

Comments Summaries

James Bruce

Russian Covert Intervention in the 2016 U.S. Election and the Role of Intelligence in American Democracy
Venice - 1/12/19

133 evaluations received

32 included comments

Positive Comments about Presenter

- Timely Topic
- Great Speaker (2)
- Bring him back (3)
- Fantastic Speaker
- Amazing
- Incredibly important current issue
- Speaker generated more questions than any other speaker
- Excellent speaker (4)
- Invite him back
- Great presentation and believable
- Outstanding
- Best ever
- Best speaker in the last 8 years
- Very good
- Appreciate that speaker left out his political views and tried to be as objective as possible
- Stuck to the facts. Provided many legitimate sources of his information used for his presentation

Interesting Comments about Presenter

- Clear in his own bias
- Answers were too long (3)
- Hard to understand
- Slurs his words
- Speaker was extremely biased, cherry picked his data and was flat wrong on some of his statements
- Too drawn out on answers

Neutral Comments

- Had difficulty staying in time period however I enjoyed the detail

- I found the Q&A very interesting. I see no reason why the speaker cannot answer all questions. People can leave if they choose to do so. This pertains to all Q & A at SILL
- It would have helped to have the material in powerpoint
- Would like to hear more about what is or can be done, to protect our electoral system from foreign interference
- Wish we had more time

Miscellaneous Comments

- I had great trouble hearing the presenter. I wear hearing aids. I'll try your system next time
- I live in Sarasota but downtown. Parking for church? Is so bad

Daniel Ziblatt
How Democracies Die: Global Development
Sarasota - 1/22/19

106 evaluations received

All 5 ratings: 38; All 5 or 4 ratings: 21; Lower ratings: 50

Comments:

- Needs larger charts/graphs
- One of best SILL speakers
- Consider having captions on slides
- Excellent
- Narration is informative
- Topic very timely
- Found lecture very interesting
- Slides very ineffective (4)
- Needs better slides
- Speaks too fast to follow (7)
- No slides please
- Slides not appropriate
- Wish he talked about U.S.
- Visuals very hard to read;
- Poor acoustics;
- Emphasis on Europe became confusing
- Board should limit speaker & question time and enforce it
- Book far better than talk
- Not relevant to USA
- Unfair-USA scheduled for tomorrow
- Many speaker's facts not facts at all
- Nothing new here--a waste of time;
- Too focused on details, not put in context
- Too many acronyms
- Tried to pack 5 lectures into one hour

Carla Koppell

A Seat at the Table: Gender, Power, & Global Security

Venice - 1/29/19

96 evaluations received

10 comments

Positive Comments:

- Interesting topic
- Invite her back
- Very relevant info
- Excellent graphics
- Wonderful speaker with an important topic
- Carla is knowledgeable and articulate with amazing experience on this topic. She gave a powerful presentation

Threads of Thoughts

- Invite her back to see what progress has been made
- More women speakers and racial equality
- I suggest that SILL offer this type of presentation as a way to look at how the hot spots in the world that previous speakers this year have addressed in North Korea, Russia, Middle East can be calmed down with female presence

Miscellaneous Comments

- I attend quite often. Today the speaker system was great. Carla was not at the podium and I could hear/understand every word. Last week it was horrible. The guy sounded garbled and content was lost.
- I complained and was told to use "your" special system!!! Please continue to use today's sound equipment.
- I think you need a Sergeant at Arms to escort cell phone offenders from the room. Your diplomatic requests aren't working (He said half tongue in cheek)

Dr. Jeremi Suri

The Impossible Presidency: The Rise and Fall of America's Highest Office

Lakewood Ranch 2/7/19

Let me start by saying that this is the highest evaluation I have seen for one of our speakers. He was a rock star !

Lots of "all 5's" but virtually no comments..:

-Four fives and one six!

-Five fives: 75

-Four fives: 14

-Three fives: 1

-Five ones: 1

-No comments

Amb. Marc Grossman

How Wars End: Resolving Conflicts Through Diplomacy

Sarasota 2/13/19

- Took too much time for introduction
- Excellent speaker
- Too many speeches during question period
- Parking garages are full, may not subscribe next year
- Problem Palm Avenue parking garage.

Dr. Aron Troen
Memory Matters in the Aging Brain
Sarasota 2/19/19

Ratings of Dr. Troen were virtually off the charts: 57 "all fives" ratings and 25 with four fives, out of a total of 146 ratings submitted---the largest number we have seen this year, I believe..

