

Nikhil Sud

prof at ashoka | law | tech policy | yale and yale law alum

[linkedin](#) | nikhil.sud@ashoka.edu.in

Excerpts from student comments on my two courses:

(1) Tech Law and Policy (TLP); and (2) Law and Lawyerly Thinking (LLT)

“His course taught me how to think. It should be a foundation course and mandatory for every student. As a fourth-year student, I can say I wish I could have taken it earlier. My whole university experience would have been far better.”

“I have never met a professor like Nikhil Sud. I feel smarter just by being around him. He's approachable, absolutely excellent at what he does, and hilarious. His classes have produced more inside jokes than any other, and he's the creator of every joke to ever exist—all of which are unexpectedly hilarious. Some professors are funny, some are challenging, and very few are both. I was completely oblivious to the world of Tech Policy (the course he taught) and ended up knowing significantly more by the end of it. The best part about his teaching is that he focuses on sharpening the way students think, rather than drilling information that can be learned outside of class. Smaller class sizes are more likely to be his thing, but he handled a class of 50 like it was a party (a decently calm one, but one where everyone gets attention—sounds like a dream but it quite literally happened!). As the semester ends, I'm in awe of how smart he is and feel grateful to have been out of his very crowded waitlist.”

“This is the best course I've taken throughout my college years and I'm only sad that the semester is already over.”

“I have never come across a professor like him. He has set the bar so high that any future professor in my life will fall short. I'm unable to describe how much joy his classes have brought me. I am certain I would have done a minor in Prof Nikhil Sud had he been here from the start of my time in college.”

“He's a STAR!! The classes are so good!”

“I want to mark my territory and officially slot him as my personal professor – I want to prevent others from engaging with him!”

“The most enriching, engaging, and entertaining class I've had at university in my four years. Love the structure and detailed feedback. It created a nuanced understanding of the tech law and policy landscape. Also highly appreciate that there is no work required beyond the class hours. I genuinely have learnt such valuable lessons in terms of both content and real-life application and it's all thanks to him.”

“Across my now nearly four years at university, I have rarely come across a course that challenges the manner in which one thinks and approaches problems, bereft of theoretical paradigms, but more wholly rooted in the practical world. That is what Prof Nikhil's course is like. It has certainly challenged how I think and approach problems, something I believe would be 'useful AF' to me in the future.”

“My absolute favourite course at Ashoka. His teaching style challenged me to become both a better thinker and a better orator - and was also extremely fun. Three-hour classes can become a bit tiring but never with him - I was always too engaged to miss a single moment. I've always viewed the law as a body of text to be studied, but this course taught me that it is so much beyond that - it's intuitive, philosophical, and highly engaging. His teaching has

made me absolutely love law. I genuinely enjoyed the course more than I ever imagined I could. I had dengue but came back to campus JUST to attend this class!”

“Professor Nikhil Sud is one of the most interesting, kind and insightful Professors, I am so grateful to have had the chance to learn from him. He is deeply invested in each student’s learning and that can be seen through the thorough feedback he provides on both graded and ungraded assignments. Even the midterm was so engaging and did not feel intimidating despite the length of the exam. The class genuinely feels like a haven and never adds on to your preexisting stress. And it provides contextual, practical learning.”

“I actually have the attention span of a fruit fly and often even 30 second reels feel like too much to focus on. This course was absolutely brilliant because I was hooked for 3 entire hours!! And the course was truly interdisciplinary. I also really appreciate all the brief writing -- I think university students often told to write using a lot of jargon, and while we are taught how to write academic papers, we are never really taught how to write briefs and landscape assessments (something that'll hold anyone in good stead, no matter which field they pick). I really liked his teaching style, it really resonated with me. Moreover, he mentored everyone in the class -- couldn't ask for a better Professor!! He is also so approachable and always prompt on emails (believe me when I say a professor has been ghosting me for months - despite a good 76 reminder emails).”

“Professor Sud's classes have fundamentally reshaped my approach to learning. They have been one of the highlights of my time at Ashoka. Through a blend of interactive activities and stimulating discussions, Professor Sud deepened my interest in law and policy. He fostered an environment where challenging subjects became fun and easy to comprehend. Even if we struggled with concepts, he was always patient and encouraging. He consistently emphasized the importance of critical thinking, guiding us to analyse rather than merely memorize. This emphasis on understanding the reasoning behind legal principles has been

extremely helpful. It helped me understand the and engage with the material, and apply general legal principles diverse situations.

