

University of Michigan
Fall 2020 Individual Response Report
POLSCI 514-001: Soc Sci Comput
Fabricio Vasselai

10 out of 11 students responded to this evaluation.

Course Name: POLSCI 514-001: Soc Sci Comput

Instructor Name: Fabricio Vasselai

1. **This course advanced my understanding of the subject matter.(Q1631)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
2. **My interest in the subject has increased because of this course.(Q1632)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
3. **I knew what was expected of me in this course.(Q1633)**
 - ◊ Almost Always
4. **Overall, this was an excellent course.(Q1)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
5. **I had a strong desire to take this course.(Q4)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
6. **As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was...(Q891)**
 - ◊ Lighter
7. **How did you participate in this course? (Q1854)**
 - ◊ Attended most sessions synchronously online (e.g., in a zoom meeting)
8. **Given the format of the course (e.g., fully online, in-person, etc.), what teaching methods worked well? (Q1855)**
 - ◊ online class works well
9. **What were the greatest challenges to your learning in this course format? (Q1856)**
 - ◊ concentration for two hours.
10. **Overall, Fabricio Vasselai was an excellent teacher.(Q2)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
11. **Fabricio Vasselai seemed well prepared for class meetings.(Q230)**
 - ◊ Almost Always
12. **Fabricio Vasselai explained material clearly.(Q199)**
 - ◊ Almost Always
13. **Fabricio Vasselai treated students with respect.(Q217)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
14. **I gained a good understanding of concepts/principles in this field. (Q121)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
15. **I learned to identify main points and central issues in this field. (Q123)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
16. **I developed ability to carry out original research in this area. (Q128)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree

17. **I developed an ability to evaluate new work in this field. (Q129)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
18. **Writing assignments were interesting and stimulating. (Q319)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
19. **Reading assignments seemed carefully chosen. (Q326)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
20. **Students felt comfortable asking questions. (Q892)**
 - ◊ 1
21. **Fabricio Vasselai stressed important points in lectures/discussions. (Q203)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
22. **Fabricio Vasselai acknowledged all questions insofar as possible. (Q216)**
 - ◊ 1
23. **Fabricio Vasselai was willing to meet and help students outside class. (Q219)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
24. **My expected grade in this course is... (Q896)**
 - ◊ A
25. **Comment on the quality of instruction in this course. (Q900)**
 - ◊ Fabricio does a great job in catering to students having different programming skills – making the class interesting and accessible to everyone.
26. **In case I teach Polsci 514 in the Winter term as well, what topics would you like to see covered?**
 - ◊ text analysis

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 - ◊ Strongly Agree
5. **I had a strong desire to take this course.(Q4)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
6. **As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was...(Q891)**
 - ◊ Typical
7. **How did you participate in this course? (Q1854)**
 - ◊ Attended most sessions synchronously online (e.g., in a zoom meeting)
8. **Given the format of the course (e.g., fully online, in-person, etc.), what teaching methods worked well? (Q1855)**
 - ◊ Fully online
9. **What were the greatest challenges to your learning in this course format? (Q1856)**
 - ◊ I am a new user for R, but the instructor's teaching is very clear, especially his notes, step-by-step, and very easy to follow.
10. **Overall, Fabricio Vasselai was an excellent teacher.(Q2)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
11. **Fabricio Vasselai seemed well prepared for class meetings.(Q230)**
 - ◊ Almost Always
12. **Fabricio Vasselai explained material clearly.(Q199)**
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- 22. **Fabricio Vasselai acknowledged all questions insofar as possible. (Q216)**
 - ◊ 1
- 23. **Fabricio Vasselai was willing to meet and help students outside class. (Q219)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
- 24. **My expected grade in this course is... (Q896)**
 - ◊ A
- 25. **Comment on the quality of instruction in this course. (Q900)**
 - ◊ Thank you!
- 26. **In case I teach Polsci 514 in the Winter term as well, what topics would you like to see covered?**
 - ◊ sublime text

