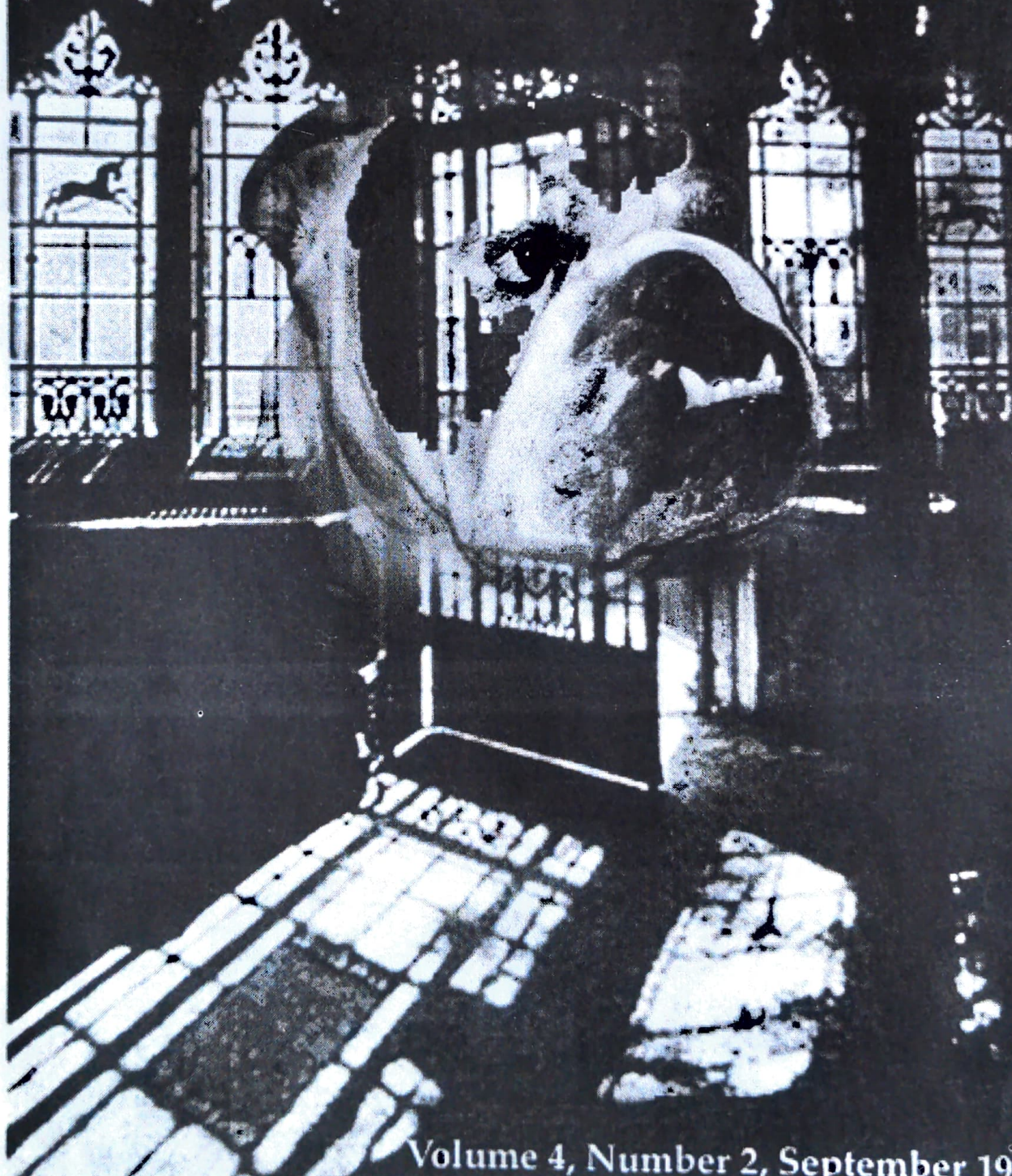


# Yale College Course Critique



Volume 4, Number 2, September 1997



# Yale College Course Critique

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## From the Editors . . . .

The staff of the *Yale College Course Critique* is proud to present you with our issue for Fall semester, 1997. In this 96-page edition, you will find approximately 180 courses and a few new features including ratings on "instruction," "material," and "difficulty" of a class. The staff is also proud to present you with our first-ever edition on the web, at [www.yale.edu/critique](http://www.yale.edu/critique).

