Northwestern

Student Report for COMP_SCI_111-0_1: Fund Comp Prog (Sara Owsley)

Project Title: **Course and Teacher Evaluations CTEC Winter 2022**

Courses Audience: **260**
Responses Received: **183**
Response Ratio: **70.4%**

Report Comments

Course and Teacher Evaluations are intended solely for the use of faculty, staff and students of Northwestern University. Any reproduction, republication or redistribution of this site's content is prohibited without the express permission of Northwestern University.

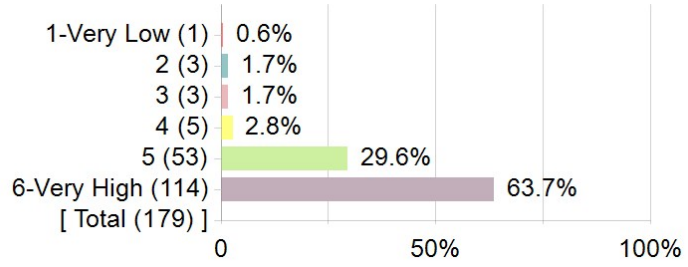
For more information about the CTEC Guidelines please visit our website: http://www.northwestern.edu/ctec/guidelines/index.html

Creation Date: **Friday, May 27, 2022**

COURSE QUESTIONS

1. Provide an overall rating of the instruction.

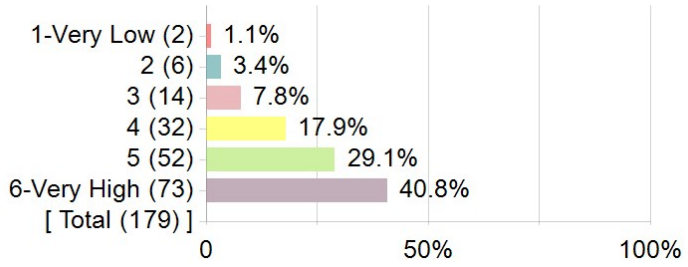
Provide an overall rating of the instruction.



Statistics	Value
Response Count	179
Mean	5.50

2. Provide an overall rating of the course.

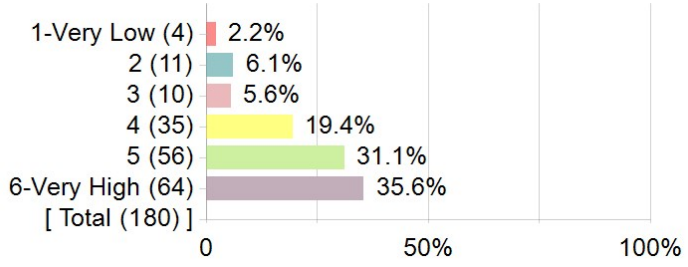
Provide an overall rating of the course.



Statistics	Value
Response Count	179
Mean	4.93

3. Estimate how much you learned in the course.

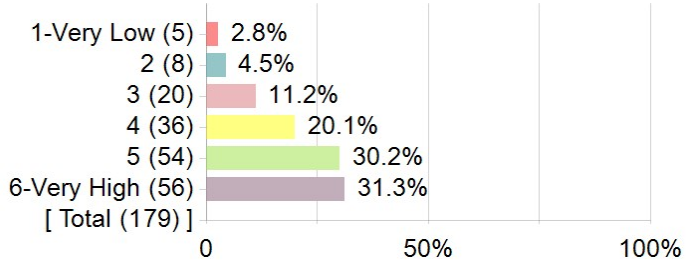
Estimate how much you learned in the course.



