Term	Course	Primary Dept	Primary Division	Enrolled: 18
Spring 2025	MATH 430 01 - Intro to Topology	MATH	Sciences	Responded: 18

Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#1 What knowledge, skills, and insights did you develop by taking this course?

Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

Declined to Answer Question: 5

Respondent	Answer
1825610	Topology: topological spaces, continuity, connectedness, homotopies, fundamental group, covering spaces
1833650	The course was split into two parts: Point-set Topology and Algebraic Topology. In the first half, it was generalizing a lot of the things we had learned in Analysis: Defining metrics and topologies, Subspaces and products, R infinity and R omega, Connectedness, Quotient maps and spaces, and Compactness. In the second half, we explored more algebraic properties of topological spaces: Homotopy and Path homotopies, the Fundamental Group, Coverings of spaces, and the Seifert Van-Kampen theorem.
1833803	point-set topology with some insights to algebraic topology in the end.
1837749	Basics of topological spaces, functions on them, related groups, etc.
1837762	Point set topology, fundamental group, covering spaces
1837827	Introduction to point-set topology and a bit of algebraic topology (topological spaces, metric topologies, compactness and connectedness, Hausdorff/T1/T0 spaces, homotopy equivalences, fundamental groups, covering spaces, etc.)
1837843	A thorough covering of point set topology (topologies, basis, continuity, connectedness, compactness, Hausdorff axioms etc.) and a covering of basic algebraic topology (homotopies, the fundamental group, covering spaces, Seifert-van Kampen theorem)
1838906	It presented a whole new perspective on mathematics. Very cool
1842318	An introduction to point set topology, and the beginnings of algebraic topology. Generalizations of topologies, open/closed sets, continuous functions, compactness, connectedness/path connectedness, homotopies/homotopy equivalence, fundamental groups, Seifert Van Kampen.
1847880	Basics of point-set topology, algebraic topology (especially fundamental groups)
1848498	I learned about point-set and algebraic topology.
1854716	We learned point-set topology in the first part of the semester and got a little introduction to algebraic topology/fundamental groups/covering spaces at the end of the semester.
1867328	A pretty good overview of both point-set topology (definition and examples of topologies, bases, products, quotient maps, connected and compact spaces) and algebraic topology (homotopies, fundamental groups, Seifert-van Kampen, covering maps). For reference, we mostly covered sections 12-27, 51-59, and 68-73 in Munkres's Topology. Also, as with most higher-level math classes, lots of practice with problem-solving (and for topology in particular, you get lots of practice with visualizing and trying to understand complex geometric spaces in higher dimensions).

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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#2 Your level of engagement with the course was:

Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

Declined to Answer Question: 1

Average and Standard Deviation

Question Average	Dept	Div	School
4.3 ±0.7	3.7 ±1.0	3.7 ±1.0	3.9 ±1.0

Choice Label	Counts
very low	0
low	0
medium	2
high	8
very high	7

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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#3 What are the strengths and weaknesses of this course and how could it be improved?

Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

Declined to Answer Question: 8

Respondent	Answer
1825610	Strengths: The content was really interesting, and Prof. Trinh was a very good lecturer. Weaknesses: Because the content didn't always correspond with the textbook, it was kind of hard to follow along when doing the psets or trying to review material.
1833803	perhaps we spent too much time on the topologies on Romega and its subspaces (i think this is the first and last time ill ever do it, praying to god i don't have to endure this again). we also spent a lot of time proving that the fundamental group was a group (just verifying the homotopy equivalences of loops so that the product of loops made sense as a group operation) ; perhaps that could have been left as homework reading ? in the end we rushed the gluing and galois correspondences a bit but it was fun nonetheless. the class was overall super informative and the lecturing was great.
1837762	I think we could have spent more time on covering spaces, since that is a pretty important topic that isn't covered in any other math class at Yale
1837779	Strengths: Incredible Organization. Loved the instructors website and study guides. Having a schedule of what content would be covered in which lectures, including the exact textbook sections referenced, was so helpful. Minh-Tam is my favorite math instructor Ive ever had. This course covered analytic and algebraic topology, so theres something to enjoy for everyone. Weaknesses: no TAs or scheduled office hours. I know that sounds bad, and it is, but the course was organized so well that I was able to help myself when necessary. And the instructor was more than happy to assist any time I reached out.
1837827	Strengths: Minh-Tam (our professor) was very knowledgeable and very kind. Lectures were -also generally well organized! Weaknesses: nothing major! If anything, the pacing seemed a bit slow at the beginning and relatively quick towards the end, but this seems typical in math courses.
1837843	The biggest strength were the lectures and Minh-Tams teaching style. He was always prepared when it came to class and facilitated good understanding. I also though the psets were well designed, with only one or two being significantly harder than the rest. The biggest weakness was the lack of office hours/practice material. There was no TA/ULA and office hours were by appointment only. And for the midterm/final we only got a review sheet which just told us that basically everything that we had covered (minus a few small topics) would be on the exam with no practice problems provided. This was somewhat made up for though since Munkres provides good questions which I used to study.
1842318	This course is extraordinarily well taught and very well organized. Lectures were clear and concise, and homework assignments worked well to reinforce key concepts and get practice using important proof techniques.
1848498	This was a fantastic course! The lectures and homework were interesting, lecture was clear and insightful, and tests were geared to help you learn and grading was very fair. Good feedback was given to help us learn on things we missed, and the professor was very responsive to questions. There weren't really any weaknesses, other than that the material itself was pretty abstract and needed time to wrap your head around, but it was well worth it.
1854716	I think that we could have spent less time on point-set topology and more time on algebraic topology, which felt a bit rushed and was crammed into the last few weeks of the semester.

