



# 2022F Instructor Report for CS 3276 01, CS 5276 01(CS 5276 01,CS 3276 01) (Kevin Leach)

Project Title: **Vanderbilt University Course and Teaching Evaluations**

Course Audience: **24**

Responses Received: **9**

Response Ratio: **37.50%**

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## Report Comments

The following is a report for an individual section of a class. Please do not distribute, print, or share this report except for administrative purposes.

Project Audience - Total number of students enrolled

Responses Received - Number of evaluations submitted by students

Response Ratio - Percent of enrolled students who submitted evaluations

If you have any questions about the evaluation system please contact [course.evaluations@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:course.evaluations@vanderbilt.edu).

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Prepared by: **Vanderbilt University Course and Teaching Evaluations**

Creation Date: **Monday, January 2, 2023**

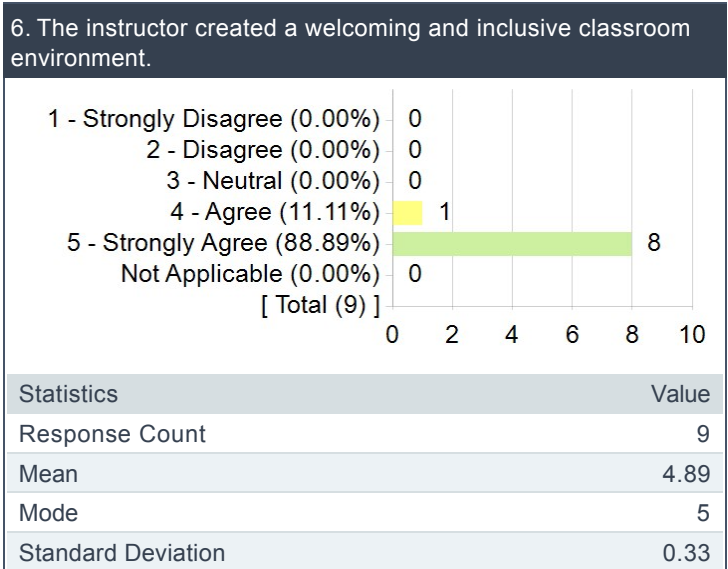
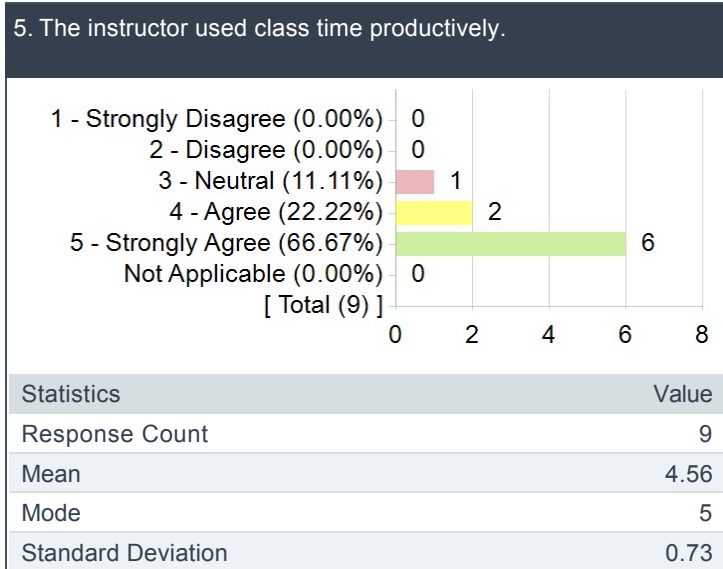
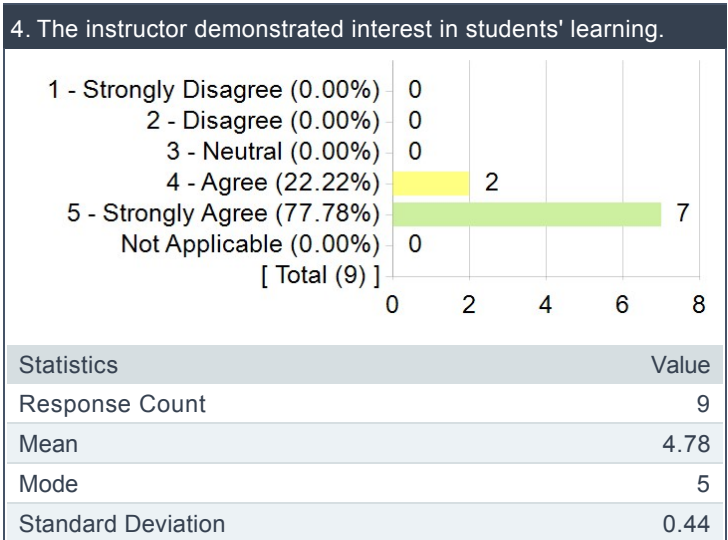
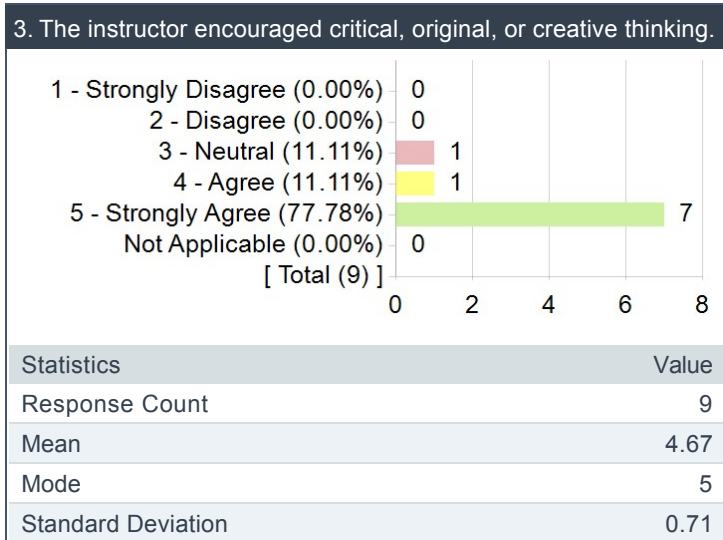
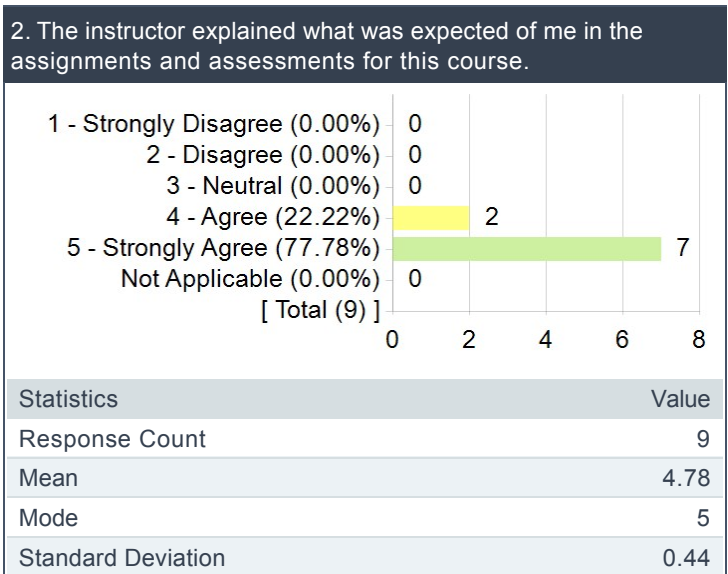
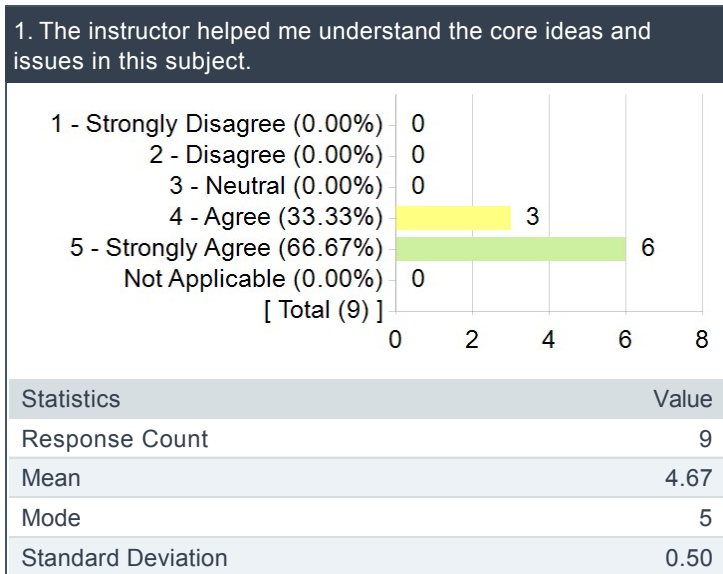
### Questions about the Instructor (Kevin Leach):

