

Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

Jeddie Sophronius

1. Summary of Instructor's Ratings

Below is a summary of student teaching evaluations from the courses in which I served as the main instructor at the University of Virginia. Copies of the full set of student evaluations and comments are available upon request.

- ENWR 1510: Writing and Critical Inquiry (Spring 2023)
- ENGL 2506: Studies in Poetry (Fall 2022)
- ENWR 1510: Writing and Critical Inquiry (Fall 2022)
- ENWR 1510: Writing and Critical Inquiry (Spring 2022)
- ENWR 1510: Writing and Critical Inquiry (Fall 2021)
- ENCW 2300: Introduction to Poetry Writing (Spring 2021)
- ENCW 2300: Introduction to Poetry Writing (Fall 2020)

Table 1: Rating of Instructor (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the best)

Criteria / Course	UVA Fall 2020	UVA Spring 2021	UVA Fall 2021	UVA Spring 2022	UVA Fall 2022	UVA Spring 2023
Overall rating of instructor	5	4.71	4.47	4.79	4.88	4.81
Communicated course schedule & expectations	5	4.86	4.35	4.57	4.93	4.86
Communicated course objectives	5	4.86	4.13	4.43	4.76	4.76
Effectiveness in explaining concepts	5	4.86	4.47	4.57	4.76	4.89
Enthusiasm/ability to stimulate interest	4.9	4.86	3.71	4.07	4.51	4.57
Encouragement of class participation	5	4.86	4.76	4.71	4.85	4.92
Quality of feedback to students	5	4.86	4.53	4.71	4.76	4.84
Support students' learning	5	4.86	4.59	4.69	4.93	4.78
Fostering belongingness	5	4.86	4.59	4.79	4.9	4.95
Welcoming of diverse perspectives	4.82	4.86	4.53	4.86	4.95	4.89

2. Examples of Comments from Students

2.1 ENWR 1510: Writing and Critical Inquiry (Spring 2023)

"This course focuses on some topics that are very controversial. I appreciate how professor Jeddie listened to all perspectives and welcoming differing ideas as a ground for productive discussion rather than confrontation."

"Professor Sophronius is a very hands-on professor. He really helped me speak out more, and get more engaged with my thoughts. I really appreciated this class."

“We covered a variety of diverse topics that made every background feel appreciated. I really felt like Jeddie went out of his way to make the class as inclusive as possible.”

“We were taught about DWM writers which stands for dead white men writers in this course. Jeddie assigned us readings for various authors and writers and exposed us to different problems in our society like racism and classism. We learned the danger of a single narrative. Jeddie also respected our opinions while we have group discussions, asking us to clarify our answers to his questions.”

“In this class, students are encouraged to offer their perspective on the variety of issues that Jeddie discusses in class. Jeddie allows students to provide opinions, often fostering a class discussion on the issue that is being covered. He is very skilled at getting students to talk in class.”

“We explored different non DWM writers and their stories. I hadn’t been introduced to many non DWM writers in my education before college. Jeddie encouraged us to explore these writings and the importance of diversity in writing and the danger of a single-story narrative. I learned many important lessons in this regard.”

“Jeddie valued all of our thoughts and opinions equally—they listened to each of us very carefully and encouraged us regardless of who we were. We also spent time in class learning about authors and poets that were specifically not white or male, a demographic that tends to dominate in many literary classes. He asked us engaging questions about representation in media and if people in the class felt as if they were being portrayed appropriately by the masses.”

“During class, we sometimes had small–group discussions such as writing our answer on the chalkboard as a group and then sharing the reason behind our answer to the class. He also encouraged different people to participate without forcing/calling on them. We also had projects where we were able to share our perspectives with the class such as the presentation and the last workshop where everyone had to give feedback to their classmates’ project. The different feedback was very helpful for me to improve the final draft. Overall, he created a comfortable and fun class environment.”

“One of the biggest parts of this class was participation. Though we were graded on it, the task never felt like a burden to do and rather it came with ease. This is because of how the professor set the expectations that all thoughts and opinions were welcomed. This created an environment where people were expected to participate and express themselves, and I personally never felt judged in the class. If there were ever disagreements, they were always handled in a respectful way.”

“We used to discuss topics and issues with the whole class freely. So, people were able to talk to each other even if their viewpoints differed, and this Socratic seminar style of class did open my eyes to new viewpoints. Also, in class, we looked at literature and media from all sorts of sources, meaning we were exposed to poetry about war, identity, and other serious topics that most people in the class do not experience. He made an effort to ensure we stayed engaged with literary diverse authors.”

2.2 ENGL 2506: Studies in Poetry (Fall 2022)

“I had an incredibly positive experience; not only did I learn about and explore a diverse subset of different genres of poetry, but I took away a great amount from the class as a whole. Prof. Sophronius is a fantastic instructor, and a joy to have been able to see twice (or more) a week!”

