

SELECTED QUALITATIVE COMMENTS

2013-2016

Following are selected qualitative comments from the open-ended questions on course evaluations. These comments were taken from courses taught between 2013-2016, since my mid-term review.

Laura is very awesome. This was also one of the few classes I've had in the GSLIS program where I actually feel like putting in many many hours and doing my best got me the grade worth all that effort. It was extremely motivating to be rewarded like that, and I ended up liking the class despite the boring nature of the material. (403, 2013)

I thoroughly enjoyed having Professor Saunders for 407-OLC. She always brought a sense of enthusiasm along with the content and challenged me to think more critically. (407-OL, 2013)

She's great. She made a topic that could be uncomfortable and made it easier to delve into and hash out. Also she has some great experiences and really cares about the issue. She also explains topics very well and is very responsive about the assignments. (410, 2013)

This course has been one of my favorite course ever taken at Simmons! I think the aspect of discussion played a major role in my enjoyment of the class because we really got to cover material and topics we were interested in by discussing them without peers. (410, 2013)

Useful, engaging course, and well-thought out by this prof. She approaches topics with sensitivity and awareness/transparency about our limitations, etc. Really brings together a lot of concepts from other parts of the GSLIS curriculum as well. (410, 2013)

Laura is incredibly enthusiastic and knowledgeable about her subject. She encouraged participation and discussion by all class members. She supported class members who didn't speak up as much in getting space to speak./ I found this course to be an incredibly valuable addition to my experience at Simmons. I believe all librarians should be educated in working with diverse users. (410, 2013)

Laura is an exceptional teacher, and I feel very lucky to have taken a class with her. (408, 2013)

I have really loved this class. It has definitely been my favourite class and I feel the assignments have been really helpful. I hope she continues to teach this class and in this way. (451, 2013)

Professor Saunders was very well organized, the class was interesting, and she was always enthusiastic and engaged. She is one of the best orators and teachers I've had./ It was a great class and it confirms that having the right teacher, one who is prepared and engaged, really makes a difference in the class. I looked forward to coming to class each day. (451, 2013)

Laura is an excellent instructor. She is personable, relatable, practical. Fosters interesting conversation in class. shows much respect for her students, which in turn garner her respect. One of my favorite classes at Simmons to date. (451, 2013)

I would absolutely recommend that others take a class with Laura, because she is great! She is fun and makes topics clear and I thoroughly enjoyed her teaching. I have nothing negative to say about my experience with her as the teacher. She is wonderful. (401, 2013)

Laura Saunders is a fantastic teacher, and one who wants every student involved in discussions. She is more than available to all of her students, and is always eager to help. (401, 2013)

Her lectures were entertaining, she was informative, clear and engaging. Gave good feedback on assignments quickly. Was very patient about orienting us to Simmons as new students and made herself

very available on topics about class and as a general resource for the program. I can't say enough nice things about prof. Saunders. (401, 2013)

I really loved how much Professor Saunders really cared about the class, even though it was online. I felt like she put a lot of time and effort into getting to know the students and helping us really learn the material. The course was well organized, had a great layout, and really fun assignments. (407-OL, 2014)

I was impressed with Laura's timeliness and fairness with her weekly responses. I still can't believe she writes to each of us individually! (407-OL, 2014)

The coursework was engaging, the online content was clear and concise, assignments were graded quickly. Overall, it was the best online course that I have taken. (407-OL, 2014)

I was told my other students that this professor was fantastic in a face-to-face course. This online course was the best I have ever taken. I received more feedback ("meaty" feedback) than I have in any other course. I appreciate her dedication to her students and to reference! (407-OL, 2014)

Because Laura is awesome! She is very quick to respond to emails and questions and gave extremely detailed feedback on assignments and you could tell, unlike other professors, that she actually read your discussion posts, etc. She was extremely helpful with collaborating on assignments and went the extra mile to make sure every assignment and grade was understood. Wish I could take more classes with her! (407-OL, 2014).

Laura is a phenomenal instructor!! I am so glad I was able to take this course with her. This course dealt with some sensitive material and I felt as though Laura created a wonderful space where I felt comfortable expressing my opinions and asking questions. I would recommend Laura as an instructor and am bummed I won't be able to take another course with her! (410, 2014)

This can be such a sensitive topic, but Laura was wonderful at creating a comfortable environment where everyone seemed comfortable sharing their thoughts, opinions, and experiences, which is very important for this topic. (410, 2014)

Laura is a great instructor! She is brilliant and makes all students feel welcome. (408, 2014)

Laura Saunders is an excellent teacher. I would encourage all of my peers to take a class with Laura, especially for those interested in working in an academic library. Laura is a real treasure to Simmons College. (408, 2014)

Laura is engaging and fun, with a definite understanding of how students work. I always feel compelled to listen when she speaks; she has wonderful classroom presence. Additionally, she happens to have her teaching focus in several of the topics in which I am also interested. I look forward to taking several more classes with Laura. (401, 2014)

