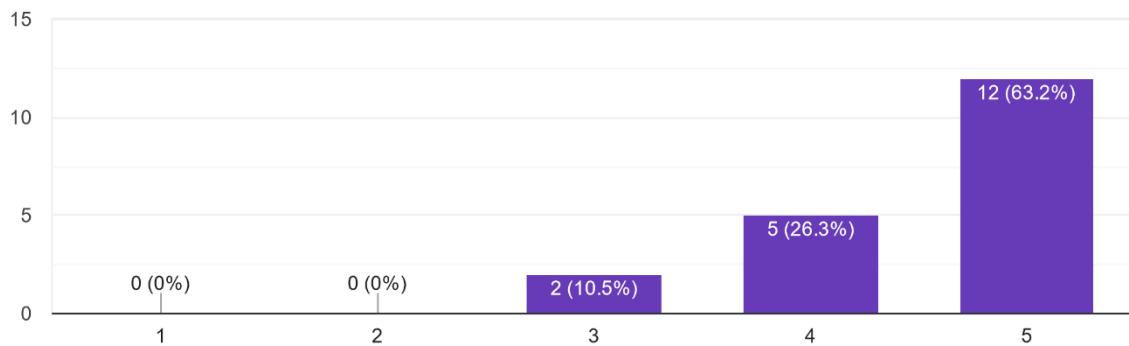


SOCL955 Practice Theory Course Online – Feedback 2021

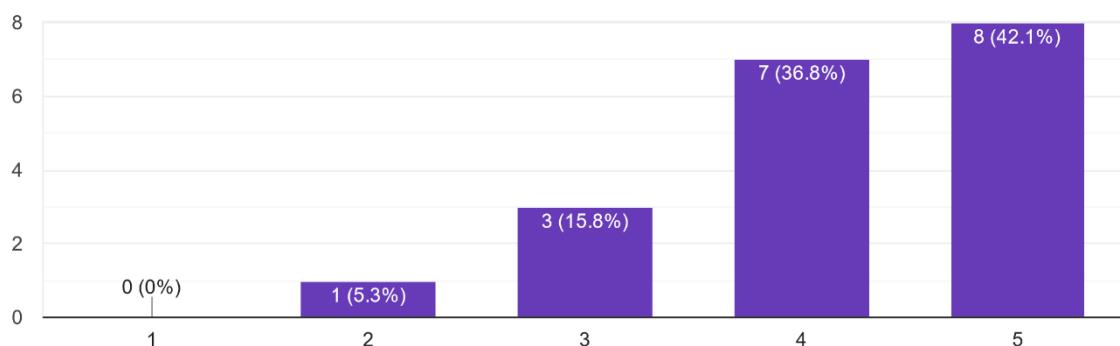
How useful were the lectures?

19 responses



How useful were the discussion sessions (e.g. The Big Questions)?

19 responses



What was the **BEST** thing about the course?

Activities/Exercises

- The fieldwork
- The various activities (and the asynchronous lectures) made it very entertaining and "light", despite I learnt a lot. Also, interesting how the different backgrounds were not a challenge in terms of quality of discussions.
- The variety of activities and synchronous/asynchronous schedule
- I really liked the charting variety exercise. And the possibility to do a podcast was very nice
- All the interaction and different activities (ie interview, blogs etc) with participants, lectures
- Getting to interact with the organizers, meet my co-students, and do the exercises
- I very much enjoyed the brief blog consultation (with Ted in my case). I also enjoyed (although not at all moments) the fieldwork experience as well as the podcast, which was a new thing for me.
- group exercises

- The mixture of activities was just fantastic- such a good balance of actively working on an output and listening, reading and talking. Thanks also for taking so much time to plan the groups so we had chance to meet lots of people. It was also an incredible opportunity to get direct feedback on our blogs- a real privilege and so helpful in just 15 minutes. Amazing!

Discussion

- The big questions

Texts/Reading

- To be "forced" to do a lot of readings that I wouldn't have prioritized otherwise (not due to lack of interest but of time constraints)

Networks/Meeting Others

- Contact with so many other research fields and learning how practice theory is applicable to all of them, specifically in what ways
- Opportunity to communicate with people coming from different backgrounds
- Meeting other people with
- Meeting other people that work with Practice Theory in a judgement free space!
- To have the possibility to ask questions to the scholars you are dealing all the time with (I mean with their texts).
- Thoughtful interactions, with the presenters and participants; being among people who take these questions seriously

Course Design

- Having a structured approach to working through the universe of practice theory.
- combining well parts of theoretical learning - both during and before the course - with others of empirical exercises"

What was the **WORST** thing about the course?

