

Virginia Tech

Fall 2024 VT Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Report: CS5040_Fall_2024

Response Rate: 39/45 (86.67 %)

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

1A - The instructor was well prepared.

Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means							
Strongly disagree		(1)	2	5.13%		5.26		5.31		5.18			
Disagree		(2)	0	0.00%									
Somewhat disagree		(3)	1	2.56%									
Somewhat agree		(4)	3	7.69%									
Agree		(5)	10	25.64%									
Strongly agree		(6)	23	58.97%									
					02550100	Question		College		Department			
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median
39/45 (86.67%)		5.26	1.25	6.00	24647	5.31	1.01	6.00	4508		5.18	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.

Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means										
Strongly disagree		(1)	2	5.13%												
Disagree		(2)	0	0.00%												
Somewhat disagree		(3)	3	7.69%												
Somewhat agree		(4)	3	7.69%												
Agree		(5)	14	35.90%												
Strongly agree		(6)	17	43.59%												
					0	25	50	100	Question		College		Department			
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median		
39/45 (86.67%)		5.00	1.30	5.00	24466		5.14	1.15	5.00	4455		5.05	1.20	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.

Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means										
Strongly disagree		(1)	2	5.13%												
Disagree		(2)	1	2.56%												
Somewhat disagree		(3)	1	2.56%												
Somewhat agree		(4)	5	12.82%												
Agree		(5)	9	23.08%												
Strongly agree		(6)	21	53.85%												
					0	25	50	100	Question		College		Department			
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median		
39/45 (86.67%)		5.08	1.36	6.00	24446		5.10	1.17	5.00	4459		5.02	1.19	5.00		

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.

Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means						
Strongly disagree		(1)	1	2.56%		5.51	5.41	5.31				
Disagree		(2)	0	0.00%								
Somewhat disagree		(3)	0	0.00%								
Somewhat agree		(4)	1	2.56%								
Agree		(5)	12	30.77%								
Strongly agree		(6)	25	64.10%								
					02550100	Question	College	Department				
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
39/45 (86.67%)		5.51	0.91	6.00	24424	5.41	0.95	6.00	4451	5.31	1.02	6.00

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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)	2	5.13%	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div>5.15</div></div>		<div><div></div><div>5.13</div></div>		<div><div></div><div>5.02</div></div>						
Disagree	(2)	1	2.56%												
Somewhat disagree	(3)	0	0.00%												
Somewhat agree	(4)	3	7.69%												
Agree	(5)	13	33.33%												
Strongly agree	(6)	20	51.28%	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>											
					0	25	50	100	Question		College		Department		
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median	
39/45 (86.67%)		5.15	1.29	6.00	24242		5.13	1.18	5.00	4407		5.02	1.23	5.00	

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

Response Rate	24/45 (53.33%)
<div><div>• Answer questions during class and office hours</div><div>• 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!</div><div>• clear explanation of the topic</div><div>• Fast response and clear explanation to all questions.</div><div>• Go through the clickable animation that demonstrates the concept.</div><div>• He explained the concept clearly and concisely and he provided real work examples and which structures were used in those cases.</div><div>• He was understanding of my accommodations and had helpful in class comments.</div><div>• 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</div><div>• He's responsive in his communication and clear in his feedback. He encourages asking questions and always gives his answers with patience and understanding.</div><div>• I certainly believe the projects were very helpful in developing a problem solving mindset.</div><div>• 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.</div><div>• 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.</div><div>• Mandatory attendance was actually helpful for learning. It gave an incentive to go to class.</div><div>• 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.</div><div>• 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.</div><div>• 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)</div><div>• Quick response times and office hours helped me identify what I didn't understand in a way I can understand better.</div><div>• self-learning projects! well done!</div><div>• The instructor is very patient with in-class question. And good at giving big picture about the projects and share useful project management experience</div><div>• The instructor went through the design document of the project, which helped me to understand more about the project</div><div>• The office hours were crucial and were very helpful in debugging the project and determining where in your project code should be worked on</div><div>• 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.</div><div>• Very helpful during office hours</div><div>• Was prompt and clear.</div></div>	

