



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

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## UNL Online Course Evaluation System

### Individual Course Report - CSCE478 Sec. 001

#### CSCE478 Section 001: INTRO MACHINE LRNG

**Semester:** '08-'09: Fall Semester

**Survey Trigger:** UNL Fall '08

**Instructor:** Stephen D. Scott

**Students:** 19

**Respondents:** 15

78.9%

[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	0	1	6	8

##### 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:	9	5	1	0	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:	2	2	7	4	0

##### Base Questions item 7

	More than 40 hours	30 to 40 hours	20 to 30 hours	10 to 20 hours	Less than 10 hours
4. I currently work the following number of hours per week at a job:	0	0	4	8	3

**Base Questions item 8**

	Yes	No
5. This course is my major field of study:	14	1

**Base Questions item 10**

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	N/A (0)	mean	mode	Std. Dev.
6. I see myself as a motivated student in this course.	1	0	0	4	10	0	4.47	5	1.06
7. I was academically prepared to take this course.	0	0	1	7	7	0	4.40	5,4	0.63
8. I was challenged to think in this course.	0	0	0	4	11	0	4.73	5	0.46
9. My course grade will be a fair representation of my learning.	1	0	2	3	8	1	4.21	5	1.19
10. I treated the instructor fairly and respectfully.	0	0	1	5	9	0	4.53	5	0.64
<b>Question Set Statistics</b>							4.47	5	0.83

**Base Questions item 12**

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	N/A (0)	mean	mode	Std. Dev.
11. Before taking this course, my interest in this subject was very high.	0	0	0	4	11	0	4.73	5	0.46
12. I understand the objectives of this course.	0	0	0	5	10	0	4.67	5	0.49
13. The organization of the course topics is reasonable and logical.	0	0	1	4	10	0	4.60	5	0.63
14. The pace at which course topics are covered is reasonable.	0	1	1	6	7	0	4.27	5	0.88
15. This course helped me improve my rational thinking, problem-solving and decision-making ability.	0	0	1	5	9	0	4.53	5	0.64
16. After taking this course, my interest in this subject is very high.	1	0	0	4	10	0	4.47	5	1.06
<b>Question Set Statistics</b>							4.54	5	0.72

**Base Questions item 14**

Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	N/A (0)	mean	mode	Std. Dev.
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	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	N/A (0)	mean	mode	Std. Dev.
17. The textbook, workbook, and/or lesson notes help me understand course material.	0	1	0	7	7	0	4.33	5,4	0.82
18. The method (or methods) of presenting information in class enhances my learning.	0	0	2	4	9	0	4.47	5	0.74
19. The coursework helps me understand and apply the subject matter.	0	0	1	4	10	0	4.60	5	0.63
20. The amount of coursework is reasonable for what I am expected to learn.	1	1	0	6	7	0	4.13	5	1.19
21. Testing methods fairly measure my understanding of the course material.	0	1	2	1	5	6	4.11	5	1.17
<b>Question Set Statistics</b>							4.35	5	0.90

**Base Questions item 16**

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	N/A (0)	mean	mode	Std. Dev.
22. The instructor is prepared for the class and is concerned about his or her preparation.	0	1	0	2	12	0	4.67	5	0.82
23. The instructor makes good use of class time.	0	1	0	4	10	0	4.53	5	0.83
24. The instructor is enthusiastic and interested in teaching this course.	0	0	0	3	12	0	4.80	5	0.41
25. The instructor treats students in a professional manner.	0	0	1	3	11	0	4.67	5	0.62
26. New concepts and examples are clearly explained at a level students can comprehend.	0	1	0	5	9	0	4.47	5	0.83
27. The instructor motivated me to understand and apply course concepts.	0	0	0	5	10	0	4.67	5	0.49
28. The instructor provides useful feedback on how I am doing in the course.	0	1	0	4	10	0	4.53	5	0.83
29. The instructor is accessible for help outside of the classroom.	0	0	0	5	9	1	4.64	5	0.50
<b>Question Set Statistics</b>							4.62	5	0.68

**Base Questions item 18**

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	N/A (0)	mean	mode	Std. Dev.
30. The classroom physical environment (e.g. temperature, lighting, acoustics) is comfortable for learning.	0	1	1	4	9	0	4.40	5	0.91
31. The classroom is free from outside distractions.	1	0	3	5	6	0	4.00	5	1.13
32. The classroom design and furnishings do not interfere with my learning.	0	0	0	8	7	0	4.47	4	0.52
33. The classroom has adequate instructional equipment and technology.	0	0	0	8	7	0	4.47	4	0.52
<b>Question Set Statistics</b>							4.33	5	0.82