I feel adept at making informed judgments about certain legal issues after studying under him. He has equipped me with invaluable skills and lessons extending beyond the classroom. I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to have been his student and for the impact his teaching has had on me. It has been such a joy learning from him!”

“I have never seen someone go for six hours straight (3 hrs in TLP and then 3 hrs in LLT) yet be constantly so engaging, sharp, insightful, and witty - thank you for making my Thursdays the highlight of my year! I could just listen to him and learn from him endlessly. Each time he teaches it’s like a perfect performance yet seems so natural.”

“Right from the moment I walked into his classroom, I knew this was going to be different. His infectious energy, crazy passion for law, and unique teaching style of his set the vibe for what turned out to be an unforgettable learning experience. While some other courses at university felt like a drag, his was the one I looked forward to every single week. The way he managed to infuse humor into even the driest legal stuff (contract law!!) was just mind-blowing. He have this crazy knack for keeping us engaged and entertained, no matter how challenging the topic. I can’t believe how much I’ve grown this semester - academically and personally - under his guidance. I am so grateful for the profound impact he has had on me – as a student, and as a person.”

“The ONLY con is that every other course seems boring after his. As an insider, all the people I’ve spoken to loved the course. I’ve never seen so much enthusiasm for a professor before.”

“Professor Nikhil is one of the best professors I have interacted with in Ashoka. His classes are interactive, dense, and a lot of fun. It’s actually surprising how he keeps it both light and heavy at the

same time. His is always open to helping students out and goes out of his way to make us understand the subject. His use of oral arguments in class is his best feature. Putting us out there and allowing us to defend arguments helps us learn more.”

“He has become a mentor and friend for life.”

“This course taught me more than just how to think about tech law and policy – it taught me how to think in general, how to sharpen my ability to articulate my thoughts, and how to keep an eye out for detail. This course has been instrumental in introducing me to the world of policy, which was something I had always wanted but had never gotten the chance to receive so far at Ashoka. I also had a lot of fun during the course, and the mix of class discussion and application-based learning through the briefs gave me a great sense of how to further my understanding of tech policy. Overall, I had a great experience in the course, and I would really recommend it to anyone who's curious about tech and how it's thought about, and regulated, at a large scale.”

“I truly enjoyed this course more than any other in my four years at Ashoka. I’m glad to be ending my Ashoka journey with his course.”

“The most fun course I’ve taken at Ashoka - and by “fun” I mean BOTH academically challenging and so very enjoyable. His style of teaching made the concepts seem so much easier than they were and kept all the students on their feet always. No class was even close to being boring. I would die of fomo if I ever had to leave class early / skip it. And he ALWAYS communicated / encouraged communication with his students. This made things very transparent and made him so approachable.”

“He is one of the most fun and engaging professors I’ve had in Ashoka. He knows how to get your attention and sustain it for a 3-hour class. In that time he breaks down subjects in law so well that even a baby would understand them, but none of it is spoon fed. More than teaching you concepts in law, he teaches you how to think logically and approach questions, which is infinitely more useful than textbook memorisation. Every concept he covers has been challenging at first, but by the end of it, once you get the small nuances you feel so confident. He also has a great all-round method of testing your logical skills, memory, oral argumentation, persuasion skills and more. I also think he’s a very funny individual with a killer sense of humour, and each class is approached with that fun attitude which makes the 3 hours fly by and not feel like a chore.”

“Students are crazy about him - and not just the students who’ve taken his courses, but who have heard about him. I have never seen a professor become so popular so quickly.”

“A perfectly curated classroom experience.”

“This course was unlike any other course in Ashoka I’ve ever taken - no professor has ever made a class feel so easygoing but intense at the same time. This has been one of the best courses I have taken in my 4 years at Ashoka. It’s been such a memorable course.”

“The greatest course of all time.”

“I want to be a part of any class he teaches – it would be insane not to.”

“Professor Nikhil is an immensely compassionate and mesmerizing individual. I deeply enjoy his classes, and have been able to acquire indispensable soft skills by taking his courses. I feel I have improved in every aspect of my life, as Professor Nikhil's natural demeanour inculcates sharp thinking, listening, and empathy into his students. I would encourage every student at Ashoka to take one of his courses!”

“The course content is incredibly relevant and worth investing time and energy into learning (and teaching). The syllabus has been curated with extremely specific purpose. To the best of my knowledge, you would be hard-pressed to find another course that delivers the same structured, logical, and targeted approach that this class offers. The condensed nature of the content means that you are taught exactly what you need to know to understand real-world dynamics, as well as a basic understanding of how law/policy works in general.”

