MS SE - Prof and course reviews Fall 2016

CHIRAG SEJPAL · FRIDAY, 27 MAY 2016

Before you start reading this document, I want you to know that the information provided below is for your reference only and no one is held responsible for what they think about a specific professor, course and grading. These are just personal opinions and might differ from person to person. The below course and professor reviews were collected from different seniors and from previous posts on ISO Facebook page. Also the timings mentioned below are as per previous Spring/Fall semester. They might change this semester.

I hope you have read MS SE major specific FAQs. If you haven't, please read. Also pre req information document if you are assigned pre req.

Also if you don't get the course if your enrollment is late, don't worry. Mostly you will get add codes in first two weeks after the classes start. Don't bother professors by mailing them asking for add codes. You get add codes after classes start.

MS SE courses

CMPE 202 Software Systems Engineering

Prof. Mohammad Fayad (Mo/We 6:00PM - 8:45PM)
What will you learn: Technically, nothing at all (not even single word to include in your resume). Fayad has his own curriculum which makes no sense. His coursework will never help in future.

Assignments/Projects: They are completely theoretical and silly but time consuming assignments. Heavy documentation is what he expects on some random topics. They are useless from both research and industry point of view. Generally, there are 2 or 3 team projects which are basically reports on some topics like software reuse, component based development etc. and involve UML diagrams as per Professor's set standards.

Grading criteria: Pretty unexpected and depends on his mood. It heavily depends on firstly, the projects and second, the individual assignments. One must meet him up for these things whenever he gives time slots or during his office hours. If he gets impressed and gives good marks in projects, its highly possible to get a good grade (A+, A, A-). Having said that, never screw up the easy things like mid-term, final exam or any extra assignment. As I said, grading is pretty random. It is important to stay in touch with him regarding the team projects.

Course load: Not much. It is light. Just that it needs heavy documentation and reporting stuff, that too on some baseless concepts. Overall, it is a completely theoretical course which is based on Professor's self-devised concepts and theories. It has no real world concepts. But, it is easier to handle if all other courses are heavy.

Prof. Paul Nguyen (Sat 12:00PM - 2:45PM)

What will you learn: Design Patterns, UML , Java

Assignments/Projects: Project 1 – UML Parser, Project 2 – Create/Use existing game and Implement Design Patterns in that game.

Grading criteria: It was difficult to do self-study due to time constraints. His exams and grades are very fair although he follows absolute grading. He is very particular about what he asks in exams, but if you live up to his expectations, he would be glad to give you full grades. With Prof Fayad being the only other alternative for 202, I would recommend go for Paul.

Course load: 202 under Paul is challenging. Course is heavy compared to other professor mainly because during my time, professor did not cover all the topics planned for exams. But it's a better option when compared to Fayad. Since its a core course, go for Paul only.
206, 207, 208, 209 reviews in MS CMPE Networking document.

CMPE 226 Database Systems

Prof. Ron Mak (Tu 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What will you learn: If you don't know the basics of database then go for it or if you want to keep one subject light because other 1-2 subjects are heavy.

Assignments/Projects: There will be group assignments every week. Mid and final exams will be tough (open book exams).

Grading criteria: Your grade will depends on your performance of the exams. But the Professor is lenient in giving grades.

Course load: The Course load will be light to medium

Prof. Kong Li – Not much idea but he is a tough grader.

CMPE 239 Web and Data Mining

Prof. Chandra Vuppalapati (TuTh 4:30PM - 5:45PM)

What will you learn: Data Mining, Basic Hadoop architecture, Classification techniques, Clustering techniques, SEO, IBM Watson etc. Apache Spark if you want to learn on your own.

Assignments/Projects: 1 group project, 1 individual assignment every 1-2 week but they are easy, 1 group research paper.

Grading criteria: Curve grading mostly based on group project and how well you do on projects. Midterms and finals are from previous years papers so doesn't matter much I believe.

Course load: Medium

Prof. Eirinaki (Tu 6:00PM - 8:45PM not taking this semester someone else is taking)

CMPE 272 Enterprise Software Platforms

Prof. Rakesh Ranjan (We 6:00PM - 8:45PM not sure if he is taking this semester)

What will you learn: Nothing much. It's a time pass course. You however have to take because it's a core course. You will learn few things but mostly it's a revision course about OS, Security, Database etc.

(Most people think that its a time pass course, but if you focus on the latest technologies which Prof. Rakesh teaches and personally explore them, it will be a good learning)

Assignments/Projects: Few assignments which are easy. 1 Final project is the main thing you will have to do in which he expects us to work on new technologies such as Big Data, IoT etc.

