Louisiana Tech University Course Evaluation Results

ELEN 451 001 - Spring 2025 (Special Topics) Spring 2025

Section: ELEN 451 001 - Spring 2025 (Special Topics)

Instructor: Lingxiao Wang

Participation: 68% (26 out of 38 students) Results Prepared: Mon, Oct 6, 2025 12:15 PM (CDT)

Objective Questions

1: Type of Course Requirement:

35% 9	4% 1	62% 16
Required and in my major	Required but not in my major	Elective

2: Indicate the range in which your cumulative grade point average falls:

54% 14	42% 11	0	0	4% 1
3.5-4.0	2.5-3.4	1.5-2.4	0.0-1.4	No GPA at Tech

3: Course Requirements were given in writing at the beginning of the quarter (including content, grading policies, attendance)

100% 26	0
Yes	No

4: Grading Policies are well defined and adhered to:

100% 26	0
Yes	No

5: Instructor posts and maintains office hours or is otherwise available by appointment

92% 24	0	8% 2
Yes	No	Don't Know

6: Examinations are appropriate to the course content.

92% 24	8% 2	0	0	0
Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Does Not Apply

7: The course material is presented in an organized manner.

88% 23	8% 2	4% 1	0	0
Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Does Not Apply

8: The instructor communicates effectively.

81% 21	15% 4	4% 1	0	0
Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Does Not Apply

9: The instructor stimulates interest in the subject.

88% 23	8% 2	4% 1	0	0
Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Does Not Apply

10: The instructor explains difficult material by giving examples that students can understand.

Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Does Not Apply
81% 21	12% 3	8% 2	0	0

11: The instructor seems concerned that students learn material.

Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Does Not Apply
81% 21	19% 5	0	0	0

12: The instructor shows willingness to answer relevant questions.

Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Does Not Apply
92% 24	8% 2	0	0	0

13: I have gained a greater understanding of the subject through this course.

Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Does Not Apply
81% 21	19% 5	0	0	0

14: The instructor accomplished the purposes that were defined for this course.

Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Does Not Apply
81% 21	19% 5	0	0	0

15: In summary, I would rate this instructor as an excellent teacher.

Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Does Not Apply
88% 23	12% 3	0	0	0

Subjective Questions

16: Use the box below to write optional comments regarding the strengths and/or weaknesses of the class and instructor. These comments will be returned to your instructor after grades have been submitted. Your identity will be confidential.

N/A
n/a
The instructor is good and friendly. He answers all the questions asked in class and make sure we are learning and get enough time to learn the course materials.
Great class
Thank you for all the effort you put into the class. It was very easy to learn about the topics that I had no prior experience with.
The way assignments are handled is excellent. Giving students very clear grading criteria and the opportunity to try as hard as they want and know exactly what grade they'll get. Additionally, the heavy focus on applying the material in projects is really good, and the fact that course projects are 60% of the final grade adds to that. However, I feel that Dr. Wang didn't explain some of the more complicated concepts in ways that were understandable considering this was an introductory ai class designed for electrical engineers. Very math-heavy and didn't fully explain how the math got the desired outputs. Also, I feel that more time should've been spent teaching the ins and outs of Pytorch, as many of the course projects required a detailed understanding of its inner workings that we had to teach ourselves. Maybe one or two class days could be spent doing a walk-through of the design process for a Pytorch-based AI?
This is one of the best courses that I took here at LaTech.
Great class and also Comes with supporting practical.

Yeah, this was a really fun and relevant class that I really enjoyed! Thanks for offering this course. I think the lectures were pretty close to spot on, I don't have any criticisms to speak of, and I learned a lot.

