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# Individual Course Report - CSCE423 Sec. 001

## CSCE423 Section 001: DSGN&ANLYS ALGORTHMS

**Semester:** '15-'16: Fall Semester

**Survey Trigger:** UNL Fall 2015

**Instructor:** Stephen D. Scott

**Students:** 39

**Respondents:** 33



[Download raw response data \(CSV/Excel\)](#)

### Evaluation of Course and Instructor

#### Base Questions item 4

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate Student
1. My year in college is:	0	1	5	17	10

#### Base Questions item 5

	4.0 to 3.5	3.5 to 3.0	3.0 to 2.5	2.5 to 2.0	Below 2.0
2. My overall grade point average is:	16	9	7	1	0

#### Base Questions item 6

	More than 18 hours	15 to 17 hours	12 to 14 hours	9 to 11 hours	Less than 9 hours
3. I am enrolled for the following number of credit hours this semester:	1	11	14	6	1

#### Base Questions item 7





course, my interest in this subject was very high.	0	4	5	10	14	0	4.03	5	1.05
12. I understand the objectives of this course.	1	2	0	19	11	0	4.12	4	0.93
13. The organization of the course topics is reasonable and logical.	0	2	0	17	14	0	4.30	4	0.77
14. The pace at which course topics are covered is reasonable.	2	2	2	16	11	0	3.97	4	1.10
15. This course helped me improve my rational thinking, problem-solving and decision-making ability.	0	3	2	14	14	0	4.18	5,4	0.92
16. After taking this course, my interest in this subject is very high.	0	5	7	10	11	0	3.82	5	1.07
<b>Question Set Statistics</b>							4.07	4	0.98

### Base Questions item 14

	<b>Strongly Disagree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Indifferent (3)</b>	<b>Agree (4)</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (5)</b>	<b>N/A (0)</b>	<b>mean</b>	<b>mode</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
17. The textbook, workbook, and/or lesson notes help me understand	2	0	2	17	12	0	4.12	4	0.99





classroom physical environment (e.g. temperature, lighting, acoustics) is comfortable for learning.	1	0	4	21	7	0	4.00	4	0.79
31. The classroom is free from outside distractions.	0	4	2	19	8	0	3.94	4	0.90
32. The classroom design and furnishings do not interfere with my learning.	1	1	3	20	8	0	4.00	4	0.87
33. The classroom has adequate instructional equipment and technology.	0	0	3	20	10	0	4.21	4	0.60
<b>Question Set Statistics</b>							4.04	4	0.80

### Base Questions item 20

34. What are 1 or 2 specific things that helped you learn in this class?

- Lecture notes, going over homework problems
- Understanding and working with NP Complete Problems Formalizing algorithms for my own work
- Games.
- The instructor's lecture and notes are really helpful
- Other students.
- Other students.
- 1. Visits to the professors office for homework help 2. Explaining homework problems to my cat (since we aren't allowed to collaborate, and I have to explain things aloud to understand them)
- The homework problems are well-designed.

- The instructor was both very helpful and very interested in the students actually learning when he assisted with our questions.
- learned some graph knowledge
- Going over examples in class before taking a quiz
- The quizzes, group homework.
- Google.
- Reading examples and looking at exercises in the textbook. Doing the homework and practice problems as well.
- Read the textbook, Consult with the professor
- Being provided with notes and the homework.
- Using reference sheets and having notes available online.
- The instructor printed out notes before every different section.
- Dr. Scott's availability outside of class so that I could come by with questions and he would help me fully understand the material. Dr. Scott's persistence and dedication to teach, even though I asked a lot of stupid questions and didn't understand some really simple concepts, he would still help me until I fully understood the material. He didn't give up on me or assume I was an idiot.
- 1. Working with other students outside of class that understood the material in a way that wasn't abstract and doing examples of class topics. 2. YouTube videos of topics described in a less-abstract, more practical way.
- lecture slides
- My book and resources
- Fear of Dr. Scott's wrath and the innate joy of solving hard problems.

