Instructor: **Lerner, Benjamin**

Subject: **CS**

Catalog & Section: **6410 01**

Course ID: **32074**

Objectives:

Enrollment: **23**

Responses Incl Declines: **12**

Declines: **1**

Instructor Related Questions: Benjamin Lerner (18 comments)

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

1   Very enthusiastic about teaching

2   Prof Lerner is incredibly knowledgeable about pretty much any computer science related topic, so he is very good at answering questions and brings up lots of interesting followups and nuances. The course was interesting, if challenging, and he always makes the class very enjoyable.

3   Explains concepts well, draws students into the discussion pretty well, is clearly passionate about the material, makes class engaging.

4   Prof Lerner obviously loves compilers and is perfectly happy to go on very informative tangents.

5   Professor Lerner knows his stuff and is super passionate about students truly learning the material. He makes time to ensure we are comfortable and confident in the material, which is not an easy task. Compilers is the hardest course I've taken at Northeastern and with Professor Lerner's support, I feel I've gained many skills and much experience.

6   Ben does a great job making the course and concepts interesting. For most topics, things are explained quite well.

7   Very knowledgeable of the subject matter. Could answer all questions thrown at him

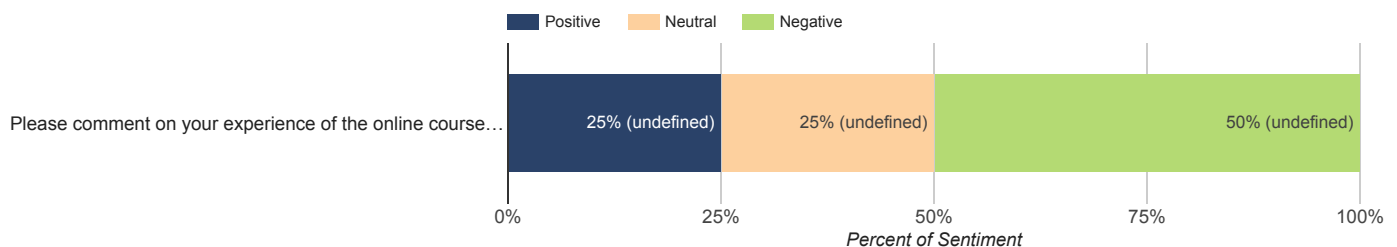8   Explanations were clear, content was interesting and insightful.

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

1   The coursework is excessive. I think automated tests on handins would help guide students' solutions.

2   More time for written assignments - while two nights would be enough for the assignment assuming no other coursework, taking other classes often meant that I did not have enough time for the written problems and ended up losing large amounts of sleep on those nights.

3   I think the absolute best improvement to this course would be if a solution to each assignment was posted after the assignment was due. I'd much rather have to onboard myself to a new codebase than have to deal with bugs or broken implementation in my own solution. It really honestly prevented me from learning as much as I could have.

Could be a bit more compassionate towards students (or at least seem that way).

4   I wish we had one fewer written assignments. I don't think I gained much from them, definitely not as much as I did from the project assignments. They added unnecessary stress to my life and provided little gain pedagogically speaking.

5   The written assignments were quite discouraging due to the way that the grading was overly nit-picky. You are given a very short amount of time to design complicated features and produce effectively a first draft. It then gets graded as if it was a peer reviewed final draft. It would be better to either tone down the cost for small errors or add a padding to account for the short time and no peer review.

6   Maybe go off less on tangents by answer all questions students ask, because sometimes other students ask too technical questions which deviates from the core materials.
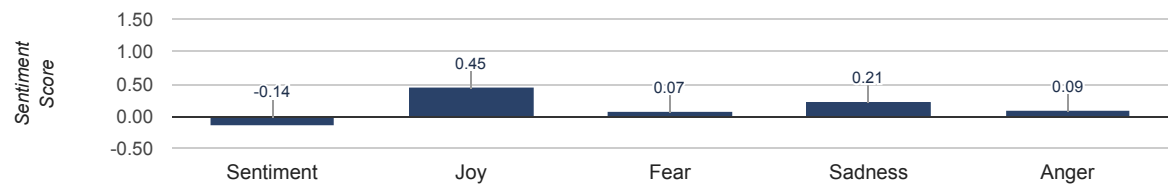
Q: Please expand on the instructor's strengths and/or areas for improvement in facilitating inclusive learning.

1   Prof Lerner does a good job at facilitating an inclusive environment.

2   It has been a true pleasure taking this course with Professor Lerner. I've learned a ton about compiler design, but more importantly software engineering and project management in general. By taking this course, I filled in many gaps of knowledge and gained a better understanding of how all the little pieces of software and programming languages fit together to make a cohesive unit.

3   Ben has a tendency to waste time having students guessing the reason for some concept or design. He then will catch them out of difficult edge cases. Sometimes it seems to feel like it is an ego booster. This ends up discouraging speaking up in class. As things progress, I noticed less people would try to answer in these situations. It would often be better to shorten this or just jump straight to the explanation.

4   He is very smart and knows everything about compilers. But I wish he focused more on explaining concepts more easily.

Questions to Assess Students' Online Experience (4 comments)

Q: Please comment on your experience of the online course environment in the open-ended text box.

Positive   Neutral   Negative

Please comment on your experience of the online course…   25% (undefined)   25% (undefined)   50% (undefined)

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

Percent of Sentiment

Q: Please comment on your experience of the online course environment in the open-ended text box.

1. The class was entirely in-person with the exception of when Prof Lerner was sick/away, so it wasn't really an online course. The website was well designed and helpful. ★ ★ ★ ☆

2. We had some unfortunate circumstances this semester that required Zoom meetings for around a month. It went smoothly and Prof Lerner was successful even with all the adversities he was facing. ★ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

3. Ben's course website is very good.

   Ben doesn't have the best communication style when answering question on the Piazza. He often comes across condescending or arrogant with his responds, especially when he does not want to answer the question (i.e. it would give away too much information about how to do something). A specific improvement would be to just stop using ellipses "…". They always seem to contribute most to bad impressions. ★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆

4. There was not much amount of posts and interactions in piazza. ★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

Student Self-Assessment of their Effort to Achieve Course Outcomes (6 comments)

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

1. Did a better job to make sure I was properly caught up when I missed lecture, as the building nature of each concept meant that falling behind was difficult to recover from.

2. Reading the lecture notes again before working on assignments.

3. I think I handled the workload well and prioritized my assignments effectively. I wish I hadn't stressed out as much, but that naturally comes with a tough course like CS4410.

4. It is often better to be confident in your design decisions, even when it seems to diverge from the starter code.

5. Studied computer systems beforehand. It should be a requirement.

6. Start the homeworks earlier.