Statistics	Value
Response Count	180
Mean	4.78

4. Rate the effectiveness of the course in challenging you intellectually.

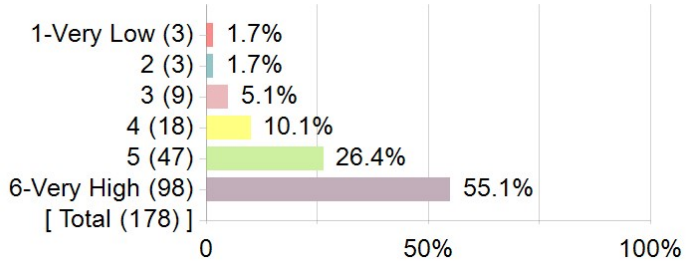
Rate the effectiveness of the course in challenging you intellectually.



Statistics	Value
Response Count	179
Mean	4.64

5. Rate the effectiveness of the instructor in stimulating your interest in the subject.

Rate the effectiveness of the instructor in stimulating your interest in the subject.

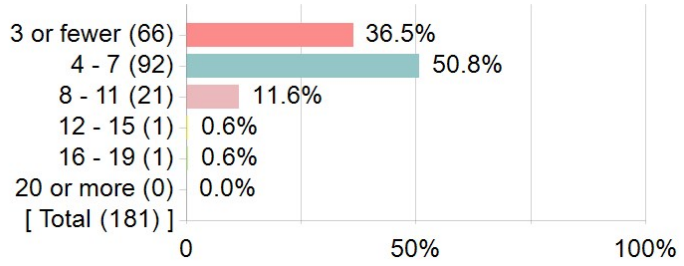


Statistics	Value
Response Count	178
Mean	5.23

TIME-SURVEY QUESTION

6. Estimate the average number of hours per week you spent on this course outside of class and lab time.

Estimate the average number of hours per week you spent on this course outside of class and lab time.



Options	Count	Percentage
3 or fewer	66	36.5%
4 - 7	92	50.8%
8 - 11	21	11.6%
12 - 15	1	0.6%
16 - 19	1	0.6%
20 or more	0	0.0%

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Please summarize your reaction to this course focusing on the aspects that were most important to you.

Comments
Sara is one of the best professors. Really understands the needs of students, gives helpful advice on careers and just navigating the CS class successfully. She dropped some of the lectures during a week which was difficult for students cos of midterms and all. She held one on one student advising sessions which were really helpful!
I really enjoyed this course. I was a little bit familiar with coding before taking this class, but I feel so much more comfortable with it now. Sara is a great professor who cares a lot about whether you understand the course material. She is so good at answering questions and makes herself available if you ever need help. There are also so many peer mentor office hours which makes it really easy to get help if you are stuck on homework or studying.
The professor was amazing. The course load was very manageable but the tests were very challenging.
I personally don't prefer the asynchronous style of the class, but the professor is very lenient in terms of time given to complete assignments and she clearly emphasizes learning over test–taking
This class was very difficult for me as it was my first Computer Science course. It was definitely not an easy A for me, although it is helpful that about 50% of the grade is comprised of assignments, attendance, and mini quizzes, all of which are simple to gain full credit for. Professor Sood is a very helpful instructor and she wants the best for her students. The TA's are really attentive, patient, and supportive as well. Definitely go to office hours! I also highly recommend taking this class with friends or making friends to work on the problem sets with. Overall, I would only recommend taking this course if you have experience with Comp Sci.
Low time commitment and relatively straight forward class; not super easy in absolute terms, but relative to other courses this one is pretty easy. Professor Owsley explains the material very well both during lectures and in the tutorial videos, but she does not address questions or concerns too well and always refers you to one of the peer mentors.
This class was fine. Sara is a good prof but the way the class is structured is not that great. First of all it's taught in Racket which while they say is a powerful programming language, is completely useless and you will never use again. It's reversed classroom, where you learn outside of class and work on problems in class, and usually I think this is fine but in this class i didn't like it at all. There are there usually 2 20–30 minute lectures to watch before every class AND a canvas Quiz, which would be fine except the class attendance is also mandatory and graded so it's basically just doubling the amount of class. And in class all we do is work on homework/ungraaded assignments, which i would rather just do outside of class, so it would just be better all around if the material was actually just taught in class. Exams are pretty fair so at least there's that. Take this class if you must, it'll be fine and is easier that most compsci classes, but i dont feel like i came out of it with much applicable knowledge and it was pretty annoying the whole