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 - ◊ Agree
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 - ◊ Almost Always
4. **Overall, this was an excellent course.(Q1)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
5. **I had a strong desire to take this course.(Q4)**
 - ◊ Neutral
6. **As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was...(Q891)**
 - ◊ Typical
7. **How did you participate in this course? (Q1854)**
 - ◊ Attended most sessions synchronously online (e.g., in a zoom meeting)
8. **Given the format of the course (e.g., fully online, in-person, etc.), what teaching methods worked well? (Q1855)**
 - ◊ I liked how we had synchronous instruction, because we had the ability to ask Fabricio questions whenever they arose.
9. **What were the greatest challenges to your learning in this course format? (Q1856)**
 - ◊ I actually think that this course format helped my learning, because I could see what code Fabricio was typing, and had the ability to run it on my own during class.
10. **Overall, Fabricio Vasselai was an excellent teacher.(Q2)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
11. **Fabricio Vasselai seemed well prepared for class meetings.(Q230)**
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 - ◊ N/A
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 - ◊ Agree
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21. **Fabricio Vasselai stressed important points in lectures/discussions. (Q203)**

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22. **Fabricio Vasselai acknowledged all questions insofar as possible. (Q216)**

- ◊ 1

23. **Fabricio Vasselai was willing to meet and help students outside class. (Q219)**

- ◊ Strongly Agree

24. **My expected grade in this course is... (Q896)**

- ◊ A

25. **Comment on the quality of instruction in this course. (Q900)**

- ◊ Fabricio was an excellent instructor. Not only does he cover the material thoroughly and is always prepared for class, but he genuinely cares about students' learning and well-being. Also, he welcomes feedback, and is constantly seeking feedback so he can adjust his class to maximize student learning. All in all it was a fantastic class.

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2. **My interest in the subject has increased because of this course.(Q1632)**
 - ◊ Agree
3. **I knew what was expected of me in this course.(Q1633)**
 - ◊ Frequently
4. **Overall, this was an excellent course.(Q1)**
 - ◊ Neutral
5. **I had a strong desire to take this course.(Q4)**
 - ◊ Neutral
6. **As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was...(Q891)**
 - ◊ Heavier
7. **How did you participate in this course? (Q1854)**
 - ◊ Attended most sessions synchronously online (e.g., in a zoom meeting)
8. **Given the format of the course (e.g., fully online, in-person, etc.), what teaching methods worked well? (Q1855)**
 - ◊ It was beneficial when the professor would allow us to work out problems during the his lecture so it wasn't just two hours of us watching him code
9. **Overall, Fabricio Vasselai was an excellent teacher.(Q2)**
 - ◊ Agree
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 - ◊ Disagree
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 - ◊ Agree
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- ◊ Strongly Agree

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24. **In case I teach Polsci 514 in the Winter term as well, what topics would you like to see covered?**

- ◊ text analysis

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 - ◊ Agree
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 - ◊ Frequently
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 - ◊ Strongly Agree
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 - ◊ Agree
6. **As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was...(Q891)**
 - ◊ Typical
7. **How did you participate in this course? (Q1854)**
 - ◊ Attended most sessions synchronously online (e.g., in a zoom meeting)
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 - ◊ N/A
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 - ◊ 1
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 - ◊ Strongly Agree
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 - ◊ 1
21. **Fabricio Vasselai was willing to meet and help students outside class. (Q219)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree

22. **My expected grade in this course is... (Q896)**

- ◊ N/A

23. **In case I teach Polsci 514 in the Winter term as well, what topics would you like to see covered?**

- ◊ Text analysis
Scraping text from the internet

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 - ◊ Strongly Agree
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 - ◊ Strongly Agree
6. **As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was...(Q891)**
 - ◊ Lighter
7. **How did you participate in this course? (Q1854)**
 - ◊ Attended most sessions synchronously online (e.g., in a zoom meeting)
8. **Given the format of the course (e.g., fully online, in-person, etc.), what teaching methods worked well? (Q1855)**
 - ◊ Coding on the fly, directly visible on my screen at home.
9. **What were the greatest challenges to your learning in this course format? (Q1856)**
 - ◊ Higher threshold to talk in the virtual format in the sense of "can you have a quick look why this does not work".
10. **Overall, Fabricio Vasselai was an excellent teacher.(Q2)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
11. **Fabricio Vasselai seemed well prepared for class meetings.(Q230)**
 - ◊ Almost Always
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 - ◊ Strongly Agree

