Instructor: **Mwaura, Jonathan**

Subject: **CS**

Catalog & Section: **5002 13**

Course ID: **21414**

Objectives:

Enrollment: **22**

Responses Incl Declines: **11**

Declines: **1**

Instructor Related Questions: Jonathan Mwaura (15 comments)

Q: What were the strengths of this course and/or this instructor?

1   He cares and is thoughtful about his approach to the subject matter.

2   Professor Mwaura is definitely a brilliant man. He has a deep understanding of the topic, and it's clear that he enjoys teaching it.

3   Always has some in-class activities, for example, use Google doc, play some games etc.

4   The professor was very kind, approachable, considerate and fair. I really appreciated his demeanor in our interactions and his presence when he actually came to the classroom. Since he was primarily on the other campus though (Portland) those were fairly few & far between, but were greatly appreciated when they happened.

5   The instructor is a enthusiastic person with great passion towards teaching, at the same time, he is really bad at teaching.

### Q: What could the instructor do to make this course better?

1   Prof. Mwaura has such a strong background in this subject matter it is sometimes hard for him to break it down to an introductory level for us

2   It was often a bit difficult to follow along with the lecture & the slides weren't very clear for people who are coming into this field without a background in CS or math. Prof. Mwaura would be a fabulous educator for students who are deep in the field or have immense background in math/CS/AI. Since this is a bridge course, most students don't have this background, and therefore, it was hard to keep up with him/the materials.

3   More in-person sessions would be better. Hybrid mode does not work for me. Also add more program practice would be better, combine mathematics and computer science together.

4   I think just general clarity of what exactly we're covering in each week & time management in class time to make sure we stick with that.

5   Actually, teach the material. The lecture periods were treated more as a recitation discussion time rather than a dedicated lesson time. The class felt terribly disconnected from the online materials and assignments. Because of this difficulty and the speed at which the class proceeded, the timeline of materials was compounding in falling behind the expected schedule of materials. Additionally, grades were never made available in a timely fashion -- some a month after the assignment due date -- nor were solutions made readily available (learned on 11/29 where they were online).

6   TEACH! as if we know nothing about computers science and discrete math when class starts, don't expect us to understand everything on Canvas beforehand, and doing difficult math problems for 3 hours! If we wanted watching videos to learn, why did we even bother to apply for Northeastern?

### Q: Please expand on the instructor's strengths and/or areas for improvement in facilitating inclusive learning.

1   NA

2   I do remember one particular instance where he noticed a difficulty I was having in engaging (materials were hard to see and I was squinting to try and read them) and without my even having to ask he zoomed in and confirmed I could see better. I felt it was really quite considerate of him!

He was also very considerate of external issues -- I approached him for extended deadlines a few times, for issues that were my own fault (time management mistakes, mis-read a deadline, etc...). I'm a single parent working full time through my first semester of full time grad school and I had a signficant personal/medical emergency at the start of semester. Though I don't think he knew any of this, it really made an impact on me that he never shamed me for my mistakes and readily worked with me to find a solution.

3   Despite student feedback throughout the course, the style of the class did not change. This class was also FAR different than the other 5002 class. So much so that switching classes would have put me at an even greater disadvantage. If I were a Ph.D. math major, this learning environment might have been successful. For a first-semester Align student, this was akin to being asked to assemble a 5000-piece puzzle with the picture face down. Occasionally successful but with far more effort than should be necessary. Lastly, although I am sure I am missing other valid points, the syllabus contained a phrase that was immediately off-putting and demonstrated him to be unapproachable regarding grades. This was a red flag to me on day one of class, I should've listened to my gut and switched classes right then.

