from casebook. (I think that's a more effective way to learn the rules.) (4)
- Excellent, I especially enjoyed the fact that we went over material not specific to the bar exam. Also, the last lecture on bar specific related material was useful. (5)

4. Professor's In-Class Performance.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	6	20	28	4.41	4	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	37.04%	51.85%			

- Very clear, with good examples. Always answered students' question very thoughtfully. Seems to really enjoy teaching evidence. (1)
- I know the Socratic method is a pedagogical travesty, but I actually would have liked to see a slightly greater role for questions put to students, rather than only seeking questions from students. (11)
- Great enthusiasm and engagement with students. (6)
- Sometimes when asking questions, I felt like I was not given a direct answer. By asking questions- I became more confused. (7)
- Very clear, and to-the-point. Probably my best law school professor in terms of teaching the material, rather than some theory about the material. It's kind of hard to evaluate profs' theories about material that we have not yet learned or seen applied in practice. I feel like in many classes what is billed as "thinking critically about the doctrine" means "learn to ape the prof's thoughts about the doctrine." Of course when the learned expert presents a view to a student who doesn't even have mastery of the doctrine yet, it looks really appealing to the student. I guess I just want to point out that as a general matter actually understanding the nuance of the doctrine after a direct, on-point lecture helps me think about theoretical matters a lot more perceptively, I think, than a 5 minute case summary followed by 45 minutes of policy debate. (13)
- Not riveting, but very clear. (3)
- Speaking style is disorganized and sometimes repeats, but good at getting the point across clearly. Also gives a lot of good tips for trial practice, how to prepare a witness, what objections to make and when, etc. (4)
- Clear and straight to the point. (14)
- Teaching style can be quite dry, at times. A bit more interaction would be nice. He tends to stick with one person for most of the class, and the questions are "gimmie" questions. (15)
- Not much critical thinking, but a nice linear presentation. Well suited for evidence I think. (16)

5. Professor's Relationship with Students.

Course Results	-	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question		0	0	8	17	27	4.37	4	5
% of rating selected for question		0.00%	0.00%	15.38%	32.69%	51.92%			

- Prof Leiter makes himself available to students as much as any professor I've had. (10)
- Very receptive to questions and concerned with students' understanding of the material. Very helpful responses to questions in emails and class. (6)

- I never know what to put for this question. I haven't invited Leiter over to get drunk and play video games, but he seems like an alright guy. (13)
- always available for further questions after class. very receptive to questions in class. (2)
- Always available to answer questions after class, and he doesn't seem to mind questions afterwards. (3)
- Always receptive to questions from students. (4)

6. How would you rate the OVERALL TEACHING ABILITY of Professor?

Course Results	- Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent+	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question	0	0	5	18	31	4.48	4	5
% of rating selected for question	0.00%	0.00%	9.26%	33.33%	57.41%			

7. I would recommend this course to other students.

Course Results	- Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree +	Course Mean	25th%	75th%
# times rating was selected for question	0	1	2	21	29	4.47	4	5
% of rating selected for question	0.00%	1.89%	3.77%	39.62%	54.72%			

8. Additional Comments

- Just once, I would have liked to see Prof. Leiter come to class dressed as Julius Caesar. Is that too much to ask? (17)
- My only real complaint is that Leiter was occasionally too generous in responding to/discussing student questions. A good 15% of the class seemed devoted to sorting out indulgent and unilluminating student hypotheticals. "What if you had a dog that really could speak and understand the English language. THEN would that constitute hearsay???" Establishing a firm norm against those kinds of inquiries early on in the quarter would be nice. (18)
- I understand the reasons for this class being multiple choice, and for the multiple choice being closed books. But still ... (10)
- This class is excellent. While a rules based class could get boring, Prof. Leiter uses fun examples and clearly really enjoys the material. The material is really useful and Prof. Leiter does a great job with it. (1)
- It could be interesting to bring in some interesting materials that are not included in the casebook, like recent cases, news stories, etc. (20)
- It isn't an interesting class. But it's evidence. Isn't a whole lot the professor can do about that. (21)
- Leiter clearly knows what he is doing teaching Evidence. The class works like a well-oiled machine. I have no idea what the test will be like...but I know the evidence rules definitely (and I guess that is the most important thing). (22)
- I would have liked more practice questions on file with the library to get a better sense of how well we're understanding the material, or possibly exercises similar to the hearsay quiz at a couple other points in the quarter. Really enjoyed the course overall. (11)
- No real complaints. He's the Kyle Orton of law professors -- I wouldn't put him in the same category as Peyton Manning or Tom Brady, but he's a good game manager. (23)
- This has been my favorite class of 2L year, although my attendance record may not show it. It's not the professor's fault that for the past 6 months or so I couldn't get out of my bed if it was on fire. (13)
- This was a very well-taught course. I have no significant changes to recommend. Leiter is a talented educator and the law school is fortunate to have him. (24)
- I appreciated the professor's receptiveness to questions. Occasionally I felt like he could have cut questions off a bit earlier, but he seemed to always get to all of the material. I would also like to say that he created an environment where more women had the opportunity to talk and ask questions than in almost any other class I have had. (25)
- I LOVE the idea of a multiple choice final (26)
- Prof Leiter is great. The only thing I didn't like is that when we talked about Daubert, Leiter talked too much about philosophy of science and it was the second to last week of class and that time would've been better spent talking about the final or reviewing or letting us go early to outline. (27)
- Really enjoyed this class (28)
- One suggestion: Syllabus should include names of cases covered in that day's reading. (4)
- Great class. I really liked the problems in the case book and the short cases and the way the class was

well organized. (9)

- Professor Leiter is one of the best and brightest at the law school. His knowledge of the material and clarity in presenting the material is outstanding. He also has a wonderful disposition, is always cheerful and makes it a pleasure to come to class. He is truly a gifted professor. The material itself is very interesting and I would highly recommend this class to anyone, especially those interested in litigation, but it will be pleasurable even for those who are not. (29)
- Interesting course. (30)
- Prof. Leiter was fantastic! By far, the best professor I've had at the University of Chicago Law School. Very clear - such a nice change from typical hide-the-ball classes. (31)
- Very clear and perfectly organized. Best course I've taken so far. The lectures were clear and a pleasure to listen. (32)
- Professor Leiter was a very intelligent, organized and patient instructor. Evidence is a challenging subject matter and he did a great job of breaking the topics down and making them easier to understand. I really liked his style of teaching. The problems and examples in the book helped a lot because I do best with examples. I also like how he is a tamer version of Socratic. It took pressure off and made it easier to learn knowing that we were only on-call on certain days. (33)

Note: Numbers in parentheses after a comment refer to the nth student that submitted the evaluation.