CMSC 14100 3 - Introduction to Computer Science I - Instructor(s): Jesus Almaraz-Argueta, Mohammed Suhail Rehman

Project Title: **College Course Feedback - Autumn 2023**

Number Enrolled: **60**
Number of Responses: **29**

Report Comments

Opinions expressed in these evaluations are those of students enrolled in the specific course and do not represent the University.

Creation Date: **Friday, February 2, 2024**

What are the most important things that you learned in this course? Please reflect on the knowledge and skills you gained.

Comments
Foundational skills in python
Python syntax, classes, objects, recursion.
Recursion, trees, dictionaries
Python programming and the "basics" of Computer Science
I feel like this was a pretty solid start to learning Python. I also learned a bit about thinking computationally, and how to break down problems into smaller components in order to solve them more effectively.
python coding
Basic python skills.
Functions, types, conditionals, loops, lists, strings, tuples, dictionaries, classes, recursion, files, and exception handling. A comprehensive overview of the fundamentals of coding in Python.
I learned everything, and it was all important
Python — functions, conditional statements, types, recursion, etc
Python overview
Basic knowledge of python
Python
Fundamental programming in Python
understanding of basic data structures and code in python
Basic Python
Python / learning to code
Learned how to use simple things like tuples, dictionaries and lists to solve complex problems, including creating minesweeper and generating a shakespearrean language model.
How to work with basic variables, lists, dictionaries, tuples, and functions/errors in Python How to use loops, recursion, and error exceptions in Python How to properly document and format Python code
Basic programming in python with functions and loops.
functions, variables, classes, dictionaries, file types, recursion, trees
– How to think about approaching a solution – Using Python's syntax/built–in functions – how to use loops, conditionals, control flow, functions – writing recursive functions – how to make classes – handling exceptions and errors – opening and writing to files in Python
Python
python
Learning the Python language, data structure, classes and object oriented programming, functions, recursion, and learning how to using coding interfaces
Somewhat how to code in Python and understand coding concepts in general.

Describe how aspects of this course (lectures, discussions, labs, assignments, etc.) contributed to your learning.

Comments
Lectures were helpful introductions to topics, discussions went a bit more in depth, but the homeworks helped the most, as they were hands on work.
The homework themselves are where the real learning happens.
Lectures and office hours were extremely helpful for reinforcing and practicing the material taught in the textbook
Lectures were very helpful, and very closely aligned with the textbook, which helped clarify concepts from it. I think the homework assignments built off of the concepts we were learning each week well, and helped us gain practical experience using the concepts we were learning about.
discussions were great
Discussions were low pressure ways to quiz self on comprehension.
Lectures and assignments were very useful in learning the concepts. The textbook was also a great review source. Though the problems presented in discussion were useful, I did not like the way they were structured.
everything contributed to my learning.
Lectures were clear, discussion sections were focused on the content taught the previous week so Monday sections weren't at a disadvantage, assignments were robust and allowed you to check for accuracy before turning it in.
Very helpful demonstration across all aspects of the classes
discussion section was helpful
Discussions were useless. Did not go to lecture. Assignments were good
Lectures and discussion sections were extremely helpful in the learning process.
discussion sections helped to better understand the concepts and deal with correctly written/formatted code
The book and homework contributed the most
The most helpful were the assignments and discussions, they really applied what we learned in lectures. The lectures themselves were straight off the textbook.
Lectures explained concepts, labs enabled you to practice them in controlled settings, homework ate your life and allowed you to practice code quality and coming up with your own solutions.
Lectures were helpful for introducing content and discussion for practicing.
Very helpful
– Homework assignments helped us to practice the concepts covered in class – Discussion sections were also useful for going through examples of different programming problems – Lectures gave clear and concise explanation of topics
Lectures, disccusions and assignments were all helpful, most helpful being assignments.
discussions helped prepare for questions in exams
The discussion sessions structured like group work really helped with understanding the material and problem solving
Discussion sessions were very helpful in understanding the material. Lectures were helpful but were so fast that it was hard to keep up. Assignments were somewhat helpful, but sometimes were overly difficult.