4   I would benefit much more if the instructor could lead us through the simplest concepts together and examples together and answer questions, rather than start the class with 10 minutes of teaching and doing difficult exercises and end up doing that for the whole 3 hours, EVERY SINGLE WEEK

Questions to Assess Students' Online Experience (6 comments)

Q: Please comment on your experience of the online course environment in the open-ended text box.
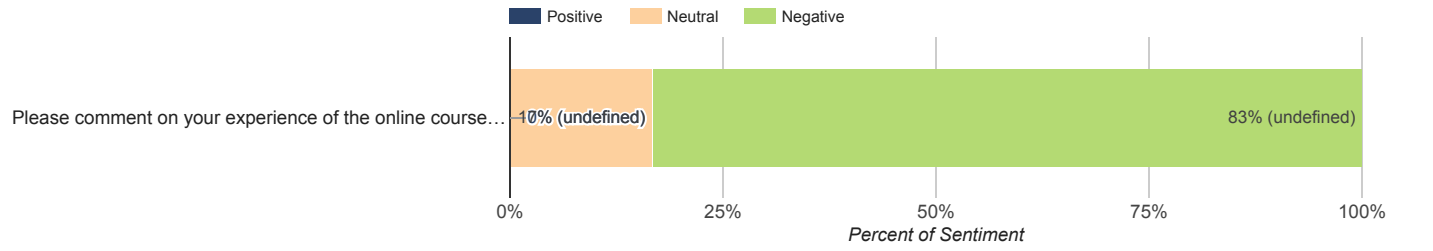
Q: Please comment on your experience of the online course environment in the open-ended text box.
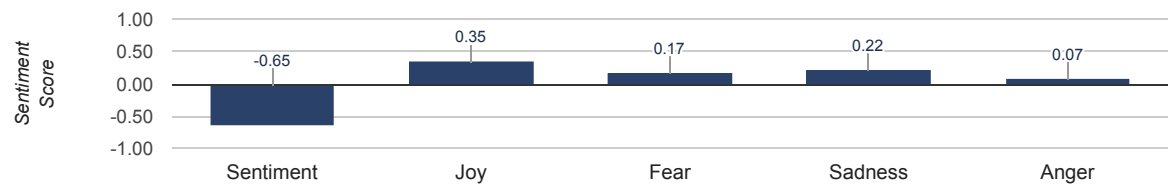
1	This course was presented as an in person course. It was ABSOLUTELY NOT ★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆
2	It's so bad to join in the professor's online class. ★ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
3	The format of this class should not be continued at Northeastern. The live-casting method is an ineffective form of teaching, and the fact that this was 'marketed' as an in-person class because it was given a classroom is dishonest. Prof. Mwaura did his best in an unfortunate situation. Overall, however, it was disorganized with our course materials spread out between Canvas, Teams, Zoom, and Gradescope. It was difficult to know where and when to look for certain assignments, etc. ★ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
4	Maybe it is better to add more in-person sections if possible. I think online course (hybrid mode) is not very convenient. ★ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
5	There were disagreeing times and due dates across all online systems with little concern to maintain that consistency. This, along with many other things, perpetuated an anxious learning environment where one always felt like they were missing something. ★ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
6	School set up a classroom for my classmates so we could learn and discuss together, that's nice. But other than that, zoom class is just not it. ★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆

Student Self-Assessment of their Effort to Achieve Course Outcomes (8 comments)

Q: What I could have done to make this course better for myself.

1	Enough study time.
2	I spent no less than 50 hours per week having to teach my self the material because the TAs were woefully unhelpful, if they were ever available. The method of instruction given to Professor Mwaura set him up for failure. On the TAs, one was overheard disparaging the students and being condescending towards the ALIGN program and students, others seemed to not want to be at office hours as well as (not data-backed), i'm assuming more than 50% of the assigned hours were not met. This is a problem at the administrative level. If these comments cause problems please contact me, I have extensive experience in consulting large businesses in overcoming short-fallings and negatively affecting their customers. My name is Dennis Hernandez and my email is Hernandez.Den@northeastern.edu
3	I search for so many information by myself.
4	I found it incredibly difficult to pay attention through the entire class, and wound up teaching myself much of the material. Ideally I should have been more "present" during class time.
5	Discrete Structures is all about mathematics and programming, so I will read more and program more to make this course better for myself.
6	I had a couple time management issues between this and other courses so I think just a closer eye on deadlines would've helped a lot, also perhaps doing more to stay engaged during class times. The class course work seemed to diverge quite significantly from the online component and I had trouble following what the professor was saying over zoom so it was hard to stay engaged. This meant come assignment time I often had to go back and teach myself things I had missed.
7	Switch classes and forced my schedule to accommodate that other class.
8	Watch YouTube videos about one of the text book instructor recommended