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- ◊ 1
23. **Fabricio Vasselai was willing to meet and help students outside class. (Q219)**
- ◊ Strongly Agree
24. **My expected grade in this course is... (Q896)**
- ◊ A
25. **Comment on the quality of instruction in this course. (Q900)**
- ◊ Much room for questions, thank you! Very responsive to student feedback throughout the course, thank you! Great connections to 599, I understood the statistical concepts better when you explained them and also when the assignments covered them. Sometimes, I found the (changing) deadlines confusing and also how different assignments contribute to the final grade.
26. **In case I teach Polsci 514 in the Winter term as well, what topics would you like to see covered?**
- ◊ How to plot functions, maybe piecewise/stepwise. They came up so often in 598 and 599, and I am tired of drawing them by hand.

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 - ◊ Agree
2. **My interest in the subject has increased because of this course.(Q1632)**
 - ◊ Agree
3. **I knew what was expected of me in this course.(Q1633)**
 - ◊ Sometimes
4. **Overall, this was an excellent course.(Q1)**
 - ◊ Agree
5. **I had a strong desire to take this course.(Q4)**
 - ◊ Agree
6. **As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was...(Q891)**
 - ◊ Typical
7. **How did you participate in this course? (Q1854)**
 - ◊ Attended most sessions synchronously online (e.g., in a zoom meeting)
8. **Given the format of the course (e.g., fully online, in-person, etc.), what teaching methods worked well? (Q1855)**
 - ◊ Yes, the synchronous online meeting has worked well.
9. **What were the greatest challenges to your learning in this course format? (Q1856)**
 - ◊ I felt that the topics for each class were a little unorganized. It was nice to be flexible, yet it would be better to have some fixed curriculum as well.
10. **Overall, Fabricio Vasselai was an excellent teacher.(Q2)**
 - ◊ Agree
11. **Fabricio Vasselai seemed well prepared for class meetings.(Q230)**
 - ◊ Frequently
12. **Fabricio Vasselai explained material clearly.(Q199)**
 - ◊ Frequently
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 - ◊ Agree
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 - ◊ Agree
18. **Writing assignments were interesting and stimulating. (Q319)**
 - ◊ Agree
19. **Reading assignments seemed carefully chosen. (Q326)**
 - ◊ Neutral
20. **Students felt comfortable asking questions. (Q892)**
 - ◊ 2
21. **Fabricio Vasselai stressed important points in lectures/discussions. (Q203)**

- ◊ Agree
22. **Fabricio Vasselai acknowledged all questions insofar as possible. (Q216)**
- ◊ 2
23. **Fabricio Vasselai was willing to meet and help students outside class. (Q219)**
- ◊ Agree
24. **My expected grade in this course is... (Q896)**
- ◊ A
25. **Comment on the quality of instruction in this course. (Q900)**
- ◊ I appreciate the R codes the instructor prepared and many pro-tips for the beginners. Overall, the instruction was really helpful for me to get familiar with R and LaTeX.
26. **In case I teach Polsci 514 in the Winter term as well, what topics would you like to see covered?**
- ◊ R for statistical analysis and data visualization would be helpful!