### **Base Questions item 21**

35. What are 1 or 2 specific things that caused a problem with your learning in this class?

- The classroom.
- Lack of adequate background in Discrete Math and Data Structures
- Correctness Proving!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Understanding these many algorithms and solving them in Midterm in less than 3 hours is not fair.
- Nothing.
- Nothing.
- 1. Desks are uncomfortable, some of them are broken. Room has bad lighting, and people walking by windows can be distracting. 2. Peers that did not express earnest interest in learning

- Before seeing the grading feedback, we were not informed about what would the graders look for specifically in the proof (e.g. what counts for rigorous proof, what is the difference between explanation and proof).
- I cannot think of anything specific.
- hard to write down a good prove for homeworks
- when we were splits in teams, most the time my team members didn't show up to class. I always had to solve problems by myself.
- Disconnect between depth of content covered in class and depth of knowledge needed to solve some HW problems
- Homework from other classes
- Nothing
- Not always taking the time to do the homeworks to the best of my ability.
- Sometimes too challenging of homework problems. Quizzes seemed like it was all or nothing. If you missed something early on a quiz, it affected the rest of it and you would get very little credit even though you did most of it right.
- The homework is extremely reliant on proofs and this course assumes every student has a graduate level understanding of proofs. CSCE doesn't have any other proof dominate class besides 235 which I took my freshman year.
- Some of the students smelled...
- The instructor never offer us a solution for the homework or exam. what he wrote on the board is not orgnized
- 1. T.A's were generally unhelpful, giving little to no real help with homework problems. As a result, if I had questions about the homework, I would need to visit the instructor, who's office hours I was not always able to attend. When homework problems were asked about, both of the T.A's were unwilling to give practical feedback about whether or not I was on the right track for answering a problem correctly. Optional Bonus problems that were intended to challenge students in thinking "outside the box" were hardly ever rewarded with points, making them seem useless to attempt in light of an overly-strict rubric. 2. Instructor generally tended to progress through topics in the course based on the vocal minority who happened to comprehend the topics faster than other students, which caused class sessions to feel rushed.
- small desk
- The TA's were not helpful at all and they didnt have time hardly for getting homework help. I would say that was the biggest distraction for the course and affected my learning.
- The mere 24 hours in each day.

## Base Questions item 22

36. Please provide 1 or 2 practical suggestions on ways to help improve student learning in



this course.

- -
- Do the algorithms yourself. It's gonna help you in Quizes
- Read book
- Nothing.
- Nothing.
- Allow group work on homework, knowing that whether a student learned the material or not will be clear on the exam. You could even do a take-home portion of the exam (where collaboration isn't allowed, so you could test a students ability for harder problems). It's just very hard to learn the material when you can't discuss problems with peers, and most of my peers are only interested in discussing assigned problems.
- I think it would be helpful if the instructor can be more specific on how the proofs in our homework will be graded.
- Perhaps online videos of the lectures would be useful.
- learned latex
- show example of a way that homework should look like! how's proofs be written, what things you are looking for when you grade a homework! yea I know it sounds odd, but every prof has his way on that.
- Some, not all, of the HW problems seemed like riddles, with no obvious answer that the course work could be applied to solve.
- More in class work, to get more practice and hands on with material.
- Have a good understanding of algorithms and proofs before attending this class
- Nothing, there was plenty of examples and a good amount of help on homework.
- None, it's a good course.
- More problems, but less challenging. More credit on quizzes if you made a simple mistake but as a whole had the right problem solving strategy. Should put grades on blackboard or somewhere so we can see our progress.
- Lectures on proofs. My homework suffered throughout the semester because of proofs.
- More board space in the room. Scott uses the projector and the board and many times he has to write on the edges which makes it hard to see if you are on the opposite side of the room. Make grades more readily available. We got our grade at semester and it would be nice to get it more often just to compare what he has to what I have recorded
- write more detail during explaining an exercise.
- 1. The homework's, quizzes, and exams need to be graded respective to the student academic undergraduate status (Undergraduate vs. Graduate Student). Point

distributions often felt harsh and "nit picky" by graders for undergraduate students. Simple numeric distinction of "423 vs 823" does not seem to carry an easier grading rubric for 423 students versus 823, graduate-level students. Optional Bonus problems for homework's need to have the incentive of actually getting bonus points attributed to the overall score of the assignment, not a simple "+0" for a mistake, rendering the attempt at the bonus problem meaningless if a grader so chooses. 2. T.A's need to be allowed/willing to provide actual help on homework assignments. This would include not giving an answer to a problem outright, but giving more hints to answering a problem to get the student thinking in the right direction for answering a problem.