Grading criteria: Fair and easy. 1 Midterm, 1 final, 1 project and few assignments. You need to score good in everything to get A. Attempt everything in midterms and finals. He does give marks for attempting a question.

Course load: Light

Prof. Dan Harkey (Used to take before Fall 15 Mo 6:00PM - 8:45PM but I guess he is taking this semester)

What will you learn: Again 272 is nothing much to learn. Overview of the current trends and stuff. You need to take as it is a core course but course content is decent.

Assignments/Projects: Midterm, Final and research paper. Midterm and finals you need to memorize more to score good as everything is from slides.

Grading criteria: Curve. Score in midterm and final and you would be good to go. But it's hard to memorize everything from slides including diagrams etc.

Course load: Light/Medium

There's another section opened on Saturday I guess. But I have no idea who would be taking 272 on Saturday. If I have any information, I will update this document.

CMPE 273 Enterprise Distributed Systems

Prof. Sithu Aung (We 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What will you learn: Professor Sithu Aung is a very good professor and someone who is always concerned about concept. He is very good by nature, always ready and open to doubts. You will get to learn a lot. He covers the concepts of Distributed Systems, RESTful services and protocols. The language that he uses for assignments throughout the course is Golang and he provides the students with all the material for learning Golang. He allows the students to carry on their projects in which ever language you prefer like Java Python. He is the 1st professor I have come across who recommends that you don't prepare an actual ppt for final project presentation and just show the working code. He cares about the efforts you have put in for the project and how much have you implemented it. Golang is upcoming but there are good opportunities in Bay area.

Assignments/Projects: His assignments give you a good hands-on for both practical applications as well as Go programming concepts which includes working with RESTful services and API calls. He is flexible with deadlines. Projects are good and include working on raspberry pi and related to load balancing and Amazon Web Services. 3 Assignments, 3 labs, 2 quiz, midterms – only MCQs, final – mcqs but depends on his mood.

Grading criteria: Lenient and fair

Course load: Medium if you are regular.

Prof. Simon Shim (We 3:00PM - 5:45PM / MonWed 4.30 – 5.45 PM)

What will you learn: MongoDB, Express, AngularJS and Nodejs ie MEAN stack and many other things like Socketio, passportjs etc. You will learn everything from scratch and it's a real good opportunity to learn new technology. MEAN stack is in high demand in Bay area. Apart from MEAN stack, he expects us to learn how to make the system scalable as well as testing the application using Mocha.js and load testing using JMeter. Scalability can be achieved using various techniques. He will introduce few things like Connection pooling, Caching, RabbitMQ queuing system etc. Apart from this, we use NGINX, Sharding and Clustering data, Redis caching etc on our own. So it all depends on you. He is one of the best professor in SJSU but its tough

Assignments/Projects: 3 Projects – 1/2 Individual project depends on him, 1 group project (4/5/6 members depends on him) on MEAN Stack which are very heavy and you would be dedicating 70-80% of your overall time of the semester to Shim's project. If you don't want to work hard, avoid Shim at all cost. Our individual project was creating Facebook using MEAN stack including friend request, groups, timelines everything. Group project was to create real time simulation of Uber application. Trust me when I say this, Shim is really tough but you will learn a lot to if you are willing to. If you don't work hard, your grades will suffer.

Grading criteria: Very fair but mostly depends on projects. There are in class quizzes as well as final exam but their weightage is less. Most of the focus is group project and you are prepared for group project by doing individual project first. If you did as per his expectations and will complete the project, you will surely get A. But please bear in mind that Shim is tough and heavy and he expects a lot. But you will learn a lot too. If you didn't do as per his expectations, you won't get A.

Course load: Very Heavy

Prof. Hungwen Li (Mo 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What will you learn: Prof H.Li is good in terms of introducing you to the core concepts and concerns of the distributed enterprise applications. As part of his curriculum, he would focus more on RESTful web services for IOT based distributed systems. He would theoretically cover different steps of distributed system interaction and would demand RESTful web services in practical's.

Assignments/Projects: Throughout the semester you would be required to do practical's, so it would be a good fit if you are passionate about coding and exploring new technologies.

Grading criteria: As far as grading is concerned, it is absolute and fair and if you work sincerely throughout, you could expect up to A in his subject. He doesn't have midterm and the final exam is moderate to crack.

