

ALAMO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

NVC

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Name: Andrew Hill

Department: Philosophy (Humanities)

Rank: Adjunct Instructor

Class: Ethics (PHIL 2306)

Date/Time: 9/26/11 - 2pm

PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS AND COMPETENCIES

- 5. OUTSTANDING:** performs very well; a model for other instructors;
4. VERY GOOD: performs well; demonstrates above average performance;
3. SATISFACTORY: performs in middle range; demonstrates average performance;
2. MARGINAL: demonstrates minimally acceptable teaching skills; some changes should be made to improve instruction;
1. UNSATISFACTORY: does not meet minimum requirements; major changes must be made to improve instruction;
0. NOT APPLICABLE: not able to observe/not relevant.

1. Mastery of subject matter

5 ☒ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0 ☐

Comments/Examples:

Hill clearly understood the material he was introducing. After returning and reviewing a previous test, the day was dedicated to an overview of the broad themes and ideas of Kantian and Thomist ethics. The outline Hill handed out provided to the students was helpful, and beginning with stories and examples (before diving into theory) was a good approach.

2. Prepared to conduct class

5 ☒ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0 ☐

Comments/Examples:

Clearly prepared to teach class. Handed back a previous test, went over that test with students, clarifying material where there were some misunderstandings. Prepared an outline of the new chapter for the students. Had good questions, examples, and discussion prompts ready.

3. Presentation of material

5 ☐ 4 ☒ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0 ☐

Comments/Examples:

Because the focus of the day was on providing an overview and introduction to a large set of complex ideas, some students may have been unclear about everything they would eventually cover. That having been said, it seems that the students did leave with a good, general picture of the benefits and drawbacks of absolutist moral reasoning.

4. Responses to student questions

5 ☒ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0 ☐

Comments/Examples:

Good, clear, and direct responses to student questions. Good follow-up use of student examples and ideas throughout class. Hill was clearly listening to the students' ideas and including those ideas into the larger classroom conversation.

5. Interaction with students

5 ☒ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0 ☐

Comments/Examples:

Student interaction was relaxed, engaging, and friendly. Students clearly felt comfortable participating in class discussion, talking with each other and with Hill. Hill used student contributions very well. Even when there were disagreements, everyone was respectful and open in sharing their ideas.

6. Classroom participation5 ☒ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0 ☐

Comments/Examples:

Students participated very well throughout class. Lively discussion about examples and stories from the text. Hill did an excellent job of incorporating student contributions and stories into his own presentation of the material.

7. Organization of subject matter5 ☐ 4 ☒ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0 ☐

Comments/Examples:

Overall structure of the class was good, with a movement back and forth between whole-class discussions and small-group interaction. The day was primarily about introducing students to new material, so it will take some time to see how well they can incorporate and use the philosophical ideas introduced.

8. Clarity of assignments5 ☐ 4 ☒ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0 ☐

Comments/Examples:

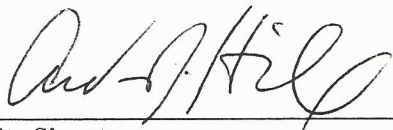
Review of the test was very clear and thorough. Misunderstandings and mistakes were covered, as were good performances. Discussion prompts were thoughtful - perhaps could have benefited from written (rather than only spoken) instructions to focus the students' conversations to include more of the theoretical/philosophical elements.

Overall Appraisal:

A very good class meeting. Hill had a clear plan for the day, reviewed the test well, and had a good method for introducing students to the new material they were starting on. Student interaction and participation was excellent. Hill led the class discussion well with clear goals and purposes, but without dominating the conversation. Students seemed to leave with a good taste of the conversations to come.

Recommendations:

As a way of introducing students to the material they would be discussing and learning over future class periods, the stories and outline worked well. Following up on that material will require a more detailed, slower-paced discussion. Comparing and contrasting theories is a good method (e.g., How do Kant and Thomas differ? How do these approaches differ from consequentialist reasoning?). Another good approach is to ask students to apply these ideas, after they've had the chance to learn about them further, to specific case studies (e.g. What would Kant/Thomas say about this situation? If you disagree with their approach, how would you support your own reasoning against as Kantian or Thomist critic? If you agree, how would you support your approach against a consequentialist critic?). Written prompts for these kinds of discussion would be helpful for many students.

SIGNATURES

28 Sept 2011

Faculty Signature

Date



27 Sept 2011

Evaluator Signature

Date

Stephen Barnes

Original to chair/supervisor; copy to faculty member.