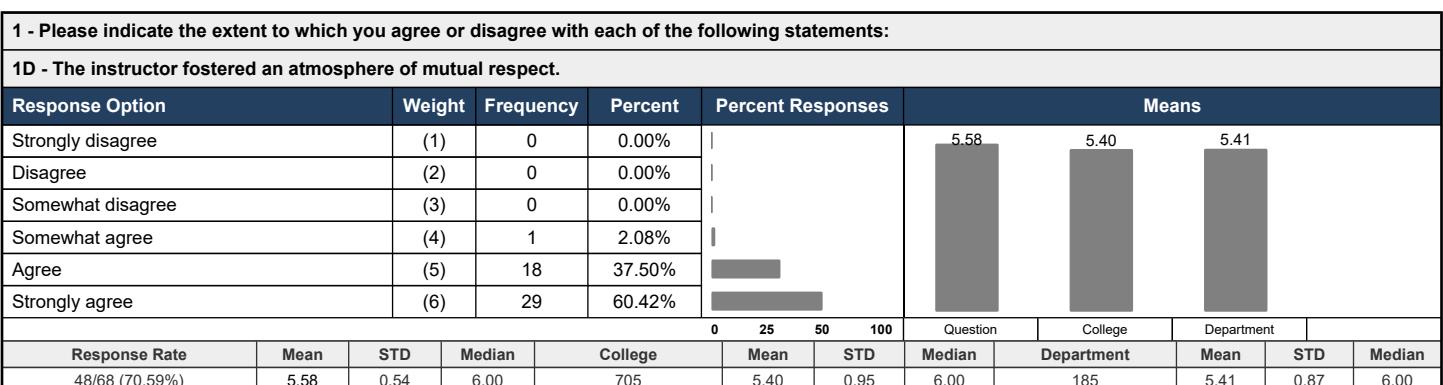
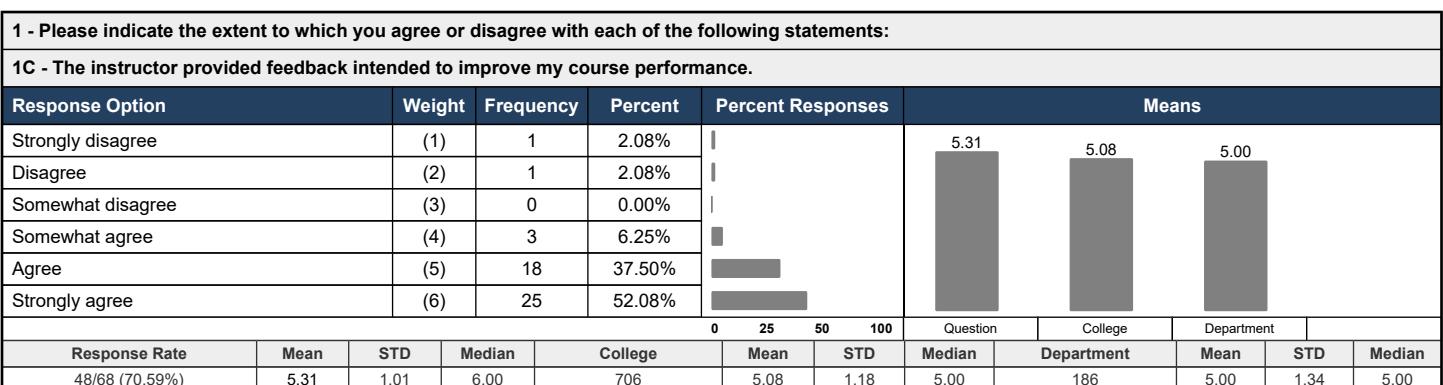
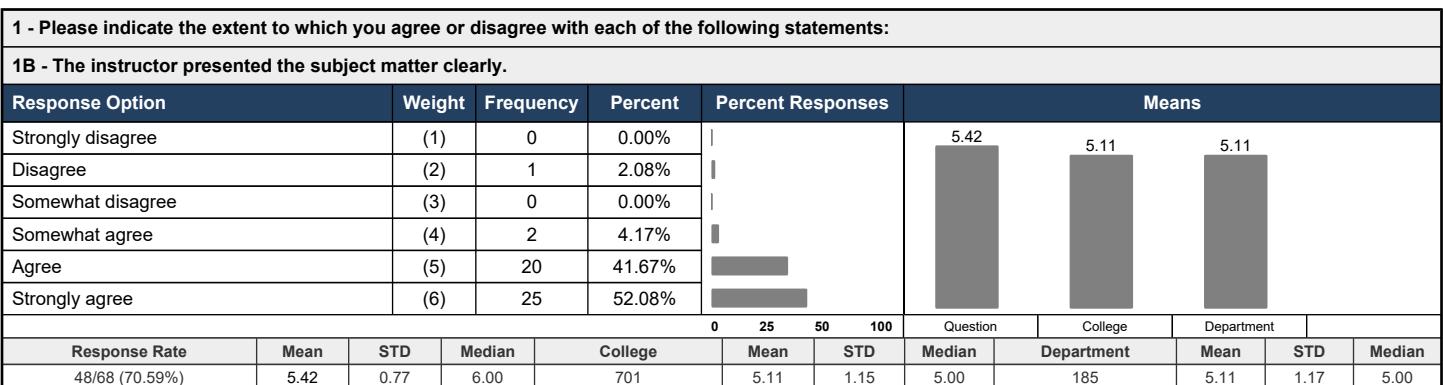
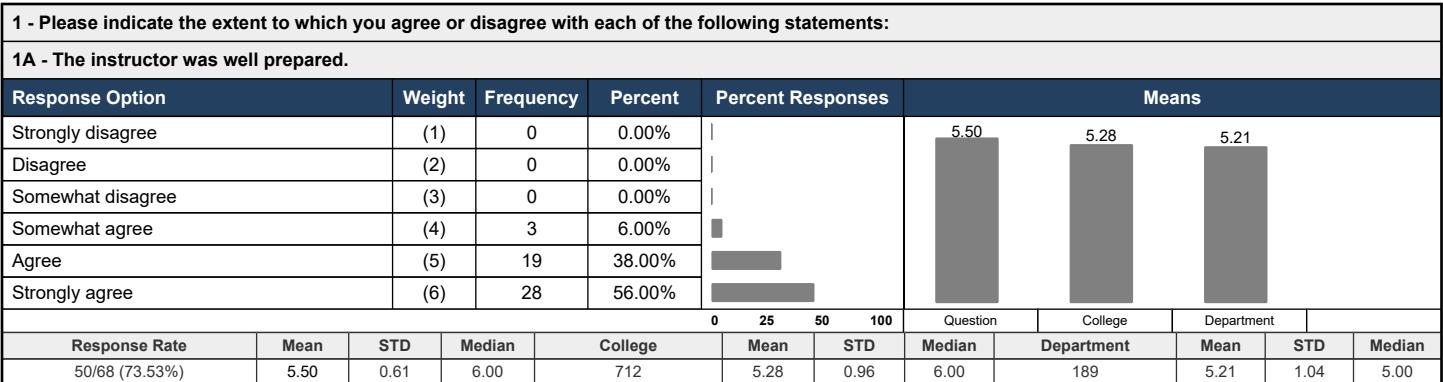


Virginia Tech

Summer II and III 2025 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2025

Response Rate: 50/68 (73.53 %)



Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2025

Response Rate: 50/68 (73.53 %)

1 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:											
1E - Overall, the instructor's teaching was effective.											
Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses		Means				
Strongly disagree	(1)	0	0.00%				5.40	5.13	5.09		
Disagree	(2)	1	2.22%								
Somewhat disagree	(3)	1	2.22%								
Somewhat agree	(4)	2	4.44%								
Agree	(5)	16	35.56%								
Strongly agree	(6)	25	55.56%								
 0 25 50 100											
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
45/68 (66.18%)	5.40	0.86	6.00	691	5.13	1.15	5.00	179	5.09	1.14	5.00

Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2025**Response Rate:** 50/68 (73.53 %)**2 - 2A - What did the instructor do that most helped in your learning?**

Response Rate	37/68 (54.41%)
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- Answer questions at the end of the class, responded to emails very quickly.
- Constantly helped on piazza and answered questions.
- Even with such a large section it was easily attainable to get one on one help and feedback. The feedback was also clear and straight to the point so it was quick and easy. Professor Hicks was very reasonable about grades and you can tell he really wanted everyone to do the best they could in the course.
- Explained the concepts well and provided multiple examples
- He explained concepts well
- He explained everything very clearly, helping me better understand the material.
- He explained the abstract concepts very well, and there were animations as well.
- He helped me when ever I have questions about the subject and made me feel comfortable in learning things and also helped me with my mistakes.
- He helped when I asked him for help with testcases. However, he also proceeded to give me wrong advice which I did, and led to the same error. This was after asking him specifically if that would fix the problem. Even after that confirmation, his words of advice did not help in the project – which felt very much rushed at the end of the semester.
- He offered to replace part of the exam score with attendance.
- He was able to allow people to stay on call after zoom session for the office hours.
- He was always prepared and always seemed to know what he was talking about.
- He was patient and understanding, and always willing to explain things a hundred times in different ways to help.
- He went over the topics really well and tried to compare to other things that we could relate to and understand better
- He would go over the details well
- His lectures were awesome
- I like how long he stayed during the after class office hours, it really let us ask questions and get answers.
- I like how the OpenDSA was set up; it forced me to go through the textbook.
- Not a lecture thing, but in OpenDSA seeing the models of the topics was useful
- Online lectures, office hours, flexibility, extra credit, and talked about the projects in class.
- piazza assistance was very helpful
- Professor Hicks and his TA's stayed very active on Piazza. He was responsive on emails too. I appreciated how accessible help was at anytime, as someone who couldn't make classes due to a full-time internship.
- Provide zoom videos, lecture notes, active in piazza, and helpful guidance
- Provided a lot of resources and was very responsive to student questions
- provided recordings of all lectures
- recorded the lessons
- The forum that we could ask our peers questions about assignments.
- The instructor having office hours immediately after class was very helpful for questions and for getting help on the projects.
- The instructor used lots of helpful examples to explain different concepts. I also appreciated being able to go back to the previous lecture videos afterwards.
- The instructor's office hours after lectures were very helpful in bettering my understanding of what I had to do for the projects. He struck a good balance between guiding me to fixing my code without outright telling me what to do.
- The recorded lectures and the piazza responses were very helpful. I was able to fit the class in with my full time job
- The timely feedback on Piazza was incredibly helpful.
- Thoroughly explained concepts, was very helpful in office hours, available to students.
- ur the best thanks Mr Hicks
- Very quick communication
- Was very active on Piazza for questions and answered questions during class time as well.
- Went over the notes well.

Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2025

Response Rate: 50/68 (73.53 %)

3 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:											
3A - I have a deeper understanding of the subject matter as a result of this course.											
Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses		Means				
Strongly disagree	(1)	0	0.00%				5.29	5.23	5.27		
Disagree	(2)	0	0.00%								
Somewhat disagree	(3)	1	2.04%								
Somewhat agree	(4)	4	8.16%								
Agree	(5)	24	48.98%								
Strongly agree	(6)	20	40.82%								
 Question College Department											
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
49/68 (72.06%)	5.29	0.71	5.00	640	5.23	0.91	5.00	171	5.27	0.91	5.00

3 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:											
3B - My interest in the subject matter was stimulated by this course.											
Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses		Means				
Strongly disagree	(1)	0	0.00%				5.11	4.99	5.05		
Disagree	(2)	2	4.26%								
Somewhat disagree	(3)	0	0.00%								
Somewhat agree	(4)	7	14.89%								
Agree	(5)	20	42.55%								
Strongly agree	(6)	18	38.30%								
 Question College Department											
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
47/68 (69.12%)	5.11	0.96	5.00	636	4.99	1.18	5.00	168	5.05	1.09	5.00

Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2025**Response Rate:** 50/68 (73.53 %)**4 - 4A - What could you have done to be a better learner?**

Response Rate	38/68 (55.88%)
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- Allocated more time to school instead of work. I spent over 50 hours a week on work which ate too much into my school time.
- As the semester went on I found it hard to focus in class because I felt I had to be working on the projects.
- Asked more questions
- be a better student
- Be more actively listenin gin class
- Be more attentive in class
- Better note taking during lecture
- Finished the milestone on time, like there were supposed to be.
- go to class more
- Gone to the office hours.
- I could have been a better listener. With me being at home, I was in an environment where there were a lot of distractions around me and because of that there were many instances where I was not listening as much as I should have.
- I could have done the OpenDSA with the lectures rather than waiting until close to the deadlines
- I could have gone to office hours more for clarification on projects and advice.
- I could have paid more attention in the lectures
- I could have started my final project sooner and not procrastinated.
- I could have structured my time better while studying and working on projects. I was a little disorganized in tackling the coursework.
- I could have taken more notes on the homeworks and studies them more.
- I could of participated more in class with the comments
- I could've took more time when reading textbook.
- I should have allocated my time better.
- I think that I should've read the OpenDSA modules before they were covered in lecture. That way, the lecture would help solidify my understanding of the topics rather than being my introduction to them.
- I wish I had more time. The subject matter was very interesting. But simply put, I had a lot going on and couldn't engage with the material to the extent I wanted to.
- Joined more classes
- Make learning more fun so that everybody can learn with more interest.
- More time with TAs
- Not procrastinated the projects and started earlier to make my life easier
- Nothing
- Participated more in in-class questions
- pay more attention during the lectures
- Review the animations.
- Started on projects earlier
- Started the projects earliers
- Study more before the exams
- Take better notes during class
- Taken better notes during class
- Took notes while in class
- Watched additional lectures on youtube.
- While technically the only thing I could've really improved was doing the OpenDSA more diligently, I believe that method of learning would not have stuck with me. It was tedious and pushed us to do it primarily for points considering how text-heavy any explanation was. I think what I should've done more though was to watch YouTube and learn from their more efficiently and effectively, but the point value of OpenDSA tied me back.

Virginia Tech

Summer II and III 2025 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2025

Response Rate: 50/68 (73.53 %)

5 - 5A - Please add any additional comments regarding the course and/or instructor here:

Response Rate	25/68 (36.76%)
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- ...
- Alex was a great instructor and I learned a ton!
- amazing teacher!
- great guy pretty funny
- Great path and applications to the project with the lectures.
- Great professor, explains everything thoroughly and briefly.
- He was a great teacher
- I do a lot of software engineering and research in my job and I learned quite a few things regarding datastructures that I could've used in the past to make some things easier rather than the less efficient methods I chose originally
- I had a great experience with the course and learned a lot
- I wish the problem specs went a little deeper into what was expected, especially for project 3. I felt blind going into most of the testing.
- N/A
- N/A
- NA
- NA
- Professor Hicks seemed very knowledgeable and excited about course material.
- projects specs were so poorly explained, simple instructions could have saved hours trying to figure out small things
- started the projects earlier
- The course is good, even the instructor is good in teaching the subject.
- The course was at times a bit hard to follow. The openDSA text book gave very vague definitions and explanations for things so when it came time to use them in a project I felt fairly underprepared. I had to do lots of outside research.
- The Open DSA distribution was kind of not balanced in my opinion. It was supposed to be 50% before the midterm and the last after. It was more like 70% and 30%. I needed to rush to finish them in the first half.
- The project requirements were vague and sometimes outright missing. While I do appreciate how active Professor Hicks was on Piazza, it's not a substitute for writing clear project criteria upfront. That was my biggest issue with the class but otherwise, as said before, the professor was very active and that in part made up for this.
- This class did not feel very well planned, project 3 had so many people struggling to understand the teacher's requirements.
- This man is one of the best instructors I've ever had. He has been kind and patient, and always willing to help out during a summer I'd consider very busy and chaotic for me. It's only because of him that I'm even passing this class due to his intelligence and understanding. His office hours are invaluable and his explanations are both helpful and allow the student to think on their own. He has never made me or others feel stupid for repeatedly asking very simple questions. Give this man a role as an actual professor and give him a fat raise because I've never had this good of an experience in a class where it's supposed to be one of the more difficult classes in my curriculum. If he was ever listed as a teacher on another subject, I'd recommend him to anyone who asked. 6 out of 5 stars.
- Very awesome professor! I liked how he was responsive on piazza.
- When asking questions to TAs, I often get responses that they don't know well, and I've received confusing answers more than once, which has led to wasting time rather than getting practical help. There have also been many TAs who didn't stick to the schedule.

6 - 6A - How would you rate the physical environment in which you took this class based upon your ability to see, hear, concentrate, and participate?

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses		Means		
				Question	College	Department		
Very Bad	(1)	0	0.00%	1	5.20	5.20	5.28	
Bad	(2)	0	0.00%	1				
Poor	(3)	1	2.00%	1				
Fair	(4)	7	14.00%	1				
Good	(5)	23	46.00%	1				
Very Good	(6)	19	38.00%	1				
				0 25 50 100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department
50/68 (73.53%)	5.20	0.76	5.00	635	5.20	0.93	5.00	168

Virginia Tech

Summer II and III 2025 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2025

Response Rate: 50/68 (73.53 %)

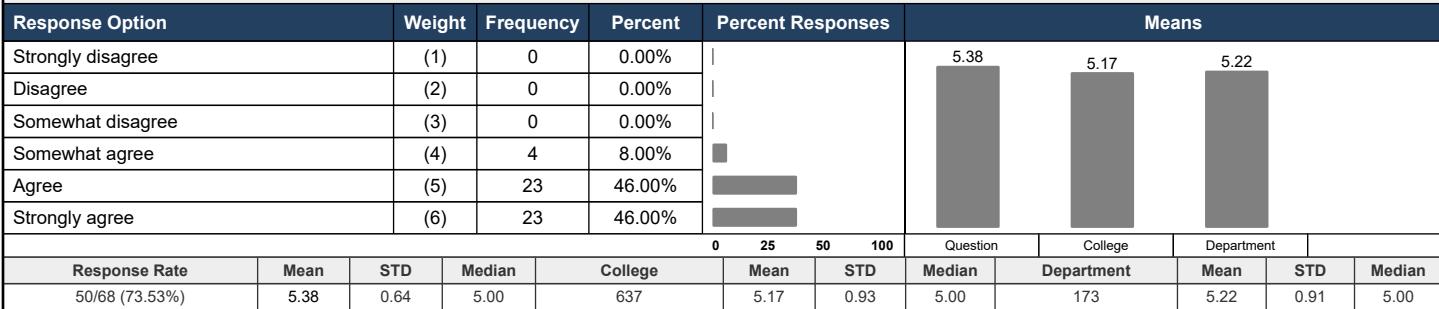
7 - 7A - Please add any comments about the physical environment here:

Response Rate	17/68 (25%)
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- ..
- ...
- Although zoom, Professor kept us engaged and communicating to reinforce learning.
- doing it online was a bit weird
- It was virtual and I could be in the lecture anywhere.
- My computer is in my living room so it could be hard at times but I made it work.
- N/A
- N/A
- n/A
- N/A
- N/A virtual
- NA
- NA
- Online
- The class happened online and everything went very smoothly.
- The class was through zoom so I just was at my desk. Nothing that interesting at my desk.
- very helpful

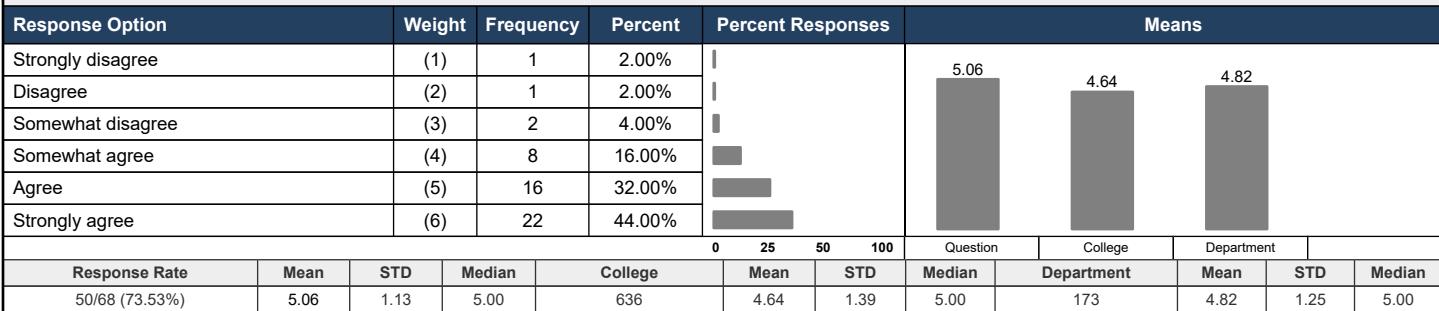
8 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

I improved my ability to problem solve.