“His classes have this major “wow” factor which is so rare”

“His course has made me seriously consider going to law school.”

“I also love his willingness to engage with each and every student personally inside and outside class, it makes a student feel valued and bridges that daunting gap between professor and student.”

“I know he’s teaching two courses but he should please teach even more – I will take every single one.”

“I want to express my gratitude to him for making me look forward to Thursdays instead of Thursday nights (party night on

campus). It is always a joy attending his classes because of how engaging he's able to make them while keeping them well-structured, there's never a dull moment! I'm always surprised by how he's able to remember individual conversations with everyone in the class, and somehow humorously also bring them up during lectures. He is so generous with his time, his encouragement, and all the sadboi musical artist recommendations."

"When I took his first TLP class I was so impressed that I couldn't help but attend LLT, and then I enrolled in LLT as well (thank you for increasing the max number of students permissible for the class). I loved the courses so much, and felt like I couldn't get enough of his lectures. I'm still extremely familiar with that feeling because it just never leaves (I also never asked it to leave), even though the term has ended. Ideally, I'd attend his lectures until Ashoka HAS to kick me out in a year haha. The lectures are so well structured and presented (performed!). For the longest time, I've felt insecure about how I speak. I've never considered myself linguistically smart, but I see a noticeable improvement after this semester and he is the reason why. I always enjoyed how he'd point out every little inconsistency in sentences and I've found myself doing something similar (it's so much fun!). I'll do my best to be a part of his classes in the monsoon semester (as a TA or just to come and watch!). I am grateful for such a fun and rewarding 4 months."

"Attending Professor Nikhil Sud's classes is an absolute delight. The course feels really well-structured and every lecture has been consistently engaging. He's constantly playing with words and sentences and seems to somehow make it so that there is never a dull moment. He actively encourages students to reach out outside class hours with question or anything else they want to discuss. I'm truly grateful to be a party of his classes."

"I am going to take every course he teaches and tell my friends to do the same. And I hereby adopt him as a mentor."

“He’s a great teacher and an even kinder person.”

“Thanks to his course, I 've noticed a shift in the way I think—I now actively seek out assumptions in people's speech, listen more attentively to nuances in other people’s arguments, and strive to be more precise in my own communication, both verbally and in writing. I really enjoyed his teaching style. His ability to engage the entire class prevented me from zoning out during the three-hour sessions, which can be especially challenging in courses with large class sizes. The “warm-fuzzy calling” and anecdotes helped with this :) I believe the skills I've acquired in this course will remain with me for a long time.

“In all his courses, please consider me enrolled.”

“In addition to the course content, the professor weaves in invaluable lessons about how to critically think about arguments and develop the habit of writing one’s arguments in a well-articulated manner. These skills are extremely beneficial, not only during your university years but also in your professional career. The best part is that you learn to develop these skills through the relevant tech policy issues that the professor discusses, which he covers in both breadth and depth.”

“I have him to thank for spurring my interest in the field. I have now started working in it.”

“Provided really helpful mentorship in my job search, and helped me land the position I want.”

“Being a student in one course and the TA in another was indeed a great experience. I really learnt a lot from him not just professionally but also personally. His approach to classes and engaging with students so well is something that I have never seen before. Thankful to have had the chance to work with him.”

“I would never miss a chance to take a course taught by him. And he has inspired me to work in the area of policy and law.”

“As I start grad school, I am extremely grateful to the professors who have provided my invaluable guidance during my time at Ashoka: particularly Professor Nikhil Sud, who was an important support figure during a particularly uncertain period of my life.”

“His Law and Lawyerly Thinking course is a robust introduction to law that is accessible to students from all disciplines.”

“It was a pleasure taking a class with Prof. Nikhil. He was super engaging, always kept us on our toes, and there was never a dull moment. I've prepared for law exams before and studied legal topics before, but I can see how big a difference it makes when Prof made most things intuitive by making a larger philosophical point about a certain body of law. I also particularly liked how his exams were structured--they made you think with little memorisation needed; I enjoyed taking the exams. He is also a wonderful mentor, and really kind--he is always willing to help out with anything under the sun. He also has a great balance between engagement and teaching in class which I particularly appreciate. 3 hour classes are usually a snoozefest towards the end, but Prof's energy and humour makes sure that we are all wide awake and energised.”