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.58	5.00	0.00%	7.69%	0.00%	19.23%	73.08%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.58	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	42.31%	57.69%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.31	4.50	0.00%	7.69%	3.85%	38.46%	50.00%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.04	4.00	0.00%	15.38%	11.54%	26.92%	46.15%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.42	5.00	0.00%	3.85%	7.69%	30.77%	57.69%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.23	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	23.08%	30.77%	46.15%
I felt respected in this class.	4.42	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	15.38%	26.92%	57.69%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.00	4.50	3.85%	7.69%	23.08%	15.38%	50.00%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
I feel it's quite common for so–called introductory courses to be not so. This course truly felt designed for those with no experience, which I really appreciated!
The course is extremely well organized. From the ED Discussion to Office Hours to Lecture, it is clear that this course and every aspect related to it was specifically planned.
Some of the grading on the midterm felt unreasonably harsh. I got 5 points off for a small technicality that would make my code fail in one very unrealistic circumstance. I get that we are supposed to think these things through rigorously to make sure our code is foolproof, but considering that many of the people in this class have never coded before, I think this should be seen as a warning with a small deduction, and not result in failing the test question entirely.
I'm not sure if people reading this will have any concept of CMSC 151, but this is unimaginably better. They do a much better job of gatekeeping the class to true beginners (or at least those without object–oriented experience it seems), and you'll actually learn a useful language so you don't have to take the full sequence to start seeing practical benefits.
Well defined, online sites well organized, expectations and communication clear, practice exams provided, help quickly and easily available. Smoothly run and well planned.
The weekly homework assignments were extremely difficult if you didn't have prior programming experience even with lectures and discussion. I had to go to office hours several times a week and still have gaps in my ability to programming. The instructors and TAs were helpful, but my grade still suffered.
I feel like the office hours system was very inefficient, and found that not being able to collaborate made for a stressful environment. Sometimes it felt like I was stuck on a problem and no one to help.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	0.00%	100.00%
Anyone interested in the topic	20.00%	80.00%

Thinking about your time in the class, what aspect of the instructor's teaching contributed most to your learning?

Comments
Suhail was ready for questions and handled them well.
Suhail is very engaging! He takes the time not only to answer questions but also ask questions to make the learning experience more interactive.
Our professor was very receptive to our questions and would take time to answer them and demonstrate them in code.
Lectures were helpful.
Professor Rehman had very clear, well–organized lectures. He explained all the concepts clearly and never went on tangents, which I appreciate.
I think his lectures were helpful in solidifying and helping me remember what I had read in the textbooks.
The professor (Suhail Rehman) was happy to answer questions, and seemed to build in some time for that so lessons weren't rushed. Also, the textbook, lectures, and assignments lined up well, as did discussion sections and the midterm.
Lectures and demonstrations
Lecture
Professor's lectures and office hours helped with learning the new material and completing the assignments.
running code in real time
The examples in class.
Suhail's a lovely man, he seems so passionate about what he does.
I recall their choice to draw out stack frames on the board helping a huge amount with my understanding of the concept.
He explained computer topics very well and gave plenty of examples to understand it. He was also always willing to stay after class and give me extra help.
Explained the concepts very well
– As most people would probably say, the live demonstrations in class of how to perform certain actions in Python were the most helpful for getting a direct understanding of how to replicate those programming concepts. Professor Rehman's constant invitation for questions was also helpful because other students felt comfortable asking questions that helped clarify things further for the whole class.
Going over examples and breaking things down really helped
discussion sessions
Displaying the code on the projector, and visually drawing out the code thought processes on the board
I like how our instructor wrote on the board and wrote code, which was helpful. He tried to break concepts down, and explained how to approach concepts.

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Nothing much.
Nothing, Suhail is great!
Release lecture notes. Hard to keep up when notes are pre typed.
Not much, I think generally I'd appreciate seeing more examples.
Give access to slides/files from lectures. MOST of it is in the textbook, but might as well.
Nothing in particular
NA
publish lecture notes
Create a python notebook file for the lectures so we can follow along with the examples
Sometimes he taught Python in terms of Java. So for those who didnt learn java previous to this course, they were kind of lost.
Homework 8 could have stood to be a little shorter instead of having this 8–question monster a third again as long as everything else which ate up the entire final week.
N/A
N/A
record lectures and release answers for past year papers and homework
Homework assignments that are less demanding and help walk through the skills more
I wish we could slow down in class. The instructor would code to fast, move the code, or the pace of the class was also too fast for keeping up with comfortably.