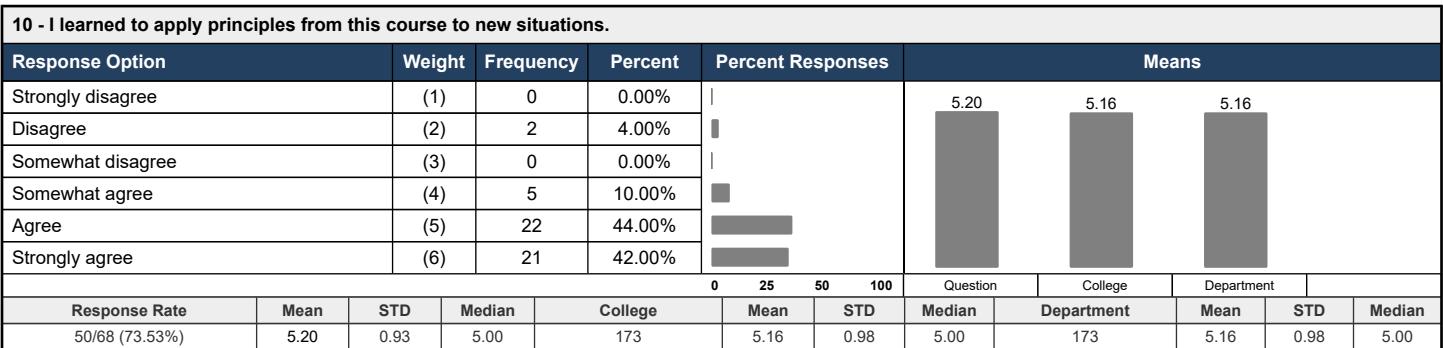
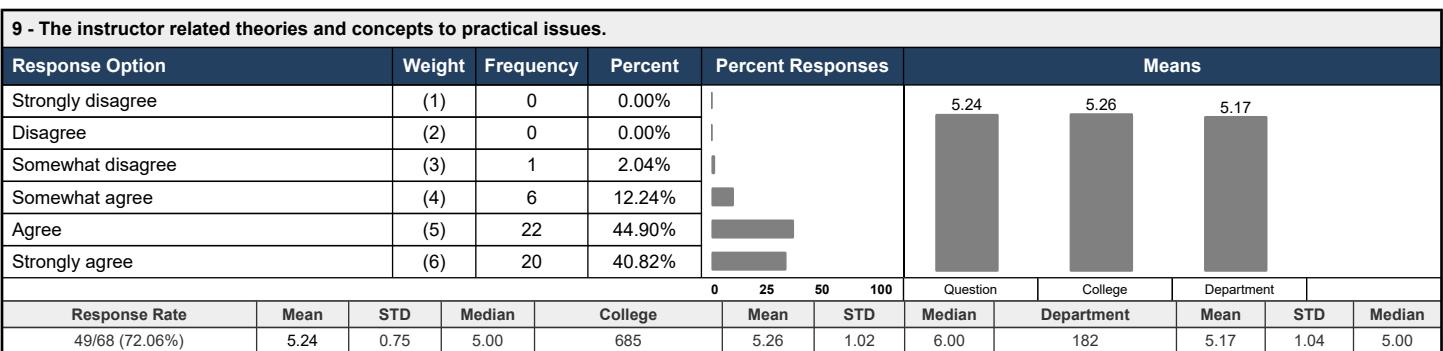
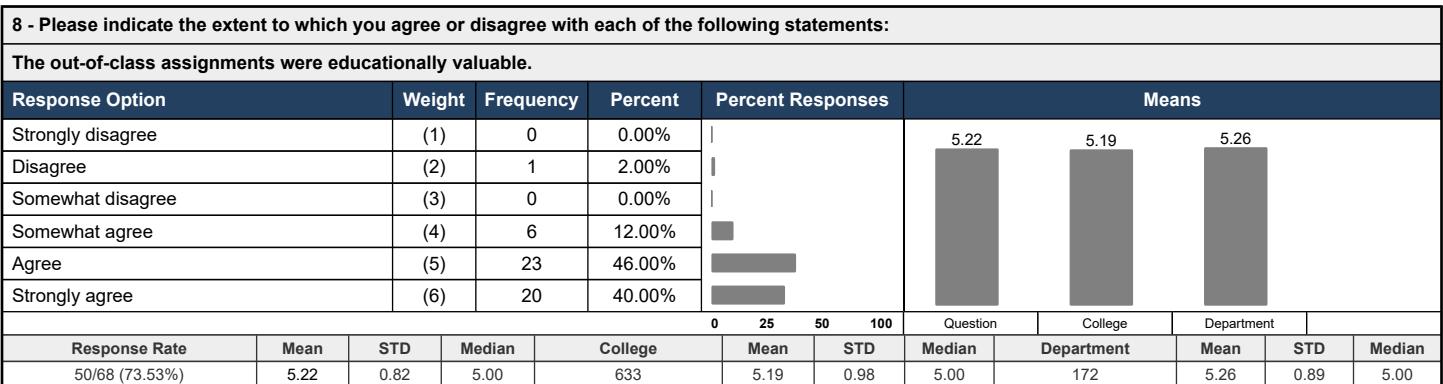
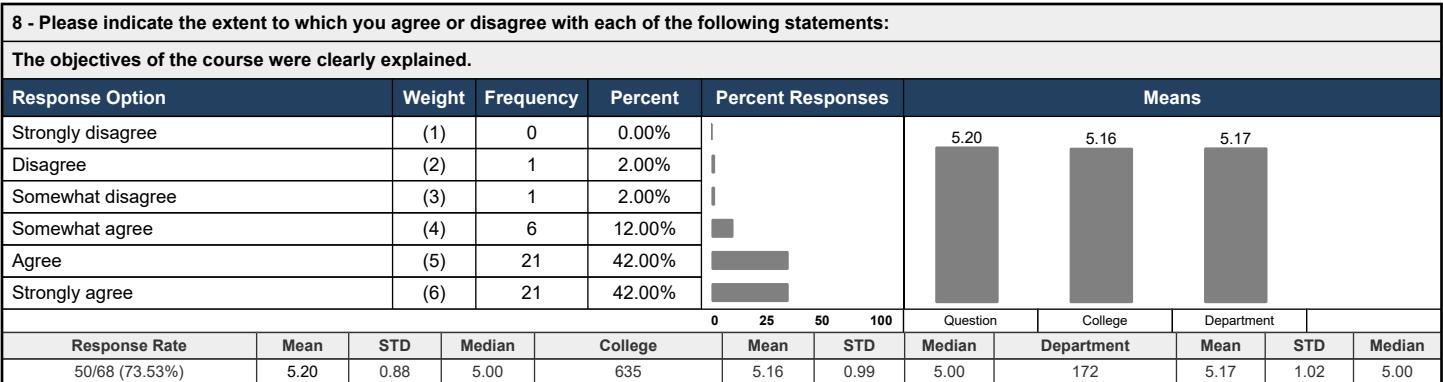
8 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

The textbook or course readings made a valuable contribution to my learning.



Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2025

Response Rate: 50/68 (73.53 %)

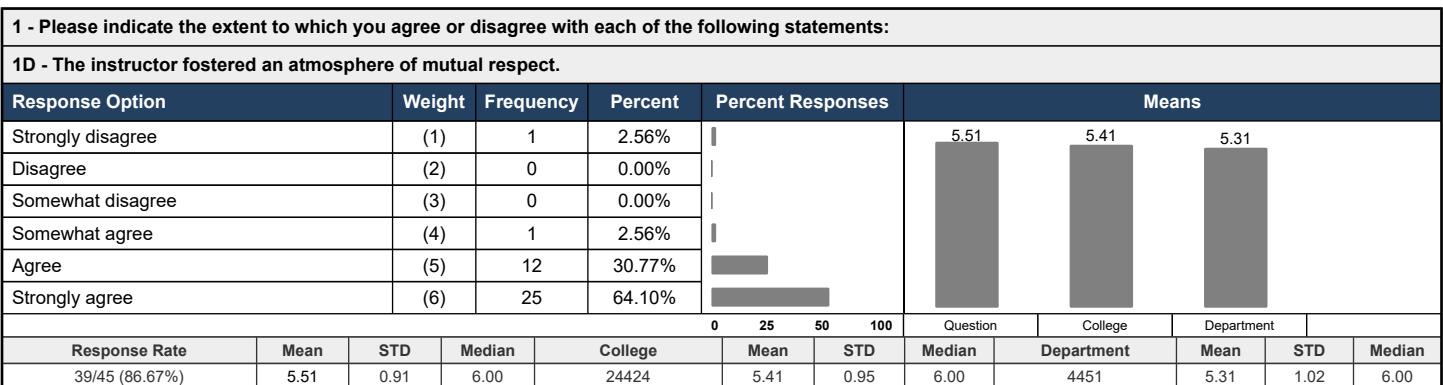
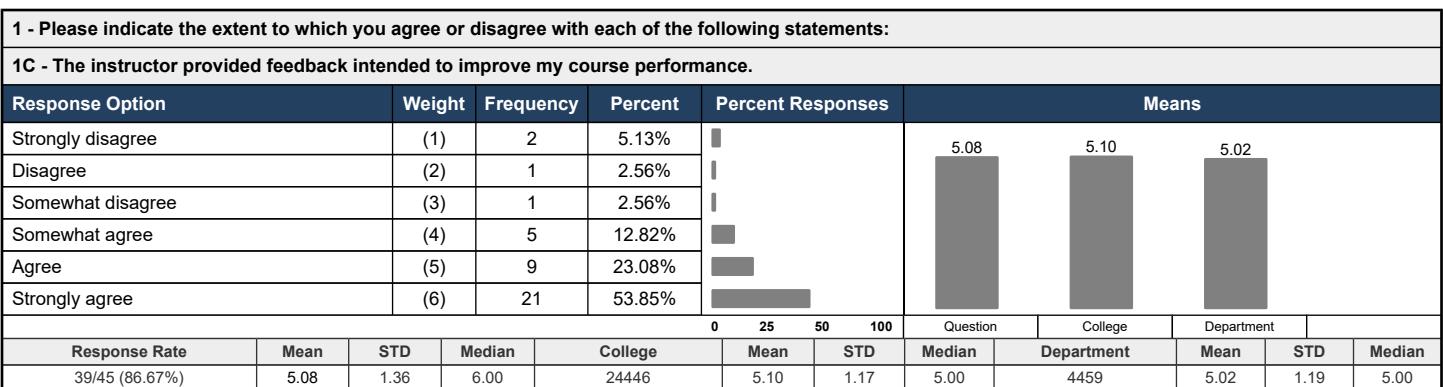
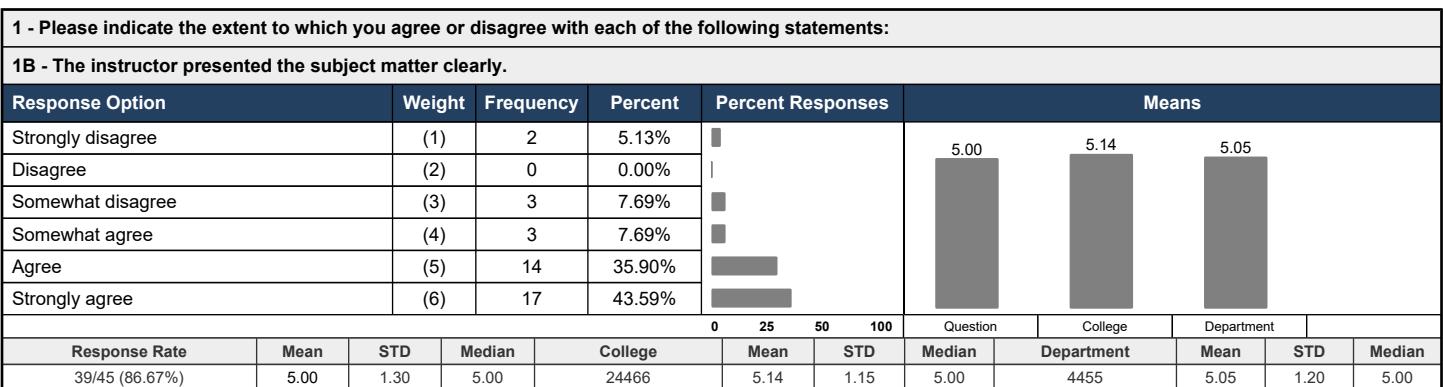
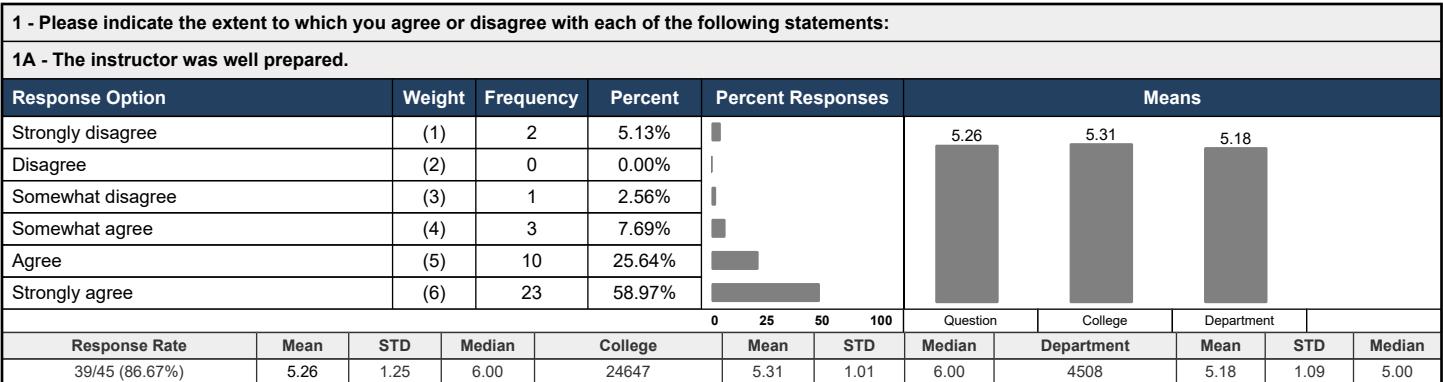


Virginia Tech

Fall 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

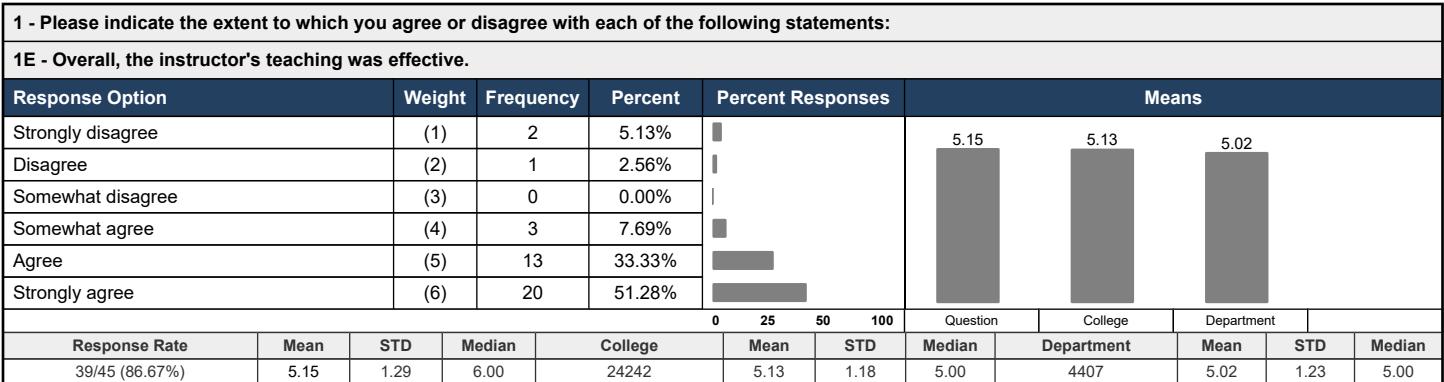
Report: CS5040_Fall_2024

Response Rate: 39/45 (86.67 %)



Report: CS5040_Fall_2024

Response Rate: 39/45 (86.67 %)

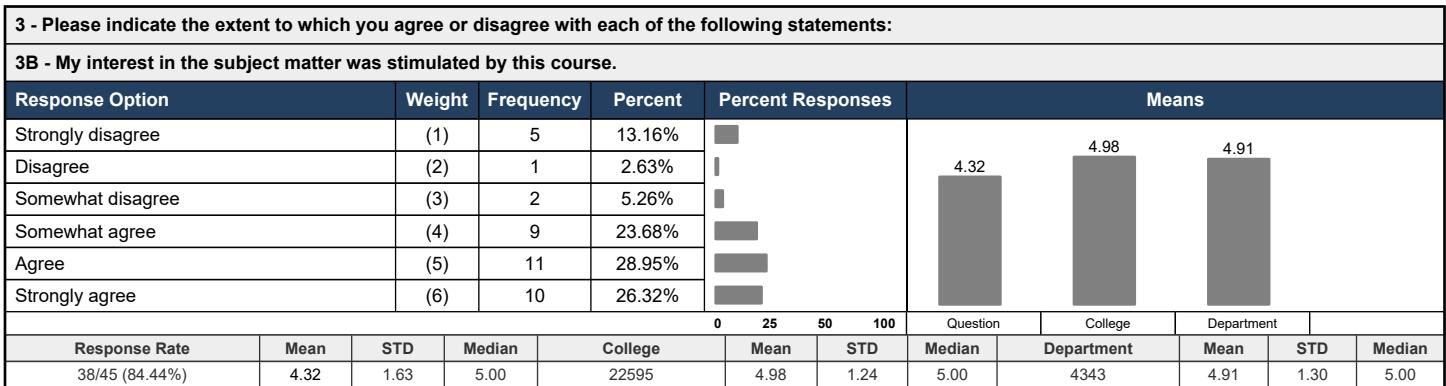
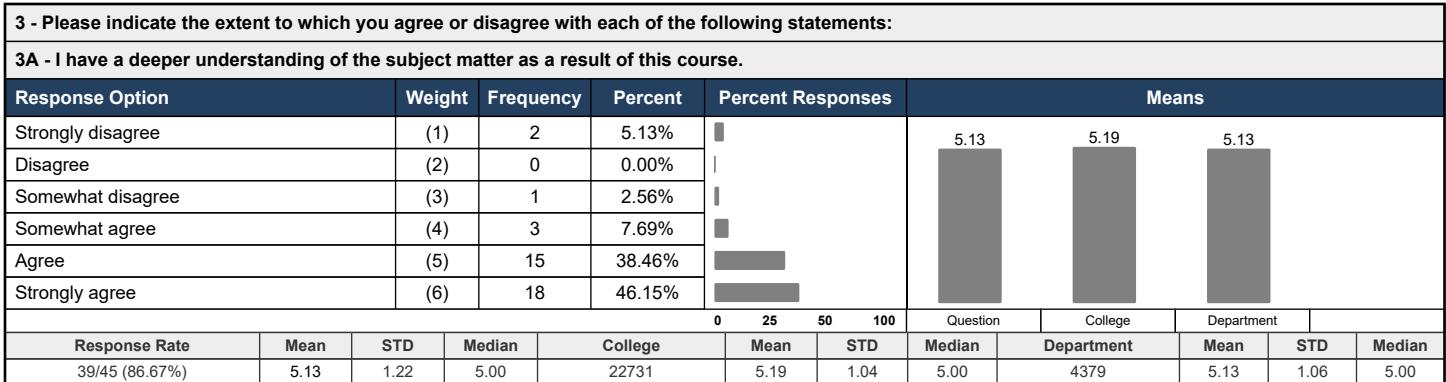
**2 - 2A - What did the instructor do that most helped in your learning?**