Not enough can be said for how enthusiastic Laura was all class, every class. She also gave the impression of being very well read and knowledgeable, as she could always provide interesting and lengthy answer to any questions that were raised in class, even if they were off topic. Overall, a truly great teacher./ It was always amazing how quickly Laura graded assignments and got them back to you. (401, 2014)

I really appreciated how the professor gave me personalized weekly feedback. As an online student, I find it very helpful to get regular updates on how I am doing. Professor Saunders was the first professor I've had who gave me substantive comments every week about my performance. This class was really valuable to me. Thank you! (407-OL, 2015)

I enjoyed the class and learned so much about reference. I didn't know much about reader advisories and how many resources there really is out there! wow, I feel empowered by knowing more about how to analyze a source too. (407-OL, 2015)

Such a positive and encouraging professor - a true pleasure to take her class! (407-OL, 2015)

Professor Saunders was SO helpful, and answered my questions quickly. She even voluntarily offered her phone number to me in case I wanted to talk. Also, she seemed genuinely interested in my ideas and thoughts in class. I felt she showed a genuine excitement with the students, and that made the legwork on my end feel more important. I really appreciated that. (407-OL, 2015)

Professor Saunders had a knack for conveying her ideas clearly while also encouraging independent thinking. I truly appreciated her taking the time to respond to each student every week via email to offer feedback and clarify points. She made me feel like more than just a number which is difficult in an online environment. (407-OL, 2015)

Laura provided an optimal online learning environment with content and assignments that were challenging and engaging. The Moodle site for this section of 407 was friendly to the eyes, well-organized, easy to navigate, and provided what seemed to be the perfect amount of information. In fact, I believe it's the best Moodle site I've experienced so far. The level of attention to its structure and aesthetics certainly required thoughtful planning and an immense amount of time and effort. Usability is important for a student's online learning experience. Also, as communication is key in any type of relationship, Laura maintained communication with our class throughout the semester by emailing useful landscape posts, which provided her input and general feedback, sometimes with examples, in response to the content of our group discussions. In addition to these landscape posts, she emailed us individually to provide feedback about our discussion contributions and also provided constructive, non-generic comments about our assignments. (How does she make the time?) In addition, it was evident from the get-go that Laura is interested in the success of her students. First, she is available via various methods for questions or concerns and also responded to emails immediately or within hours. Also, due to an unforeseen situation, she permitted me to transfer into her online section of 407 after a couple of weeks or so had already passed into the semester. As soon as her section appeared in Moodle, I attacked whatever posts/assignments/readings were necessary to catch up, but I believe she actually set the tone of the course/semester by checking in with me to make sure I was settling in. (Isn't that unheard of?) This was an early indication that this professor is mindful and supportive. Furthermore, Laura provided our grades in a ridiculously timely manner and set the pace for the course. This makes a huge difference because it informs students of the instructor's approach and expectations. I knew where I stood in the course throughout the entire semester, so I was never worried. This level of certainty helps since we have so much to tackle and manage as it is. I 107% recommend that you take 407 (or any course) with Laura Saunders—online or in-person. If you want to learn from a professor who is approachable and sincerely invests time and effort in her/his/their students, ensures an engaging learning experience, and provides grades at the speed of lightning, stop reading this and register for one of Laura's classes now! (407-OL, 2015)

Professor Saunders created a fantastic online learning environment. The class is a mix of readings, online lecture (in written and multimedia form), and discussion. What impressed me most is that Professor Saunders responds to each student individually for each posting and assignment, and provides a weekly landscape posting. She encourages us to ask questions and reflect upon what we have learned. This was the best online class I have taken at Simmons! Other online classes have very limited interactions with the professors. (407-OL, 2015)

Laura Saunders genuinely cares about everything she teaches. She engages the class in a balanced way, both sharing and soliciting stories and opinions. I felt as though everyone in the class was heard and had their opinion valued, while still allowing for the fact that she has a different level of knowledge,

understanding, and study on this topic. Her assignments and discussions advocate for real, student driven-professor lead learning. Laura is a fair grader, though certainly not easy. She will encourage free thought and the exploration of new ideas. I would recommend that anyone and everyone take a class (or as many as possible) with Laura. (505D, 2015)

Laura Saunders is by far among my favorite professors at SLIS - her passion for the subject is evident, and she does a phenomenal job teaching this course. I appreciated her scholarship in the field as well, and would most certainly take another class with her if I am able. (493, 2015)

This was one of the best courses I've taken at SLIS! Remarkably well done, particularly for a 2-week class, couldn't imagine a better structure. (493, 2015)

The committee assignment was great practical experience for the future career setting. (451, 2015)

Laura was/is always great. Would take a class from her on any topic and recommend others to do the same. She's engaged and excited with the material, makes herself available to students outside of class and is a great resource for beginning professionals (451, 2015)

Laura is one of the most engaging and well-organized professors I've ever had. I took this course because she was teaching it. (451, 2015)

Laura is one of the best professors I've had at Simmons. She is enthusiastic about the subject matter and was willing to adapt the schedule to take advantage of some opportunities that came up, including a presentation at Harvard and a presentation by Alison Head. She was also very supportive and respectful. (451, 2015)