Question	This Class Section		Department (CS)		School (ENGIN)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
The instructor helped me understand the core ideas and issues in this subject.	4.67	0.50	4.25	0.94	4.32	0.93
The instructor explained what was expected of me in the assignments and assessments for this course.	4.78	0.44	4.35	0.88	4.37	0.92
The instructor encouraged critical, original, or creative thinking.	4.67	0.71	4.27	0.93	4.35	0.92
The instructor demonstrated interest in students' learning.	4.78	0.44	4.36	0.90	4.44	0.87
The instructor used class time productively.	4.56	0.73	4.31	0.93	4.31	0.98
The instructor created a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment.	4.89	0.33	4.41	0.85	4.49	0.84
Overall, the instructor (Kevin Leach) was:	4.89	0.33	4.10	0.98	4.20	0.98

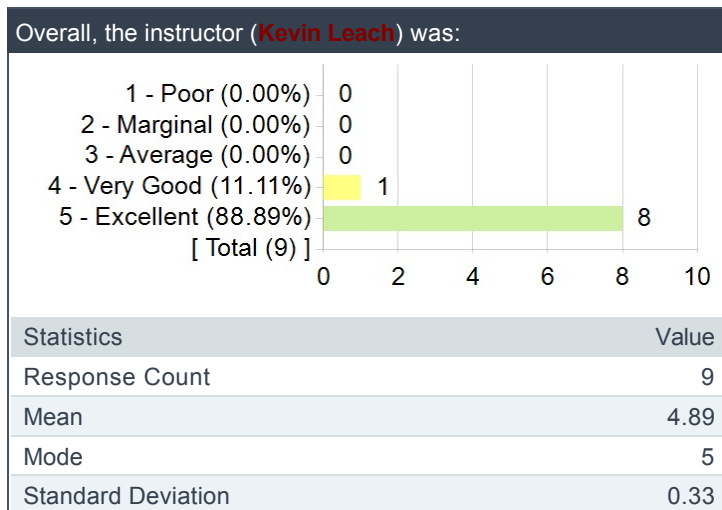
### Questions about this Course (CS 3276, 5276 01):

Question	This Class Section		Department (CS)		School (ENGIN)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
This course helped me appreciate the significance of the subject matter.	4.78	0.44	4.21	1.00	4.25	0.99
The components of the course, such as class activities, assessments, and assignments, were consistent with the course goals.	5.00	0.00	4.30	0.93	4.35	0.91
The feedback I received during the course was helpful.	4.11	1.36	3.99	1.08	4.09	1.05
I felt comfortable asking questions in this course.	4.67	0.71	4.18	1.02	4.34	0.93
This course helped me consider connections between course material and other areas of my personal, academic, or professional life.	4.33	0.87	4.20	1.01	4.27	0.98
Overall, the course (CS 3276, 5276 01) was:	4.56	0.73	3.78	1.06	3.91	1.05
Compared to other classes, the amount I learned in this course was:	4.56	0.73	3.70	1.06	3.53	1.09
Compared to requirements in other classes, the workload assigned in this class was:	4.67	0.50	3.64	1.03	3.25	1.09