Comments
time.
I liked it.
Chill intro programming course.
There's a bit of a learning curve at the beginning of the quarter when you're first adjusting to Racket, but the more you practice, the more familiar it becomes. Sara was great at explaining topics and was accommodating; there were also a lot of peer mentor office hours that were super helpful. The weekly exercises were pretty challenging, but nothing impossible with office hours. Overall, I would recommend this course to anyone who is looking to major in CS.
I loved Prof. Sood — if you want to take CS 111, take it with her!
TAKE THE CLASS WITH SARA SOOD. Only my second quarter here, but definitely one of the best professors. I didn't have a lot of experience going in and the class was super doable, focus during class and watch the videos, you'll be fine.
Sara is a really good professor and she genuinely cares about her students and wants them to succeed. This was a pretty easy intro CS class and I definitely recommend taking it with Sara
I'm not as interested in CS generally and took the class as a prereq for other majors. I have taken a year of java in high school so the class is not a hard one at all; tho it takes some time to adjust to Racket. Weekly exercises are the major assignment; 2 tests each is 20% and these are relatively easier.
Great class, great teacher, great lectures, great TAs, highly recommend if interested in Comp sci
Oh my god Professor Sarah is the absolute best. Take this class with her. She is so helpful, makes sure you understand everything, her lecture videos are easy to follow, and she really cares about you and tried to get to know as many of the 250ish kids in her class as she could. Tests are easy if you study and the exercises are guaranteed 100s if you go to office hours and get them right.
I didn't really like the flipped classroom situation since we didn't really learn much in class, but it was also good because it forced me to get started on assignments that I probably would've started the day before it was due.
Overall, pretty good course. It's a prereq so most people need to take it. It's in Racket which is somewhat odd/different, but you do learn the very basic coding logic. If you're doing python after this, that is much better! Also Sara Sood is SO nice, you should try to talk to her one on one at least once. She is very encouraging, whether you're a CS major/minor/just taking it for different reason.
Engaging
This course requires a lot of self motivation as the lessons are meant to be learning outside of class, and in class is time to work on assignments. I really enjoyed how collaborative this course was. It was a great introduction to comp sci and Sarah was an amazing teacher – very understanding and supportive!
this class was fine. racket kind of sucks but its not that hard to do well in it especially if u take 110 first
Sood is a great professor and made the course very digestible for someone without any computer science experience. While at times the course felt like it was moving slowly, it helped me ensure that I understood every concept well.
CS–111 is an easy class. Especially taking this class with Sara, she provides the tools for you to do extremely well. If you have had any experiencing coding before, this class will seem like a waste of time. However, if this is your first coding class, then I believe this will be an invaluable experience for you.
Take this course!! Sara is the best professor I ever had here and she really incentivized me to continue pursuing CS. The class is not very hard, especially if you go to some peer–mentor office hours to clarify any doubts.
The course was great and the professor was also really good at explaining the stuff.
People hate rackets for a passion and there's a reason. Language is very repetitive and looks long lmao. Outside of the pure pain from the programming language, instructions are very clear and Sara offers a lot of resources (even outside of the classroom). TA is extremely helpful!
Highly recommend this class, especially with Professor Sood. Honestly, I actually enjoyed coding in racket, but I went into the class with no CS experience. This class gave me confidence and skills to take more cs classes in the future.
Professor is extremely talented at teaching and engaging, I understood everything pretty well thanks to how thorough her lectures were.
This course was fine, however I think that the language used (Racket) is really unuseful.
Prof was very accommodating to the current circumstances of the world and allowed us to submit our work to count for daily attendance rather than going to class. I do wish that rather than making us do modules at night in our own time that she would have taught the content in class and made our mini classwork exercises into homework. I never went to office hours and I did good in the class, but it is important to read the assignment pdfs very carefully.
This course is really fun and an easy intro class if you want to see if you have an interest in computer science. The workload is very easy to manage and there's a lot of peer mentors that hold office hours all the time, so it is easy to get help. Definitely take the class with Sara she's an amazing professor.
Great intro to fundamental programming concepts. I have a good bit of programming experience under my belt and still learned a good bit from the class. Professor is nice and there are many resources for help and answering questions. Be warned, however,