Response Rate | 24/45 (53.33%)

- Answer questions during class and office hours
- At the beginning of the semester, I was struggling with the class and considered dropping it only to retake it in the following semester. This caused a great deal of stress and was frustrating as I continued to struggle throughout the course. After addressing my concerns about my performance and the potential outcome of the class with Professor Hicks, my Academic Advisor, and some of the TA's for assistance on the projects or the readings for better understanding, I was advised of my two options (1) persevere or (2) drop the class. I was encouraged by Professor Hicks to go with (1) and go to as many office hours (both his and the TA's) to get as much help as possible and that I what I did. Thus far I have managed to bring up my grade from a highly concerning F to a high C+. Professor Hicks was mindful of the stress and pressure I was under to do well in this class and took the time to explain things in a way that I was able to grasp and understand them. Thank you!
- clear explanation of the topic
- Fast response and clear explanation to all questions.
- Go through the clickable animation that demonstrates the concept.
- He explained the concept clearly and concisely and he provided real work examples and which structures were used in those cases.
- He was understanding of my accommodations and had helpful in class comments.
- he would take breaks to check on the chat to see if there were any questions asked, and would always answer them all very thoroughly
- He's responsive in his communication and clear in his feedback. He encourages asking questions and always gives his answers with patience and understanding.
- I certainly believe the projects were very helpful in developing a problem solving mindset.
- I would say it's the well-prepared materials and the structured schedule that helped me easily find resources and understand what I should do next.
- Instructor helped me to relate concepts to practical use cases. Assignments provided by instructor are very helpful to improve myself to be efficient in writing quality code by following principles and design patterns.
- Mandatory attendance was actually helpful for learning. It gave an incentive to go to class.
- Professor Hicks did a great job making the lectures engaging. He often provided examples/metaphors for topics outside CS to relate to whatever we were learning at the time, and I found those examples to really help me understand and remember that material. Professor Hicks provides a welcoming environment for his students, and I was never afraid to ask questions. I really enjoyed his class.
- Professor Hicks was very good at student interaction during lectures (and via piazza and email). He gave good answers or hints as needed, and presented the content of the class clearly. His exams and projects are designed to show how well you can apply the material, rather than rote memorization.
- Provided an interactive and educational environment which allowed for everyone to feel comfortable to ask questions (and responding to the questions as soon as possible was very helpful)
- Quick response times and office hours helped me identify what I didn't understand in a way I can understand better.
- self-learning projects! well done!
- The instructor is very patient with in-class question. And good at giving big picture about the projects and share useful project management experience
- The instructor went through the design document of the project, which helped me to understand more about the project
- The office hours were crucial and were very helpful in debugging the project and determining where in your project code should be worked on
- Unfortunately, I did not feel like this course or this professor ever took much of an interest in fostering a productive learning environment outside of just reading through the prepared slides for each lecture.
- Very helpful during office hours
- Was prompt and clear.

Report: CS5040_Fall_2024

Response Rate: 39/45 (86.67 %)



Report: CS5040_Fall_2024

Response Rate: 39/45 (86.67 %)

4 - 4A - What could you have done to be a better learner?

Response Rate	23/45 (51.11%)
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- apply the concepts with different cases
- attend more office hours to discuss the project
- Better familiarize myself with the terminology associated with this course. Prior to this course, I have only had 12 weeks of coding experience with Java from the VT Java Bridge Program.
- Go to office hours more, ask in class questions
- I certainly could've communicated more and used more of the resources available to me in my first project's time period, but that's about it.
- I could have completed the openDSA assignment much earlier
- I could have done a better job at consistently keeping up with the Open DSA
- I could have kept up with the material better, completing the OpenDSA chapters before class as is recommended would have been helpful.
- I could have put in more hours for the coursework
- I could've kept up more with the OpenDSA's
- I feel I went above and beyond to foster an environment in which I would be able to learn this material with no success. I will elaborate further below. My answer will be split up between this box and the next due to character limits. 4B: I have so many comments about this course I have had to spend quite a bit of time just distilling them down into something that I think has a chance to be read by whoever goes over these surveys. They are organized in 4 main categories: Projects, Piazza, TA/Office Hours, and Instructors. First, the interactions on Piazza were infuriating and I eventually gave up even trying to get support from there. When instructors didn't just flat out refuse to answer questions, they would answer questions with conflicting information. Rather than understanding that piazza is an asynchronous form of communication and therefore, much slower than a normal conversation, and answering questions directly, instead would constantly reply with short, unclear answers or would tell you to "read the spec" or "consult an OpenDSA section" as if we hadn't done that dozens of times. If "reading the spec" would solve my problem, I wouldn't need to go back and forth on Piazza trying to squeeze a drop of an answer out of the staff for hours. Second, The TAs/Office Hours were completely useless. To be clear, I don't fully fault the TAs for this as I'm sure they are just students too and aren't paid to know all of the answers the way the instructors are. However, I went to office hours for help on projects multiple times and I never once received actual help on my problems. After waiting for up to 2-3 hours in a queue to see someone, this is very frustrating. They either did not understand the project they were meant to help us on or didn't understand the solution code they had been given. At one point I had to explain to a TA how the code worked (not MY code, mind you. The STARTER code) before I could even ask my question, by which point I had completely lost faith in their ability to help me. After spending most of the time walking through my code with them, the overwhelming response was "All of this looks good I don't know why it's not working". And then they would say they have to move on to help someone else. Finally, there were multiple instances of TAs just not showing up to their listed hours and there were multiple times where a TA said they were going to put me into a breakout room, help someone else, and then come back to help me and they just never returned.
- I think I did pretty well.
- I'm the best learner
- It will be better if I have some background with Java to learn this course.
- Maybe I could have spent more time delving deeper into data structures and algorithms, as they are essential for our future careers.
- Put more time into the projects
- Spent more time on the projects earlier in the semester.
- Spent more time studying. Unfortunately my other class took precedence.
- Take advantage of the TA office hours as soon as the project is issued. Take time to thoroughly review the project background and requirements before starting the actual work
- Taken an in-person section if possible. I have a lot of trouble focusing during online lectures
- To be able to practice the concepts more, it's challenging to do that when projects take up so much time to complete that that often gets chosen over the other.
- tried to follow more closely with the class timeline with openDSA
- Try to understand the open DSA questions better rather than continuously answering the questions until I get them right

Report: CS5040_Fall_2024

Response Rate: 39/45 (86.67 %)

5 - 5A - Please add any additional comments regarding the course and/or instructor here:

Response Rate	22/45 (48.89%)
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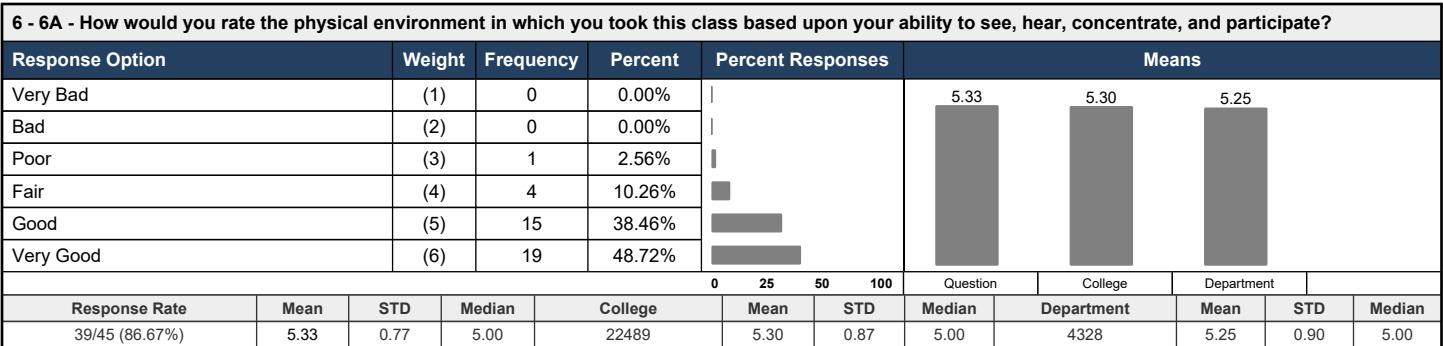
- -
- 1. The instructor wasted too much time answering questions about projects, which could have been done during office hours, or let TAs answer these questions. As a result, some topics in this course were vaguely explained, and immediately moved on to the next topic because of lacking enough time to do so. 2. Project specs were not documented enough such that students will have to browse through questions on the piazza to know why the output did not match the reference tests. 3. I think I am wasting too much time dealing with strange output formats instead of focusing on how to implement the required data structures and their related algorithms. This is a data structure and algorithm course, not a file processing course. 4. The school's advisor said that this course would definitely help us deal with companies' technical interviews, but it turned out that this course did not help at all. I did not gain more/deeper knowledge about common data structures, nor did I feel confident in solving companies' technical interview problems after taking this course.
- Genuinely wants to see students succeed
- Great instructor and I will take his class again if I had to.
- Great professor. Should be more TAs specifically for graduate course in my opinion.
- He teaches well
- He was chill, the kinda guy you could smoke with.
- I appreciate the well-prepared materials and structured schedule provided by the professor. I also understand how challenging it is to teach such a wide range of concepts within a single semester. However, I sometimes found it difficult to fully grasp certain concepts during the limited class time. Additionally, the project didn't seem to align well with the class schedule, which made the beginning of the course particularly challenging for me. I was also a bit confused about the course requirements. While it is listed as a required class, it seems to assume prior knowledge of data structures and algorithms. Without that background, the course can feel more difficult than expected.
- I believe the details and information provided for the projects were not sufficient. Additionally, there was no physical assistance or teacher support available for other campuses, such as Falls Church. I also think the deadline for Project 3 should have been longer than two weeks.
- I love you
- I really enjoyed the course.
- I sincerely appreciate you answer questions and explain the projects at the beginning of the class, but sometimes it takes too long time. Additionally, some milestone, especially for the first project, is due before we learned the corresponding contents in the lecture. This makes the lecture a little bit less attractive and useful since we need self-study through the OpenDSA to catch up the milestone. The question answering for individual at the beginning of the class can be shorter. In addition, the office hour room is really a problem for me, since 2/3 of the time I don't have the access to that room as the PhD student who's office is in DDS instead of Torgerson. There is some trouble to contact and fix this problem with the CS department.
- I think the first project was too hard and the last project was too easy. First project's difficulty was exacerbated by having to (re)learn Java, JUnit testing, and mutation testing in addition to doing the project itself. On the other hand, half of the last project was already done in Project 1. It would be better if the difficulty for the first and last projects were reversed. I think the time commitment for the course is closer to 20-24 hours per week.
- My only note is that sometime the instructor would jump quickly to look back at previous slides which could be somewhat jarring
- OpenDSA textbook can use some improvement. I'm used to courses that provide online textbooks with the capability of making highlights and writing notes but OpenDSA has no such capability. Some of its glitches needs to be evaluated too as there were some complaints about it on Piazza from other students. The projects were nice in providing the intended value for our professional development as programmers but it is very time-consuming, time-consuming to the point that my other classes get breadcrumbs of efforts left out of me which isn't fair to them. Also, the WebCAT reference tests for Project 4 was better in that it had descriptions of what the test is testing for but some tests like both integrated Capstone 1 and 2 tests were not very descriptive, so with this I'd suggest ensuring all reference tests have a clear description of what is being tested so that the student can have some kind of idea of how to go about it. Ex. "Failed test with expanding hash table with tombstones" is more descriptive than "Failed on integrated capstone test 1." If it helps, put yourself in the shoes of a student (as you once were one) and see if you'll figure out how to approach it by how it was phrased. This can apply to other aspects of the course too (directions on projects, etc.). Definitely found the TA's helpful. It was a good idea to combine TA resources of both grad and undergrad sections. The TA schedule on Excel was helpful to know the availabilities of TA's at certain times. There were occasions though where a TA that was scheduled for a certain time block wasn't there, so it becomes imperative that TA's are responsible for showing up at the time shift they signed up for or was assigned to.
- Thank you for encouraging me to tough it out and not give up.
- Thank you for taking a difficult class and making it fun, interesting, and (mostly) easy to understand. I hope to take another class with you in the future!
- The assignments felt like they weren't proofread. Several errors each time and also sometimes was confusing to read. Especially the first two projects. Also, the last project was super easy and was said to be hard. The third assignment was fairly difficult but was said to be easy. The first assignment was said to be easy, but I thought it was one of the harder ones.
- The first two projects were very difficult due to their fast pace. It could be improved by taking some more time for a refresher on java.
- The use of web-cat and the way the first project was structured was all very new and foreign to me starting out, which contributed to me failing it with a 39%. While it was partly my responsibility of course, I didn't ask the questions I should've asked because I didn't truly know what I didn't know. One suggestion would be to hold some kind of optional, out-of-class session maybe after submitting project 0, with TA's at the start of the semester, to explain how web-cat works and the general approach to these projects that we should take for those unfamiliar with everything (e.g. formatting expectations, what the command processor vs controller does, etc.). I never used it before, nor Eclipse in any programming courses, so that's why I'd suggest it, at least for the grad program. One more idea for the course is to respond to questions about instructor tests failing with more hints about what scenarios our code is failing in, and what test cases we could try to isolate the problem. I've seen that happen a fair amount already, but with web-cat, multiple things could be wrong for one instructor test, and that level of detail is important to consider as well.
- Third, the project specs were awful. They were poorly formatted and the requirements were often unclear. If I offer a good faith reason for this, I would say it's because it can be useful to learn to take a narrativized document and extract concrete requirements from it, but this only works if there is adequate support from the staff to clear up confusion, which there wasn't and will be expounded on later as well as in my section on Piazza. Project 3 was especially egregious. It was managed so poorly, that the instructors had to come up with a mechanism to give points back to students after the due date since, I'm assuming, so few people were actually able to complete the project. To be clear, while I'm appreciative of this from a grades standpoint, I wish they would have just been more willing to help debug, provide better instructions in the beginning so that they didn't have to cover for our inability to solve the problem at the end. Finally, the instructors. After writing a piazza post complaining about much of the above, an instructor who was not mine personally emailed me offering me her help, which I was grateful for. However, her help did not solve my problem. She said if I needed any further assistance I could email her back. When I did so, she responded that she was "too busy with her own students" and that I should "utilize my TAs", which as I have already explained, were no help at all. Also, despite multiple attempts to get help from my actual instructor, I was told "If what you're looking for is debugging, I won't be much help... I won't go through your code line by line." This was after explaining in detail the scope of the problem and how my code functioned. I demonstrated that I fully understood the problem, as well as my code, but couldn't figure out the error I was having. Debugging assistance was exactly what I needed on a specific part of my code (not "line by line") and his refusal to help in this was the final straw. I checked out of the class after this. I have been a professional developer for almost 5 years and I couldn't imagine having a junior engineer come to me and ask for my help and my response being "I won't help you debug your code, good luck". I see it as my responsibility as the more experienced person to help my juniors overcome challenges they can't overcome on their own, ESPECIALLY when those junior engineer's show a deep interest in and effort to solve the problem. To be refused help so blatantly in each of the ways listed above despite making such a strong effort was infuriating and completely killed what was prior to this class a genuine desire to learn and improve at this topic. Just a final comment. Please don't mistake my comments as complaints that the material was too difficult. I enjoy learning how to solve difficult problems. I just wish there was actual, genuine support and assistance to help us solve these problems rather than being met with obstruction, lack of interest, and the oft repeated excuse throughout the course "We don't want to trivialize the problem". It's not trivial if the majority of the class is struggling to overcome it without assistance.
- Very good instructor and very helpful

Virginia Tech

Fall 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

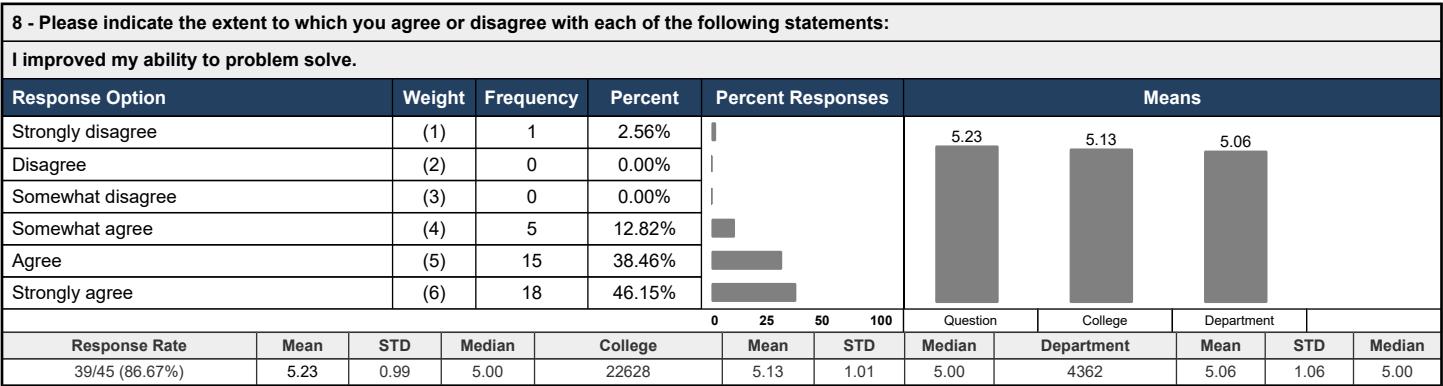
Report: CS5040_Fall_2024

Response Rate: 39/45 (86.67 %)



7 - 7A - Please add any comments about the physical environment here:

Response Rate	16/45 (35.56%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I had no issues about this My class was virtual so it was on me to find a quiet and distraction free. No issues with audio or video. N/A N/A N/A N/A - the class is Online n/a, course was online. Though the virtual features of the course (zoom, myDigitalHand) were good. N/A, online. NA No complaints. Was good. None There was no physical environment. This class was on Zoom. This is a virtual Class. Wish I could've taken lectures in person 	