Timings

- Lunchtime? too short to have lunch as well as discussion
- Timetable (meetings started too late in the morning and ended too late in the afternoon)
- I would have just had more time for the big questions. One hour is too little to really engage in discussions.
- not bad at all - but maybe less time on the fieldwork?
- Not many things. Maybe during the first day there have been too many dead times
- Staying up until 3am (but it was manageable)
-

Other

- Feeling stupid when I didn't understand.
- Just trying to keep up
- the session on reflections on doing the podcast - I am not taking this course to advance this kind of techniques.
-

Difficulties of Online

- Not being able to have the informal unplanned moments with the group and teachers!
- Not being able to socialize properly. Your efforts in this direction were great. I miss being in the same room with everyone and seeing how tired they are :D
- if I have to find an aspect, then it is that we could not meet in Lancaster to further discuss the Big Questions in a nice little Pub...
- The intensity of being online - really quite tiring. Also being online means its harder to escape from my other responsibilities and just focus on the course.
-

Matching interests

- I would have preferred to read the blog post of a person with interests more similar to mine, the same goes for group works
- There weren't much chance to reflect on the potential to integrate practice theory into my own interest/research project
- That it's over! :(I think I missed socializing a bit more and the groups could have been better mixed. I think I worked with some people all the time, and didn't get the chance to work with others. Also, there were a few comments to 'go find the people working in a similar field' but I felt there were not that many opportunities to do this as the day were well-structured and busy. If you didn't work with these people in a group activity, I think, you probably missed out.
-

Big Questions

- The Big Question sessions were a bit chaotic in the beginning but got much better as the module progressed.
- I did not enjoy the big questions sessions turning into a sequence of brief snippets from different research questions since it made it fairly disconnected and hard to distill any particular insights other than raising yet more big questions.

Charting Variety

- "The charting difference exercise- I see the value of it but it was an extremely intimidating thing to do on the first day and I would have preferred to spend a little longer on the models/getting to know everyone's research on the first day, maybe spending time on the charting exercise to wrap it up as a group activity on the last day?

If you were running next year's Practice Theory course, what would you do differently?

Activities

- I won't ask students to do the Charting variety exercise.
- Connect practice theory with more practical examples

Timings

- Divide the course into two sections with a week or so in between, alternatively have an introduction seminar 1-2 weeks before the course started.

- Maybe one day less and/or group some people together for one session that deal with similar issues/research questions to see if they come up with how practice theory can help them, that would have been helpful as some research topics are sometimes quite far apart
- allocate more time to discuss the different research projects in light of practice theory - an extended version of the quick introduction on day 1
- I would make materials available earlier than the course did
- "If it's again online (which I think worked very well and is cutting emissions), I would recommend having an initial meeting a few weeks before the start of the intensive course to discuss and talk through the preparations. I know you did your best to make the information available but it was still a bit overwhelming to go through alone."
- I would also take into account different time zones. Considering that there weren't actually that many in the UK, the slots of 'lunch' etc didn't make sense for most attendees but they had lunch earlier. Also for people with kids that weren't in the UK time zones, the evenings got really long (even if the time difference is only 2-3h) but that's the time where families spend time together. Also, I think different cultures have other understandings of working on weekends that should be taken into consideration when planning the course in the future."
- I would start it on Monday till Friday
- I would have loved to have an online introductory 'social' gathering at the same time as the course materials were released- maybe a chaired introductions session with some smaller break out groups or semi-speed dating to get to know others before the course began- this would a) help get some of the social anxiety out of the way and b) give us chance to help each other and think with each other about some of the reading and exercises before we meet and formulate some questions together.
- Perhaps have two days in one week and three days a few weeks later, with some more structured individual work in between to engage with and apply the theories. For those coming new to practice thinking, they probably don't have time to absorb the ideas in the concentrated 5 days.

Big Questions

- I would keep the big questions session for longer (cutting maybe on the last lunch or postcard or plenaries)
- More time for the Big Questions discussions!
- The general discussions can be longer (Big Questions). As well as the plenary sessions at the end of the day. The first day you did recapitulate all groups, but it would have been nice to have some broad discussion on the topics as in the Radio Show. I also missed a small exercise for day five. A suggestion would be for everybody to provide examples of the "normal" questions of their discipline and "practice theories informed questions".
- to structure the Big Questions session more precisely around the topics and maybe schedule more time for this. Then just start with a thesis to discuss. Without linking it too much to own projects.
- Decide on a structure for running the Big Questions sessions. Let the participants lead the conversation. Lots of preparation have gone into preparing for the course, and most participants had so many questions on their minds to be addressed in the sessions.

- I would restructure the Big Questions topics and make sure we have more of a conversation about one or max three questions that you can frame such that they are relevant across research topics.
- Reserve more time for the theoretical issues (the Big Questions). They were way to short to deepen the discussion.

Matching Interests/Mixing Groups

- I would have preferred to read the blog post of a person with interests more similar to mine, the same goes for group works
- More mixing between groups.
- Perhaps stream the group into areas of interest, so sessions on topics such as materiality or policy are focused on applying this to a narrower range of issues rather than the diversity of everyone in the participant group.

Collect questions in advance

- Have a question gathering process in response to the recorded lectures and preparatory reading (the sorts of questions people would ask if they attended the lecture or discussed the reading in a tutorial), with a deadline some days before the course started, and then use these questions to inform the content of the face-to-face sessions.