Our goal is to be an information source for Yale students, providing data that we have collected in a way that can most help you in course selection. However, our publication is not an authority of any kind and professors often change various aspects of their classes from year to year; and the reviews you read may not fully represent what the course will be like this semester.

To keep our publication going, we ask that sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have not filled our surveys last spring do so on the web. With your help and our continued effort to compile as much information as we can, we hope to review every course with over twenty students in addition to courses in which Yale students deemed everyone should know about. Enjoy shopping period!

Paul Degenkolb, Diane Tran  
Editors

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**Special thanks to:** Yale College Dean's Office, departments that allowed access to departmental evaluation forms, the Registrar's Office, and the *Yale Herald*.

**Notice:** The editors of the *Yale College Course Critique* take reasonable steps to check the general accuracy of the information contained in this book. The book is intended for use only as a guide, and no guarantee of its accuracy can be made by the *Yale College Course Critique*. The opinions contained in the articles in this book are those of individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the *Yale College Course Critique*, its editors, or Yale University. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for publication. This magazine is published by Yale College students, and Yale University is not responsible for its contents.

### The *Yale College Course Critique*, Volume 4, Number 2, September 1997

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# Course Critique User's Guide

The professor (in charge) who taught the class. If the class is taught by multiple professors, it will say staff

The department, number, and title of the course. Courses are listed alphabetically as their titles appear in the Blue Book. Cross-listed courses appear in the department where the course description is found in the Blue Book.

## English 120a: Modern Prose-Advanced Writing

Instructor: L. King

(different professor for Fall '97).....

This notes if the course is being taught by a professor other than the one shown above.

The average rating of the "overall quality of the course" (independent of other ratings) on a scale of 1-5, as rated by respondents.

The average rating of the instruction of the course on a scale of 1-5

The average number of hours per week respondents spent on the course, NOT including class time.

The ratio of respondents who took the course for CR/D/F

The ratio of respondents who would recommend the course to a friend

**4.1**

**Good**

Instruction

**3.9**

Material

**4.2**

Difficulty

**4.5**

Hrs/wk: 6

Major: 1/43

NOT CR/D/F

Responses: 43/155

Recommended: n/a

6 SR, 12 JR, 22 SO, 115 FR

The average rating of the subject material being taught on a scale of 1-5

The average rating of the difficulty of the course on a scale of 1-5

The ratio of respondents who took the course for their major

The total number of students enrolled listed by year, NOT included non-undergraduates

### Rating key:

4.5-5.0 Outstanding  
3.5-4.4 Good  
2.5-3.4 Average  
1.5-2.4 Below Average  
below 1.4 Poor

The number people who responded to our survey out of the total number of people in the class. If the department allowed access to the professor's Dean's Evaluations, it will say "Dean's"



## Spanish 146a: Cultural Studies-Spain

Instructor: M. Crocetti

(Listed as Spanish 246a)

The course starts with the study of pre-historic Spain, with cave drawings and continues through contemporary history, with viewings of films and art slides. Students study the many diverse aspects of Spanish culture.

According to respondents, the subject material is engaging and Professor Crocetti is "enthusiastic" and "sweet." All the respondents were pleased with the professor; one student cited her as the best part of the course.

Four out of five respondents recommend the course. And overall, the respondents gave the course very high marks. But this clearly dissatisfied freshman felt, "It was a *total* gut...I didn't learn a thing." Yet one sophomore spent a good 6-7 hours a week on the course. "If you want to continue speaking and practicing Spanish, do not take this course! If you like being treated like a second grader, more power to you," continued the freshman respondent.

Another student criticized the course

**"If you want to continue speaking and practicing Spanish, do not take [Spanish 146]! If you like being treated like a second grader, more power to you."**

because it did not allow enough class participation. All in all, though, this seems to be a well-liked course with a dedicated professor who is concerned that her students do well.

3.8

Good

Instruction	Material	Difficulty	Hrs/wk:	CR/D/F:	Recommended:
3.8	3.4	2.8	3	1/5	4/5
			Major: 1/5	Responses: 5/18	5 SR, 7 JR, 2 SO, 4 FR

## Spanish 160a: Freshman Colloquium

Instructor: G. Dopico-Black

(Listed as Spanish 260a)

Spanish 160, the first college-level Spanish literature course, is designed to promote open discussion in small groups and general class discussion. The course covers three literary genres: poetry, narrative, and theatre.