Course load: Moderate (if you are choosing technology stack in which you have experience) / Heavy (if you are required to use technology in which you are a beginner)

CMPE 274

Prof. Weider Yu

What will you learn: BI Technologies and softwares

Assignments/Projects: He didn't take last semester so no idea about it. But it's a team project of 5 or 6.

Grading criteria: Midterms, finals, quizzes everything will be from slides. However, you would need to mug up everything. Mostly will get A, A-. Few will get B too.

Course load: Light

/* ---Start of Spring 2017 Update:

Courseload was light. More stress on punctuality and sincerity of work; quality of work is an add-on. There was only 1 homework assignment which was writing a paper. There was a team project and focus was more on architecture and the technologies used and what problem you are solving. Most classes had a session of lecture followed by the presentation/seminar given by students on project update or on special topics, and attendance was required because of in class activities. There was a mid and a final, both were 1 page exams and most questions were out of slides. Slides are not provided though, one needs to ask previous students. People who did their exams perfectly got A. However messing up any 1 exam or any 1 question (1 question could be 15-20 marks) makes your grades become uncertain and you get to know only after the semester results.

---End of Spring 2017 Update */

CMPE 275 Enterprise Application Development

Prof. Charles Zhang (Wed 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What will you learn: Enterprise Application development using framework. Main concentration will be on Spring MVC-Hibernate frameworks. If you want to learn development using frameworks then go for it.

Grading: Grading is not that tough but you need to consider all the requirements to finish an assignment or a lab (No leniency in grading). A bad point is the grades are released very late for e.g.: Grades of assignment1 will be released when you will be doing your final project or near your assignment3. So it may happen you will make the same mistake in your assignment2.

Course Load: The load is not heavy. Keeps you busy but compared to Prof. Gash's class it is pretty light with everything planned and detailed out from the first class.

Prof. John Gash (Mo 6:00PM - 8:45PM (if needed another section might open

for Wed 6:00PM - 8:45PM))

What will you learn: 275 under Prof Gash is purely analytical. His expectations throughout the course would be how good you explore the challenges involved in distributed systems. His projects are heavy and expectations are very high. You won't get to learn new programming languages or technologies during the course.

Assignments/Projects: You will be required to work on Java (particularly netty.io framework) and C++ and Python. In one of the project, he expects entire class to work in sync. I would recommend 275 under him, if you are highly self-motivated and enjoy researching topics in distributed parallel applications. Moreover, if you actually plan to dive deep into distributed system and its challenges, then go for him.
Project 1 – Create a scalable distributed Systems, implement leader election algorithms, data distribution, cross cluster communication etc
Project 2 – Deep dive and OpenMP, OpenMPI parallel programming concepts

Grading criteria: His grades are very fair and he does curve. But scoring in his projects is challenging due to his high expectations, abstract project definitions and team collaboration.

Course load: Heavy

CMPE 277 Smartphone Application Development

Prof. Charles Zhang (Th 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What you will learn: Mini shim. Uses Chandra's 277 slides. Doesn't teach much but projects are good. You learn a lot provided you do everything on your own. Gives slides to learn by yourself.

Assignments/Projects: 3 Assignments. Midterm/Finals.

Grading: Same as 275 Zhang grading. A bit tough

Course load: Medium/Heavy

Prof. Chandra Vuppalapati (Tu 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What you will learn: Android focus till midterm, iOS focus after midterm. Windows development depends on term to term. Professor is good. Covers a lot of ground so have to be attentive in all lectures. Course pace is very fast. Android is 60% and iOS is 40% as per course coverage. But again it depends on each term. If you actually do assignments then there is a lot to learn and gain.

Assignments/Projects: Weekly assignment, 3 projects, midterm/final

Grading: Curve but Grading is easy and good.Course load: Medium-heavy load Good course for learning mobile dev. But take care other subjects are not too heavy.

CMPE 280 Web UI Design and Development

Prof. Chandra Vuppalapati (Th 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What will you learn: Web and UI development as the name says and related technologies such as BootStrap, HTML, CSS, Javascript, jQuery, AJAX, Visualization using different charts such as D3.js etc.

Assignments/Projects: Bi weekly assignments on different technologies, midterm, final, 1 research paper

Grading criteria: Fair and curve.

Course load: Medium/Heavy as too many assignments.

CMPE 281 Cloud Technologies

Prof. Paul Nguyen (Sa 9:00AM - 11:45AM)

What you will learn: Technically, you will be acquianted with: the latest cloud platforms like Amazon Web Sevices. Core cloud concepts of multi-tenancy, scaling. Technologies and platforms like NodeJs, MongoDb, Heroku etc. The projects will be quite challenging esp. for inexperienced and less experienced people. But, there are surely many key take-aways which can be included in the resume/profile in the end. A lot to learn in this course. The projects are a great addition to your resume.