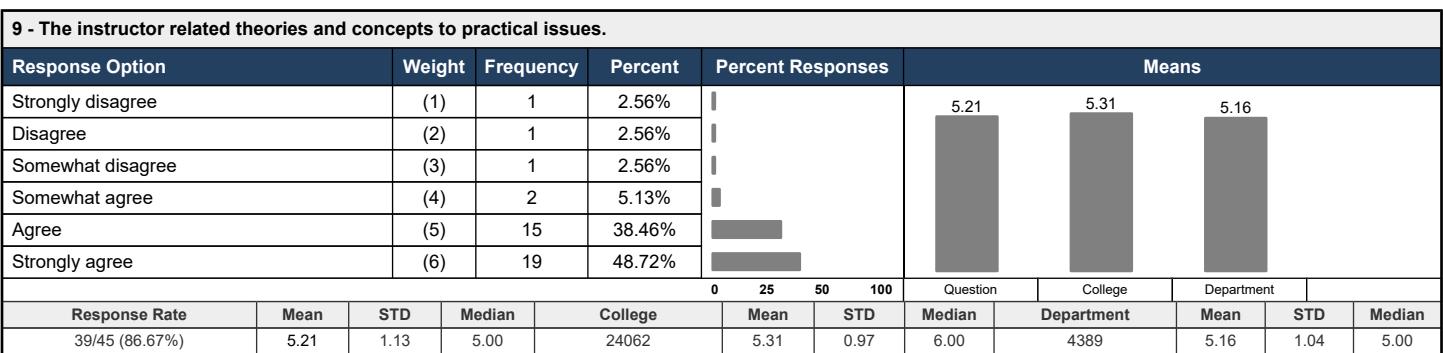
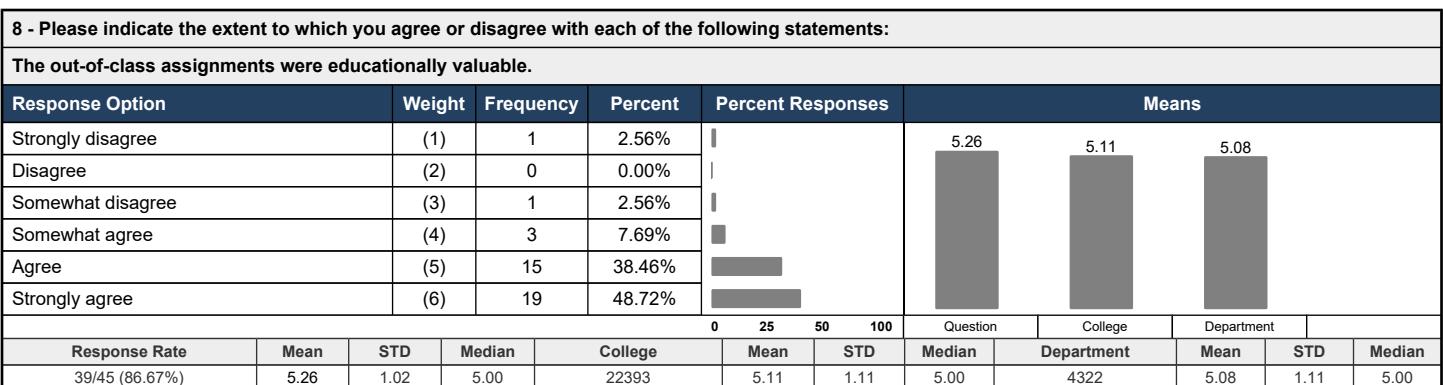
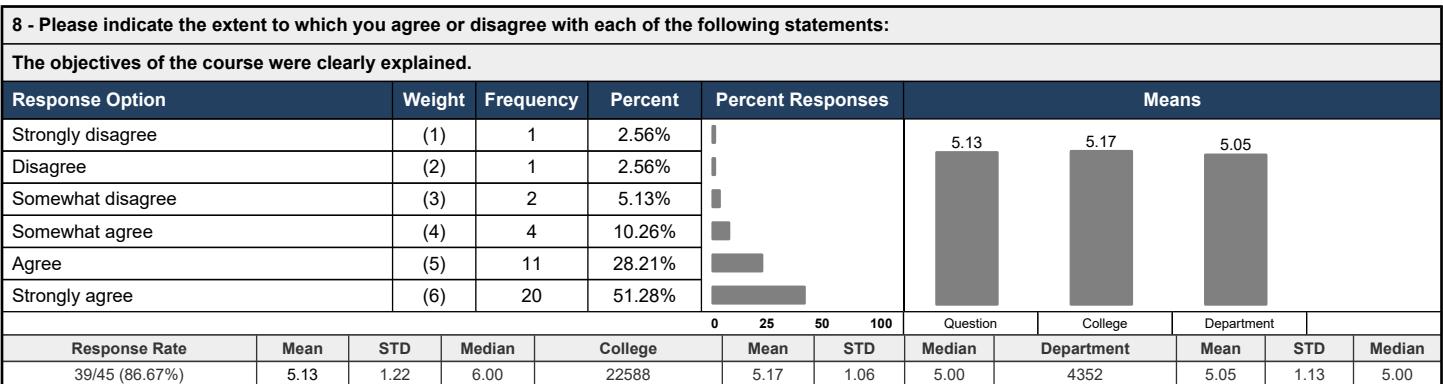
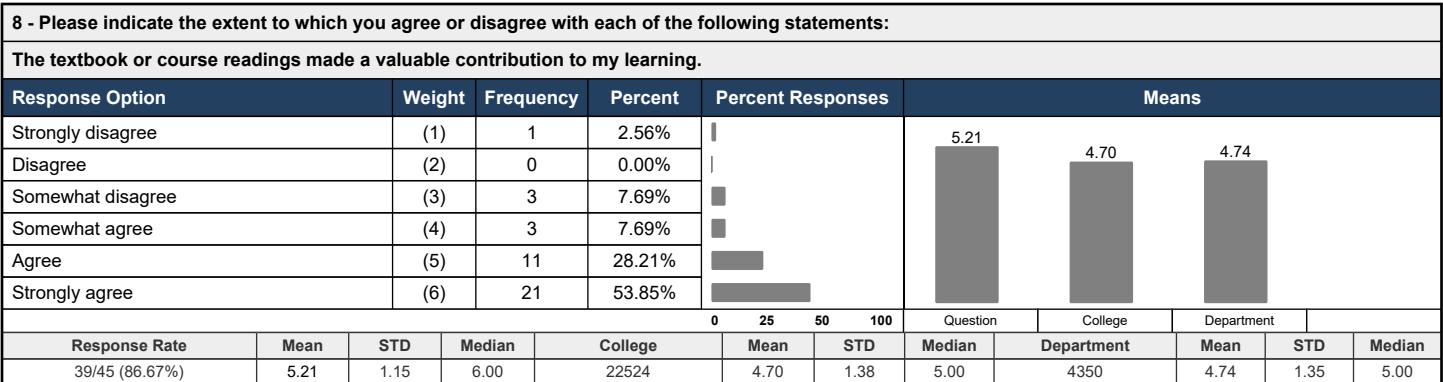


Virginia Tech

Fall 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

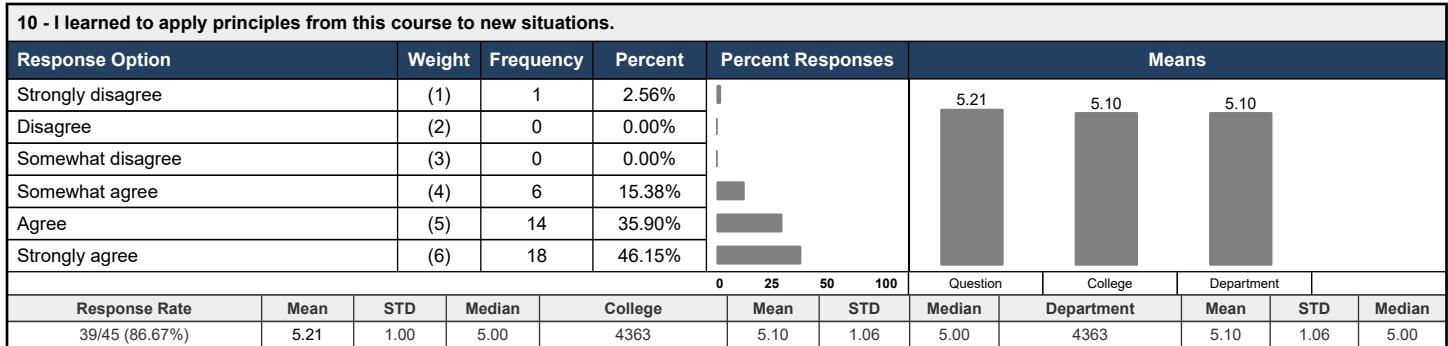
Report: CS5040_Fall_2024

Response Rate: 39/45 (86.67 %)



Report: CS5040_Fall_2024

Response Rate: 39/45 (86.67 %)

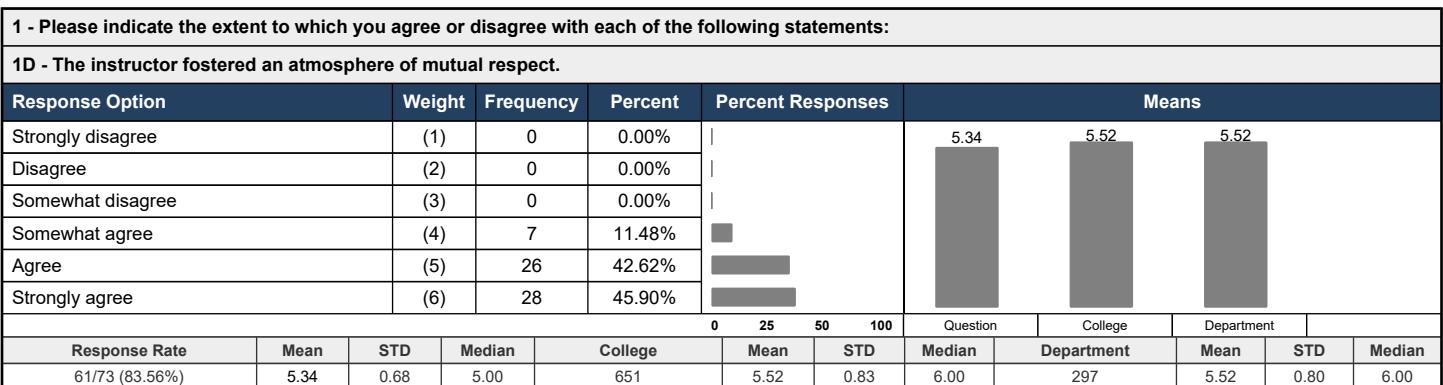
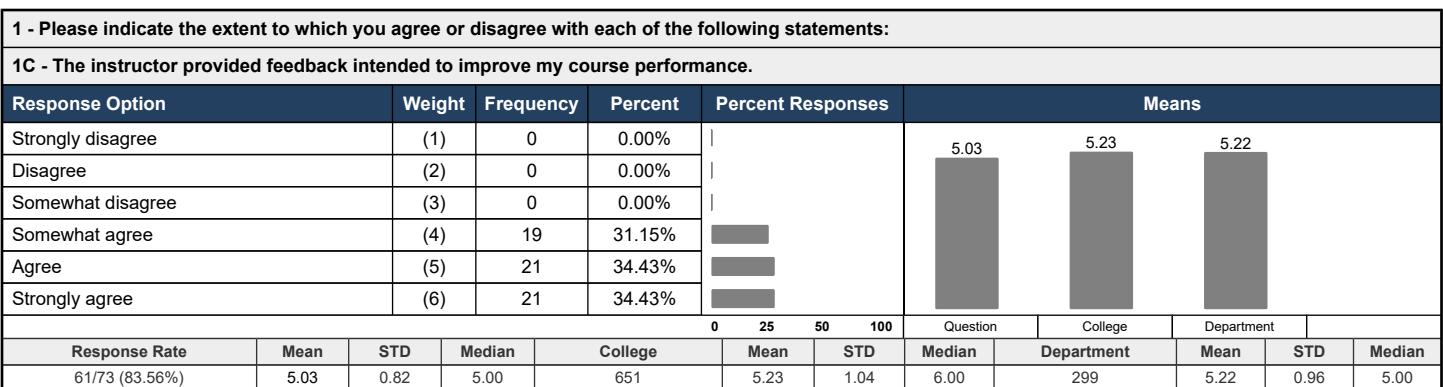
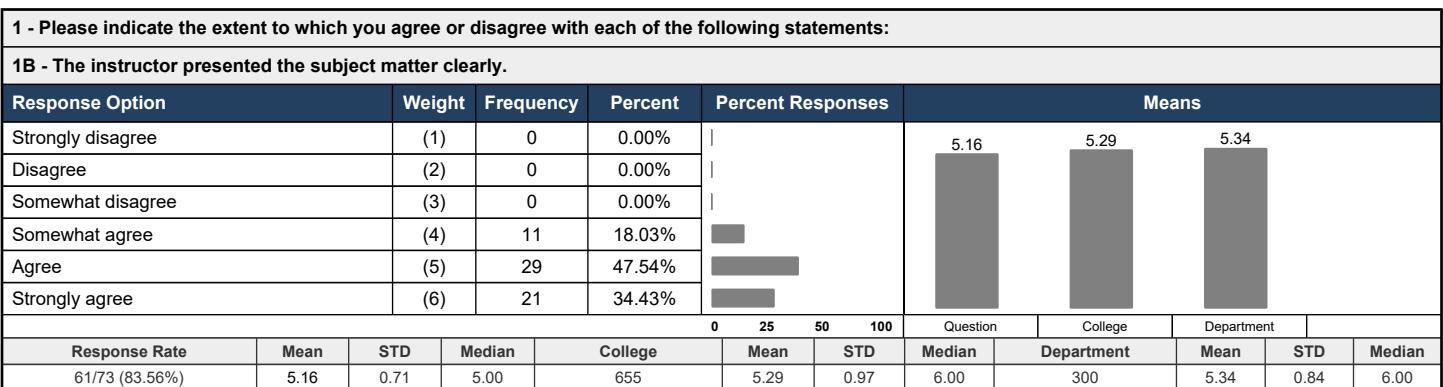
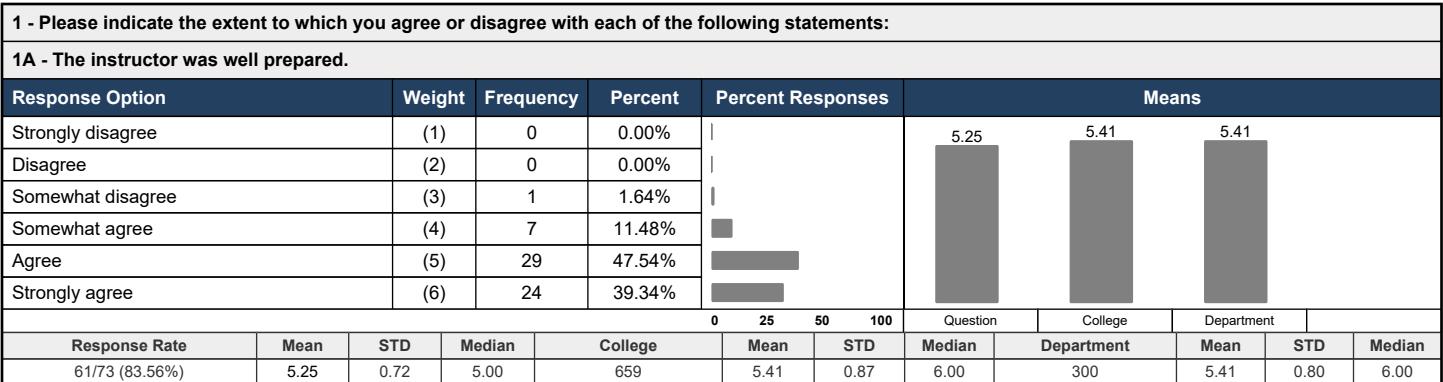


Virginia Tech

Summer II and III 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2024

Response Rate: 61/73 (83.56 %)



Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2024

Response Rate: 61/73 (83.56 %)

1 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:																			
1E - Overall, the instructor's teaching was effective.																			
Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses		Means												
Strongly disagree	(1)	0	0.00%				5.17	5.28	5.33										
Disagree	(2)	0	0.00%																
Somewhat disagree	(3)	0	0.00%																
Somewhat agree	(4)	9	15.52%																
Agree	(5)	30	51.72%																
Strongly agree	(6)	19	32.76%																
<table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>25</td> <td>50</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> <td>Question</td> <td>College</td> <td>Department</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>										0	25	50	100		Question	College	Department		
0	25	50	100		Question	College	Department												
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median								
58/73 (79.45%)	5.17	0.68	5.00	647	5.28	1.01	6.00	295	5.33	0.87	6.00								

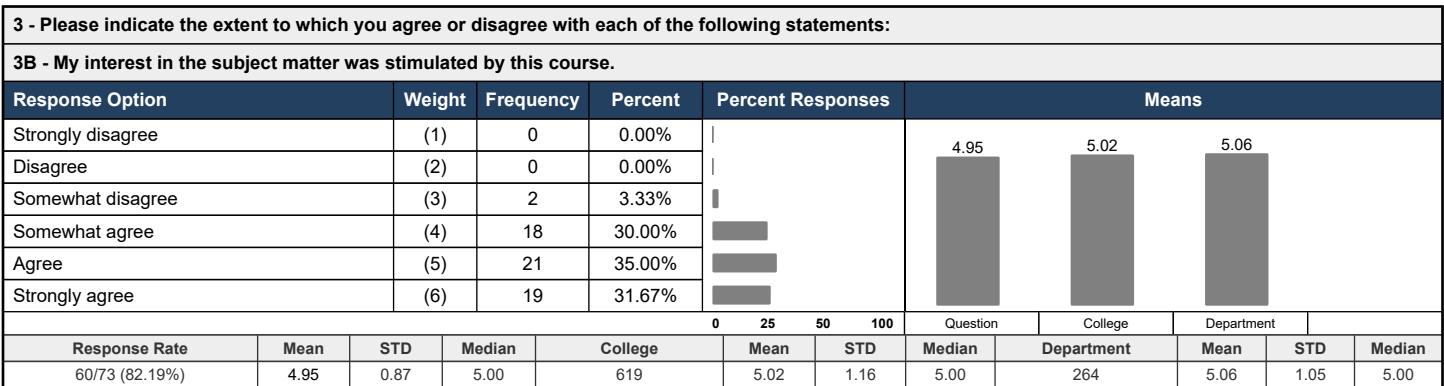
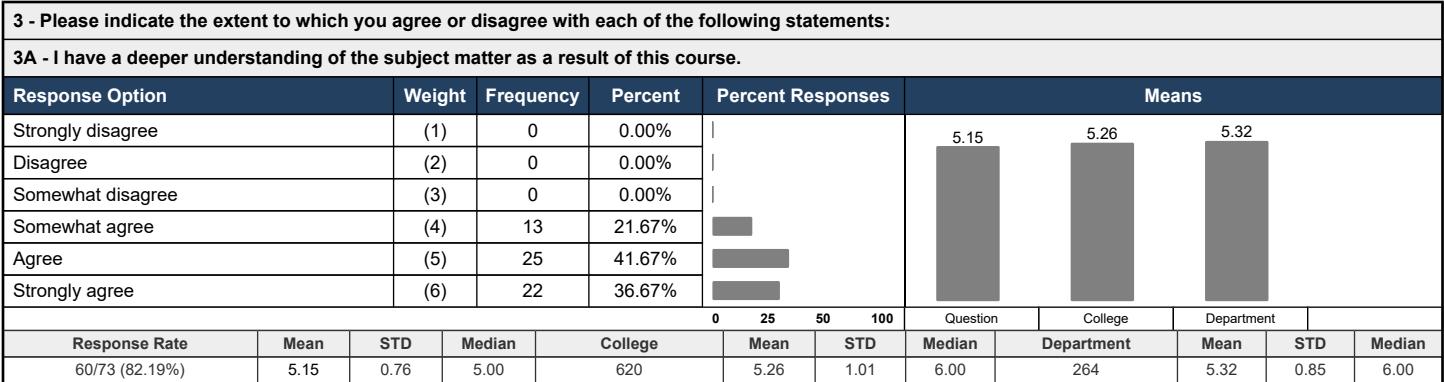
Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2024**Response Rate:** 61/73 (83.56 %)**2 - 2A - What did the instructor do that most helped in your learning?**

Response Rate	43/73 (58.9%)
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- Allowing us to forego attendance helped immensely. I was juggling several classes at once for this Summer semester, so being able to go at my own pace was very beneficial.
- clear notes and help i piazza
- detailed explanation of class material and prompt answers on piazza
- Easily accessible and adjusted to students' needs.
- Explain content really well
- Flexibility for attendance
- Gave really detailed explanations in class and responded quickly when I reached out.
- good and engaging content
- good lectures
- Having a large selection of videos to go back to was great and much more helpful than lectures where I'd take my own notes.
- He always gave good feedback on the issues with my projects when I have asked about them.
- He explained things thoroughly and slowly.
- He gave detailed examples during lectures on whatever we were learning from the opendsa passages, and I found that to be very helpful.
- He is very, very well spoken.
- He made sure he was available to answer all questions and replied quickly to any emails
- He made the class content easy to understand and encouraged students to enjoy learning coursework
- He provided helpful online resources to help understand the content.
- He provides clear explanations.
- He regularly hosted office hours and had an abundance of TA office hours to help us succeed and make sure someone was always available to provide assistance.
- He rescheduled finals when I was unable to attend the normal times due to work
- He was very approachable and amicable. He is very knowledgeable and helped guide you to the the answer to your problem instead of giving you the answer.
- I liked his explanations of course material beyond opendsa
- I really liked that office hours were right after class.
- I struggled to attend office hours due to my schedule, and I really appreciated the hints on where to debug for my project that he would respond with in Piazza.
- I think the class slides were really nice to have, and the structuring of the projects were really helpful in understanding how to do them.
- Instructor was able to explain subjects matters and projects well.
- Lectures were nice
- n/a
- Office hours were helpful
- Office hours were very interactive
- Office hours.
- Provided many opportunities to ask questions during class and office hours
- Really liked how Alex Hicks took time to explain each project spec in detail during lecture. Also how he did not mind re explaining something again. Even if someone else asked & I didn't really understand (specifically via piazza and office hours). I have experienced a lot with previous professors (here at VT) that you can tell they get mad or catch a slight annoyance for this. Never once felt this with Mr. Hicks, which as a student coming to a professor I value a lot much. For a virtual summer class this was easy to follow with Mr.Hicks. I really appreciate the consistent canvas announcement reminders he would send out when we had important deadlines. Overall, 10/10 would recommend.
- recorded lectures
- Recorded lectures that could be viewed later to relearn tougher material
- The instructor asked questions which helped make classes more engaging.
- The instructor provided a very flexible schedule to be able to ask questions in office hours, and other modes of communication to clearly communicate the coursework.
- The instructor was incredibly in depth about everything.
- The office hours were helpful, had my questions answered well whenever I was stuck.
- The Open DSA was very helpful in learning some topics
- was flexible during the summer as I was working
- Was very responsive via email/
- Whenever I had questions, he was able to reach back to in a timely manner and help troubleshoot anything I was having trouble with. Apart from that, his lecture recordings have also been very useful to help relearn and absorb the material. He also explains the content very well and always kept us updated on any deadlines and important dates that were coming up, and it allowed me to be sure that I was on track to making good progress.

Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2024

Response Rate: 61/73 (83.56 %)



Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2024**Response Rate:** 61/73 (83.56 %)**4 - 4A - What could you have done to be a better learner?**

Response Rate	43/73 (58.9%)
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- attend more meetings
- Attended class
- Better paid attention during class time
- do homework and projects earlier
- focus on lectures better
- Given myself a lot more time since it was summer course.
- Gone to class
- I could have attended more lectures and Office Hours
- I could have been more attentive at the zoom meetings and participated more.
- I could have been more attentive in class and followed along with the Zoom polls.
- I could have payed attention more.
- I could have read the opendsa passages before each class.
- I could have read the textbook (did OpenDSA) assignments as the subjects were being taught in class.
- I could have spent more time understand the material more fully, although it was challenging as it was a remote summer course.
- I could have started my projects a lot earlier
- I could've paid more attention to the lectures.
- I could've reviewed the open dsa textbook before class.
- I made a mistake in choosing a partner for a project which worsened my grade but made sure to bounce back for the end of the course.
- I needed to start earlier on the projects
- I personally got overwhelmed by the projects very easily, by looking at them holistically instead of breaking them down into smaller problems. This is a bad habit of mine, and something I intend on correcting.
- I should have been doing the OpenDSA assignments more in line with when we did the subjects in class.
- I think I could have taken notes, which I wasn't sure because i didn't need to in 2114. I also think I could have payed attention more in class. I think it considering the lectures are more about process, it is more of a class that I should have taken in person.
- I was a bit lazy at times and I could've gotten started on my projects earlier.
- I would have revised what I have learned in the textbook thoroughly and continue to search and work on more practice problems to be better prepared for the exams.
- If I actually did the OpenDSA on schedule, I would have learned it better than just cramming.
- If I did the OpenDSA while doing the projects instead of doing everything at the end
- instead of attendance by exam i couldve done normal attendance but i ended up getting a job which didnt allow me to do this
- Just need better time management on my end, was good at first but towards end started to slip slightly. Also I took this class during my summer internship. It's doable but you have to be sharp, start projects early. Highly recommending note taking the lectures where you go over project spe, in full detail. With timestamps of where information was said, so that you can reference for later.
- Made more time to study the textbook
- Manage my time better.
- n/a
- Nothing.
- Online learning does have more distractions
- Open DSA was pretty buggy, I lost points on chapters not working for me, but I also left those for the last day so that can be on me as well.
- Paid a little more attention
- Paid attention in class
- Practice coding often!
- Spent more time per day learning the content than diving right into the projects.
- Starting projects earlier
- Starting the projects early and not missing the milestones
- time management
- virtual classes are hard for me in general, but I think he did a good job of making it a smooth process
- Work harder on the projects.

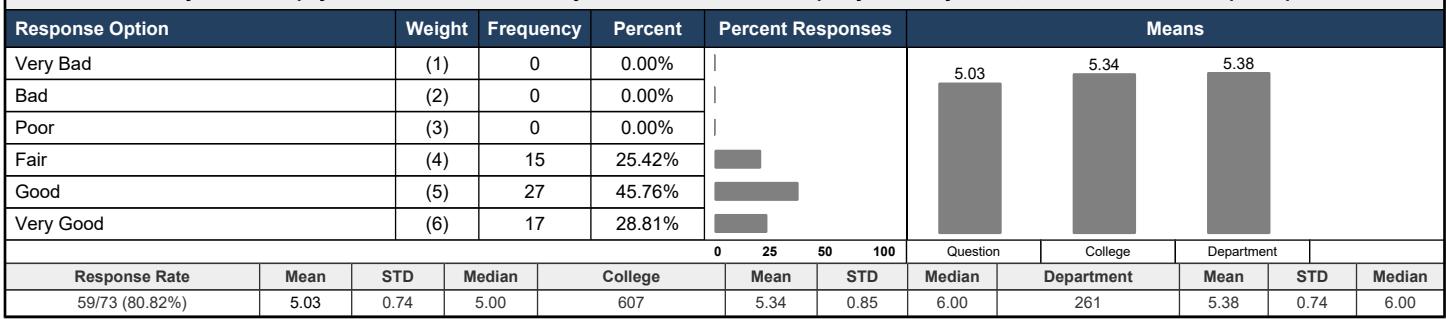
Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2024

Response Rate: 61/73 (83.56 %)

5 - 5A - Please add any additional comments regarding the course and/or instructor here:

Response Rate	29/73 (39.73%)
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- ..
- great work!
- Had a good summer semester.
- He explains the material very well that is easy to follow and understand the content. He is also very helpful on helping people troubleshoot things on projects and assignments and answers emails in a timely manner. Every time I need clarification on things, I could always approach him for ask questions and concerns and get them answered in a timely fashion.
- He provided lots of bonus pt opportunities.
- He was good over all
- He was very good at explaining the content and making it easy to understand.
- He was very helpful and very responsive in the piazza, and made the course easier to understand in the short amount of time that we had.
- I hope there would be extra points for achiving milestones on projects
- I like how the projects were 50% of the grade. I do believe though that adding more CodeWorkout exercises as part of the homework would be helpful for understanding the material better. The textbook did well with helping me visualize what the data structures were doing, but I feel like I was lacking understanding on their exact implementation.
- I think open dsa was really wordy and hard to understand. I think recording lectures would help more because watching an explanation in real life is always more effective and going through slides. I also think that the beggining of the course was too much of a review of 2114 and it sort of became difficult to understand how to manage the class like notes, hw, etc, because the beggining felt too much like review.
- I think responsiveness on Piazza and/or more accessible TA hours would've been very helpful, especially on project due date days. There was a day where I posted a question on piazza the day of submission probably about 6 hours before it was due and didn't get a response until the next day passed the second 12 hour late period. so I was not able to improve my project at risk of getting a lower score
- Love professor Alex!
- N/A
- No complaints keep up the good work.
- Not directed at the professor since its not his fault But the course having a broken DSA for the whole semester is extremely frustrating
- Overall, I think the class was well-taught and the course material/assignments were spaced out reasonably.
- The class was very enjoyable and filled with valuable information.
- Trying to get credit with OpenDSA was frustrating and sometimes it would not load properly. The requirements in some of the docs for the project were unclear (Sample output had errors) and WebCat tests gave little to no feedback.
- Very friendly and knowledgeable
- very helpful, understanding, cares about his students
- Very professional.

6 - 6A - How would you rate the physical environment in which you took this class based upon your ability to see, hear, concentrate, and participate?

Virginia Tech

Summer II and III 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2024

Response Rate: 61/73 (83.56 %)

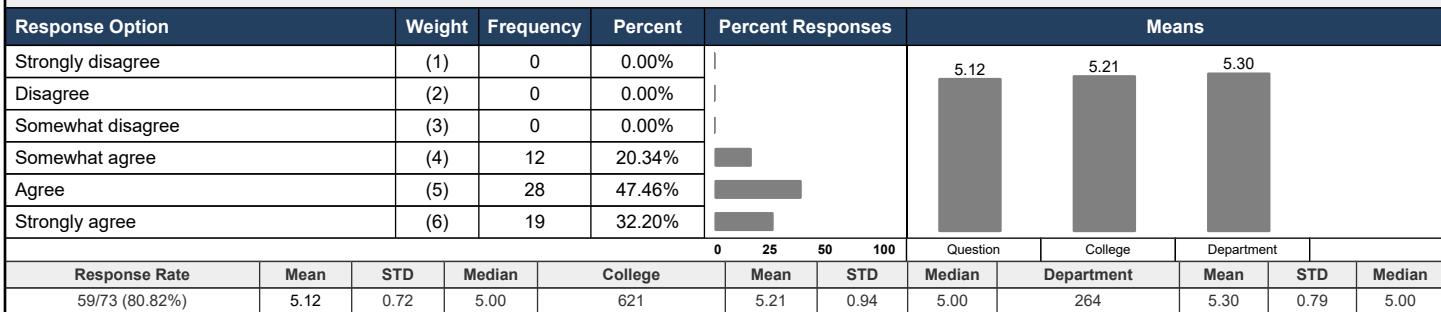
7 - 7A - Please add any comments about the physical environment here:

Response Rate	29/73 (39.73%)
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- ..
- Because the summer course is online, I was able to focus and work effectively on each of the projects and homework assignments. The lectures are also very easy to follow through, and I could always go back on them whenever I need to revise any content related material.
- Difficult in online learning
- I was just in my room.
- I was virtual and my bed is comfy.
- I would prefer to be in person, but this was one of the best online classes I've been in.
- It was a zoom class so it was dependent on internet, but overall no complaints it was good for what it was.
- it was an online class so nothing special.
- It was virtual.
- It's an online class
- Just a difficult summer on my end, but it seemed well organized on the instructor side which i appreciated
- n/a
- N/A
- n/a
- n/a
- N/A due to fully virtual class
- online
- online class
- Online classes are just always going to be difficult since it is mostly self-motivated.
- Online zoom was good.
- Our piazza cannot provide many helpful tips. And TAs and professors sometimes didn't answer questions very quickly.
- remote environment
- There was no physical environment, as it was an online course. However, nothing on the instructor's Zoom camera was ever a distraction from the instructor himself.
- This class is virtual, but my chair is very comfy
- This was an online class, so there was no physical environment.
- Virtual
- Virtual
- Was virtual class room
- Zoom meetings were always up and uploaded to canvas in case which is great

8 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

I improved my ability to problem solve.

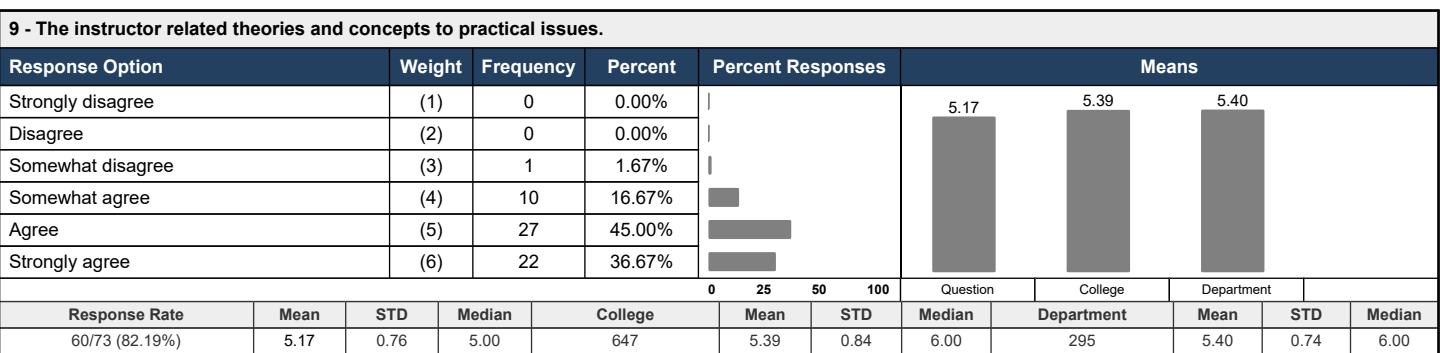
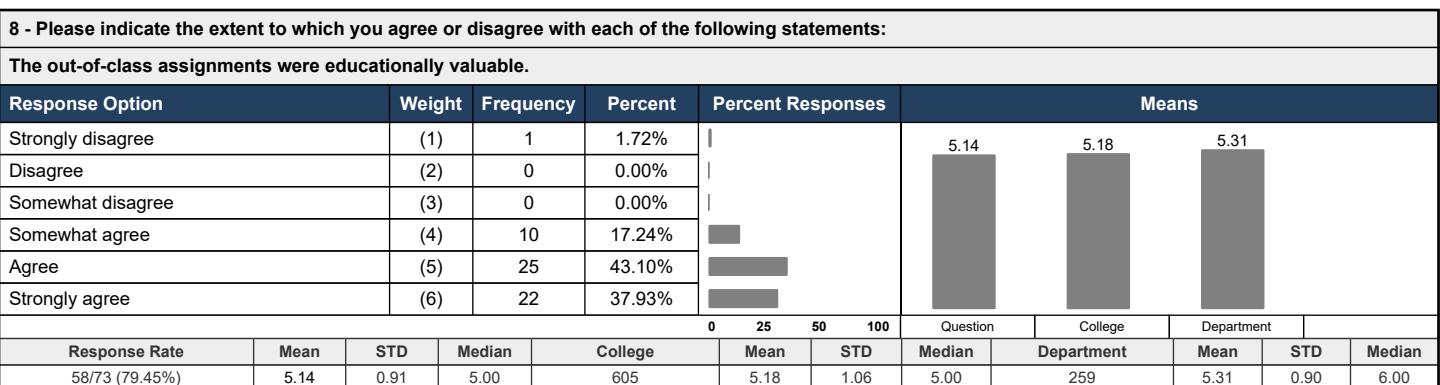
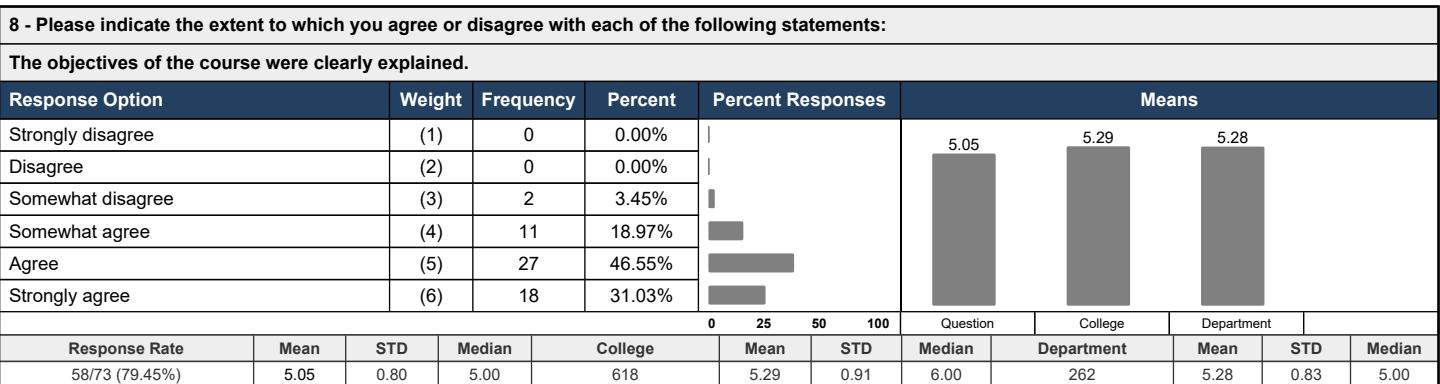
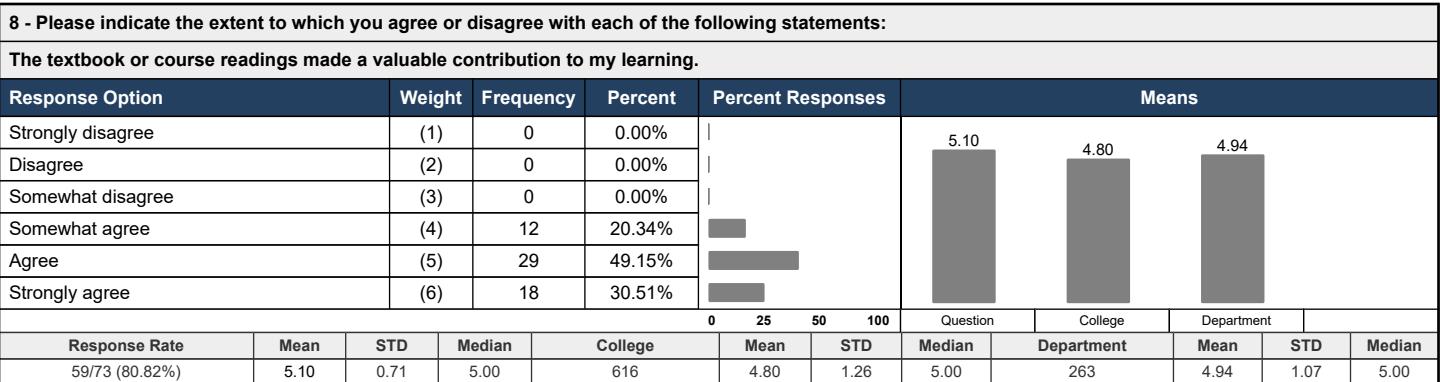


Virginia Tech

Summer II and III 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

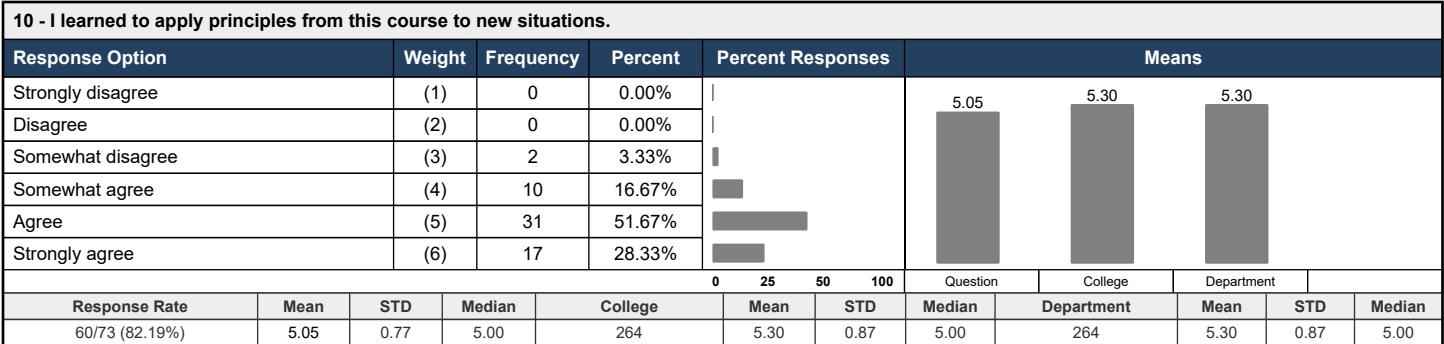
Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2024