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8. **Given the format of the course (e.g., fully online, in-person, etc.), what teaching methods worked well? (Q1855)**
 - ◊ The synchronous online instruction worked well. I actually think this format makes a lot of sense even in non-COVID times because I was able to follow along very well in my own RStudio when I had the instructor's screen on my second monitor.
9. **What were the greatest challenges to your learning in this course format? (Q1856)**
 - ◊ N/A
10. **Overall, Fabricio Vasselai was an excellent teacher.(Q2)**
 - ◊ Agree
11. **Fabricio Vasselai seemed well prepared for class meetings.(Q230)**
 - ◊ Almost Always
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- ◊ Strongly Agree

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- ◊ 1

23. **Fabricio Vasselai was willing to meet and help students outside class. (Q219)**

- ◊ Strongly Agree

24. **My expected grade in this course is... (Q896)**

- ◊ A

25. **Comment on the quality of instruction in this course. (Q900)**

- ◊ The instruction was good overall, but I have a few suggestions for improvements to the course in the future. First, this class did not really need to be two hours... it could have been an hour and a half or even an hour honestly. It's not that the instruction pace was too slow, it's just that at a certain point with code you can't keep going with examples before it starts to get tough to follow. Second, the no collaboration policy doesn't make a lot of sense to me. I will almost certainly never write code that isn't overseen by other people. Additionally, I don't think the solutions to the homework in this class were so basic and obvious that talking it out with each other wouldn't be helpful. I really don't think in a graduate course you have to be too worried about people blindly copying answers, and by favoring non-collaboration over collaboration I think our ability to discuss ideas and learn from each other suffers. Third, this class started relatively lowkey, but the sheer volume of homework became significantly more challenging by the end. The Datacamp exercises actually take a really long time. They can be beneficial, so I'm not saying to do away with Datacamp entirely, but I do think parsing them back a bit would make me feel less like I'm just trying to get through them and more motivated to actually try and learn from them. I'm feeling this point especially hard right now staring down the barrel of 5 full Datacamp courses that have to be completed in two weeks along side other finals and a problem set in 514. I would just recommend being more mindful of the workload that Datacamp entails. Fourth, the assignments designed by the instructor are pretty good, but I would appreciate if all of them told you what result to expect at the end of the code. Some exercises had this so you could check your answer, and I found that I learned a lot more by knowing I had written the correct code (which I could verify by checking against the answer it was supposed to return) than turning in an assignment and hoping I was in the ballpark. To be clear, I'm not requesting the problem answers, but if the exercise code is supposed to return 0.339492, then it's helpful to know that so I can correct my code until I'm getting at the right answer. This is a really helpful guided learning strategy.

Overall, I think this is a good class and I'm pleasantly surprised by the things I can now do in R and Latex. The suggestions I have outlined above are suggestions for improvement, but I would like to stress that ultimately I thought Fabricio did a good job as our instructor. I went from a complete R and Latex novice to being relatively comfortable with each, so kudos to a job well done.

26. **In case I teach Polsci 514 in the Winter term as well, what topics would you like to see covered?**

- ◊ I would like to see less general R topics (e.g. R functions and commands) and more realistic examples, such as working with actual datasets to do regression or other forms of analysis. Additionally, rumor has it that the Winter 514 features a long research paper at the end. If this is true, I don't really understand why or what the purpose would be of such a task. I think time next semester would be best spent in a similar fashion to this semester, just with more applied topics.

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 - ◊ Agree
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 - ◊ Frequently
4. **Overall, this was an excellent course.(Q1)**
 - ◊ Agree
5. **I had a strong desire to take this course.(Q4)**
 - ◊ Disagree
6. **As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was...(Q891)**
 - ◊ Heavier
7. **How did you participate in this course? (Q1854)**
 - ◊ Attended most sessions synchronously online (e.g., in a zoom meeting)
8. **Given the format of the course (e.g., fully online, in-person, etc.), what teaching methods worked well? (Q1855)**
 - ◊ This was a hard course to take online, because I feel it was not as interactive as it should have been. I appreciated when we were asked to participate. Problem sets and DataCamp were useful, but I thought it was too much coursework for a 2 credit course.
9. **What were the greatest challenges to your learning in this course format? (Q1856)**
 - ◊ –It was hard to code and look at the screen using the same computer.
10. **Overall, Fabricio Vasselai was an excellent teacher.(Q2)**
 - ◊ Agree
11. **Fabricio Vasselai seemed well prepared for class meetings.(Q230)**
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19. **Reading assignments seemed carefully chosen. (Q326)**
 - ◊ N/A
20. **Students felt comfortable asking questions. (Q892)**
 - ◊ 2