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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)	2	5.13%									
Disagree		(2)	0	0.00%									
Somewhat disagree		(3)	1	2.56%									
Somewhat agree		(4)	3	7.69%									
Agree		(5)	15	38.46%									
Strongly agree		(6)	18	46.15%									
					0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department		
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median	
39/45 (86.67%)		5.13	1.22	5.00	22731	5.19	1.04	5.00	4379	5.13	1.06	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)	5	13.16%	<div><div></div></div>	<div><div>4.32</div><div>4.98</div><div>4.91</div></div>						
Disagree		(2)	1	2.63%	<div><div></div></div>							
Somewhat disagree		(3)	2	5.26%	<div><div></div></div>							
Somewhat agree		(4)	9	23.68%	<div><div></div></div>							
Agree		(5)	11	28.95%	<div><div></div></div>							
Strongly agree		(6)	10	26.32%	<div><div></div></div>							
					0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
38/45 (84.44%)		4.32	1.63	5.00	22595	4.98	1.24	5.00	4343	4.91	1.30	5.00

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Response Rate:39/45 (86.67 %)

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

Response Rate23/45 (51.11%)

- 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

Response Rate	22/45 (48.89%)
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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%		5.33	5.30	5.25	Question	College	Department			
Bad		(2)	0	0.00%										
Poor		(3)	1	2.56%										
Fair		(4)	4	10.26%										
Good		(5)	15	38.46%										
Very Good		(6)	19	48.72%										
					02550100									
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median
39/45 (86.67%)		5.33	0.77	5.00	22489		5.30	0.87	5.00	4328		5.25	0.90	5.00

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	

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)	1	2.56%		5.23	5.13	5.06	Question	College	Department			
Disagree		(2)	0	0.00%										
Somewhat disagree		(3)	0	0.00%										
Somewhat agree		(4)	5	12.82%										
Agree		(5)	15	38.46%										
Strongly agree		(6)	18	46.15%										
					02550100									
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median
39/45 (86.67%)		5.23	0.99	5.00	22628		5.13	1.01	5.00	4362		5.06	1.06	5.00

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Response Rate: 39/45 (86.67 %)

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)	1	2.56%								
Disagree		(2)	0	0.00%								
Somewhat disagree		(3)	3	7.69%								
Somewhat agree		(4)	3	7.69%								
Agree		(5)	11	28.21%								
Strongly agree		(6)	21	53.85%								
					0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department	
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
39/45 (86.67%)		5.21	1.15	6.00	22524	4.70	1.38	5.00	4350	4.74	1.35	5.00

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	2.56%											
Disagree		(2)	1	2.56%											
Somewhat disagree		(3)	2	5.13%											
Somewhat agree		(4)	4	10.26%											
Agree		(5)	11	28.21%											
Strongly agree		(6)	20	51.28%											
					0	25	50	100	Question		College		Department		
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median	
39/45 (86.67%)		5.13	1.22	6.00	22588		5.17	1.06	5.00	4352		5.05	1.13	5.00	

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)	1	2.56%									
Disagree		(2)	0	0.00%									
Somewhat disagree		(3)	1	2.56%									
Somewhat agree		(4)	3	7.69%									
Agree		(5)	15	38.46%									
Strongly agree		(6)	19	48.72%									
					0	25	50	100	Question	College	Department		
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median	
39/45 (86.67%)		5.26	1.02	5.00	22393	5.11	1.11	5.00	4322	5.08	1.11	5.00	

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

Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means									
Strongly disagree		(1)	1	2.56%			5.21		5.31		5.16				
Disagree		(2)	1	2.56%											
Somewhat disagree		(3)	1	2.56%											
Somewhat agree		(4)	2	5.13%											
Agree		(5)	15	38.46%											
Strongly agree		(6)	19	48.72%											
					0	25	50	100	Question		College		Department		
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College		Mean	STD	Median	Department		Mean	STD	Median	
39/45 (86.67%)		5.21	1.13	5.00	24062		5.31	0.97	6.00	4389		5.16	1.04	5.00	

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

Response Option		Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means						
Strongly disagree		(1)	1	2.56%								
Disagree		(2)	0	0.00%								
Somewhat disagree		(3)	0	0.00%								
Somewhat agree		(4)	6	15.38%								
Agree		(5)	14	35.90%								
Strongly agree		(6)	18	46.15%								
					02550100	Question	College	Department				
Response Rate		Mean	STD	Median	College	Mean	STD	Median	Department	Mean	STD	Median
39/45 (86.67%)		5.21	1.00	5.00	4363	5.10	1.06	5.00	4363	5.10	1.06	5.00