Response Rate: 61/73 (83.56 %)



Report: CS3114_5040_Summer_2024

Response Rate: 61/73 (83.56 %)

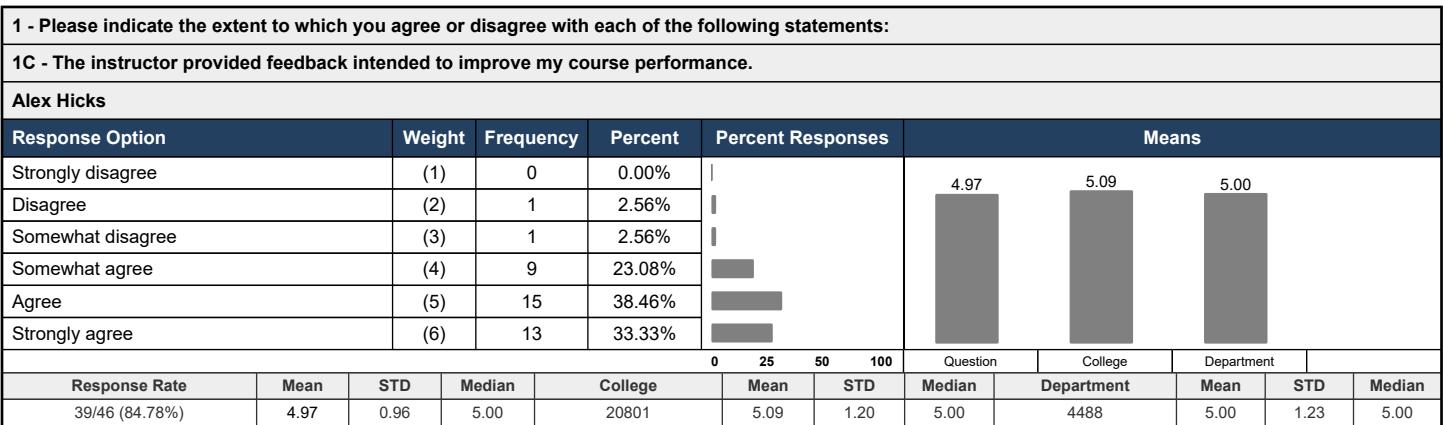
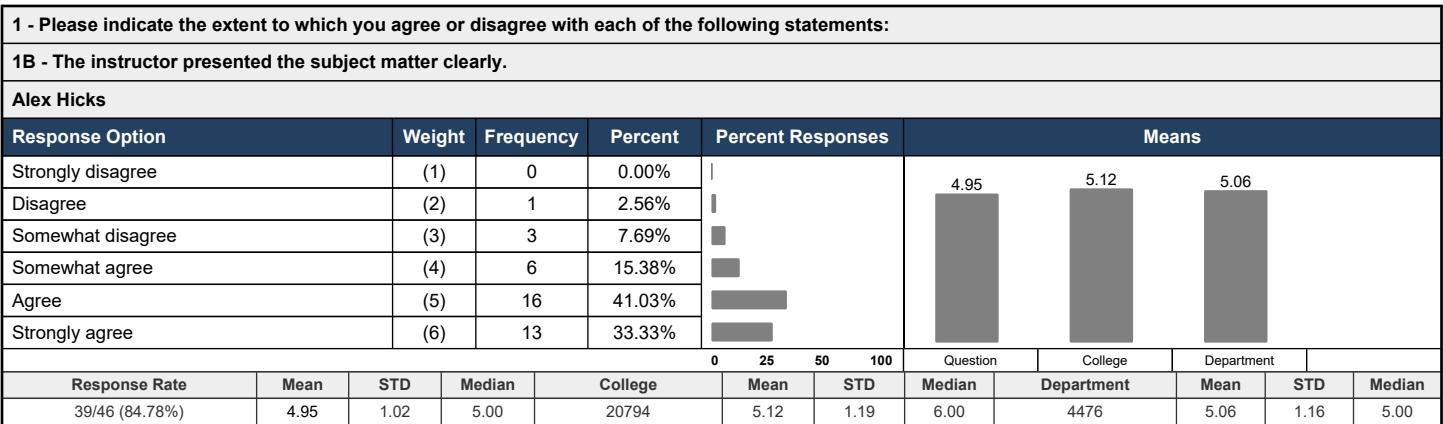
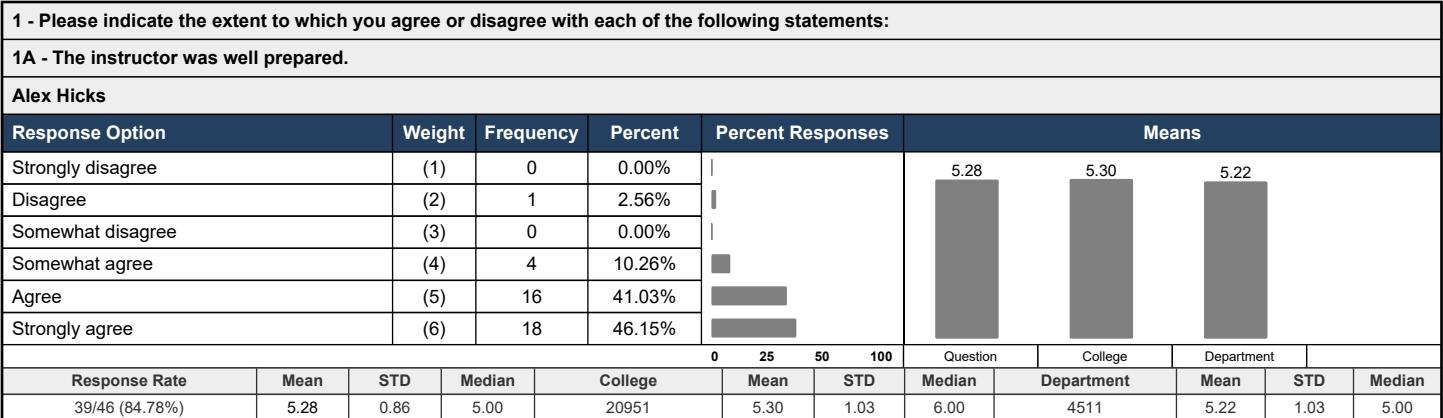


Virginia Tech

Spring 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_4104_13401_202401: Data and Algorithm Analysis-CS_4104_13401_202401
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 40/46 (86.96 %)

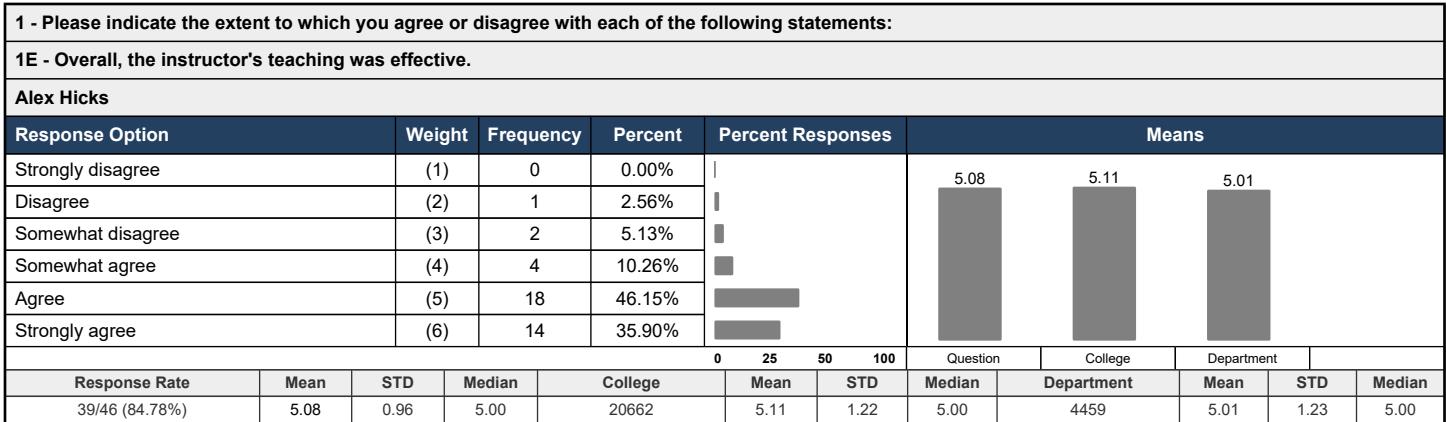
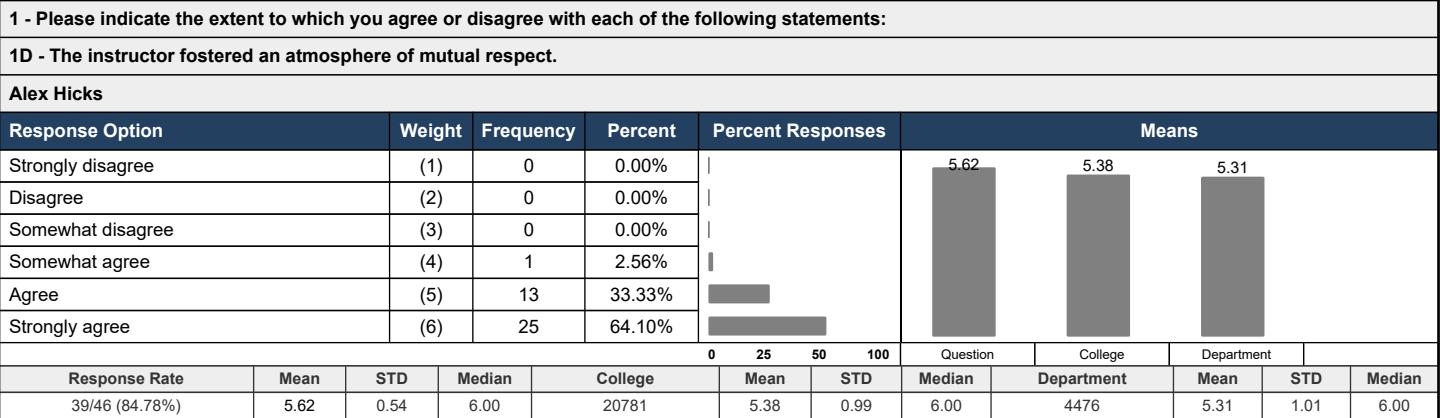


Virginia Tech

Spring 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_4104_13401_202401: Data and Algorithm Analysis-CS_4104_13401_202401
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 40/46 (86.96 %)



Virginia Tech

Spring 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_4104_13401_202401: Data and Algorithm Analysis-CS_4104_13401_202401
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 40/46 (86.96 %)

2 - 2A - What did the instructor do that most helped in your learning?

Alex Hicks

Response Rate	26/46 (56.52%)
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- He checked if students had questions or thoughts on the subject matter in general.
- good
- Loved the type of problems we went over in lectures and on the homeworks, I found them super interesting. I like how they weren't just copy and pasted from Leetcode, they were real-world problems and sometimes abstract. They really made me think. I felt like I could pay attention and follow along in the lectures and that they were engaging, even for an 8 am. The course load wasn't overwhelming, but we definitely had to start the homeworks early and use office hours a couple of times.
- Posted the slides online and was always available during office hours
- Answered questions
- He went in-depth in working on problems during class, which helped for exams on how to think.
- I liked his grading scale, and it definitely helped me with working hard in the class
- Post the slides for after class review and studying.
- The homework had good questions on them that helped reinforce what I learned in class
- Upload all presentations online
- Related what we were covering to the real world; covered why these things we were learning are important as computer science students.
- He was very well prepared for class material, and he has been ready to answer questions from the students.
- He explained things clearly and seemed to know the material well.
- Professor Hicks was very kind and not strict. I've found that I learn most effectively in classes where I don't feel a ton of pressure to do some crazy hard assignment and where there's harsh grading on difficult concepts. He made the content accessible and encouraged learning through his grading style. I felt encouraged to attend lecture and study, but not forced, which makes a huge difference.
- Had multiple options in how we can learn and how we can go about class.
- Make the powerpoint more readable
- The Abominal Snowman game really helped me understand the adversary argument. I think more examples like that would help us learn the material.
- Share notes, and give plenty of time for homeworks
- The professor reply email very quick.
- Hands on assignments
- He was very helpful after/outside of class when I had trouble understanding complicated concepts.
- Made the material relevant to what he tested us on, and the homeworks reflected what he expected us to know which was very helpful
- He had very extensive slides and we could tell he understood a lot about the subject, which made it easy to ask clarifying questions.
- Posting the lecture notes online when I was unable to attend class made falling behind much less likely for me.
- Giving constructive feedback and modifying the structure of the class to fit the students taking it.
- The professor provided comprehensive notes.

3 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

3A - I have a deeper understanding of the subject matter as a result of this course.

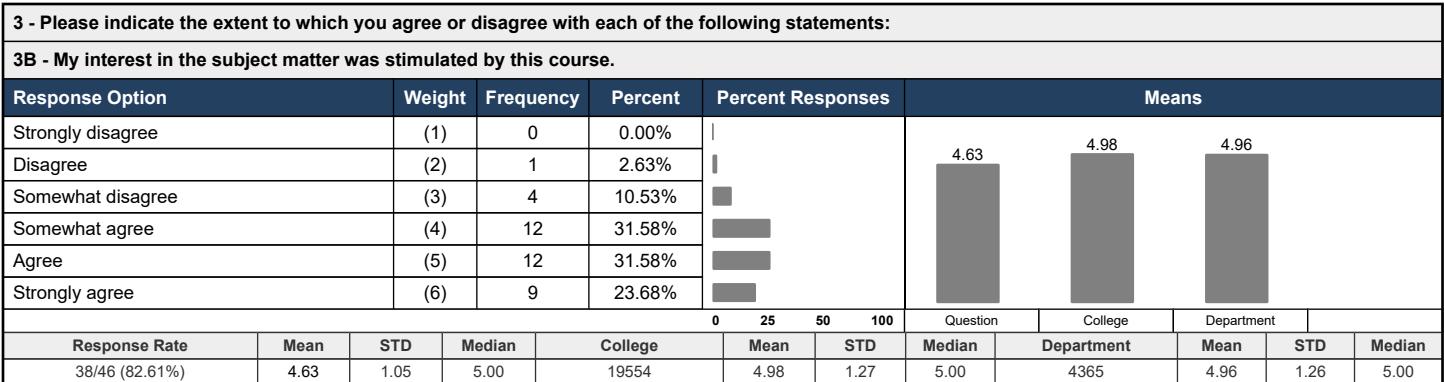
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses		Means					
				0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department	
Strongly disagree	(1)	0	0.00%					4.89	5.18	5.15	
Disagree	(2)	1	2.63%								
Somewhat disagree	(3)	0	0.00%								
Somewhat agree	(4)	10	26.32%								
Agree	(5)	18	47.37%								
Strongly agree	(6)	9	23.68%								
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
38/46 (82.61%)	4.89	0.86	5.00	19651	5.18	1.06	5.00	4376	5.15	1.05	5.00

Virginia Tech

Spring 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_4104_13401_202401: Data and Algorithm Analysis-CS_4104_13401_202401
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 40/46 (86.96 %)



4 - 4A - What could you have done to be a better learner?

Response Rate	26/46 (56.52%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I could've read the textbook more. • good • The extra credit work seemed interesting, I just didn't have time to complete it. Busy week. • Asked more questions about what I didn't understand • Tried harder • I could have taken notes throughout the semester, I did not because the lecture slides are posted online. • Read the textbook or asked more questions about subjects I didn't understand. • Went over notes more, studied more • Wake up for class more often • Started homeworks earlier. • I should have gone to bed earlier since this is 8am class :(• I could have focused more in class. • Honestly, if this wasn't an 8am I might've absorbed a tad more information. Maybe I could've gotten better about listening when sleepy? • Asked the professor more questions and go to office hours more • N/A • I didn't pay attention much during class. • I could've studied more • learn something else by myself • More hands on coding assignments would have been nice to have • I could have attended some more classes. I had trouble getting to class because of how early it was and how late I had to stay up for work. • Reviewed the lecture slides more • review more about the lecture ppt • I could have reviewed lecture notes/slides more before or after class. • There were many days that I did not go to class because it was at 8 am. I am a senior. In no way should I be forced to have an 8 am class in my final semester. • I could have actively participated in class more. • I could have attended more lectures. 	

Virginia Tech

Spring 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_4104_13401_202401: Data and Algorithm Analysis-CS_4104_13401_202401
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 40/46 (86.96 %)

5 - 5A - Please add any additional comments regarding the course and/or instructor here:

Alex Hicks

Response Rate	21/46 (45.65%)
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- good
- I know that Alex Hicks is a graduate student and it was an 8 am class, however, it was clear to me that he did not understand some of the material he was supposed to be teaching us. He said that the slides were not his and it was apparent that he did not read (at least some of them) ahead of time. Therefore, he spent a lot of time reading off of the slides and speaker notes, which I found to be a very ineffective teaching strategy. It was hard to pay attention, especially when he made some fairly egregious mistakes when working examples, because I felt like I could learn better if I just read the slides on my own time and spent the remaining time reading the textbook or OpenDSA. So that's what I did during class time because attendance was part of our grade. Please do not let any lecturer use attendance to directly affect grades. Whether that's through the obvious "attendance quiz" scheme or the less obvious "pop quizzes" strategy. If a class is discussion based or something like senior design where you need to work with your group that's different, but in general I have never enjoyed a lecture-based course with mandatory attendance.
- Would love to take more courses from Professor Hicks in the future. This was one of my favorite classes I've taken at the school so far, I like how algorithm and math oriented the problems were. I feel like he presented the material in a clear and engaging way and it really made the class enjoyable to go to.
- The way the math is presented on the slides is hard to follow sometimes, which left me confused on how to solve some problems.
- Very good teacher
- None
- Good professor and great educator, just sometimes the course was a little "boring" from the subject matter itself.
- Great class, great professor, just found it hard waking up at 8am for class every week.
- At a point studying for quizzes were difficult as those questions were heavily based on problem solving abilities.
- Thank you so much
- It was difficult to stay engaged because it was 8am and it was a more traditional lecture so I wasn't always paying attention
- Great class, great professor!
- Honestly loved the class. I think its worth waking up for the most part at 8am
- N/A
- I think more explanations in the slides might have been good, so it would be easier to understand what was going on when reviewing the material.
- N/A
- He was a great professor!
- if there are sample exams would be better.
- Sometimes he explained things in the slide when I wish he wrote out more logic visually on the board. Some things were hard to understand when I didn't know where the math came from. But overall a well structured class.
- Prof. Hicks was an absolute pleasure to learn from. Smart guy.
- I felt that the course material taught in class was tangentially related to our homework and quizzes. It often felt like the materials we were assessed on were entirely different from those we were learning during class. I also felt like the in-class presentation materials were too closely adapted from OpenDSA, and while I appreciate the more technical approach it takes, I would have liked the slides to focus more on concise explanations of the concepts with alternative examples and explanations. This would have allowed OpenDSA to serve as an additional resource; instead I felt like it was so similar to the presentation material that studying both was pointless, so I prioritized the more comprehensive OpenDSA materials.

6 - 6A - How would you rate the physical environment in which you took this class based upon your ability to see, hear, concentrate, and participate?