“This course has made me completely reevaluate how I think of poetry and the human condition. Jeddie did an amazing job getting us invested in the intricacies of each poem without ever making them feel inaccessible to someone without full context of a subject. I enjoyed every class and learned a lot!”

“The course, with the selection of poems and books of poems to discuss, illustrated both the power and diversity in poetry. We got to see a variety of formats, themes, and writing styles and discuss them in class. The writing prompts allowed enough creativity that I could make what I wanted of them, and write about things I had found particularly interesting during class times, but also enough structure that I never felt I had no idea what to write”

“We read books by a ton of authors and they were from all walks of life. Jeddie treated us and the authors with the utmost respect and gave them all the same consideration.”

“As a class formatted around providing opportunities for everyone to chime in at their own discretion, there were no constraints towards the perspectives and opinions offered; while tying in many variable points of view from all participants, Prof. Sophronius was consistently able to teach a substantive lesson derived from our own diverse perspectives.”

“I felt safe and comfortable enough to share aspects of my own past during discussion, including things I generally am unable to talk about.”

“Some of the topics we covered in this class were difficult, they spanned from race to capitalism to war and other incredibly personal things that the poems we read grappled with. I was nervous at first to discuss them as a class but I think Jeddie taught all the material in a very culturally competent and respectful way. He also made an effort to get to know us as students and people and our experiences, allowing us to draw on them as part of the class. I feel that everyone’s cultures and backgrounds were respected and uplifted in this course and it was a great learning experience to learn about each other through these different identities. Jeddie was also very respectful as he guided the course to discuss these topics and did his due diligence to consistently educate us with a little background about the subjects we were discussing in a very honest way.”

“Our course deals with narratives of place and displacement. In order to efficiently discuss these narratives, the instructor has to be accepting of diverse perspective because this issue is subjective. I think my instructor did a great job incorporating different perspectives. This course consists of works which demonstrate the different forms place and displacement can come, as well as how transcultural this feeling, abstraction, and reality is.”

“Jeddie would always break down and analyze each individual poem and detail the literary devices they contained as well as the plot and deeper meaning of the poem.

While teaching he subsequently encouraged participation and discussion from students in the class and gave examples.”

“There was always an opportunity for an individual to speak up if they had a unique perspective or idea on a poem or activity in class. This was very helpful to all to feel more respected despite possible diversity in class, as we all learned from each others’ diversity.”

2.3 ENWR 1510: Writing and Critical Inquiry (Fall 2022)

“I really enjoyed this course and the assignments we completed. My understanding and interest for the topics at hand along with my writing skills improved during this course.”

“I thoroughly enjoyed this course and will miss being here every Monday Wednesday and Friday next semester!”

“I had lots of interesting in group discussions and demonstrations, discussing many important contemporary issues as well as greatly improving our writing. I feel that this is the best writing course I’ve ever taken, as we got to explore exciting new ideas and worked a lot with different types of literature. This is definitely the best course of the semester, and I feel I got lots of great feedback to improve my writing skills.”

“I was not expecting much coming into this course but I had read great things about the professor on rate my professor so I was curious to see what it was about. To my surprise, this class was even better than I expected and I honestly came to each class excited to see what the next topic we’d learn about was. The homework was easy and engaging and the professor was kind and funny. I will definitely take away so much from this class.”

“I really enjoyed this class and I think that this class is really important because all of our discussion were about real-world issues and what we should do on an individual level to help address these problems. I think that more people should take this class because it really changed my perspective on the world.”

“I think that everyone needs to know that Jeddie Sophronius is an incredible teacher. Not only did he connect with each of us on an individual level, but his class bonded me and all of my classmates. Our lectures were engaging and fun. Jeddie made me look forward to my ENWR because I knew that I would get to learn from a variety of perspectives and the class would move in the direction we chose. This University needs more professors like Jeddie. They are a treasure.”

“ENWR 1510 with Mr. Sophronius was by far one of the best classes I have ever taken throughout my 13 years of academic courses. Mr. Sophronius was always readily available for my random writing questions and came to each class with a positive attitude that encouraged me to learn”

“I LOVED this course. I think we learned about a lot of things relevant to the real world while simultaneously helping me to improve my writing.”

“Jeddie ensured every student’s opinion was valued and respected. He encouraged all students to speak in discussions and offered a safe place for diverse opinions. Most of this is due to Jeddie’s charismatic personality and the ability for students to feel trusting of him. He creates a very personal and friendly class atmosphere.”

“Professor Sophronius allowed us to facilitate our own discussions and allowed us to disagree with one another without much intervention. He allowed us to feel like adults with autonomy carrying our own conversation.”