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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#3 What are the strengths and weaknesses of this course and how could it be improved?

Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

Declined to Answer Question: 8

Respondent	Answer
1867328	Strengths: by far the biggest strength of this class was the professor. Minh-Tam was not only a good lecturer, but he was incredibly organized in running the class, and always knew exactly what he would cover in each lecture and HW. Unfortunately, I'm pretty sure he is leaving after this semester, so it's difficult to know how good the course will be in the future (especially given that the course got terrible reviews under the previous professor). The other major strength of the course is the textbook, Munkres's Topology, which does a very good job at explaining basic concepts and is a great resource if you don't understand something super well. Weaknesses: not many, other than the fact that topology can be very dry and difficult to understand at times (but it's a core topic in math, so I'd definitely recommend that all math majors take it). We also had multiple problem sets involving topologies on R^omega, so I wish we'd spent slightly more time in class covering this topic; it felt a little unbalanced to have so many problems related to a topic that we primarily only used in class to give a few examples and counterexamples.

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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#4 What is your overall assessment of this course?

Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

Declined to Answer Question: 1

Average and Standard Deviation

Question Average	Dept	Div	School
4.6 ±0.5	3.6 ±1.2	3.5 ±1.2	3.9 ±1.1

Choice Label	Counts
poor	0
fair	0
good	0
very good	6
excellent	11

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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#5 The course was well organized to facilitate student learning.

Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

Declined to Answer Question: 1

Average and Standard Deviation

Question Average	Dept	Div	School
4.7 ±0.5	3.9 ±1.1	3.7 ±1.1	4.0 ±1.0

Choice Label	Counts
strongly disagree	0
disagree	0
neutral	0
agree	5
strongly agree	12

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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#6 I received clear feedback that improved my learning.

Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

Declined to Answer Question: 1

Average and Standard Deviation

Question Average	Dept	Div	School
4.3 ±0.8	3.6 ±1.1	3.5 ±1.1	3.9 ±1.1

Choice Label	Counts
strongly disagree	0
disagree	1
neutral	1
agree	7
strongly agree	8

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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#7 Relative to other courses you have taken at Yale, the level of intellectual challenge of this course was:
Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

Declined to Answer Question: 1

Average and Standard Deviation

Question Average	Dept	Div	School
3.9 ±0.9	3.7 ±1.0	3.5 ±1.0	3.3 ±1.0

Choice Label	Counts
much less	0
less	1
same	4
greater	8
much greater	4

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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#8 Relative to other courses you have taken at Yale, the workload of this course was:

Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

Declined to Answer Question: 1

Average and Standard Deviation

Question Average	Dept	Div	School
3.6 ±0.6	3.4 ±0.9	3.3 ±1.0	3.1 ±1.0

Choice Label	Counts
much less	0
less	0
same	7
greater	9
much greater	1

Term	Course	Primary Dept	Primary Division	Enrolled: 18
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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#9 Would you recommend this course to another student? Please explain.

Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

Declined to Answer Question: 4

Respondent	Answer
1825610	Yes! It was a very well taught course, and the content was quite interesting.
1833650	This is a pretty fundamental course for higher math courses, and I'd absolutely recommend it for any math major who has even an epsilon of interest in the topic of shapes and surfaces.
1833803	yeah definitely. it was good to develop a good background on fundamental groups and covering spaces which will be useful in algebraic topology lol.
1837749	If you are interested in pursuing high level proof based math I would say that this is an essential.
1837762	Yes, point set topology is used everywhere in math.
1837779	I wouldnt recommend math at Yale as a whole, but this class was very stimulating. Please look out for instructors like Minh-Tam who care to organize their courses. Do not take profs who are not strong lecturers or who seem like they prioritize research.
1837827	Yes! Was a good introduction to a new mathematical topic. (Topology also seems to have a lot of applications in other math classes Ive taken, which is cool!)
1837843	I would definitely recommend this class to any other student at Yale! I came in with significantly less background than most people in the class (MATH 255 was the highest level math class Id taken before), but I still loved going to this class. While the point set topology was interesting, the class really picked up post midterm when we started going into algebraic topology. The results and ideas from this section of the course made it go from being a good class to my favorite this semester. And although it was definitely an intellectually class, I felt that I came out as a much more competent mathematician.
1838906	Yes, especially if Professor Trinh is teaching it
1842318	I would strongly recommend this course as taught by Minh-Tam Trinh, although much of what made the course so good was his excellent teaching and organization.
1847880	Yes! Topology is a really interesting field, and it's an opportunity to flex a lot of different mathematical knowledge
1848498	I would recommend this course to anyone who likes abstract mathematics - I loved how we could think about the material in a very visual way. If Professor Trinh is teaching again, I would definitely recommend it. Topology is a very cool subject that can be hard to learn on your own without the structure and resources of a class/instructor/peers. We got to see some analysis ideas in the point-set part of the course, and abstract algebra ideas in the algebraic topology part.
1854716	Yes - I think it gave a good introduction to the basic ideas in topology and was probably a lot less scary than jumping straight into MATH 544.
1867328	Mostly, yes. Math 430 was one of the best math classes I've taken at Yale, but this was largely due to Minh-Tam's amazing teaching. Because he is leaving after this year, it's difficult to know how good the class will be in future years. That being said, topology is a very important area in math, and I think all math majors should take at least one topology class, so I'd still recommend this course (especially if it continues to use Munkres's Topology textbook, which explains topics really well and should allow for decent learning even if the professor who teaches the class in the future isn't so good).