21. **Fabricio Vasselai stressed important points in lectures/discussions. (Q203)**
- ◊ Agree
22. **Fabricio Vasselai acknowledged all questions insofar as possible. (Q216)**
- ◊ 1
23. **Fabricio Vasselai was willing to meet and help students outside class. (Q219)**
- ◊ Strongly Agree
24. **My expected grade in this course is... (Q896)**
- ◊ B
25. **Comment on the quality of instruction in this course. (Q900)**
- ◊ –Fabricio really cared about this course and was very dedicated to teaching the students important concepts. I learned a lot about R and I'm grateful. He was always ready to answer emails and any questions during office hours. I just felt the coursework was too high for a two credit course and I would have appreciated being able to run questions by classmates in the problem sets.
26. **In case I teach Polsci 514 in the Winter term as well, what topics would you like to see covered?**
- ◊ –Appending datasets
 - Discontinuity Regression
 - Text and Space Analysis

Course Name: POLSCI 514-001: Soc Sci Comput

Instructor Name: Fabricio Vasselai

1. **This course advanced my understanding of the subject matter.(Q1631)**
 - ◊ Agree
2. **My interest in the subject has increased because of this course.(Q1632)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
3. **I knew what was expected of me in this course.(Q1633)**
 - ◊ Almost Always
4. **Overall, this was an excellent course.(Q1)**
 - ◊ Agree
5. **I had a strong desire to take this course.(Q4)**
 - ◊ Disagree
6. **As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was...(Q891)**
 - ◊ Lighter
7. **How did you participate in this course? (Q1854)**
 - ◊ Attended most sessions synchronously online (e.g., in a zoom meeting)
8. **Given the format of the course (e.g., fully online, in-person, etc.), what teaching methods worked well? (Q1855)**
 - ◊ Yes
9. **What were the greatest challenges to your learning in this course format? (Q1856)**
 - ◊ none
10. **Overall, Fabricio Vasselai was an excellent teacher.(Q2)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
11. **Fabricio Vasselai seemed well prepared for class meetings.(Q230)**
 - ◊ Almost Always
12. **Fabricio Vasselai explained material clearly.(Q199)**
 - ◊ Frequently
13. **Fabricio Vasselai treated students with respect.(Q217)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
14. **I gained a good understanding of concepts/principles in this field. (Q121)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
15. **I learned to identify main points and central issues in this field. (Q123)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree
16. **I developed ability to carry out original research in this area. (Q128)**
 - ◊ N/A
17. **I developed an ability to evaluate new work in this field. (Q129)**
 - ◊ Neutral
18. **Writing assignments were interesting and stimulating. (Q319)**
 - ◊ N/A
19. **Reading assignments seemed carefully chosen. (Q326)**
 - ◊ N/A
20. **Students felt comfortable asking questions. (Q892)**
 - ◊ 1
21. **Fabricio Vasselai stressed important points in lectures/discussions. (Q203)**
 - ◊ Strongly Agree

22. **Fabricio Vasselai acknowledged all questions insofar as possible. (Q216)**
- ◊ 1
23. **Fabricio Vasselai was willing to meet and help students outside class. (Q219)**
- ◊ Strongly Agree
24. **My expected grade in this course is... (Q896)**
- ◊ A
25. **Comment on the quality of instruction in this course. (Q900)**
- ◊ Great quality, very detailed explanations, and intuitive ways to learn how to code. I would just add that an important limitation was that there weren't much in-class exercises or small practices during sessions to apply the tools right away and figure out if we had questions.
26. **In case I teach Polsci 514 in the Winter term as well, what topics would you like to see covered?**
- ◊ 1. Web scrapping
 - 2. Further applications of Monte Carlo simulations
 - 3. How to reduce memory use and time for our code
 - 4. OCR and text analysis
 - 5. Machine learning