“Professor Sophronius introduced texts from cultures around the world as well as their own personal experiences as a professor into many of the lectures. They also emphasized discussing these issues from a globalized perspective instead of a westernized one”

“Professor Sophronius taught our discussions in a way to give everyone a chance to speak up. When discussing through smaller groups or even as a class, he would give extra chances for everyone to be able to give their opinion. He also always stayed available after class or offered extra office hours for help in case some people wouldn’t be able to make the ones he released at the start of the year.”

“Jeddie began each class with a positive perspective and a great attitude. He prefaced every difficult and politically controversial topic with a warm, kind, and appreciative approach. Never once was Jeddie discriminatory to anyone or anything at any level.”

“A lot of the time, he would play devil’s advocate or argue an opposing side. This oftentimes let others express their opinions that were different from others in the class. Additionally, he would urge us to consider other opinions.”

“Professor Sophronius is from Indonesia and grew up in Australia, and he offered unique perspectives from his childhood. He was sure to create a neutral environment during class discussions so that people from both sides could make their arguments.”

“As a class, we had discussion about very serious problems. All different perspectives were respected and welcomed during the discussions.”

“Jeddie always told us he was here for us, and when everything happened with the shooting, he sent us daily emails to remind us that we are loved and checked in with us which was sweet”

2.4 ENWR 1510: Writing and Critical Inquiry (Spring 2022)

“Overall I really enjoyed this course more than I thought I would. You helped me look at writing through a different lens and learn that it does not all have to be super structured, it can be fun!”

“I initially walked into the class a little concerned given the subject of the ENWR. However, I can very confidently say that Mr. Sophronius did a fantastic job helping us to develop our writing skills and the ways in which we may narrate our own personal lives (both the beautiful and the ”ugly”).”

“This course deepened my understanding of myself as a writer and myself as a person. The assignments made me reflect on myself and also improved my writing skills. The course was very engaging overall and the class discussions were always very interesting.”

“Overall, I had a good time in the course. I took this course because one of my friends took it last semester and he said it wasn’t bad so I went into the course thinking it would be a good class and I was satisfied. Many of the topics we discussed in class were interesting and I feel like I learned a lot while improving my writing a good amount. The only small issue that I would say I had is that I felt that the writing assignment #2 & #3 were a little too close together but that didn’t pose any real issues. Professor Sophronius was very understanding if I was honest with him about not being able to submit an assignment on time which was helpful because this was a very busy semester for me.”

“I would say that they even encouraged diverse perspectives. I felt that he was constantly challenging me to consider perspectives different than mine to get a better picture.”

“Mr. Sophronius always pushed for feedback from all of his students, and he always welcomed opinions from everyone even if they went against his own or those of others. I never once felt like I was silenced or excluded from the rest of the class. Without a doubt, he loved to hear his students’ thoughts on the subjects that we went over throughout our assigned and in-class readings.”

“He was always open and kind to any differences shared in the class. He shared his own experiences which inspired everyone else to speak up as well.”

“The entire class was kind of centered around diverse perspective, Mr. Sophronius made these discussions particularly engaging and allowed us to debate taboo topics.”

“Professor Sophronius was always open to hearing different perspectives and enjoyed discussions about varying opinions in class. Overall it was a very pleasant environment and not one where I felt concerned about sharing my opinions.”

“A few members of our class are international students or from diverse backgrounds. As we covered many varying subjects and issues, the professor welcomed everyone to share their different perspectives and explain how their backgrounds influence this perspective. I was able to learn a lot from my peers and always felt welcome to share my own opinions as well.”

2.5 ENWR 1510: Writing and Critical Inquiry (Fall 2021)

“This was the most I have learned in an English class in years. I feel like I learned everything I should have learned over the last four years in one semester.”

“I feel like Jeddie truly wanted me to grow as a writer and I feel that I have”

“Overall, I think that this course was very useful and a nice change on the type of writing I was used to doing in high school. I liked that the instructor gave students the opportunity to share their stories and experiences through various unique writing assignments”

“I took this class because I had to take an ENWR and it honestly has been better than I thought it would be. There were times when I didn’t want to come to class because I don’t really like writing but there were also times when I was actually excited. Jeddie engaged everyone very well and he was a great teacher.”

“Overall, I had an enjoyable experience in this course. This course expanded my knowledge on modern-day topics, expanded my horizon on what a poem can be defined as, and helped me improve as a writer by letting us be creative about what topics and formatting options we could choose.”

“I really enjoyed this course. I specifically chose to go with studying about cultures because I had previously enjoyed Anthropology back in high school. I am glad I took this course because it introduced me to different types of articles and very interesting discussions. The instructor seemed really interested in what he was teaching and put his heart into discussing everything and teaching us in class.”