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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#10 Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the instructor. In what ways was their teaching effective and in what ways could their teaching be improved?
Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam

Declined to Answer Question: 6

Respondent	Answer
1833650	Minh-Tam is a wonderful professor who's clearly passionate about the material. I love it in class when he shares related, motivations, or historical facts, which some professors in math often don't do.
1833803	i enjoyed the preclass questions he'd ask. it was a good way to motivate the course. overall he had impeccable motivational skills and everything we learned felt natural. he allowed us to build intuitions about these, at times unwieldily and hard to picture, topological spaces and their respective topologies and how they related to each other. im saddened he will be gone after this year.
1837762	Very clear and supportive lecturer and great course planning, overall an excellent instructor
1837779	Best math prof Ive had at Yale. The entire course schedule was laid out on a website ahead of time, which set clear expectations. He also posted study guides which were extremely helpful in putting each topic in context ahead of exams. His assignments and exams were well-planned and feedback was clear. Exams were graded within 24 hours which is very impressive. Every lecture felt well-crafted and was delivered with a smile (he has an underrated sense of humor!!!). He also speaks and writes very clearly. It is abundantly clear that he cares about teaching and about his students. Only critique: no set office hours. To his credit, he was very accessible and always willing to give individual help. But office hours are also a great place to connect with other students in the course, so some way to facilitate connections between students couldve made the class more effective. Regardless, Minh-Tam offered an extremely high level of support without the aid of a TA or ULA. His instruction reminded me of why I chose math. It was an immense privilege to take his Topology course.
1837827	Minh-Tam was very knowledgeable, very supportive, and very approachable! Great professor.
1837874	Rather than simply stating definitions and theorems without any context (as many math professors do), Minh-Tam deliberately illustrated the motivations behind the math and development of topology. He is an exceptional and clear lecturer.
1838906	He had such a passion for the topic, it really showed through.
1842318	Dr. Trinh was an exceptional teacher. His lectures were very clear and enjoyable, and he did a good job explaining challenging concepts and making sure that students were following him during the lecture. Homework assignments were well thought out to give students practice with the most essential points from each section, and were appropriately challenging to facilitate learning without becoming too burdensome. The organization of the course was phenomenal, which made the experience taking the course much more enjoyable. Dr. Trinh always responded very quickly to emails, including giving detailed answers to any questions sent to him.
1847880	Minh-Tam was fantastic! Extremely well-organized, very clear instruction, fair psets. He was also very apologetic when he made mistakes (which was rare!) and took an effort to both correct the errors and make sure that everyone understood the correction. Truly one of the best instructors I've had at Yale. Although I'm a graduating senior, I feel bad for underclassmen math majors who won't get to take any of his classes.
1848498	Professor Trinh was amazing! He had fair homeworks, exams, was responsive, and it was clear he cared about us students. He clarified ideas that people found confusing on homeworks/exams in class, he was great at explaining things in a intuitive way, and was happy to answer questions both in person and via email. I appreciate his clear communication, grading, feedback, and organization. His enthusiasm about the material helped us engage more, too.
1854716	Dr. Trinh was a very good teacher! He was very kind to his students and he gave engaging and mostly clear lectures!

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Instructors
Trinh, Minh-Tam (P)

#10 Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the instructor. In what ways was their teaching effective and in what ways could their teaching be improved?
Instructor(s): Trinh, Minh-Tam

Declined to Answer Question: 6

Respondent	Answer
1867328	Overall, Minh-Tam was a fantastic professor. His lecturing was great (though maybe not the absolute best I've had at Yale), but what truly set him apart is how organized he was. Every class was paced super well (pretty rare for most math professors I've had), and he knew exactly what he wanted to cover in each lecture. He also knew exactly what would be covered on future homeworks, so he was able to connect the homeworks with the lecture materials really well. Exams and homeworks were difficult but fair, another balance that very few math professors can manage. Finally, he was super responsive over email, and he was also always willing to stay late after class if anyone had any questions. In short, Minh-Tam was just a really great professor all-around, and I'm sad that he will be leaving Yale after this year.