Assignments/Projects: They are challenging and one must not screw even a 10 marks lab in order to stay on track. Each and every single thing (even a 10 marks extra assignment) plays significant role in building your grade.

Grading Criteria: Pretty straightforward. It is exactly as per given in the greensheet of professor. No curving. He is pretty strict about the given grading range and does not compromise on it even if a person is falling short of 1 mark for getting A or A- etc.

Course Load: High. One needs to devote significant time on each and everything. Mostly, all the technologies and stuff I mentioned above have to be learnt on your own. So, it totally depends on how well-versed you are with them already. If you are not very familiar, then, it is going to be a very heavy course. Overall, it is a very good course from industry standards. Not recommended to be taken in 1st sem though.

Prof. Mourad (Only takes in Fall. Not sure if it is being offered this Fall though Th: 6-8.45)

What you will learn: Mourad is an easy going fellow, teaches good but No pressure coursework. Midterm and finals were online MCQs.

Assignments/Projects: Only 1 project.

Grading: Good and easy grading.

Course load: Light

Prof. Jerry Gao (Tu 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What you will learn: Completely theoretical course. Not much to gain from 281 course. Not very good. Not interesting to attend lectures/slides. Teaching style not good. Project ideas

not clear and erratic. Well overall 281 course structure is same for all prof. You can consider 281 under other prof. like paul, given you want to take risk of grades under them. You would learn few deployments on different cloud which would be helpful in your resume. So yea, it really depends on you as how you take this course and how much are you willing to do on your own.

Assignments/Projects: Few assignments, 1 project and midterm/finals

Grading criteria: Grading policy not clear/mentioned

Course load: Light-medium

CMPE 283 Virtualization Technologies

Prof. Michael Larkin (Mo 6:00PM - 8:45PM/Tu 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What you will learn: Overall superb professor. One of the best from teaching point of view. Course load would be light to medium depending on your interest. Mostly theory but he gives project or lab for practical implementation. He teaches hardware virtualization which may not be interesting to all. But given other prof. choices for 283, he is way better. Well, his slides were updated in our batch (few not all). Many seniors have got internship based on his course. The only con is that the course content is all Intel SDM, which is a very restricted domain I guess.

Assignments/Projects: Multiple quiz, assignment along with midterm/finals Project may or may not be given, depends on professor and batch capacity

Grading criteria: Absolute grading

Course load: Light-Medium

Prof. Kong Li (TuTh 4:30PM - 5:45PM)

What will you learn: Virtualization technologies

Assignments/Projects: Assignments are tough but you will learn a lot. There will be extra assignments as well but the usual assignments are hard. If you get time, you should do extra assignments.

Grading criteria: Tough grading. Extra assignments can help with grading but are hard.

Course load: Heavy

CMPE 284 Storage and Network Virtualization

Prof. Medha Bhadkamkar (Mo 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What will you learn: It is a light course with little workload towards end of the semester. It is more theoretical as compared to other courses offered by SE department. Decent course not much to learn.

Assignments/Projects: We had about 4 assignments. 1 presentation and 1 final project. None

of them had too much coding involved and were fairly easy.

Grading criteria: Easy. Many people get A-

Course load: Light

CMPE 285 Software Engineering Processes

Prof. Richard Sinn (Mo 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What will you learn: A bit theoretical but teaches Agile, Architecture, Process models etc all the Software Engineering processes.

Assignments/Projects: We ended up making ecommerce website with all the features. Class is interactive. Professor has good sense of humor.

Grading criteria: Grades not declared but it was tough when he took 272 last semester so no idea.

Course load: Light to medium

CMPE 287 Software Quality Assurance and Testing

Prof. Emese Bari (Th 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What will you learn: Manual testing before half way. Automation testing in remaining half. Good amount of documentation and good coverage of automation tools and platforms along with hands on approach. New but experienced prof. Good in teaching

Assignments/Projects: Homeworks, projects – 1 Manual testing individual, 1 mobile automation group project, 1 individual testing web automation individual, and Final

Grading criteria: Absolute and fair. You need to make sure you do homework and in class exercises properly as final is based on that.

Course load: Light

CMPE 294 English – CMPE Seminar

Prof. Vicki Parrish & Prof. Michael Robinson – They both teach together. Husband and Wife lol. Vicki - Good professor but expects us to work on our English properly. Every week in class assignment, 1 Interview, 1 research paper/project report, 1 journal article etc. Easy going

Prof. Robert Bruce – Decent, Boring lectures but decent grader. Same assignments.