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
					Question	College	Department	
Very Bad	(1)	1	2.56%		5.26	5.27	5.22	
Bad	(2)	0	0.00%					
Poor	(3)	0	0.00%					
Fair	(4)	4	10.26%	■				
Good	(5)	16	41.03%	■■■■				
Very Good	(6)	18	46.15%	■■■■■				
				0 25 50 100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department
39/46 (84.78%)	5.26	0.97	5.00	19473	5.27	0.91	5.00	4334

Virginia Tech

Spring 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_4104_13401_202401: Data and Algorithm Analysis-CS_4104_13401_202401
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 40/46 (86.96 %)

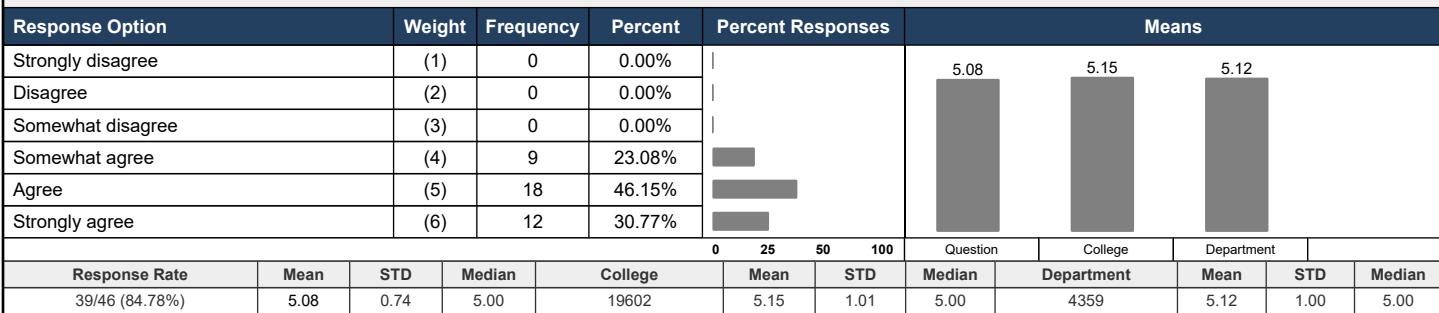
7 - 7A - Please add any comments about the physical environment here:

Response Rate	17/46 (36.96%)
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- good
- Good classroom.
- It was an 8am class
- All good!
- good environment for the course and amount of students.
- Class was scheduled too early in the morning
- Good, standard classroom
- Good
- Pretty good
- environment was fine, easy to read screen and hear him
- nothing it seems chill
- N/A
- N/A
- Bad time and too far
- Slightly cold all the time
- that was good
- N/A

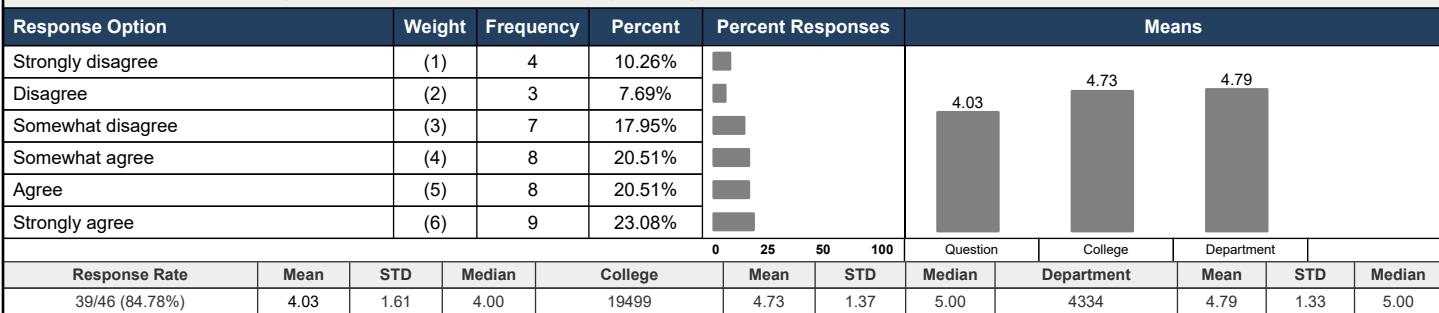
8 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

I improved my ability to problem solve.



8 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

The textbook or course readings made a valuable contribution to my learning.

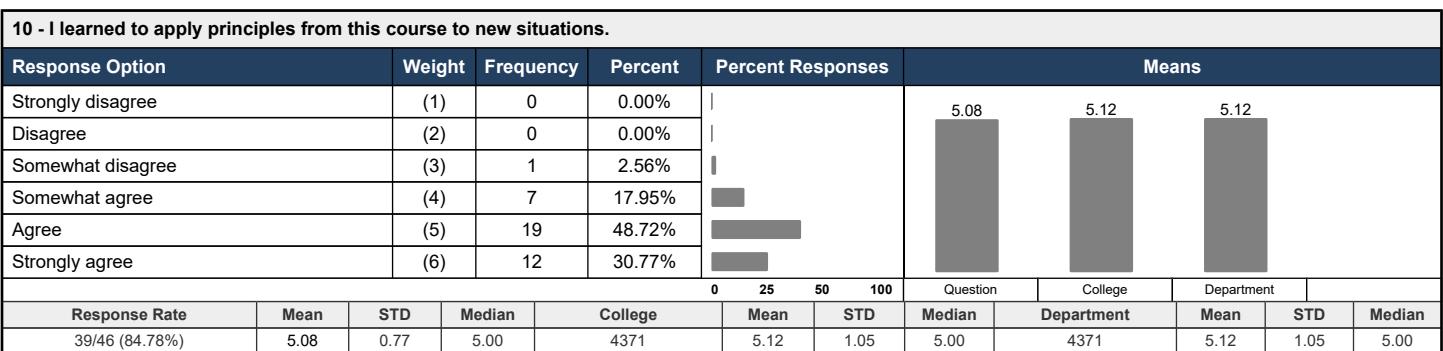
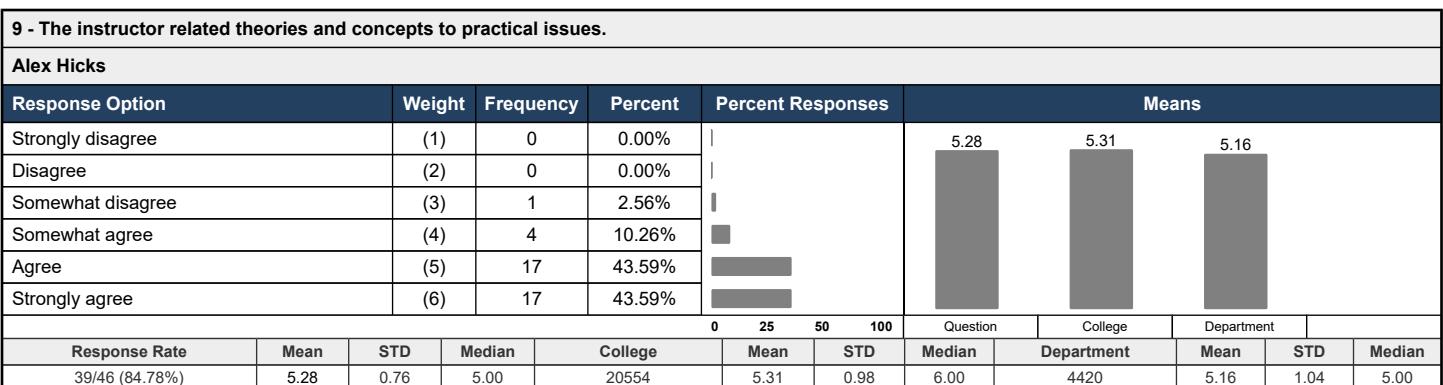
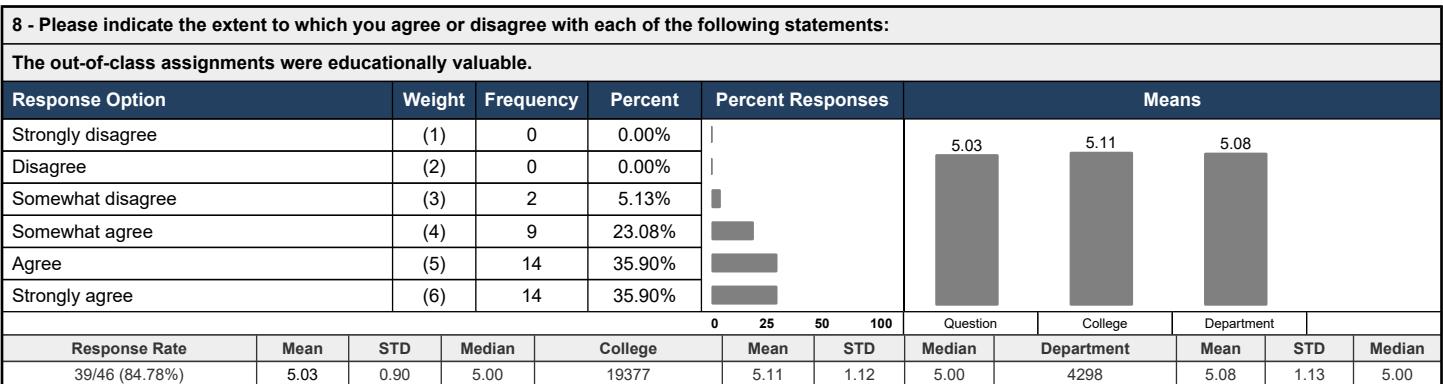
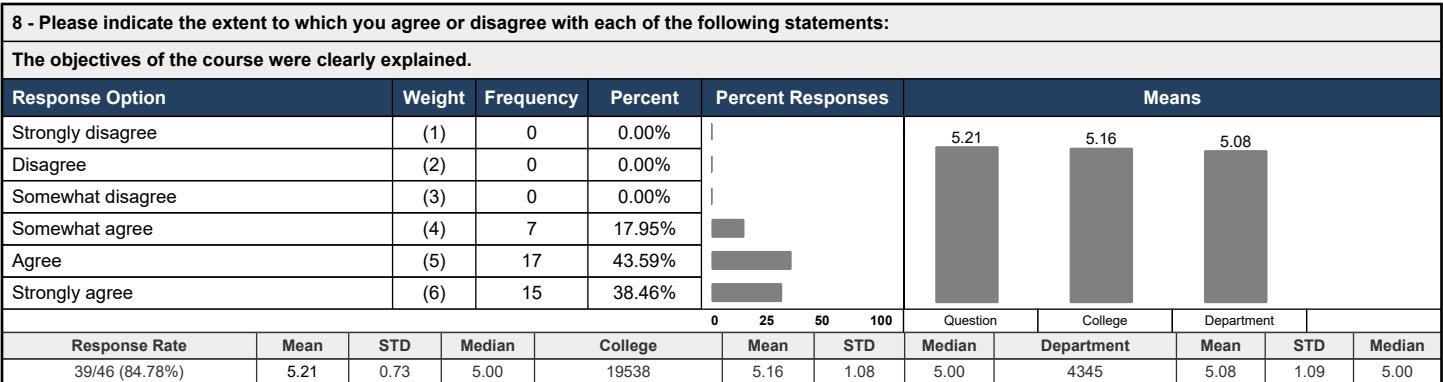


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Spring 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

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Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 40/46 (86.96 %)

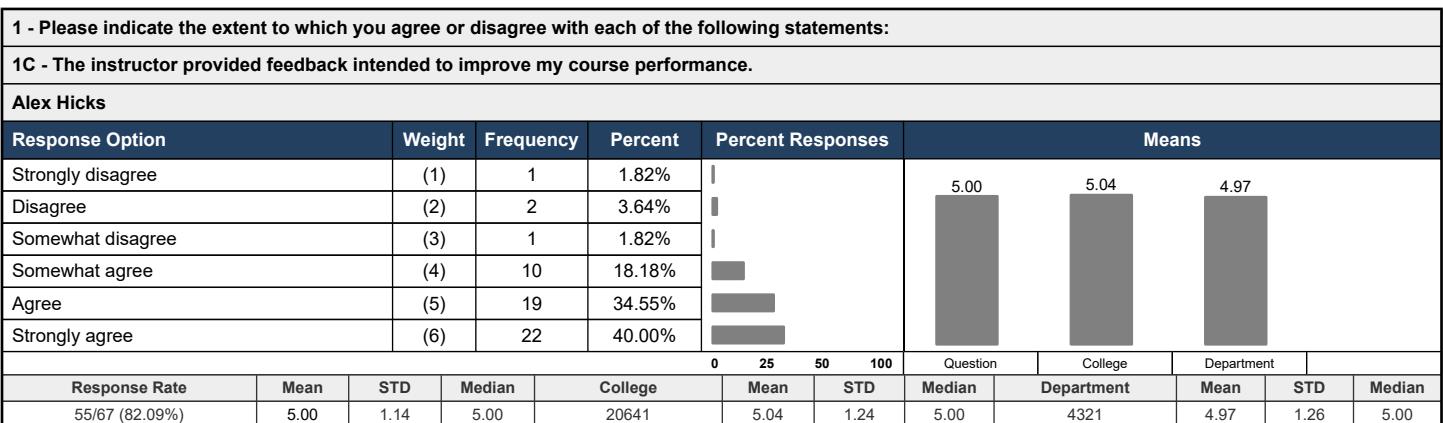
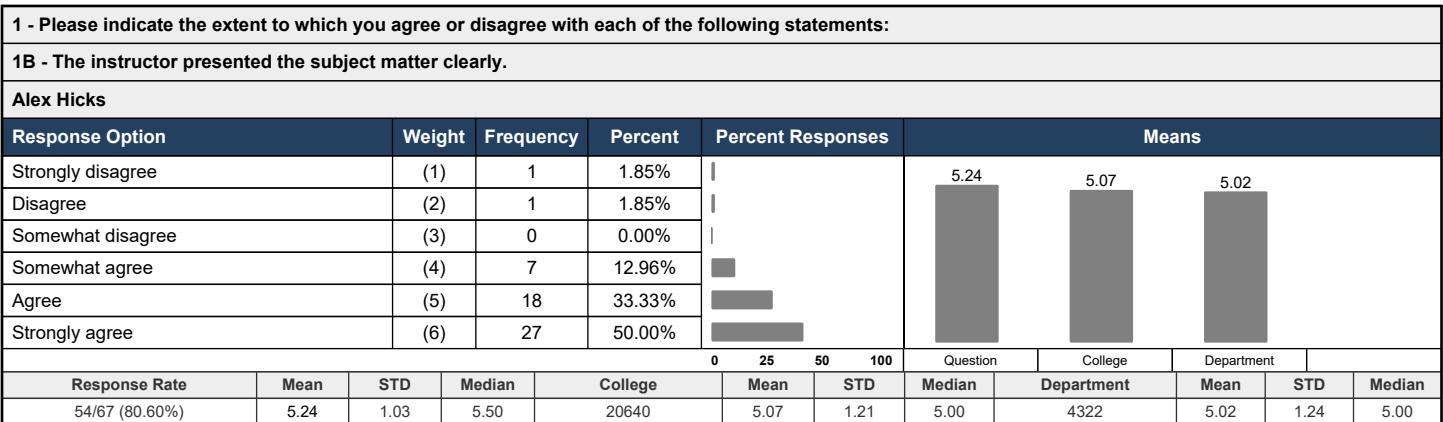
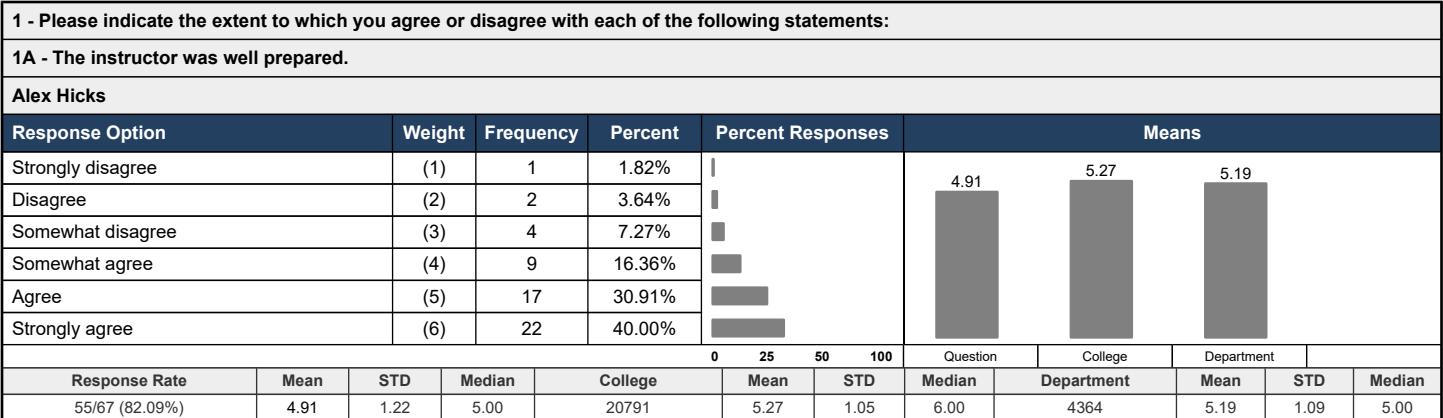


Virginia Tech

Spring 2023 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_3704_20811_202301: Intermed Software Des-CS_3704_20811_202301
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 56/67 (83.58 %)

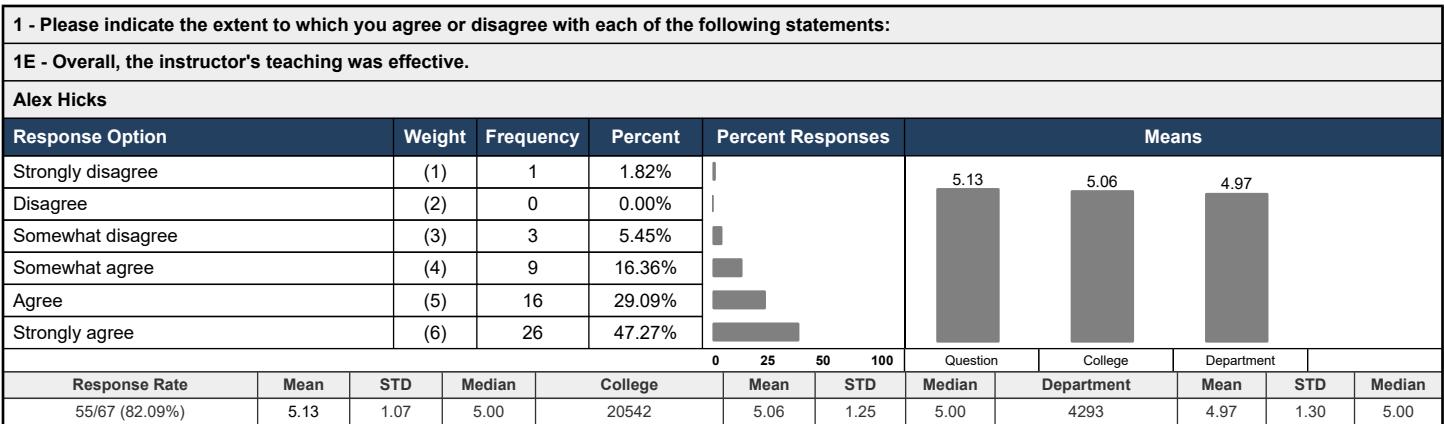
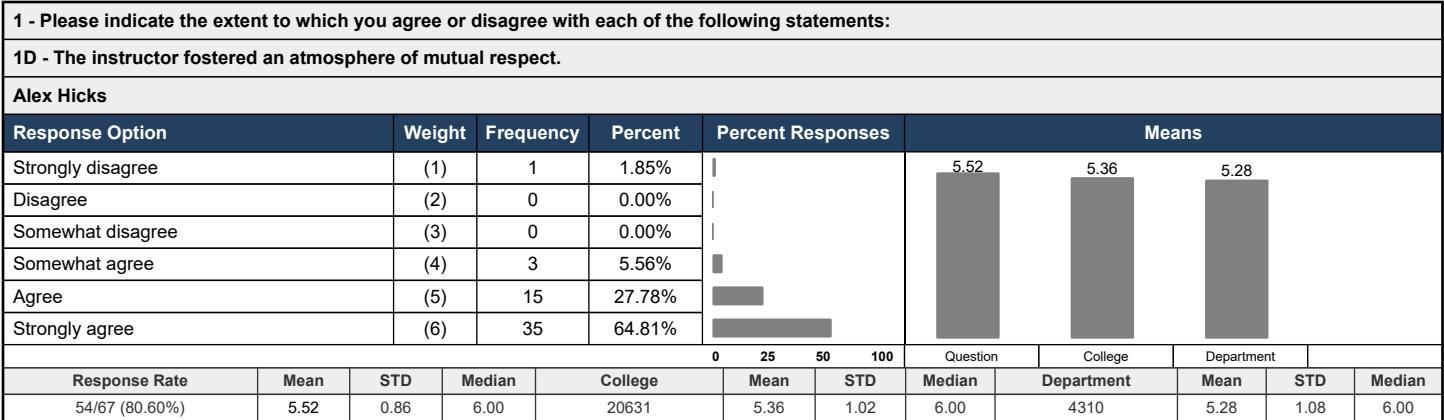


Virginia Tech

Spring 2023 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_3704_20811_202301: Intermed Software Des-CS_3704_20811_202301
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 56/67 (83.58 %)



Virginia Tech

Spring 2023 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_3704_20811_202301: Intermed Software Des-CS_3704_20811_202301
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 56/67 (83.58 %)

2 - 2A - What did the instructor do that most helped in your learning?