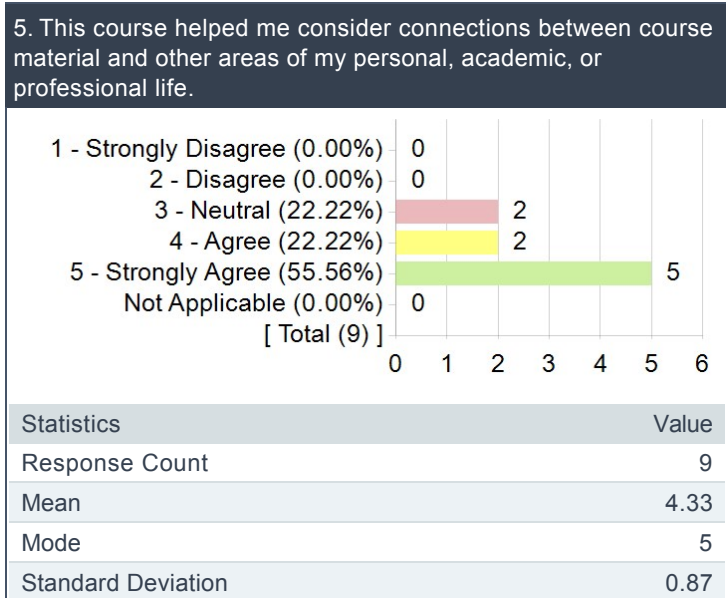
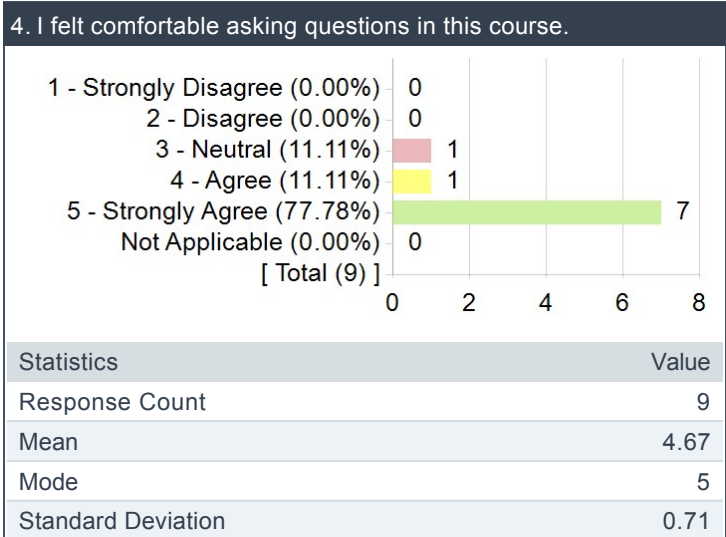
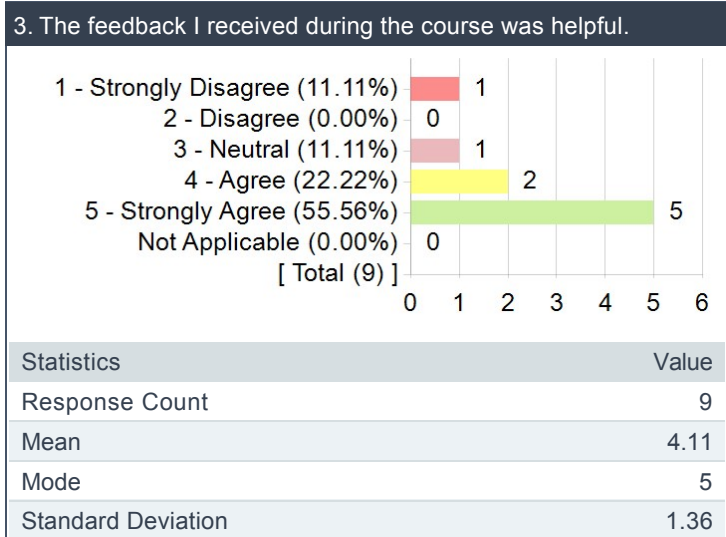
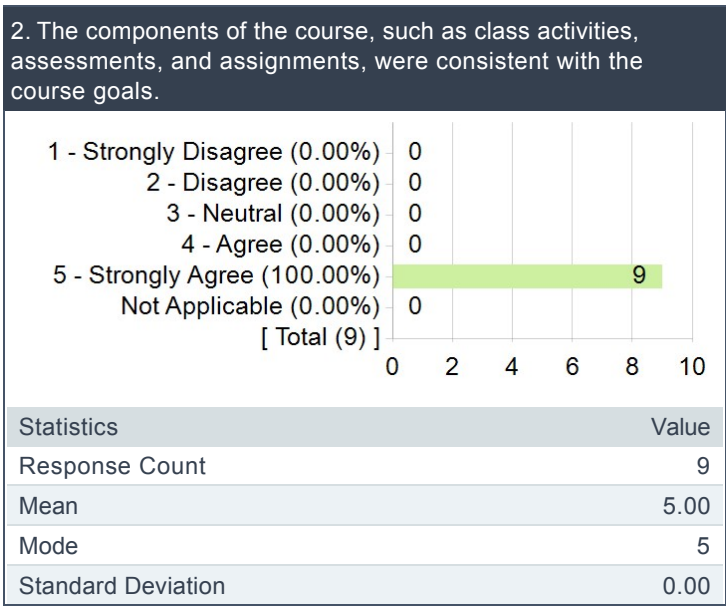
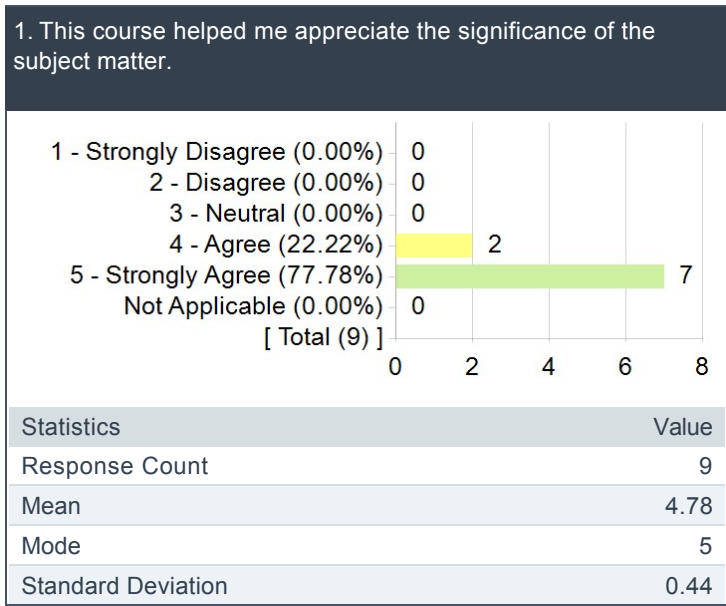
Please respond to the following questions about the instructor (**Kevin Leach**).