Students enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and class discussions. One person recommended the course to any freshman interested in Latin American and Spanish literature. Another felt the course improved his Spanish "immensely" through engaging reading. However, another respondent felt his language skills improved minimally because of the lack of "focus on grammar and accuracy." Professor Dopico-Black received good reviews. She was "laid-back but encouraging."

Although one student had difficulty understanding her at times.

As far as workload, hours sent on the course per week ranged from 2 to 6. One student noted that the grading was fair. Because of the seminar format, some felt the number of students impeded a "genuine, spontaneous discussion."

**Requirements:** weekly writing response paragraphs, 3 hour-long exams (on each literary genre), final paper (approx. 8 pages)

4.3

Good

Instruction	Material	Difficulty	Hrs/wk:	CR/D/F:	Recommended:
4.5	4.8	3.9	4	0/5	5/5
			Major: 1/5	Responses: 5/21	0 SR, 1 JR, 1 SO, 19 FR

## Statistics 241a: Probability Theory

Instructor: N. Hengartner

(different professor for Fall '97)

Reviews for Statistics/Mathematics 241a were mostly positive. Although some discrepancies in how interesting the material was existed, everyone praised Professor Hengartner as excellent. One enthusiastic respondent from the class of '97 wrote of Professor Hengartner and the class, "Good professor and good material. Very thorough." This endorsement of Professor Hengartner seems to be the reasoning reason that students liked the course.

The one main drawback to the course was also outlined clearly in the respondents' forms. The first was the 9:30 a.m. lecture time. As most of us have experienced 9:30 a.m. class is not only difficult to wake up for, but also difficult to remain awake through, even if you make it there. However, judging from the glowing remarks about the course, most of the respondents seemed to have made it to class and found it interesting enough

No consensus on the difficulty of the material was apparent. A responding student, also from the class of '97, exclaimed "Class isn't too hard..." While another respondent cited "the difficulty of exams" as the worst part of the course. Yet another student responded with the comment that "the course increased dramatically in difficulty through the semester." Regardless of the opinion of the students about the difficulty of the course, most did agree that the grading of their assignments was stringent.

The bottom line seems to be, *take the class* if you are at all interested in Statistics. Although you will have to be at class at 9:30, it is a small price to pay for an outstanding professor. And although the course work is graded "harshly" you, like many of the respondents, may not find that course work very difficult or time consuming (6 hours per week). An added bonus is the evident real world applications of the material. "Real world applications, cool math, and a great prof."

4.2

Good

Instruction	Material	Difficulty	Hrs/wk:	CR/D/F:	Recommended:
4.7	4.2	n/a	6	1/15	10/15
			Major: 12/15	Responses: 15/35	11 SR, 16 JR, 5 SO, 2 FR

*Reported from Fall '96*

## Theater Studies 110a: Survey of Theater and Drama

Instructor: M. Robinson

Theater Studies 110a, "Survey of Theater and Drama", is one of the prerequisites for all Theater Studies majors. This course exposes students to major figures and works of theatrical development, from the Greeks to the present. There was a pretty large range of opinions in the appraisal of this class. One student commented, "You learn so much about theater history, and it's something good to know." On the other hand, one student said bitterly, "[This is] the only course that I have ever taken that I detested."

Generally, most of the students were satisfied with the professor's lecture style which was described as "dynamic" and "enthusiastic", but few thought the lectures "disorganized" and "incoherent". Sections were characterized as helpful, fabulous, and interesting by some, but some found them as a waste of time because the ma-

terials were already well covered in the lectures. TAs were described as very helpful and enthusiastic, and one of them, Taylor, was especially well-liked.

Many felt that this course is a must for anyone who enjoys reading. All of the respondents rated the subject material good and said that it enabled them to be exposed to various plays. Despite its strong ratings, most respondents felt there was too much reading, and that the class paced relatively fast—"I didn't feel like we had enough time to read each play in depth." However, at the same time, the readings were considered the most valuable part of course because they examined a variety of genres and styles of plays.

Nearly everyone who turned in a response felt that they gained a better understanding of theater history, and it was a good course in "sampling a lot of different ideas and styles".

3.5

Good

Instruction	Material	Difficulty	Hrs/wk:	CR/D/F:	Recommended:
3.5	4.1	2.8	3	1/25	18/25
			Major: 12/25	Responses: 25/99	1 SR, 1 JR, 12 SO, 85 FR