**Base Questions item 20**

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

- The instructor involve students a lot.
- Instructor has an excellent teaching ability.
- The topic summaries were helpful, even though I didn't enjoy writing them. Also, the implementation portions of the homework assignments were excellent learning opportunities.
- 1. The professor (see the 'other comments' question) 2. The annoyingly large, complex assignments that I actually kind of enjoyed doing
- Coding the algorithms.
- The coursework was a bit heavy, but it did help me to learn concepts (or I should say force me).
- The lectures and homework were very helpful in learning the material.
- Dr. Scott -- he is an exceptional instructor. I will take any course he teaches.
- The homework
- (1) Reading the book helped significantly, especially when I could read in advance to a lecture regarding a topic being lectured about, (2) The in-depth homeworks provided me with an excellent feel for the operation of learning algorithms, and in combination with the associated homework report and the mini-homeworks, a very good general understanding of learning algorithms was developed.

**Base Questions item 21**

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

- None.
- Nothing in particular caused problems, and when problems came about, they were addressed and discussed openly and considered appropriately. If anything, I wish I had a stronger Matrix Theory and Probability Theory background, but both of these were discussed as needed and with an appropriate amount of depth for the goals of this course (i.e., not an in-depth coverage of these, but rather and application of them).
- Some of the slides about GD/EG resemble the parody in the meta-talk.

- Loud music and noise from neighboring classrooms....?
- I have problems concentrating during long class sessions, so not involving the class much kept my mind elsewhere.
- The system that controls the projector seems to behave a little erratically. Also, the textbook is quite outdated. Unfortunately, there is no other suitable textbook.
- When the instructor was challenged with questions on core concepts, he failed to give satisfactory answers, and instead of acknowledging and promising to answer at a later time, he avoided the answer altogether.
- the homework is pretty big, which involves a lot of programming.

**Base Questions item 22**

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

- I disliked the topic summaries. They weren't difficult, but they took time. They often corresponded with implementation timeframes and caused me (and others) to put off implementations. While everything was turned in more or less on time, it did make things a bit hectic at the last moment.
- I thought that there were too many 'trivial' assignments. The topic summaries and mini-homework assignments didn't do much to improve my understanding. It would be a better use of time to eliminate those assignments and replace them with another full-fledged homework (on i.e. bagging and boosting or some other topic).
- I can't think of any...
- Tone down the amount of work in the class. I spent most of my free time on this homework. This wouldn't be a problem if I didn't have five other classes to worry about. I didn't have time to enjoy the concepts because I felt too stressed.
- More homework assignments, smaller in scale.
- The pace of the instructor is a little fast, especially spoken English.
- Nothing in particular seemed like it needed any significant improvement.

**Base Questions item 23**

37. Other comments that you would like to make:

- There isn't a value for "The instructor is enthusiastic and interested in teaching this course." It's beyond Strongly Agree. I can only think of three other professors that I've had who are as interested and enthusiastic as you, and none of them clearly conveyed it all the time. It's much easier to pay attention and enjoy coming to class when it's clear that the person teaching you wants to be there (or at least doesn't despise being there), and you clearly fit that description. By far my favorite class this semester.
- Nope.
- This was an excellent course. I felt the alternative methods of inferring a student's understanding or ability to understand the material were fair for both the instructor and the students. I really liked having no exams, and learned quite a lot from the in-depth homeworks. I feel that I understand the material in a more meaningful way than I would have if exams were given and time was spent strategically studying and planning for an exam rather than taking needed time to understand the material. In a nutshell, I strongly prefer having a large workload and associated expectations of high quality over ordinary exams, and know that it's a much better method for me to gain a good understanding of a topic. For example, after completing a large assignment or project, I always feel very accomplished, and the knowledge learned to complete the project maintains a very strong presence.
- Some grade weights seem a little skewed compared to the work load. For example, Topic Summaries took (me) many hours to write but are a very small percentage of the final grade.

Having the final project be worth 50% of the grade seems a little overkill to me, given the size of other homeworks etc.

- Instructor is clearly one of the best instructors at UNL. A subject as difficult as Machine Learning could have been much more difficult had it been taught by someone else.

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