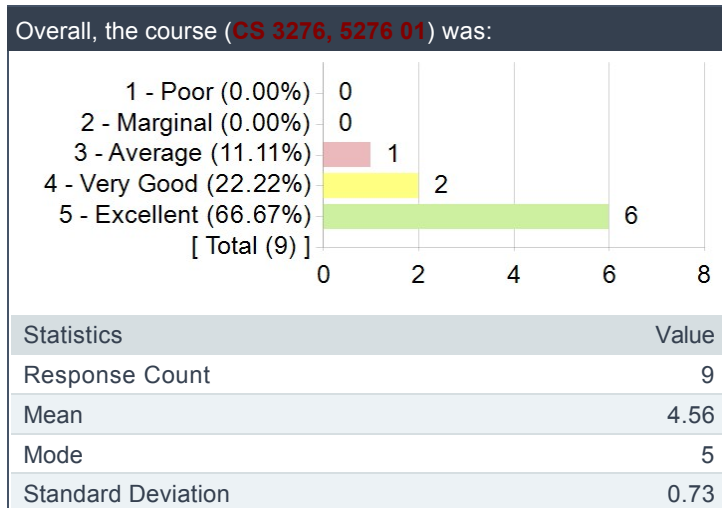
Overall, the instructor (Kevin Leach) was:



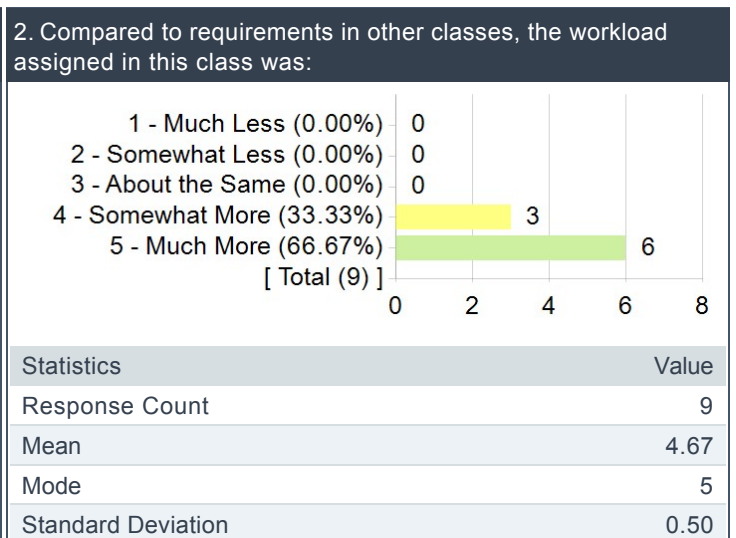
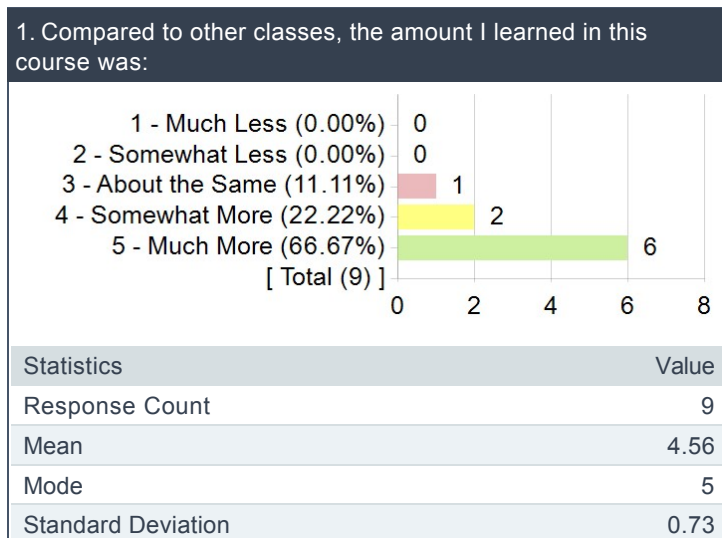
**Questions About This Course (CS 3276, 5276 01):**



