Discrete Structures (Spring 2023)

Instructor: **Hoshino, Richard**
Subject: **CS**
Catalog & Section: **5002 05**
Course ID: **40492**
Objectives:

Enrollment: **21**
Responses Incl Declines: **20**
Declines: **0**

Instructor Related Questions: Richard Hoshino (28 comments)

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

1	The lectures were lively, interesting and passionate. The explanation of mathematical concepts was clear and it helped us a lot in completing our homework.
2	Thanks to Richard, I now find Math an intriguing subject, which I had never experienced before in my life.
3	Providing sufficient guidance and maintaining a patient attitude when addressing students' inquiries.
4	He is a great person who is very good at what he does—the best instructor in my academic career.
5	Every time Richard explicitly explained how a theory or knowledge we've just learnt is connected with a real-life tech problem, I got a goosebump and felt greatly motivated to continue my path in tech! Thank you!
6	The course can inspire students' interest in math since most of us have left campus for many years.
7	Richard is an excellent professor and a genuinely kind human being; I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to take a class with him and will actively seek out further opportunities to take classes with him. It's clear that he's passionate about the subject matter, and my overwhelming impression is that he truly cares about students and wants to empower everyone to understand and engage with discrete math and computer science in general. He went out of his way to build up our confidence in ourselves as computer scientists, and I really appreciated that. The course was extremely well organized and expectations were clearly communicated. Classes were unfailingly useful in helping me understand the topics, and the weekly Zoom recitations were extremely helpful as well. The workload was significant but fair, and we received ample support. Richard was extremely approachable, supportive, and responsive to student questions both inside and outside of class. Feedback (in the form of graded work and comments on said work) was delivered with unfailing promptness, which enables students to learn from mistakes and improve continuously. I really enjoyed the creative and puzzle-like nature of many of the problem sets. Richard goes out of his way to make discrete math fun and approachable without watering down the difficulty of the material; this is quite difficult to do well, but Richard has managed to make it look easy. Overall, a true delight. This course was one I was intimidated by and worried about initially, but it was by far my favourite this semester.
8	He is very nice and enthusiastic in class. He often explains while making diagrams, which I think is very helpful for me to understand the points
9	Richard is always energetic and enthusiastic, delivering his passion for math to all of us. I have enjoyed Richard's classes throughout the semester.
10	1. True dedication to teaching and giving to students. 2. Understanding difference in student backgrounds. 3. Course video recording is helpful.

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

1	The timing of classroom explanations could be more reasonable. Sometimes there is not enough time for the most difficult parts to be explained.
2	I think the course is already good enough.
3	none
4	I couldn't think of any.
5	Not that I could think of. Definitely the best maths I ever had. Apart from pure maths, it was also the best tech intro class for me.
6	In my opinion, the instructor already made the course a good one.
7	Honestly, I think the course is very well designed. Any recommendations I could make would be relatively minor. One thing I would gently suggest is that Richard avoid describing certain topics as hard or easy. This is something he sometimes does, and I think it's always with good intentions (for example, he describes problems as hard, I think, to help us feel better if we struggle with them), but my personal experience and pedagogical research both suggest that it can sometimes be counterproductive. Students may feel embarrassed if they struggle with something that was described as easy; conversely, they may approach a problem with heightened anxiety if the professor said it was really hard. My suggestion would be to find ways to encourage students and normalize struggle without labelling problems as easy or difficult.
8	Maybe reduce the amount of homework a little
9	Actually I believe Richard has already done better than most instructors ever can. Just hope he can keep on delivering his passion in future courses.