CMPE 297 (Every semester different courses are offered under 297)

Prof. Rex Tsou – Machine Learning (Tu 6:00PM - 8:45PM)

What will you learn: Basic machine learning concepts like the classification and regression problems, theory about the advanced concepts like the Deep Neural Networks, SVNs, NLP

etc. Does not go deep into these topics just an overview.

Grading: Grading is based on his requirements. If you have worked on all the things asked in the assignment then you get full score.

Course Load: The load is not heavy. Keeps you busy with homework and research paper but it is pretty light. Everything he teaches is from the book "Learning from Data".

Prof. Weider Yu – Big Data Engineering & Analytics (Took in Fall 2015 not sure who is taking this time)

What will you learn: Prof covered all the big data related technologies and R language. Programming language is our choice, either C, Java, Python.

Assignments/Projects: Project could be in Spark or Hadoop.

Grading criteria: Easy grader

Course load: Low to medium (depends on how much you want to learn)

CMPE297 IoT in Smart City: Prof Kaikai Lui & Prof Jerry Gao (Took in Summer 2016)

What will you learn: Details of large number of Platforms, Frameworks, protocols covering Networking and Big Data - focusing on IoT. Its a great learning experience for me. The frameworks and technologies on which I worked on for this course, I would not even thought of doing so otherwise at that point of time.

Assignments/Projects: Its a research based course and you will learn a lot about a lot of technologies through lot of research papers. By the end of course, you and up writing latest 5-6 IEEE formatted papers and 3-4 presentations.

Grading criteria: Straight forward and expects good quality of papers and presentations from students.

Course load: Medium to high depending on the type of final project you opt for. If you choose your final project to be challenging, then you need to analyze research papers just to implement it.

Recommendation: Strongly recommend. Good learning.

There are many new 297 sections opening this semester. I will update this document if I get information on the new subjects.

You can take max 2 MS CS courses as non-program elective but you need permission from MS SE program advisor – Dan Harkey. Also MS CS courses are hard to get as there are not many seats.

P.S: I want to let you know that the information above might be incorrect as professor might have changed the syllabus/grading criteria and this are just personal opinions of seniors who have taken the classes under a professor. We do not take any responsibility if you take a

course which was light before but is heavy this semester under same professor. Also definition of heavy light moderate differs from person to person.

Credits: I would like to thanks all the seniors, current students for helping me out with course reviews for MS SE 🙂

Feel free to comment on this document if you have any more doubts regarding MS SE 🙂

More Prof. reviews, select Computer Engineering Department:
http://www.ratemyprofessors.com/campusRatings.jsp?sid=881

Best,
Chirag Sejpal
Vice President, 2016-17
ISO - SJSU

Like Comment Save

67

View 14 more comments

Omkar Nimbalkar Amit Magar
Like · Reply · 1 · 4 July 2016 at 12:06

Amit Magar replied · 1 Reply

Ashish Pai Veeresh Kamble
Like · Reply · 6 July 2016 at 23:38

Srijan Magapu Pretty good abstract, but there might be slight changes in what they want you to learn from year to year. When i took Shim's class we were expected to work on vijava.api and java with some logger tool. We werent dealing with mean stack. So there might some thing new now.

things that doesnt change from what was mentioned above is the level of difficulty, classroom engagemnt, fair grading.
Like · Reply · 1 · 21 August 2016 at 10:35

Manasa Potnuru Mounika Jv
Like · Reply · 24 August 2016 at 15:05

Ashish Pai Veeresh Kamble
Like · Reply · 1 · 24 August 2016 at 17:51

Chirag Sejpal Yesha Joshi
Like · Reply · 1 · 4 November 2016 at 08:25

Yesha Joshi replied · 1 Reply

Vikas Miyani Hiral Parikh
Like · Reply · 5 November 2016 at 12:12

Kaushik Narayanan Anirrudh Venkat
Like · Reply · 1 · 5 November 2016 at 17:58

Rafi Mohamed Anyone know whos taking CMPE 272 Enterprise Software Platforms on Saturday??
Like · Reply · 7 November 2016 at 02:37

Yugal Chandrakar replied · 3 Replies

Niral K Koradiya Can any one have detail about CMPE 255 and CMPE 256....?? CMPE 255 Data Mining CMPE 256 Large Scale Analytics....new subjects under data science specialization
Like · Reply · 2 · 6 May at 22:20

Write a comment...