“His classes and advice helped me land the perfect job for me. And as soon as I was on the job, I was doing work he had already trained us in. At my job I am known as Prof Nikhil’s star student!”

“I had so much fun during the course. I am so glad that on a random day I decided to explore law and take his course!”

“I absolutely loved the classes and certainly learned so much. He is always super precise. I love how he remembers all the points students make and uses them to build upon class content. It’s just super engaging! Thanks so much for teaching the course; it has been an absolute pleasure to TA for him!”

“Overall 10/10. Interactive and engaging lecture sessions and the prof is great at getting everyone engaged. The course material is also stimulating and it’s great to have at-length discussions in class. The exams focus on critical thinking and the understanding of the material rather than memorization. There isn’t any homework or assignment that needs to be completed outside of class hours. And absolutely no influence by the TAs. The professor was hands-on and was in control of every aspect.”

“His emails have gone viral on Ashoka Twitter. Students have also been forwarding them to friends outside class. They love them!”

“So many people I’ve heard from want to take his courses. Sometimes they can’t because of clashes with mandatory courses – and they wish those other, mandatory courses didn’t exist!”

“Really thorough, very well conducted. Professor’s personality, his analogies and his articulation make it very easy to follow course material.”

“Extremely eye-opening. I appreciate that lectures were structured around logic and analytical skills because those are skills we don't often get to practice.”

“Incredible course!”

“had so much fun, learned a lot, many transferrable skills”

“I think it was a really enjoyable and informative course. This was not a field I was really interested in but prof has single-handedly made me love this area. He has a great way of engaging the class which I think is one of his strongest suits.”

“I liked that we focused on concepts more than theory. The discussions were super fun and engaging. Probably one of the few classes that provides material that is actually applicable.”

“I think the course was great--enjoyable, engaging, enlightening, and all the nice e-adjectives. Prof made sure we were always engaged through means of asking questions that just required brain-work in the moment and it was quite a refreshing change from how much we are made to mug things up in college otherwise. The classes discussed relevant topics, and all connects to current news were brought up and discussed. It was also great to see Professor focusing also on aspects of being a policy person rather than just studying the course material.”

“I have, for many moons now, been pondering over how I should thank him for such a wonderful semester. I thought college was going to be like the 'Ratta Maar' montage in SOTY, but he made it more like 'Masti ki Patshala' from Rang De Basanti. I have been babbling about his classes to many people and it is quite evident how grateful I am for the experience of sitting in his classroom. I have been relentless in my advertisement of his course. This is all to say that I have learnt very many things throughout this course—to skim skillfully, write sharply and think logically. I have learnt what a creative, encouraging, generous and empathetic professor looks like. How even though we are all away he has mountains of work to attend to, he always acts as if he is always available whenever we need him.”

“the high level of academic rigour makes the course fabulous.”

“This course has been an incredible journey. Listening to him talk about his passion uniquely, and his ability to make even the most complex (read: boring) topics (Competition Law, lol) engaging has made this one of the best courses I've taken at Ashoka. He has single-handedly contributed to the rediscovery of my love for Tech Policy, thanks to his insightful, relevant, and thought-provoking lectures. I feel equipped with a newfound understanding and enthusiasm for this field.”

“He has raised the bar for teaching and evaluating very high. I have never before seen a professor put so much effort in setting up an exam, evaluating students, and providing as detailed feedback as he has.”

“I completely see the value of attendance and participation in a course as engaging as this.”

“This is my favourite course.”

“Because of how he teaches, students' analytical skills will go through the roof. I've never seen a class where students are having this much fun, laughing so much, while also learning so much.”

“Grateful for the amazingly detailed feedback he gives; my college experience would have been so much better if I had received such thoughtful feedback on my work in other courses. This was a refreshing surprise, and I am grateful to him for putting in the time and effort into this. Thanks for a really fun exam too (I genuinely did have fun). It was one of my favourite exams ever and I tweeted about it!”

“Conversing with him is incredibly engaging and fun...Our conversation, and my research into his work, was genuinely inspiring!”

“Thank you so much for the super detailed feedback! I really appreciate the time he took to explain every little thing.”

“Through his course, I've learned more about writing than in my four years at university, including through my thesis.”

“His class has shown me how tech policy works in the real world - I had no idea and was always interested to learn.”

“The insights, discussions, and depth of knowledge he brings to each session make this course one of my favourites.”

“This is the only course in which I’m actually upset if I ever have to miss a lecture.”