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

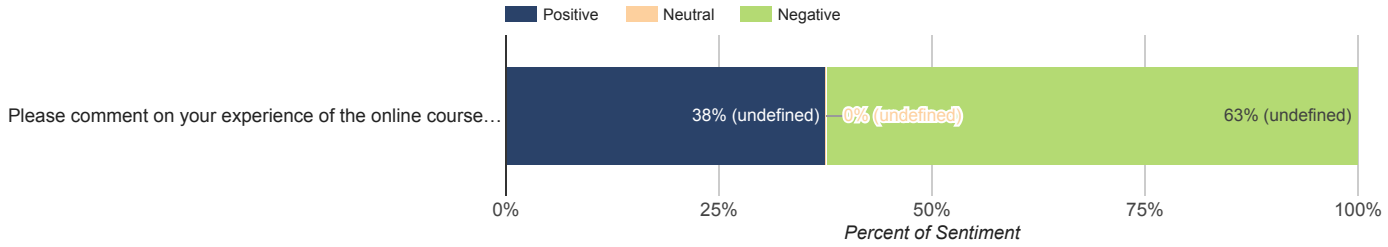
1	Friendly and willing to help students.
2	The professor delivered a thorough and captivating exposition of the concepts during the class, providing an extensive expansion of ideas.
3	I think our learning environment is inclusive enough. I consider it a job well done.
4	Richard's enthusiasm for maths, for solving problems with math and coding, and for teaching is really "contagious". I gained so much energy from learning with Richard.
5	the instructor use a lot of familiar childhood games to teach very complex math problem, which did increase my interest.
6	Richard was great about inclusivity and creating a welcoming and respectful classroom environment. He set high standards for professional and kind communication in the course. My only comment would be that the Bayesian problems that used breast cancer screenings as an example used gendered language focused exclusively on women. Men, both cisgender and transgender, both get breast cancer as well, so it might be worth revisiting the wording of that problem.
7	Workshops are very helpful and often very inspiring to me. Also, I really like the illustrated explanations, which help me understand knowledge more visually.
8	I think I have explained enough. Richard is a real treasure to this campus and I feel lucky to have taken this course.

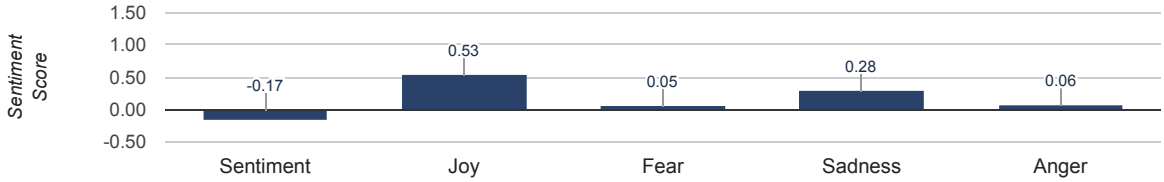
Q: Please expand on the instructor's strengths and/or areas for improvement in facilitating inclusive learning.

9	1. Smartly clearly and effectively organize course material in a concise right on the topic, easy to comprehend. 2. Use the time wisely and every minute is worth it.

Questions to Assess Students' Online Experience (8 comments)

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





1	Some of the videos in the online class were very vague in explaining the concepts and did not help me much in my study. ★☆☆☆☆
2	Sometimes the teacher in the online course spends a lot of time writing things in the whiteboard, and find them wrong, then erase it. I think it a waste of time. ★☆☆☆☆
3	Online courses can give more animated demonstrations ★★☆☆☆
4	I think the experience has been wonderful. ★★★★★
5	some online courses are not very clear. ★☆☆☆☆
6	The Zoom-based bi-weekly recitations were extremely helpful for hands-on help with problem sets. Richard is adept at using technology for educational purposes (smoothly switching between his tablet and main computer), and it makes it feel frictionless and natural. ★★★★★
7	There are some online course materials that are not specific and clear enough ★★☆☆☆
8	Not sure about this question because this course is delivered on-ground. But for Problem Solving sessions on Zoom, it is great experience. ★★★★☆

Student Self-Assessment of their Effort to Achieve Course Outcomes (7 comments)

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

1	Communicate more with classmates.
2	I could have better time management.
3	Should read the textbook more, except for watching online videos
4	I would have benefitted from reviewing certain math topics (logarithms, limits) before this course.
5	Pre-learning in advance
6	I think I could have practiced and read more on course-related materials.
7	Review maths and start learning high school math topics before taking this course.