- small group size which would be good for 1st floor rooms with desks.
- Please get new TA's and improve on the office hours because it wasn't helpful at all.
- N/A

### **Base Questions item 23**

37. Other comments that you would like to make:

- This lecture hall's chairs are horrendous and are literally falling apart. This interfered with my learning.
- -
- Thank you Professor Scott, you are one of the best. Proud Student.
- Nothing.
- Nothing.
- It is a really solid class and a great professor.
- Thanks for this great class. I enjoyed it.
- We need more professors like this in CSE. Scott, Bourke, and Harvill are the only good professors that I have had that are dedicated to our success and can accurately explain the content in many different ways.
- Overall I found this course to be by far the most difficult course in comparison to my other courses. As someone who learns better by doing and not simply reading (which I also made sure to do), The way in which the T.A's were reluctant to give tangible help, in combination with the very harsh point distribution for quizzes, homework's, and exams, I constantly found myself feeling as if my efforts to learn the material and do well in the class were pointless and that there was nothing that I could do to improve my overall grade, despite being willing to take on extra credit work outside of class to balance out in-class evaluations. I often found that the class felt like a "do-or-die" type of scenario, where only the students who had very clear understanding of the material succeeded early on in the semester, while the rest of the semester felt rushed and confusing. The grading felt harsh, and getting points back on an assignment or quiz seemed almost pointless, as points that could be regained were trivial to the overall grade.
- N/A

## Evaluation of Graders

The CSE department is committed to continuous improvement of its programs and would like to have more information than is provided by the end of the term evaluation form. All responses remain absolutely anonymous.

### Lalitha Pragna Nasina

#### Grader

	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Average (3)	Below Average (2)	Poor (1)	N/A (0)	mean	mode	Std. Dev.
38. The grader's respect for all students and sensitivity to their views are	12	14	4	0	2	1	4.06	4	1.05
39. Graders maintain either one or two office hours every week. The adequacy of the grader's hours in the office/resource center is	10	13	5	1	2	2	3.90	4	1.11
40. The grader's availability and punctuality at the office/resource center for the specified office hours is	12	10	7	1	2	1	3.91	5	1.15
41. The quality of the grader's explanations during office/resource center hours is	10	10	7	0	4	2	3.71	5,4	1.30
42. The grader's fairness in grading is	10	11	5	1	6	0	3.55	4	1.44
43. The timeliness with which the grader returns the graded materials is	8	9	9	4	3	0	3.45	3,4	1.25
44. The grader's feedback on written work he or she graded is	9	11	6	2	5	0	3.52	4	1.37
<b>Question Set Statistics</b>							3.72	4	1.25

## Grader Text Response

45. What strengths does the grader display?

- -
- ...
- Fair grading.
- Fair grading.
- A strong willingness to help.
- nice
- No idea
- Helpful
- Comments on homework were helpful.
- Good feedback and comments
- 1. An understanding of why she knows you're wrong.
- She has a great strength in how to skip the office hours, and not informing students that she is not available in her office hours.
- Getting more office hours and more time for help.
- Relatively quick, consistent grading.

46. What areas does the grader need to improve in?

- -
- Getting Zero from grader does not make sense when spending hours solving a HW problem.
- Nothing.
- Nothing.
- N/A
- nothing
- No idea
- none.
- Get homeworks back to us faster
- The TA is quite not efficient about helping us, The TA do not really understand all the exercises the instructor assigned to us. Slow grading speed.



fairness in grading is	12	10	5	0	6	0	3.67	5	1.45
52. The timeliness with which the grader returns the graded materials is	9	10	7	3	4	0	3.52	4	1.33
53. The grader's feedback on written work he or she graded is	10	10	6	1	6	0	3.52	5,4	1.44
<b>Question Set Statistics</b>							3.76	5	1.35

### Grader Text Response

54. What strengths does the grader display?

- -
- Understand the material.
- Fair grader.
- Fair grader.
- A pleasant attitude and a good command of the material.
- nothing
- no idea
- Helpful
- Good comments on homework.
- Good feedback and comments
- 1. An understanding of why she knows you're wrong.
- Getting more office hours and more time for help.
- Always available, very helpful.

55. What areas does the grader need to improve in?

- -
- More feedback.
- Nothing.
- Nothing.
- N/A
- really need to learn how to grade prove problems and how to give partial credits

- No idea
- None
- Get homeworks back to us faster
- The TA is quite not efficient about helping us, The TA do not really understand all the exercises the instructor assigned to us. Slow grading speed.
- 1. Unambiguity of homework feedback, with clear reasons as to why each point is taken off. 2. Giving actual, tangible help on homework that translates to part of a solution, or something that would at least give the student a hint as to where to progress in the problem.
- Please improve yourself in how you need to help students. If someone does not understand a material, it is your duty to help them.
- Getting more office hours and more time for help.
- N/A

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