“We looked at a lot of well-rounded perspectives and I felt everyone had an opportunity to express their opinion even if it went against the mainstream class discussion.”

“Jeddie always wanted to hear our opinions and successfully created a safe environment where everyone’s unique opinions were recognized and considered respectfully”

“He provided examples of short writings and essays from many different cultures and some of our writing assignments involved researching rituals from other cultures around the world.”

“The instructor always gives students the opportunity to share their opinions in an open-minded and non-judgmental setting. The instructor welcomes debate and clashing opinions.”

“We discussed many cultures in this class and Jeddie always allowed students to engage in the conversations. He allowed students to voice their opinions in class and in their papers.”

“All types of comments were always welcome. There was no judgment and even as an introvert, I rarely felt scared to share my thoughts in front of everyone.”

2.6 ENCW 2300: Introduction to Poetry Writing (Spring 2021)

“I really enjoyed the poetry workshop. Being able to listen to other people’s work and offer praise and suggestions was my favorite part of the whole class.”

“We had real-time classes which although more difficult over zoom always helped my understanding of the course material, and it included both class discussion and instruction”

“Jeddie is a wonderful professor who treats his students with respect, gives thoughtful feedback, and clearly cares deeply about his students. He was available outside of class to help with assignments, as well as to build a connection with his students. His poems are also wonderful.”

“I loved this course!”

“love this class and love this professor. He is one of the best and kindest people I have encountered and he was so passionate about poetry and that made taking this class so awesome!! I would absolutely recommend this to a friend”

“This course was my absolute favorite class I’ve taken so far at uva. The instructor and the class were nice and very welcoming to whatever suggestion was said. I would definitely recommend this class to some who is looking to get into poetry.”

“During our in-class discussions, Jeddie allowed everyone to voice their thoughts on poems we read and how we interpreted them. He would respect everyone’s thoughts.”

“Jeddie actively sought out opinions different than his own from students with different experiences with regard to gender, race, and religion. There were poems regarding those topics in the course material, as well, and he worked to integrate them smoothly into the discussions in order to bring attention to the experiences of others.”

“Always open to everyone’s thoughts and his feedback was very uplifting yet helpful.”

“he was so kind and welcoming to all and many classmates shared really deep poems about their struggles with being different and they were praised”

“With all of our poem assignments, but specifically during the poetry workshop, we were allowed to write about anything we wanted to. Some being happy but a lot were very deep and personal. there was never a moment when this teacher looked or sound like he was uncomfortable or like he was judging us. I, and everyone else in the class, really appreciate that.”

“He encouraged and welcomed participation, and I always felt supported in class.”

“This was my favorite class that I have taken so far at UVA. I genuinely loved and appreciated every assignment that was given during this class. And I thought the end of the year bios were the cutest thing. Please continue doing what you’re doing”

2.7 ENCW 2300: Introduction to Poetry Writing (Fall 2020)

"I really enjoyed it. Every time this class met, it was what I was the most excited about in the day. Jeddie created a warm, friendly and creative environment in which I felt supported and safe to take risks with my work. I enjoyed the way the class meetings felt and I really appreciated Jeddie's feedback on our poems and the way that he shared other poetry with us."

"This was my favorite course of the whole semester. Absolutely amazing. The prof. genuinely cares about his students, and the class was such a great environment to learn in."

"This was an amazing class. I went in not knowing much about writing poetry but left feeling truly capable of crafting work I can be proud of."

"A great introduction to poetry and really helped me build confidence and broaden my horizons"

"It was literally amazing, and I had a great time in this class."

"He valued everyone's poetry equally, regardless of what it was talking about. Additionally, he created a course packet that was full of diverse poets and lots of interesting material that was provocative and new to me. He is an amazing listener and created a lovely learning environment for everyone."

"The instructor was very open-minded. He chose poems from all different cultures to make sure everyone in the class felt included and had poems to relate to."

"jeddie showed us poems from all over the world, growing my perspective from just western-centric poetry. he also encouraged us to write poetry that embraces our differences and diversity. he was the best!"

"The reading list which Jeddie created for the course exposed the class to a myriad of different perspectives and diversity of thought and experience I have not experienced in prior poetry courses."

"Jeddie always asked students for their opinions on specific poems and never shut down ideas. He truly did let students express themselves which in turn developed their confidence."

"The professor did not stick to Westernized poetry as I had seen throughout high school, but instead introduced the class to a variety of poems on both difficult and meaningful topics. The professor also created a safe environment to share our poetry, even poems with potentially uncomfortable subjects."

"He respected everyone's views and we read from a diverse range of poets. It wasn't all boring white men, it included all genders and religions and races and sexualities. He allowed us to talk about our own experiences, and I felt very safe talking about personal experiences in this class."