Do you have any comments or advice about any of the following that might help us for next year's course: on the podcast; fieldwork; blogs; reading; preparation, etc.

General

- Online course worked well and in future it would be great to actively offer it to people who can't readily access Lancaster, especially people from countries that find it hard to get visas to events in western countries.

Examples

- show us some examples from last year students
- For staff: Provide examples of the fieldwork and the blog draft in advance."

Preparation

- "For students: Focus on the online lectures. They summarise quite well the recommended readings.
- I liked the preparation. I found it great to watch lectures and read texts first and then get together for the interactive stuff. I would keep this in the normal courses as well.
- I felt that the preparation and reading in advance was really extensive
- For me there was a problem assessing some of the readings, particular the books. One or two of these will arrive after the course, which is a pity.
- Maybe it would be helpful especially for those who are not familiar with practice theory to give some advice on what is the focus of each required reading - it might be hard for some to read the texts without knowing what they are about.
- Have a info meeting a few weeks before the start of the intensive course

Fieldwork/podcast

- the fieldwork could potentially take up less time, leaving more time for seminars, discussions in groups with teachers. See point above about dividing the course into two sections, wold give more time to fieldwork in-between.
- Podcast, fieldwork, and blogs were all so rewarding. Thank you for putting some much effort into organising these activity. A true gift.
- I would let the fieldwork teams meet earlier on to start brainstorming earlier - just a meet/greet/brainstorm and then pause for the podcast. Tying this down on Friday evening when everyone was exhausted made for a less than great start.
- Podcasts were great ideas. I learned very much as I listend to the ones of the other groups. The groups were build very nicely. As it were over the course of the day more or less the same people you came across, we built some common ground and the discussion got deeper. Also the informal group meetings / lunch session worked really well!!
- I think beginning the field work on Friday night was a bit unfortunate. It had been two longs days and for some time zones it was already getting quite late (8pm). I would move that a bit around in the agenda.

Charting Variety

- Only as above- I think the charting exercise was a bit intense as our first 'outing' in front of a load of strangers and some of the world's most pre-eminent practice theorists! I spent far longer fretting about those things and the model than I should have when I look back at the balance of those things versus the reading. Great exercises but maybe just a less pressurised first day/more socialising/meeting in advance.

Blog

- I would ask for a research proposal instead of a blog, so that people can pitch their ideas and get feedback from one of you
- I would maybe leave more space to the one to one discussion of the blog between you and the student

One to one

- Although tiring for you, but include a short one on one session not necessarily about a blog (although writing was fun and productive), but about a specific research issue?
- more feedback about our own research
-

None

- No comments
- Not particularly

Mixing groups and socialising

- Mix participants a bit better throughout the group activities
- Perhaps, give more time for socialising? All the group activities were quite busy on getting the tasks done and I missed opportunities to chat a bit more informally with participants
- Also I think the Friday evening could have been a nice opportunity for some sort of social/informal activity for people that were available (like cocktail party, games night etc)"

| What other feedback question should we have asked? | If we had asked that question, how would you have answered it? |
|--|---|
| Questions about the quality of online course | |
| Did the technical solution, eg teams, worked satisfactory? | Yes, better than expected. |
| I think you got all | |
| Would you do this course again? | Yes! |
| What's your favourite practice theories approach? :D | OK, I'll go and delete the suggestion. |
| WOuld you join this course again? | yes |
| questions re take aways, changes in thinking, research practices etc. | my perspectives on own research project have changed - and I have become very inspired. |
| Anything else that you would like to comment on? | <p>I felt that the pre-work could have been curated a bit more carefully (less could be more) and, for my taste, been geared more to readings instead of lectures and podcasts.</p> <p>And yes, the food wasn't great because the time schedule didn't allow for things other than microwaveable food...</p> |
| Is there anything that you wish to be given other than materials, instructions, etc.? | snacks |
| "How likely are you to use practice theory going forward?" With Likert scale | Very likely |
| 1) How happy you are all in all with the course? 2) What do you think about the online setting? | <p>1) Extremely happy!!! Was very useful!!!</p> <p>2) Very happy! As having to small kids it was way easier to participate in this course as it would have been if I had to travel to Lancaster.</p> |
| About the time organization of the course | I would have avoided the weekend in the middle, as long as it will be an online course |
| There are probably some other questions but I can't think of them. | as the question was not asked, I will never be sure how I would answer it |
| What did you think of the format of the course- how was it using teams/doing it all online? | <p>I thought it worked incredibly well! I think the use of different rooms this way and the access to online notebooks and collaborative spaces was fab, even though the pace meant perhaps we were a bit inconsistent about scribing/capturing it. Loved the idea of the suitcase and it meant a LOT that thought, kindness and effort went into creating a little rite of passage at the end to try to bring it to a close- precious. Thank you SO much I have absolutely loved it all. So sad it's over.</p> |