And we have had numerous comments and suggestions. Excerpts follow:

- A little too heavy on the science
- Very dry and too scientific I wanted practical strategies to protect my brain
- All slides should be white letters on black background or vice-versa
- The laser pointer needs to have a red light in order to be visible on the screen; green light disappears on the screen
- Very interesting but too technical for a layman
- Very biased and P,C based. I do not intend to renew next year
- Best of the year so far; Most was largely P>C> and biased
- Rating is higher than 5 !
- Excellent !!
- Best speaker ever !"
- Way, way too much detail !
- Interesting but too scientific
- Why are Wed lectures so much more relevant than Tuesday's ?
- Very disappointed with Wed approach: very little practical information
- This lecture was heavy on science; I thought it would be a more practical discussion

Heather Conley

The Kremlin Playbook and the Future of the International System

Venice 3/5/19

Attendance: 278

72 evaluations received

10 comments

Positive Comments

-Fabulous Speaker (2)

-So knowledgeable. Able to delineate a great amount of information with clarity

-Best speaker yet

-Great

-Best presenter in past 4 years that I have attended

-Have her back next year (2)

-Non-partisan comments

-Thank goodness she was not political. We need a break from the anti-Trump agenda

-Nice she was not partisan

Q and A Comment

-The most important comment was in response to a question regarding cyper-distribution. It is critical to educate children in critical and independent thinking

Dr. Alyssa Ayres
India: Rise on the World Stage
Sarasota 3/7/19

116 evaluations

25 All 5's :

- We need to realize India's potential
- Speaker spoke too rapidly--hard to follow
- Very good overall picture of the country

All 5's & 4's

- Let's have more attention to South & East Asia
- Wish she had explained visa issue
- Almost did not attend, but glad I came
- Excellent overview
- Excellent response to questions
- A bit overwhelming--needed some slides
- Really knows her stuff !!
- Lower Scores: Sample Comments
- Very knowledgeable but too much data
- Too many facts: Really liked Q & A
- Not enough sharing of her experiences
- Highly skilled & knowledgeable speaker
- Question period was best part
- She spoke extremely clearly
- Too many references to her book
- Items on screen too small
- Charts not readable

Dr. Margaret Hermann
Understanding World Leaders
Venice 3/15/19

Attendance 374
69 evaluations
15 comments

Positive Comments:

- The best
- May be best speaker of the season
- Fantastic
- Just arrived in Venice and this was my first visit. Very enjoyable!
- Outstanding-incredible have her return
- Bring her back
- Most fascinating speaker of the year

Comments for Improvements

- Would like to have seen some charts, graphs visuals
- 10:40-still has not addressed topic
- I would have liked her to select particular known leaders, living or dead and how they compare
- Talking fast
- I wanted to hear a detailed psychological analysis of various world leaders, their strengths, weaknesses and idiosyncrasies : Putin, Trump Jinping, Theresa May, Macron Maduro. This what I expected but was partially addressed during the Q and A session. I would like to see her come back but provide more details and anecdotal evidence into the character, personality and behavior of these world leaders; strengths vs weaknesses who are the most admirable? Who are the bad actors and why.

Visual Improvement Comments

- Need to show the speaker some respect by removing all the crap on the podium so the audience can actually see the speaker. There was no microphone in the holder and the light was not needed. What a low class operation
- Suggest providing a platform for short speakers or lower the light so audience can see speaker's lips.

Kudos Comment:

- 2019 has been a great year of thoughtful lectures: Well done SILL

Amb. Anthony Wayne
Building Partnership With Mexico
Venice, 3/19/19

Attendance: 261
104 evaluations
16 comments

Positive Comments:

- Great
- One of the best organized presenters. Enjoyed the slides
- This was more substantive than most talks
- Overhead visuals help so much
- As a speaker said I learned a lot
- Well Informed, good delivery, well focused, contemporary issues well covered, learned much
- The buzz afterward consisted of comments such as 'too much information' however, the Ambassador riveted me.
- I love all of these!!!
- Invite him back

Areas for Improvement:

- Less info on slides. Too hard to listen & read at the same time
- Too many charts
- Too many words on slides (use points not sentences)
- Stats need more simplified in presentation
- If more data are to be communicated, then use a handout at exit
- Too many points . More focused please.
- More on the wall
- Used powerpoint presentation but he zipped through the slides without going into detail
- Perhaps-hand-outs of some detailed slides

Miscellaneous Comments:

- Please investigate having a company video the lectures so slides can be seen
- Frequently difficult to hear/understand audience questions
- Could you ask speaker to repeat the question as he/she hears it??"
- Do we have improved the technology suggested?

Dr. Robert Jones
The End of White Christian America
Lakewood Ranch, 3/21/19

89 evaluations

38 were rated all 5's

13 were rated all 5's or 4's

- There were a few comments suggesting this speaker not be brought back next year.
- More typical were comments on the (lack of) visibility of the slides.
- One suggested that audience questions be submitted in writing to prevent mini-lectures

Other comments:

- Absolutely speaker should return next year
- Excellent topic, data and speaker
- Great !
- Best speaker of the year

Dr. Katherine Hicks

The U.S. Role in the World: Domestic Debates and International Context

Sarasota 3/28/19

77 evaluations

(total number of evaluations was lower than usual, reflecting the lower attendance today)

31 all 5's

11 all 5's and 4's

Comments:

- Knowledgeable, well presented, but topic was too broad
- Great Q & A; Bring her back
- We can't see slides well enough; verbal explanations needed
- Some slides not readable
- After hearing this summary lecture, I'd like to hear her speak in depth
- Questioners should be stopped if they don't ask a question
- Most introducers do a poor job; training or written principles should be provided
- Blue text on slides is difficult for older attendees: black should be used