

## Selected Comments from Teaching Evaluations

The original question on teaching evaluations was: "Please identify what you perceive to be the real strengths and weaknesses of this teaching assistant and course." Students' answers are organized by course.

### Politics and Strategy (Introduction to Game Theory)

"Manoel is an excellent TA. He really provides good examples of problems and innovative methods to solving them."

"Manoel was extremely helpful throughout the course; he was often far better at addressing questions than the professor. I really liked the lecture notes he provided and appreciated his willingness to go over questions we had during section."

"Manoel always seemed to introduce during his discussions some very basic forms of the next concept we would later learn in lecture. He would also use different methods to explain how to do certain problems. (I believe one of the homework assignments used the distance formula for calculating someone's alignment with a candidate's platform, but Manoel's use of a graph to explain the same problem made things infinitely easier and faster, which is ideal for an exam). Manoel is also incredibly knowledgeable and I always felt confident that I would be learning something valuable in his discussion. He's a fantastic lecturer and he makes the material feel valuable and worth learning."

"He was incredibly helpful and the discussion sections were much more helpful than the lectures."

"Great TA who takes the time to make sure his students understand what is going on in lecture."

### Political Institutions and Economic Development

"Supportive, patient, and knowledgeable TA."

"Class discussions were always very helpful. Lectures from professor always left students with questions, but the TA was always available to answer questions in office hours, section, and via email. Very concerned with the needs of students and always will go the extra student to aid students in understanding material."

"Manoel is a great TA. I have no doubt that he put in a lot of work in this class. He is nice and approachable but strict with grading and expectations. He is an outstanding lecturer."

"Manoel is so nice and always willing to help out students. I really learned a lot from his extra explanations on top of the professor's lecture materials. Actually far more during the section. No notable weaknesses".

### Government and Politics in Latin America

"The most obvious strengths of Manoel include his expertise in the material and his commitment to students understanding."

"He was always well prepared for classes and his explanation was always clear and helpful! I do not think i could pass this class without his lectures. Thanks for his passionate and friendly teaching!"

“Manoel is an excellent TA, who is very enthusiastic about teaching. I love how he uses slides and presentation to run the class, in addition to writing charts + notes on the board. This makes the class topics much easier to understand. His communication skill is also excellent, and he genuinely wants his students to do well.”

“Fantastic presentations and discussion. Very organized.”

“Did an excellent job at simplifying a subject that was extremely difficult. I left lectures a little confused but once I got to discussion, our TA did an excellent job at making it make sense. Awesome Job!”

“ I really appreciated the additional media that showed us what culture was like in the countries we studied, It brought to life everything.”

“Manuel is a wonderful teacher and his love for the field shines in his work. He clearly understands the material and can explain the most challenging economic concepts. His level of student interest is very high, and I hope to have an opportunity to take a class with him again in the future. ”

“Manoel was beyond amazing at explaining the material—sometimes even better than the professor! If it’s possible, Manoel should be a TA for this class again! I’m sure my classmates enjoyed his sections as well. Really interesting discussions too! He was also super helpful during his office hours. Best TA I’ve had at UCLA by far!”

“Manoel is an amazing teaching assistant. He went out of his way repeatedly to make himself available to students. He always had extra office hours when our midterms approached and our research papers were due. He is also absolutely brilliant and explained our course material clearly and concisely.”

“Pleasure to have had as a TA. BEST ONE I’VE HAD AT UCLA”.

“It was good to have a Brazilian as a TA for a class about South America. Alongside his unquestionable knowledge on the subject, Manoel was also very patient and helpful. He had good office hours and also offered extra office hours for students who could not go to regular hours or needed help with the material/assignments. At the beginning of the quarter he provided a list of movies about South America, so students could better understand the policies and events discussed in class in a more personal way. The sections were organized as a seminar. Overall, I’d give Manoel 10/10 as a TA. ”

“Manoel was always very kind and receptive to students. He made the sections interesting and presented the information from lecture in new ways to help student get a better grasp on course ideas. The section was best when we had a set task to accomplish, such as a debate, but it was also very helpful to be able to go over the main points from the required readings. A great T.A.!”

