

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Please summarize your reaction to this course focusing on the aspects that were most important to you.

Comments
This was a great course
This course honestly wasn't as good as I thought it would be. It felt disjointed and we didn't really learn anything cohesive. Karen is very nice though.
This is a great course to take for anyone who wants to make an impact in their local communities while also picking up new data analytics skills. IEMS 365 has a lot of unique aspects, including working with the local school districts (and presenting findings to them as opposed to just the teacher) and approaching social policy questions through data. Professor Smilowitz is encouraging and wants all teams to succeed, but she doesnt create any competitive or cutthroat environment.
In this class you mostly learn R, ArcGIS and a little bit of Tableau and apply those skills to social good problems. Since the class entirely consists of group projects with "interdisciplinary" groups, the IEs will inevitably have to do more work than some other teammates. For most of the quarter we worked with the Evanston public school district to analyze school assignment areas and at the end worked on a 48-hour long Hackathon. The Hackathon was pretty brutal and took up a lot of time during reading week when most students still had other obligations. This class was interesting but I found that it wasn't super interdisciplinary because most people were IEs and it wasn't well organized. The workload was also really inconsistent and it was hard to know what to expect. Bottom line – you'll have a good experience if you have a good group.
Fantastic course – the group based nature of this class means that you have to work through your personal weaknesses and targets areas that you need to strengthen whether that's technical expertise, teamwork, or strategic thinking. You learn a lot from your peers and get great hands on experience in a few really interesting areas in social impact. Not dry at all and the problems feel deeply relevant to real world issues
This course did not teach much. Most of the course was spent on one project ending in a short presentation. Great to practice your IE skills though
I liked this class. That said, I hoped I would develop more hard skills on platforms like Tableau and ArcGIS and I did not develop those as much as I'd hoped. Smilowitz is really great though and the projects are really interesting.
I had high expectations going into this class but it disappointed a little. I enjoyed it and it wasn't that difficult to do well, but I felt like the course was disorganized. It almost felt like DTC again where the concept was really great but the implementation was iffy. I wish we had learned more in class and got to apply those skills. There was a really long project that eventually came together but I didn't feel prepared at all going in. Expectations were also unclear and that made the process stressful. Your experience in this class is also really really dependent on your team. Thankfully I had a great team but it took us a couple weeks to get there, and those weeks were miserable. The hackathon is kinda a crazy concept but it's not bad if you set clear expectations on your team for how much time and effort to put into it. It sucks that I still had classes going on during it.
The organization of the case studies and the modules were a little confusing: you might be working on 1 project outside class while working on 1 project during class time, the modules weren't organized week by week for this reason, which made it difficult to find specific information. Overall I would recommend this class if you're interested in consulting, humanitarian work, analytics, or anything in between.
Great course– super interesting case studies, learned more and feel more comfortable with data analytics, given the space to learn but ask questions when needed.
Being part of a great team made my experience in this class awesome and worthwhile. This class is all about teamwork
hackathon should be banned