

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 %)

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

1A - The instructor was well prepared.

Alex Hicks

Response Option				Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means						
Strongly disagree				(1)	1	1.82%								
Disagree				(2)	2	3.64%								
Somewhat disagree				(3)	4	7.27%								
Somewhat agree				(4)	9	16.36%								
Agree				(5)	17	30.91%								
Strongly agree				(6)	22	40.00%								
							0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median
55/67 (82.09%)		4.91	1.22	5.00	20791		5.27	1.05	6.00	4364		5.19	1.09	5.00

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

1B - The instructor presented the subject matter clearly.

Alex Hicks

Response Option			Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses		Means					
Strongly disagree			(1)	1	1.85%								
Disagree			(2)	1	1.85%								
Somewhat disagree			(3)	0	0.00%								
Somewhat agree			(4)	7	12.96%								
Agree			(5)	18	33.33%								
Strongly agree			(6)	27	50.00%								
						0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median	
54/67 (80.60%)		5.24	1.03	5.50	20640	5.07	1.21	5.00	4322	5.02	1.24	5.00	

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

1C - The instructor provided feedback intended to improve my course performance.

Alex Hicks

Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means						
Strongly disagree		(1)	1	1.82%								
Disagree		(2)	2	3.64%								
Somewhat disagree		(3)	1	1.82%								
Somewhat agree		(4)	10	18.18%								
Agree		(5)	19	34.55%								
Strongly agree		(6)	22	40.00%								
					0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
55/67 (82.09%)		5.00	1.14	5.00	20641	5.04	1.24	5.00	4321	4.97	1.26	5.00

Virginia Tech


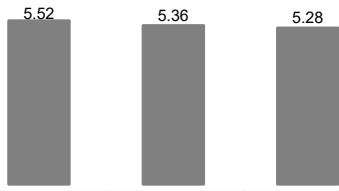
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Response Rate: 56/67 (83.58 %)

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

1D - The instructor fostered an atmosphere of mutual respect.


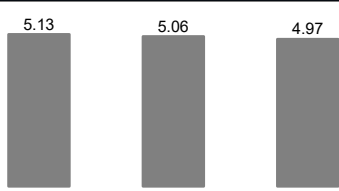
Alex Hicks

Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means								
Strongly disagree		(1)	1	1.85%										
Disagree		(2)	0	0.00%										
Somewhat disagree		(3)	0	0.00%										
Somewhat agree		(4)	3	5.56%										
Agree		(5)	15	27.78%										
Strongly agree		(6)	35	64.81%										
					0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department			
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median		
54/67 (80.60%)		5.52	0.86	6.00	20631	5.36	1.02	6.00	4310	5.28	1.08	6.00		

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.

Alex Hicks

Response Option				Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means						
Strongly disagree				(1)	1	1.82%								
Disagree				(2)	0	0.00%								
Somewhat disagree				(3)	3	5.45%								
Somewhat agree				(4)	9	16.36%								
Agree				(5)	16	29.09%								
Strongly agree				(6)	26	47.27%								
							0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median	
55/67 (82.09%)		5.13	1.07	5.00	20542		5.06	1.25	5.00	4293	4.97	1.30	5.00	

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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 Rate42/67 (62.69%)

- 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.

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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)	1	1.79%			4.88	5.14	5.08			
Disagree		(2)	1	1.79%								
Somewhat disagree		(3)	2	3.57%								
Somewhat agree		(4)	12	21.43%								
Agree		(5)	24	42.86%								
Strongly agree		(6)	16	28.57%								
					0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
56/67 (83.58%)		4.88	1.05	5.00	19646	5.14	1.09	5.00	4195	5.08	1.14	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%			4.80	4.89	4.84			
Disagree		(2)	3	5.56%								
Somewhat disagree		(3)	4	7.41%								
Somewhat agree		(4)	12	22.22%								
Agree		(5)	17	31.48%								
Strongly agree		(6)	18	33.33%								
					0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
54/67 (80.60%)		4.80	1.16	5.00	19561	4.89	1.32	5.00	4175	4.84	1.36	5.00

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Instructor:Alex Hicks *

Response Rate:56/67 (83.58 %)

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

Response Rate38/67 (56.72%)

- 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

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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 it's 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							
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%									
					02550100	Question		College		Department			
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median
53/67 (79.10%)		5.45	0.72	6.00	19486	5.18	0.96	5.00	4138		5.13	1.00	5.00

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Response Rate: 56/67 (83.58 %)

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

Response Rate	19/67 (28.36%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Response Option				Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means										
Strongly disagree				(1)	0	0.00%		4.85		5.10		5.03						
Disagree				(2)	3	5.45%												
Somewhat disagree				(3)	3	5.45%												
Somewhat agree				(4)	12	21.82%												
Agree				(5)	18	32.73%												
Strongly agree				(6)	19	34.55%												
							0	25	50	100	Question		College		Department			
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median				
55/67 (82.09%)		4.85	1.13	5.00	19584		5.10	1.05	5.00	4160		5.03	1.11	5.00				

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.

Response Option				Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means											
Strongly disagree				(1)	3	5.45%		4.65		4.63		4.67							
Disagree				(2)	3	5.45%													
Somewhat disagree				(3)	3	5.45%													
Somewhat agree				(4)	12	21.82%													
Agree				(5)	14	25.45%													
Strongly agree				(6)	20	36.36%													
								0	25	50	100	Question		College		Department			
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median					
55/67 (82.09%)		4.65	1.44	5.00	19493		4.63	1.41	5.00	4146		4.67	1.41	5.00					

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

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

The objectives of the course were clearly explained.

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
Strongly disagree	(1)	1	1.85%			5.07	5.11	5.03
Disagree	(2)	0	0.00%					
Somewhat disagree	(3)	3	5.56%					
Somewhat agree	(4)	8	14.81%					
Agree	(5)	20	37.04%					
Strongly agree	(6)	22	40.74%					
					0	25	50	100
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department
54/67 (80.60%)	5.07	1.04	5.00	19525	5.11	1.12	5.00	4145

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

The out-of-class assignments were educationally valuable.

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
Strongly disagree	(1)	2	3.70%			4.61	5.06	5.03
Disagree	(2)	4	7.41%					
Somewhat disagree	(3)	5	9.26%					
Somewhat agree	(4)	10	18.52%					
Agree	(5)	14	25.93%					
Strongly agree	(6)	19	35.19%					
					0	25	50	100
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department
54/67 (80.60%)	4.61	1.43	5.00	19408	5.06	1.16	5.00	4118

9 - The instructor related theories and concepts to practical issues.

Alex Hicks

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
Strongly disagree	(1)	0	0.00%			5.30	5.30	5.17
Disagree	(2)	1	1.79%					
Somewhat disagree	(3)	0	0.00%					
Somewhat agree	(4)	5	8.93%					
Agree	(5)	25	44.64%					
Strongly agree	(6)	25	44.64%					
					0	25	50	100
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department
56/67 (83.58%)	5.30	0.78	5.00	20433	5.30	1.00	6.00	4250

10 - I learned to apply principles from this course to new situations.

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
Strongly disagree	(1)	0	0.00%			5.11	5.07	5.07
Disagree	(2)	1	1.82%					
Somewhat disagree	(3)	1	1.82%					
Somewhat agree	(4)	12	21.82%					
Agree	(5)	18	32.73%					
Strongly agree	(6)	23	41.82%					
					0	25	50	100
Response Rate	Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department
55/67 (82.09%)	5.11	0.94	5.00	4167	5.07	1.12	5.00	4167