Alex Hicks

Response Rate	42/67 (62.69%)
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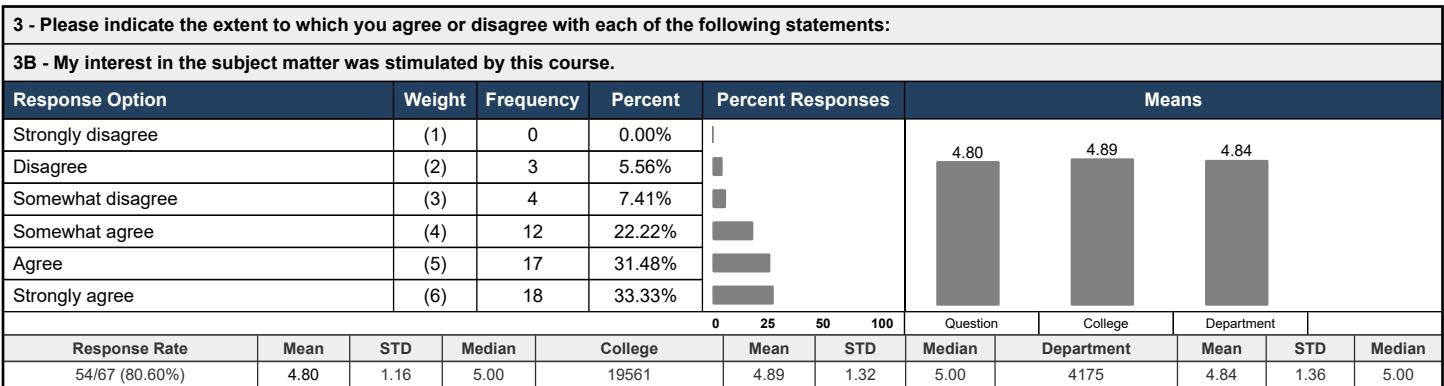
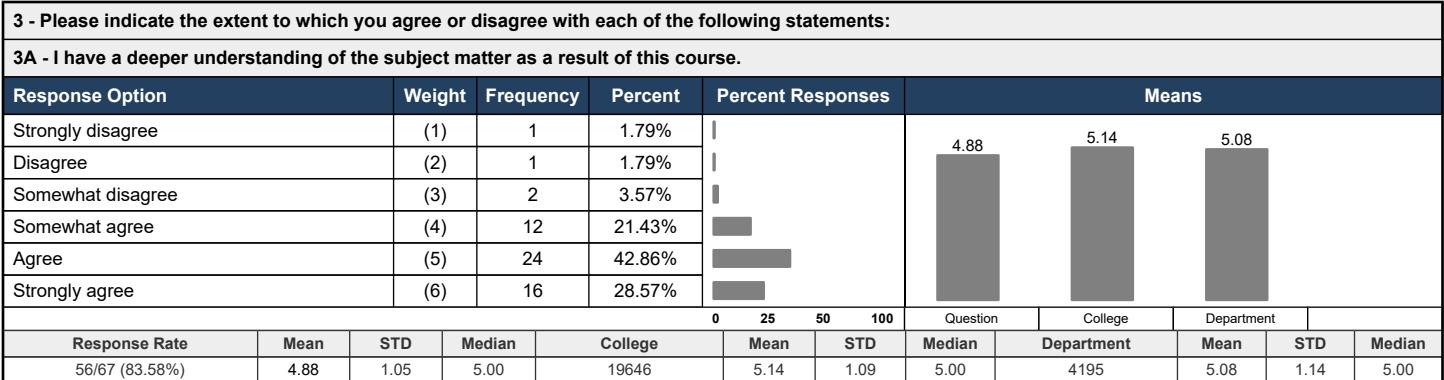
- The assignments did help me learn a little bit about some new software.
- He is very kind and helpful
- N/A
- At times the instructor felt somewhat unprepared mostly in regard to the project, but given the circumstances, it is understandable as to why.
- Provide lecture slides.
- Used great slides that described different topics within Software design and provided real world examples on how they could be applied.
- Clearly explained everything in details.
- I enjoyed the level of enthusiasm that the professor brought to each class and how he related the material to practical uses.
- Gave good lectures that are going to be useful in the future. Have always been helpful if I ran into a issue with assignments.
- Absolutely nothing at all.
- Responded to my emails really quickly, and cleared doubts well.
- I like his style of teaching class, but I would like to have more project working with my classmate.
- Post the notes online and gave very detailed lectures.
- I liked that he made his quizzes fairly straightforward and how they were like a review of the notes in class. He also would let us know of one coming up so that we had time to prepare.
- He was very insightful and went in to very great detail about every aspect of the class material
- Professor Hicks was always looking for ways to improve the course and was passionate about teaching and the students learning. This helped keep the lectures feeling alive and interesting.
- Quizzes
- I really like how we learned about real life development cycles. I thought it was really cool getting to learn about Agile.
- Very understanding and helpful.
- He connected everything being taught to real life scenarios to make the connection better when discussing some complex topics.
- Teach about real world scenarios that most computer science students will go through at some point.
- The hands-on part of the group projects.
- Professor had excellent knowledge of the subject material and conveyed it well. He took time to help students with assignments or any concerns after class.
- He provided clear material of what was discussed in class for our review. He made it clear what the objective of each topic was and how it could be theoretically be applied in real world applications.
- setup
- He explained things very well and was able to keep me interested in what he was talking about. He felt very relatable and like he knew what he was talking about rather than being a robot and reading directly off of the slides.
- He was very understanding of every student and provided a safe class environment. The slides presented in class definitely helped students with future quizzes and assignments.
- He would always post the notes and let us know when quizzes were, which was super helpful.
- I thought his lectures were really good, and taught about modern technologies. He would say for example, "This technology has seen a emergence in this field."
- I think the contents of the slide were super helpful because they discussed tactics used in the workforce, which is not something covered about in-depth in the CS core curriculum at the moment. It very much prepares you for what it's like to be in the workforce.
- He did a great job giving examples and specific real world applications and scenarios.
- He really made teaching personalized by teaching classes no matter the size, as the population started to dwindle towards the end of the semester
- The instructor provided a lot of material and explanations from the powerpoint presentation which helped be understand a lot about software design.
- The presentation slides he had prepared for each class really helped me to conceptualize the advanced programming topics we were learning about.
- He broke down the lectures quite easily and even provided a syllabus in which he stuck to, throughout the entire semester. This made it easy to follow and definitely helped my learning experience in the class.
- Provide examples
- He explained concepts well during class.
- I think Dr.Hicks was incredibly patient with students and cared more about the fact that we learnt the material properly than most professors. He made sure we got our assignments done but also provided ample support when we were struggling. Overall I would recommend this class to my peers in the future! Thank you again!
- Gave great lectures
- Professor clearly communicated with students and presented material and an easy way to understand.
- Explained concepts in a way that was easy to grasp.
- The most inspiring thing I have heard from Professor Hicks is that students struggle with Development Operation skills. I am now trying to distinguish myself from other students by learning how to use tools to improve work flow.

Virginia Tech

Spring 2023 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_3704_20811_202301: Intermed Software Des-CS_3704_20811_202301
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 56/67 (83.58 %)



Virginia Tech

Spring 2023 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_3704_20811_202301: Intermed Software Des-CS_3704_20811_202301
Instructor: Alex Hicks *
Response Rate: 56/67 (83.58 %)

4 - 4A - What could you have done to be a better learner?

Response Rate	38/67 (56.72%)
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- I could have paid better attention in class, but in my defense, there was no actual incentive to try to learn the content.
- Nothing
- be better with deadlines
- Attended office hours more often.
- Go further in depth via extra materials and readings.
- Spend more time on course materials.
- I could have done more research after classes to better understand some of the real life applications from the material.
- Come to class more often
- Nothing at all, the course was presented in a way that discouraged learning.
- I found the subject matter of the course interesting because I am currently working in industry and the course covers a lot of the basics. The course covers a lot of the core subjects which are important to always be refreshed on. However the importance of these core subjects (ie. testing, mono service, micro services) is only apparent if someone has hands on experience. For example the importance of testing is not obvious if someone has only worked on solo projects or small group projects that only last a few weeks. However, after working on a large application along with multiple teams of engineers the importance of testing becomes much more obvious. I would suggest adding demonstrations to the course to show the importance of each topic. Maybe the demonstrations don't even have to be technical.
- Be more attentive during class.
- Start projects earlier and attend class more.
- I could have started some of the assignments earlier in order to learn better.
- It was a bit difficult for me to get invested in the course because there weren't really any places for me to apply the knowledge I received
- It might be controversial to say, but I feel like the assignments could have been a lot better and in greater numbers. The class felt like it had like 2 assignments, as I believe it had around that many, but it could have done more to reinforce the material learned in class. Also, the assignments themselves were not of the highest quality because I and many people I talked to usually were confused while working on the assignments due to the lack of clarification for many parts. The instructions on how to do them, except for the first group assignment, were great.
- More work on project development
- I wish I had paid more attention then I did at some points in the class
- Start assignments earlier.
- More out of class assignments related to the topic at hand.
- Take notes for future classes.
- I missed a couple class sessions, but overall, I did what was expected for me for the class.
- I could've used my free time to dive deeper into the topics explored in class, but seeing as class barely was touching on the topics I would have had to dive a lot deeper.
- I think there should have been more assignments to reflect the content we were learning in class (although given the circumstances it is understandable why we didn't have more assignments)
- Attending the in person class more often instead of reviewing slides on my own time would've definitely helped me become a better learner, I wouldn't have missed in person quizzes as well if I had attended every class.
- Gone over the slides more, there is some useful information in most of them, you just have to find it.
- Go to class more.
- I definitely neglected to come to class a few times, so I think I could have been a better learner by showing up to more classes.
- I missed a few more classes than I would have liked.
- I believe I did everything right, as I came to class everyday and understood the material, and my grade reflects that
- I could have looked over the presentation slides more after class so that I could better remember the material.
- I think I could of taken better notes on the slides provided and maybe reviewed them more frequently. But since I do have an A in the course, I think I did well prepping and studying for the course as a whole.
- Show up more
- I did what I could to be a good learner, genuinely couldn't have done anything more.
- I could have been more proactive about my assignments
- Took notes in class
- I think if I reviewed notes more after lectures I could better retain the information.
- I could have attended class more to learn the material.
- Do more self-exploration

Virginia Tech

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Instructor: Alex Hicks *
Response Rate: 56/67 (83.58 %)

5 - 5A - Please add any additional comments regarding the course and/or instructor here:

Alex Hicks

Response Rate 25/67 (37.31%)

- The only thing I would say about this class would be that there was no incentive to actually participate or learn the content. Because the only type of evaluation was open note quizzes, I was just able to find every answer to every question in the powerpoints, and do other homework in class. This class also required a disproportionate amount of troubleshooting. Because the instructions were very unclear and the professor was slow to respond at times, I had to figure out a lot of the assignments by myself, which took a long time sometimes.
- - understand was difficult time with deaths of grandparents for professor, maybe better structure for the class
- He was fantastic.
- n/a
- He's a good instructor. Easy and be respectful to those who want to learn
- Thank you so much for the semester.
- He was unprepared for the semester. We were setting up our environments two months into the semester. 50 percent of our grade is supposed to be from a semester long group project, but he has not yet released the project and the semester ends next week. When he did somehow manage to put out an assignment for the class to do it would be riddled with bugs, especially for Windows users. It seems as though this professor had this class at the bottom of his list of academic priorities, which can possibly be explained by the fact that he is a grad student. Even with this in mind, hiring somebody who is unprepared to teach a course reflects poorly on the CS program and the university as a whole. I sincerely hope that improvements will be made for future students.
- There were a few programming assignments here and there, and a group assignment. The group assignment didn't really feel like a group assignment, we just worked on that group assignment but we didn't really have anything else other than that.
- Thanks for a great semester!
- Very understanding, responds to emails promptly, is willing to help with whatever you need
- It felt a little weird doing all this set up for a project that never really happened
- Amazing and helpful Professor
- Very nice, just wish that there was more interaction with the group project. It got pushed back too much so we didn't get to do a whole lot.
- There was supposed to be a semester long project that we did not have. The professor took many sick days, which probably impacted the pacing of the course.
- Alex was responsive, engaging, and helpful; however, the course needs more thoroughly developed. More out of class assignments would have helped to stimulate learning / build on the concepts discussed in class. We did three environment setup assignments over the course of Feb-Apr, with no actual application assignment over the course of the semester. Severely disappointed on the level of actual programming done in a class titled "Intermediate Software Design". Material discussed in class has plenty of real world applications, but little was done to demonstrate its use.
- You were a great professor, I think in the future you should just release more assignments.
- He's a great professor! He works well with students.
- Great guy and real nice guy.
- He was a great professor! Super nice and accommodating, and I liked that he touched upon toxic work environments, as it is an issue that is prevalent in many workplaces, unfortunately.
- This course was great and I hope there are more hands-on experience with either individual assignments or group work!
- Great professor to teach the subject, we as students could tell it was something that he was passionate about and it in turn helped us learn better.
- - Very good teacher, easy to learn from and someone who is always available to talk to.
- Unable to get the full project ready for students to do.
- Awesome professor
- None

6 - 6A - How would you rate the physical environment in which you took this class based upon your ability to see, hear, concentrate, and participate?

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
					Question	College	Department	
Very Bad	(1)	0	0.00%		5.45	5.18	5.13	
Bad	(2)	0	0.00%					
Poor	(3)	2	3.77%					
Fair	(4)	1	1.89%					
Good	(5)	21	39.62%	█████				
Very Good	(6)	29	54.72%	███████				
				0 25 50 100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department
53/67 (79.10%)	5.45	0.72	6.00	19486	5.18	0.96	5.00	4138

Virginia Tech

Spring 2023 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Course: CS_3704_20811_202301: Intermed Software Des-CS_3704_20811_202301
Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 56/67 (83.58 %)

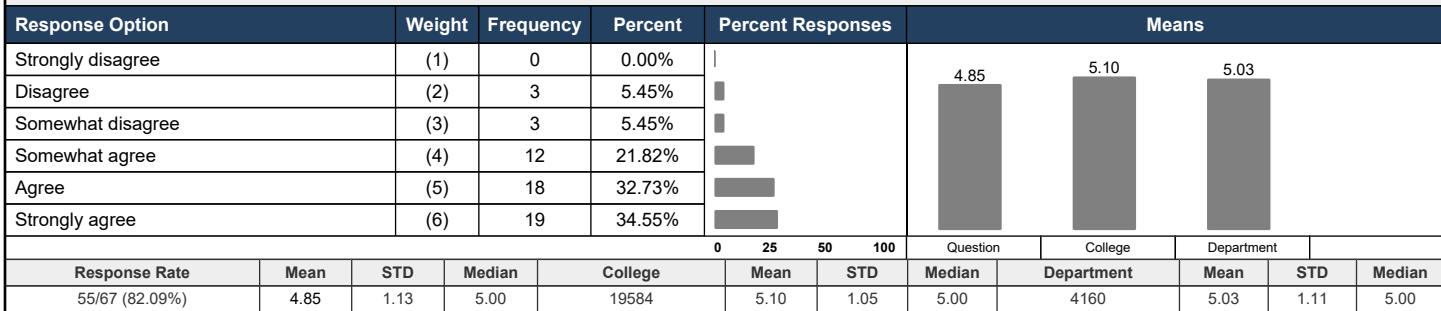
7 - 7A - Please add any comments about the physical environment here:

Response Rate	19/67 (28.36%)
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- It got very hot in the room, but other than that it was fine
- n/a
- The learning environment is pretty good, I was able to concentrate on topics that he discussed about.
- It was pretty good.
- No comment
- Good classroom
- Good environment, just wish more people would show up for class.
- Physical environment was just fine.
- Besides there being days with only 4x students in the classroom, the physical environment was adequate.
- It's hard to concentrate in any classroom in Surge, I'm not sure exactly why but that classroom building is not a good learning environment.
- Typical classroom.
- It was good! The only problem is that the room only had outlets in the front and back of the room, and my laptop has a short battery life so it quite often died during class.
- Very welcoming and fostering
- Classroom is a bit small for the class size, but people did stop showing up to class so it definitely got better.
- Good
- No comments
- Room needed more power outlets
- None
- There is something wrong with that physical classroom, the first ten minutes of being in that classroom made me feel congested and I would sneeze constantly. This does not happen in other classrooms.

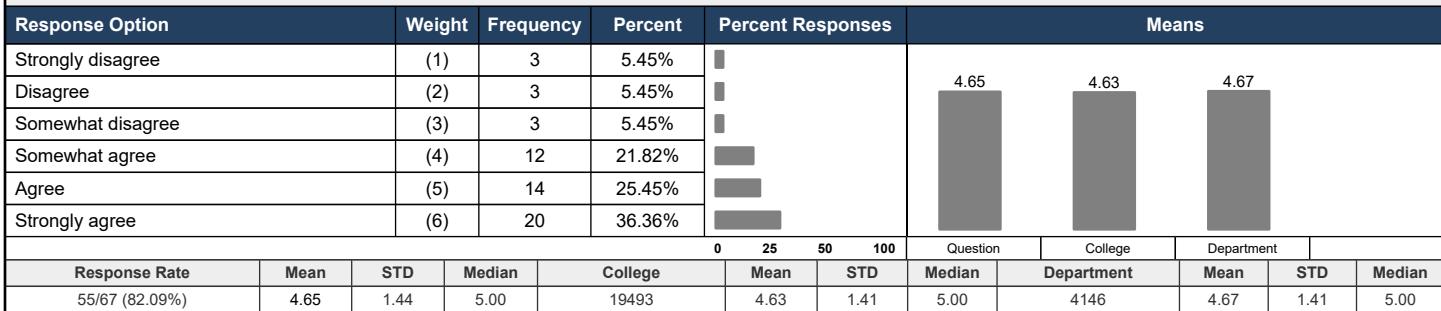
8 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

I improved my ability to problem solve.



8 - Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

The textbook or course readings made a valuable contribution to my learning.



Virginia Tech

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Instructor: Alex Hicks *

Response Rate: 56/67 (83.58 %)