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.38	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	7.69%	46.15%	46.15%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.35	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.54%	42.31%	46.15%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.38	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	7.69%	42.31%	42.31%	7.69%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.31	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	15.38%	38.46%	46.15%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.46	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	7.69%	38.46%	53.85%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.27	4.50	0.00%	7.69%	7.69%	34.62%	50.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.15	4.50	0.00%	11.54%	11.54%	26.92%	50.00%	0.00%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	3.85%	42.31%	53.85%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.46	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	11.54%	30.77%	57.69%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.27	4.50	0.00%	7.69%	7.69%	34.62%	50.00%	0.00%

Please include the name of the TA/CA/Intern you are evaluating. What aspects of the TA's teaching contributed most to your learning? What could the TA modify to help you learn more? Please include any additional feedback for the TA/CA/Intern.

Comments
Sarah. She was very nice and entertaining. Helped make discussions fun and not seem like work.
Andi was pretty helpful is the discussion sections by giving a student's perspective.
Sarah
Minjoo. She was great.
There are a lot of TA, some better than others but it was nice that they offered OH everyday, and the discussion section(for me it was led by Lena) was very helpful in applying the things we learned, and Lena was rly good at explaining and helping us through the problems if we had trouble.
Andi Willow Liu was absolutely fabulous! Discussion sections were productive and encouraging.
Sarah Mostow
Sarah Mostow. Good opportunity to better understand the topics covered in lectures and break down correct code line by line. Quite personable but could've had better class control
Lena Liang
The TA during discussions was extremely friendly, and she made discussions fun.
I don't recall the TA's name, and I can't check because there isn't a people tab on canvas for this course for some reason. She broadly did a good job of organizing discussion sections and catching mistakes there.
Minju Song
TA: Lena Liang Lena's willingness to explain confusing topics, or even just the simple ones that we needed clarification on was easily the most helpful part of the discussion section. I think the live examples of what the problems would look like in the iPython interpreter was also helpful as well.
Sarah
Minjoo Song. She is very helpful in guiding discussion sections and helped me with office hours outside of discussion a lot. She helped me work through the homework and guided me to the right answer.
Lena Liang. She tried to explain and break down concepts as best as she could. Sometimes I wish we covered more of the problems and how to solve them in the class.

The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.40	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%	50.00%	45.00%	0.00%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	4.33	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%	50.00%	35.00%	10.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	4.20	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	40.00%	40.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.30	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	50.00%	40.00%	0.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	4.40	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	60.00%	40.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.25	4.50	0.00%	5.00%	10.00%	25.00%	40.00%	20.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.30	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	50.00%	40.00%	0.00%

How much did the following elements of the course contribute to your learning gains?

	Mean	Median	No Gain	A Little Gain	Moderate Gain	Good Gain	Great Gain	N/A
Laboratory Experience	1.00	1.00	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%
Field Trips	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Library Sessions	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Review Sessions	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Writing Seminars	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

Other course elements not mentioned above:

Comments
discussion sessions – moderate gain
Discussion sections
discussion sections
Discussion Sessions

Is this class a requirement of some sort?

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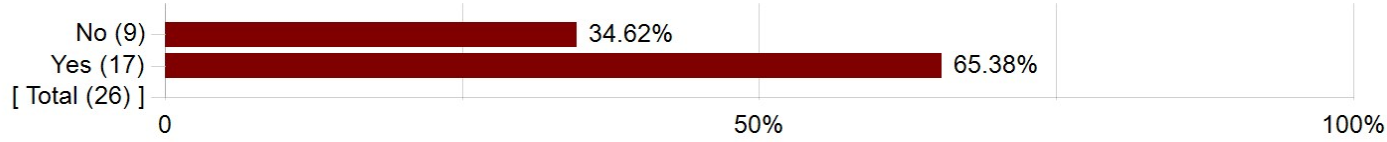
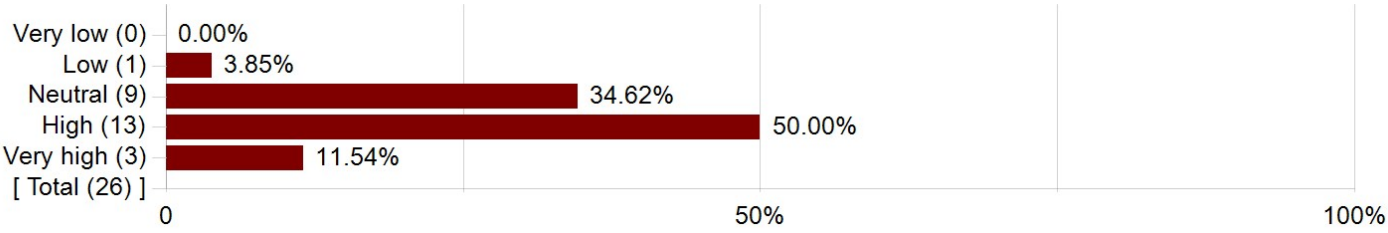