### **Political Economy of Development**

“He is probably the best T.A. I had. He was very good at teaching and his knowledge in this field is very abundant. He understands assigned readings very well, and I was surprised by how well he remembers all the details of the readings.”

“Manoel is an excellent TA. I never once felt like I was wasting my time going to his discussions. He is clearly working very hard and preparing diligently for each discussion with the intention of really helping his students to understand the material and do well on the exams. He is always well prepared and was able to answer all student questions. A+”

“Gehrke always came to class with a positive attitude and made himself available whenever we needed help. I really appreciated how helpful he was and how much he genuinely cared about teaching the material to us.”

“The teaching assistant was very knowledgeable about the course material, he encouraged student participation during the sections instead of simply lecturing at us. He often provided different ways of understanding or interpreting the course material that was not always emphasized in lecture, this proved to be very helpful for my own comprehension of the course material. Sections were overall very helpful.”

“I can say with in complete confidence that Mr. Gehrke influenced the learning environment within the classroom in such a way that enabled the flow of knowledge in an organized discussion setting; his genuine demeanor and dedication to teaching the class made the experience of his lecture dually enriching and entertaining. In all honesty, I think that Mr. Gehrke deserves to be recognized for excellence at teaching and it is the reason why I chose to write this review. I wish him all the success and am in debt to him for the time he garnered to assisting his student in grasping the thick material of the course.”

### **Introduction to Comparative Politics**

“This class has been by far the hardest political science class I’ve ever taken. Thanks to my wonderful TA I was able to comprehend more of the material. He is straightforward and he will help anyone that’s seeking help. He also makes everyone participate and he does not make someone feel less or anything. All in all, he is a great TA.”

“Manoel was very knowledgeable about the course and always found ways to foster real discussion.”

“We know Gehrke as Manoel, but he has been a great teaching assistant nonetheless. Although section began each week with what I think were pointless reading quizzes assigned by the professor, Manoel also led off with a time open to questions students had about the material. He offered insightful answers to us, always expanded on ideas introduced in lecture. He also had us participate in active analysis of the materials in small groups. He would help us connect different ideas from the material. He made himself easily available through email and flexible office hours.”

“TA is pretty great and knows a lot about the material and very engaged throughout the discussion. Definitely glad to have had him.”

“Manoel’s strengths are that he is very knowledgeable about the course material and a very good facilitator of class discussion. He is very nice, approachable, willing to help, and caring of his students. I did not feel intimidated about his knowledge, but rather felt compelled to ask him all my questions and come to discussion every week. I would highly recommend Manoel as a T.A. One of the best I’ve had at UCLA. Lastly, I do not identify any weaknesses in his persona. Thank you Manoel for a great quarter!”

“Very patient and has much knowledge regarding the topics we are learning”

“This TA has a really solid grasp of the material and concepts which allowed him to teach us well. English isn’t his first language, but he has a good command of the language regardless and is still able to communicate near perfectly. ”

“Manoel is an awesome TA! He was extremely knowledgeable about the course material and what the Professor was presenting to us. He challenged us to expand upon what was

discussed in lecture, and had us debate with each other, which I think gave me a much better grip on the subject than if he had just spent the entire time rewording the lectures.”

“Excellent TA – able to guide thoughtful discussions ”

### **Introduction to American Politics**

“Manoel is great! I love coming to section and being greeted by Manoel’s energy. He is extremely committed to helping students and encourages all of us to give our opinions on the topics we discuss. I have absolutely nothing negative to say towards Manoel!

“My TA was extremely understanding and flexible with collegiate swim schedule which made my academic studies easier to manage with his support. Whenever we had discussion, the environment was very accepting of others’ opinions even during debates. Overall I left each discussion with a new perspective.”

“The TA was definitely great and very knowledgeable of the overall subjects. He was someone that one could ask any question, he encouraged participation often from the class and kept discussions flowing even if there was no participation. He was kind and what I thought was very helpful were the visuals drawn on the board. We also discussed our own current events with him and were able to share our opinions which i thought was interesting. He could be contacted for help outside of class through his office hours which were a valuable amount of time provided and through email. Overall a wonderful TA! I take this time to thank you for everything since week one for the help and encouragement!”