## Overall the course was:



## Questions About This Course (CS 3276, 5276 01):



## What elements of the course (CS 3276, 5276 01) most contributed to your learning?

Comments
The PAs were actually very helpful...making a compiler ourselves helps bring things together. Going through examples in class was helpful as well. Working in teams was huge; talking content over with another person and bouncing ideas off each other was crucial.
Ideas and skills of system programming
The PAs were definitely extremely useful because they directly build on and cover most if not all concepts discussed in class.
The setup of the course website was helpful so that I was able to see previous slides and the concepts we covered. It was also helpful having office hours immediately after class.
The classes were very instructional and Dr. Leach was always there to provide thorough and insightful feedback. Dr. Leach really made the course what it was and is the best professor I've had at Vanderbilt by a million miles.
The lectures were very good. The intro videos for each assignment very useful, and the assignments were challenging and rewarding
The course projects contributed the most to my learning.

## What improvements to the course (CS 3276, 5276 01) would you recommend?

Comments
I might scale back some of the PAs or offer more feedback on the test cases...it is very easy to get stuck in these assignments and waste tons of time on something fairly simple.
More approachable learning materials
Honestly, this isn't really an improvement per say, but this course is just extremely difficult. I haven't taken any course at Vanderbilt that has been of a comparable or greater level of work or difficulty. I'm not sure if this can be ameliorated at all if the course stays the way it is, but I feel like for how much time I put into this class (more than all of my other classes combined) it should be given a higher credit value.
The lectures do a great job of explaining the topic conceptually, but then the expectation is for the students to be able to implement the concepts concretely with little additional support. Especially for the latter assignments regarding assembly code, many of us don't have that much experience coding in assembly and hence I felt like there was a disconnect between the expectations and the existing knowledge base of the students. For the last assignment in particular, the concepts surrounding compiler optimizations is super clear, but the implementation is so incredibly difficult given that we all have different PA5 submissions, so it feels like a double penalty. More examples of compiler optimizations with registers (vs dummy variables) would be very helpful. I think the recurring theme is that topics were explained really well but the transition to implementation made this class very very difficult in terms of time and energy to complete the assignments (This class required work equivalent to two classes in my opinion), but that being said I think the class was certainly rewarding.
None
Though well-intentioned, I feel the exams were less valuable than the assignments. I know the exams and finals are already not worth much, but I feel that it takes away time from the assignments, which is where the real learning happens in this class. I like how the assignments were challenging but still doable, but it would be useful to have more checkpoints, like we did for PA4 to make sure we are on the right track.
For improvements, the course should include details about how long in hours each project should take. In addition, the difficulty of this class should be mentioned upfront.
While the assignments are excellent, I would really recommend making class more interactive. You can easily get an A in this class without ever showing up. The participation grade is really the only motivator, and I'm guessing you don't want it to be that way. Try bringing more interactive components into the class — that is, making the students actually do things. Just listening to slides gets tiring, and it's just not effective at all for getting information to people. We can all read slide decks faster than we can listen to them (which is really what ends up happening).

## Do you have any other comments?

Comments
The course was pretty consistent, which was nice to know what to expect. I wish more classes were like this one, also because students can work in teams. It is amazing how much more you can learn by collaborating with another student, even if you both were fairly lost at first.
Overall it's a very different course though all these years' learning. The content is rich, along with much more workload. Though I didn't do well in this course, I feel I learned a lot from it. And Prof. Leach is also one of the best instructors since he created almost perfect materials and delivered excellent lectures, as well as insightful assignments for students.
N/A
No
N/A