Comments
that Racket and the IDE it uses are pretty dreadful if you have experience with standard programming languages like C++.
Overall, this course was pretty simple. It does get a little confusing if you don't pay attention to the lecture videos, so make sure you watch those. Exercises were not too bad.
Sara is a great professor, lectures were kind of useless. Attainable A if you dedicate the time necessary, mainly just go to office hours, but more challenging that a lot of people make it out to be, for sure focus on getting a good group
Other than the fact that you are working with Racket, which is just so random that you will not find a single resource online to refer from, I think that this course is amazing. It really teaches you how to think step by step like a machine. Takes it from me, a person who cannot code for my dear life, and I managed to figure a lot of the homework out by myself. Professor Sood does a great job of explaining the code and the way that the machine carries out that code. Furthermore, the homework is much much harder than the exams themselves and they also account for most of our grades, so there is no way that you will walk out of this course failing. Highly recommend the course.
This course is simple if you have previous programming experience. Sara is a really good professor, and you should take it with her if possible!
If you have no interest in CS and are just taking one for IMC or something just take 110 bc its a lot easier.
Learned a good amount!
good class
Sara Sood is amazing! She is really really nice and actually cares about her students and is also really good at explaining everything thoroughly. Definitely go to peer mentor hours too—they are life–saving. Overall, this class is pretty chill even as long as you kind of know what's going on.
This is a good course for students with no programming experience, and helped me with declaring my major.
This class was required for my major in McCormick, but I'd recommend to ANYONE. Super fun, easy, and interesting. The assignments felt like puzzles to figure out each week, and the work was light outside of class. Professor Sood was awesome as well! "If there were a bus full of cats, how would you count them?"
Drracket is not the bessttt code format but you just gotta perserve. Sarah Sood is an absolute icon – she's an amazing teacher, and always takes the time to help each and every student. There's an exercise due each week and then 2 midterms – there are many practices on canvas. Have fun :) GO TO PEER TUTOR HOURS
Sorod is a an awesome teacher and makes the class interesting. The flipped classroom is a bit annoying but not awful. Exams were somewhat difficult, but not horrible. Only take this class if you need to though because learning racket is not very helpful or a good way to get introduced to programming.
Professor Sood is a good teacher. The peer mentor hours were very helpful. Because of the flipped classroom structure of the class, I felt a bit disconnected though.
Very easy class, and easy A. Professor Sood is an amazing professor. She is extremely resourceful and good at explaining/walking through difficult computer science concepts. Personally, the only thing I didn't like about the class is that Racket is kind of a useless and annoying language to work with. If you took AP Computer Science, this class will be extremely easy, with most if not all of the concepts being review.
This class was extremely informative and definitely greatly expanded my knowledge about Programming. The course load was manageable and the content was not too difficult.
I was worried I would not be able to follow because I knew nothing of code, but professor was really good at explaining and really cares for her students.
This class is proof that even the most challenging course can be enjoyable if enough help is provided. Thank you to whoever thought that TAs should hold office hours from early in the morning till late at night, EVERYDAY. Sara is the kindest, and funniest lecturer and it was so nice to be able to approach her to ask questions. Thankful that I took this class when I did with Sara and this set of TAs.
This course was definitely challenging but manageable. It was similar to my cs 110 class, except racket was harder to understand than python. But Sara did a very good job explaining Racket and how easy it could be to understand the language.
This course was very difficult to do on your own. IF YOU ARE NOT A COMP SCI MAJOR AND WANT AN INTRO CLASS, I WOULD SUGGEST 110. Professor Sood is amazing, but definitely would not recommend this class if you aren't interested in pursuing comp sci related studies
The professor explains concepts extremely well and there are a lot of peer mentor hours available if you are struggling. DrRacket is just a very annoying language to learn that we likely won't have to know ever again. I would say that that is the only downside of this course.
Although racket is a strange coding language, this was a great introductory course in computer science and definitely sparked my interest in the subject.
I loved this class. Professor Sood is amazing and super helpful!