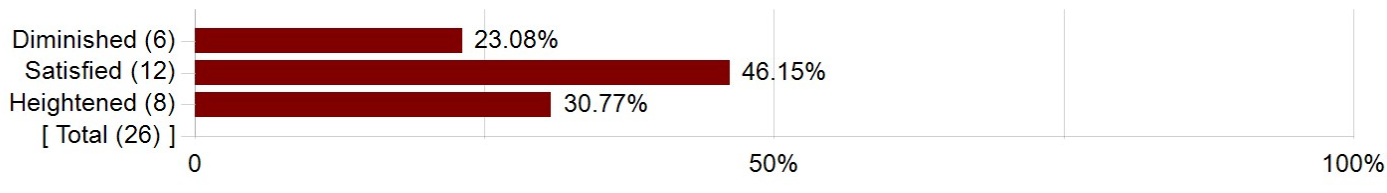
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?

Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?

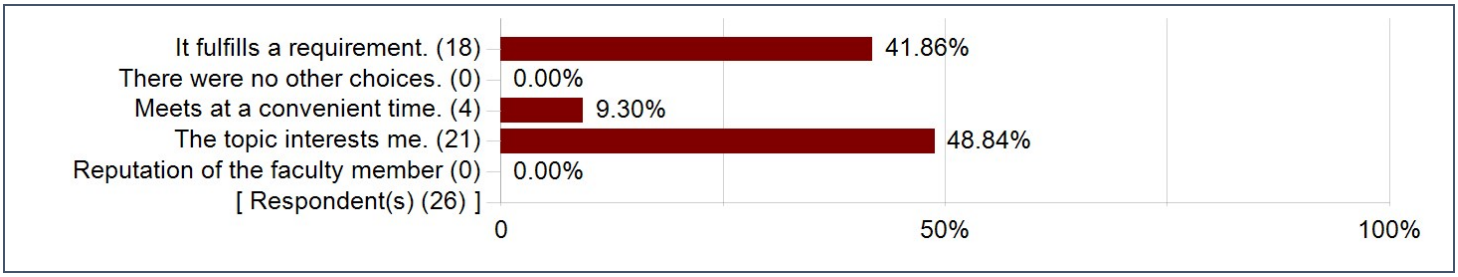


Now that this class is over, your interest is?

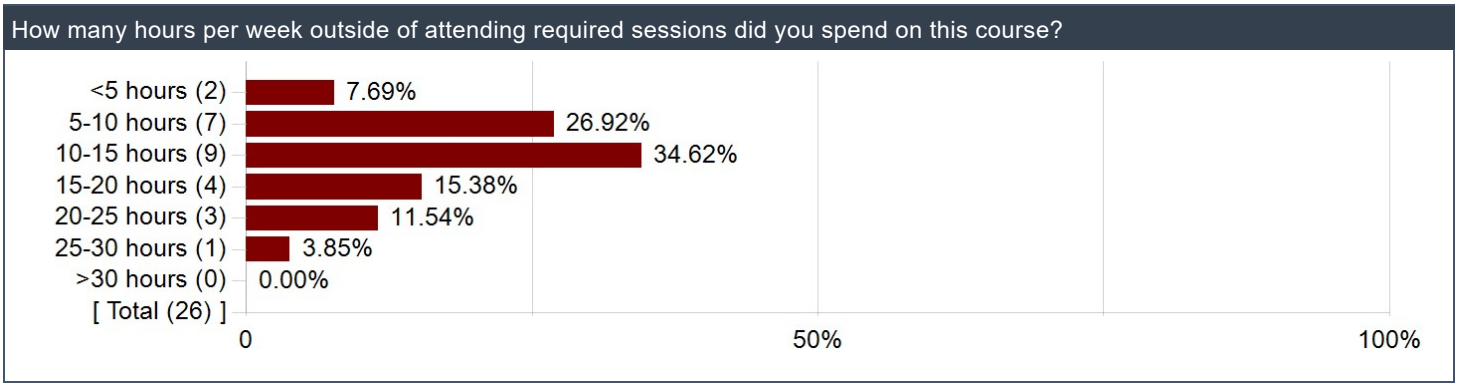
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