This was a great class. Despite it being a very difficult semester to balance school work and everything else, I really enjoyed the course, each and every class. I also really appreciated that Laura recognized the fact that group work can be difficult and not only gave us class time to meet, but also encouraged the use of chat and other online meeting features. As a part time student taking one class at a time while also working full time, I am not a fan of group work since it often can be problematic when trying to schedule time to meet. I often wish professors were more aware of the problems, so I was very grateful that Laura made the effort to offer suggestions to resolve some of the issues. I would highly, highly, highly recommend taking this or any class with her. (451, 2015)

Laura is an excellent professor - her lectures are well-organized and delivered with enthusiasm. She paces the class beautifully, and encourages discussion and questioning from the students. She also is in complete command of the material, and was always engaging through the class period. (407, 2015)

Laura is a wonderfully thoughtful and caring instructor who has a clear passion for reference. I appreciated her openness and transparency with all elements of the course, as well as her high ethical standards. (451, 2015)

Dr Saunders is a wonderful professor, and this was one of the most stimulating, well-designed, well-organized, and enjoyable courses I've ever taken. The assignments were often time-consuming, but all were precisely targeted for helping assimilate knowledge and practical skills necessary to a reference librarian -- so I can perfectly see the justification for each one. The one piece of the course workload that could have been reduced were the weekly reading assignments, which on some weeks were just too hefty and very hard to get through when compounded with the course assignments, work for other courses, and one's job. (407, 2015)

What more can I say? Laura is an amazing instructor and I've already used what I've learned in her class in a professional setting. It has improved my reference service at my place of employment and has helped with my professional development. (407, 2015)

This instructor clearly shows enthusiasm and knowledge for the class. I have no doubt that she has given every class her all. She is always available to help and really makes the class worthwhile. I'm going to miss being in this class. (407, 2015)

Laura is enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and cares about her students. For a required class I had little interest in she was the ideal professor. Required LIS classes need passionate professors who can make the students care about the class despite their desire to be studying other things. (401, 2015)

Laura clearly loves the field of LIS and this showed through her teaching. I felt respected when she informed the class of her reasoning behind the curriculum and her some of her teaching practices (e.g. informing us that this is a pilot class and letting us know she values our feedback; informing us why we were doing certain assignments or class activities; etc.). (401, 2015)

Laura is an incredibly engaging, responsive, intelligent and understanding professor. She is available for meetings and returns assignments quickly so you have the opportunity to improve on the next assignment. Her lectures are thoughtful and well planned, and her in class group assignments are relevant and interesting. She makes what could potentially be a dry topic of LIS theory and makes it interesting and always brings the theory into practice. (401, 2015)

Laura is great at tying together personal experiences with the course curriculum. Her anecdotes provide a clearer understanding of course content. Her understanding of difficult topics, and willingness to explore together rather than dictate viewpoints really set her above other professors in nearly every program I've encountered in my academic career. (505J, 2016)

Professor Saunders made every attempt to accept feedback and create an inclusive environment. Opening up a feedback board on the Moodle page, accepting mid-semester feedback forms, and having open office hours before class were all good channels of communication that were kept open between student and professor. (505J, 2016)

The most valuable thing I learned in this course is just having the opportunity to engage in these critical discussions about LIS. The theories and unique discourse will certainly inform my practice once I'm in the field. I know that I'm ahead of the game because of the content of this course. It's unfortunate that most SLIS students will graduate without engaging in these critical discussions. I think what Laura was trying to do is imperative for the work that we do as information professionals. I was fortunate to have taken this course with this particular professor. (505J, 2016)

The professor encouraged me to work a lot harder on my critical thinking and its expression than I had done before, and I am grateful for that. (505J, 2016)

Professor Saunders did a great job introducing this new class. It was a crazy range of complex subject matter to dive into, and I think we all learned along the way about how to structure the classroom environment. I hope it's offered again in the future, if only because the content was so good! And important! The first go-around for any course, let alone one with a wide range of challenging subjects, is necessarily going to be a work-in-progress. That was my expectation coming into the class, and I really appreciated the opportunity to participate in helping shape it with my peers and professor over the course of the semester. I think this class really has the potential to be a great part of SLIS and could lead the way for other LIS programs to follow suit. (505J, 2016)

Again, Laura is mindful...of inclusiveness and also of sharing power. She was proactive in trying to encourage students who were less vocal to contribute more, and was fairly successful, particularly because her method didn't shine a spotlight on anyone. Students still retained their power. Also, as she facilitated discussion about theories, she also encouraged us to identify ways to bring theory into action. Lastly, Laura provides extensive feedback, including thought-provoking questions, on assignments in a

timely manner, which allows you to reflect further, learn from, and build on for your personal development. This is directly linked to Laura being mindful. (505J, 2016)

The content of this course should be required for all SLIS students; it's all foundational and important for us to consider as students but also as emerging professionals. I am confident the content would also help with navigating microaggressions, which for some reason SLIS has yet to tackle, in any way. I am very happy that I was able to take this course, and thank goodness Laura Saunders had the guts to create it. You can't go wrong with Laura. (505J, 2016)