The labs, while interesting and yes, hands-on, I don't think they did a great job of letting us learn the topics and methods.
For one thing, a lot of the models and machine learning we did was still theoretical. We'd download a dataset, train a model, and use some theoretical test set to get a score. But this didn't really give us a grasp of what the model was doing a lot of times. The Lunar Lander lab was a lot of fun, because we could actually see our model in action. Also the image generation one. That was cool. But a lot of them, we didn't actually get to see them in action, they were purely theoretical, even though they could have been interactive.
Also, I think it would have been really useful and cool for the LLM section, to have been taught how to use something like ollama and download and run models locally. Even better, to figure out how to train our own models, or start with a pretrained model and tune the model to user documents or files, and actually use them. All of our laptops are capable of running even fairly large models; my medium tier laptop with no discrete GPU can run 7 billion parameter models at 3 or 4 tokens per second, and 3 billion parameter models at up to 9 or 10 tokens per second. That's way bigger than we would get if we trained our own, even if we did the training off device.
For the computer vision, it would have been so cool to be able to take our own pictures of cats or dogs or food or whatever and let the model try to classify our own pictures.

I get that it's a lot easier to use something like Google Colab instead of trying to train graphics heavy models on an underpowered laptop, but there has to be a better learning model than Colab. It was really hard to learn and modify and train our models in the amount of free time Google lets us have, and we shouldn't have to resort to using personal email accounts to continue with our homework.
Also, essentially every time I took a lab and tried to run it locally (which I was assured by Dr. Wang should work) I found out that Google Colab was using outdated libraries or literally cheated and just ignored errors or fixed them in the background, making it next to impossible to adapt them to my own machine, even when my laptop CPU was literally faster than Google Colab's environment with it's dual GPU's (yes, I checked. For some models, my laptop trained faster than Google).

Okay, final issue with the labs ?? It was obvious to everyone in the class that Dr. Wang used AI to generate the labs. This honestly felt like a betrayal, since we were not allowed (as per the syllabus) to use AI to do our homework for us, we didn't feel that Prof should be allowed to. We/I wouldn't have minded if the labs were well written, but they were not. Several times, Dr. Wang had to say that there was an obvious error with it and that we had literally wasted an entire week trying to solve an impossible problem, or that the assignment was actually wrong, and we were supposed to do something completely different.
For us ambitious, hardworking students, this was aggravated by the fact that every assignment we got was written in a totally different way. For example, I don't think any two labs did learning patience (in the training loop) the same way. Every time, I had to go through and try to figure out how this simple thing was supposed to work, because it was different every lab. Same thing for the actual model definition. Even when we were using the same type of model or defining the same model, every lab did it in a different way. Sometimes using different libraries to do the same thing as last week. This was aggravating, as I had to relearn a new thing if I wanted to tweak the model. Also, I want more comments! I shouldn't have to look up what some function does, it should have a comment briefly explaining it. There was even a training loop that gave a hyper-parameter for samples per epoch, but if we changed it, it broke the program.
I've always been against including an entire library just to do something simple. For example, on of the early labs was using the mean square error to evaluate the success of the model. I literally wrote a function to do this in like 8 lines of code that was well commented and much more understandable than including an entire library just to do that simple thing.

Otherwise, I really enjoyed this class, and learned a lot! I would definitely take this course again. I guarantee I'll continue using this stuff, if not at my job, then in personal projects. For example, I'm really wanting to try to make a model trained to give insights into stock market trends, kinda like the CA house price model we made :)

Great subject and great teaching method. Should have more similar classes and would love to take similar classes in coming days.

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Excellent

NA

The course seemed to be organized with a gradual increase in complexity.

No other comments

The only change I would recommend is allowing us to build some of these networks and training loop algorithms from scratch for the earlier projects (1-3). It helped me tremendously when I had to do it myself instead of trying to troubleshoot a prebuilt network. However, for the larger projects (4-6), I think they are perfect.

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Although the topic was initially unfamiliar and challenging for me, Dr. Wang made the learning process approachable and manageable. The way the projects and assignments were structured really helped me grasp the concepts without feeling overwhelmed. I appreciate the supportive environment and clear guidance. It made a big difference in my understanding and overall experience.

Great course. Seemed to tilt towards "tools-usage" more than engineering design and problem solving. I have heard a great many students cheated on the take home assignments and exams.

Really enjoy the projects
Well done. Very doable class with lots of assistance and accomadations. 10/10
The course was highly demanding and career orientated. Instructor made every effort to put things understandable.