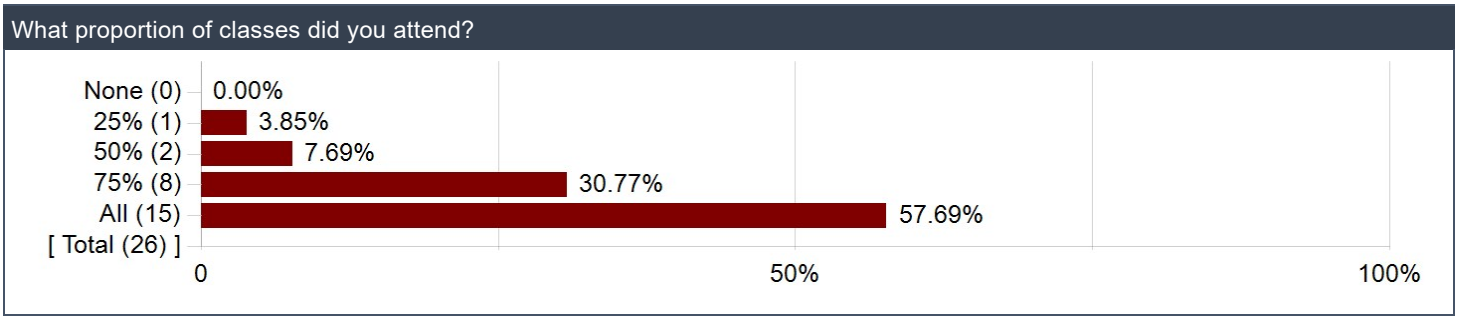
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



How many hours per week outside of attending required sessions did you spend on this course?



What proportion of classes did you attend?



Please comment on the level of difficulty of the course relative to your background and experience.

Comments
More difficult then expected, as I do have significant previous experience, but not too overwhelming.
With coding background, it isn't difficult at all. If you are new to coding, there might have to be some extra legwork.
This course will be VERY DIFFICULT for someone who has absolutely no computer science background
For someone with absolutely no background in cs, this is a hard course
Got harder towards end of course.
I've never had any formal coding education in any language. I thought this was the right level of difficulty, and I got a lot out of the class. It does take quite a bit of effort, though.
I had zero experience in coding, overall the course was a bit difficult starting from around week 5, but I think if you read the textbook, go to lectures, and sometimes even go to OH for help you would do fine. I had some trouble keeping up but now I'm doing okay.
This class isn't easy (start assignments early, actually read the textbook, etc) but it IS an intro class actually built for beginners.
Its difficulty level is well controlled.
Not difficult, just time consuming
challenging for newcomers but manageable
Somewhat difficult
I took both APCSP and APCSA in highschool. The first half of this course was a breeze, but once recursion came up I felt like I didn't know anything. Good luck!
I have some experience with code previously, but it would have been fine if I didn't; probably the "hardest" thing was just navigating the first homework alone. I will say that the problem sets get soul sucking fast and require large time investments, especially because you'll often want to take a break and come back to them.
No programming experience and this was harder than Organic Chemistry III for me
This course picks up in difficulty around the midway point; although it definitely felt easier than CMSC 12100 for me, sometimes the homework assignments could be a bit challenging to come up with solutions for. Besides that though, the class is mostly easier than others. Prior coding experience, especially with Python, can help someone ease into things more, but generally, anyone could pick this class up and do well with enough effort.
As someone with no experience, this course was extremly diffcult. Towards the end I felt like I was starting to get it but over all it was a really hard course.
Very challenging
This course was very difficult for me, and I had a fair amount of computer science background in java and coding
The course is really difficult if you have no coding background or experience.