Comments
Overall, a great course. Super manageable, easy workload, but you still learn a lot. Sara is really nice. And there are infinite office hours. I took this course after taking CS 211, because I needed it as a prereq for CS 214. It was an interesting class with very manageable workload, but I feel like I could have learned imperative programming and recursion without having to take the full course. If you have taken other CS classes at Northwestern already, only take this class if you have to.
Flipped classroom style definitely adds to the workload outside of the classroom. That being said– lecture is often optional depending on your comfort with the weekly coding assignment. Overall a fulfilling introduction to coding for someone completely new to the discipline.
There were moments when the class work felt very overwhelming. There are parts of this course that feel very self guided and that left me feeling a little lost. That being said its a very interesting and for the most part engaging class.
Sara was an amazing professor, who was understanding of our workload as a student and accommodating for different situations. She and the peer mentors were accessible for help if you needed it. This class was also pretty easy and had a low workload that you could finish in class.
Professor Sood is an amazing professor. She is a very effective lecturer and seems very down–to–earth. In terms of the course, the homework assignments are very doable, even for someone who has no experience in computer programming prior to this class. Lectures are online modules, and class time is usually reserved for group work and asking for help. Going to peer mentor hours is incredibly useful if you need assistance, and there are plenty of peer mentors available. Exams aren't too bad either as long as you study and look at the past exams. Overall, pretty good and doable intro course.
Overall, I was disappointed with this course because the professor made it seem that the material would be correspond accordingly with the tasks but it seemed like there was more time spent on trying to complete the hard assignments.
While racket is difficult to use, I enjoyed learning the topics and they are all apparently important for future classes.
The instructor was great and the flipped classroom structure makes perfect sense for an intro class like 111. The work was very manageable and peer mentor office hours were helpful when I needed help or clarification.
It's a surprise to me that we need to learn new concepts by watching the videos on our own before the class. I didn't like this method at first. But it turned out great. I could pause the video to think about it when I was confused, and I could skip the part that I've already understood. These are things I can't do if it was taught through lectures in person.
3 module quizzes each week, one assignment, workload ok
As long as you keep up with the modules and homework tasks you should be fine. There are so many opportunities for office hours to get clarification from peer mentors that even if you don’t plan ahead to attend one, chances are that there is an office hour happening at that very moment so you can seek help. I would say that doing things like exercises/ studying ahead of time (even just 1–2 days before) makes a big difference in terms of office hours because you have a more likely chance of one–on–one with the peer mentors. Only two exams (midterm and final), both of which are very fair and reasonable. BUT if you’re doing this for a distro, would recommend COMP_SCI 110 with Prof Sarah simply because Racket is less intuitive than Python. Sara Owsley is an incredible Prof – despite the class being roughly 200 or so in size, she put in a lot of effort to get to know her students.
This was an amazing course taught by an amazing professor. It is definitely a really great course for anyone without much CS experience that would like to get a grasp on what CS is all about. It is a very welcoming environment for someone who does not have any background in CS
This course is definitely challenging. The exercises can get tedious so I highly recommend asking the PMs for help in class or go to office hours. Sara is awesome and is really helpful if you have any questions.
Sara was an amazing professor hands down. Didn't really like the idea of learning DrRacket at first but it turned out to be very interesting.
Comp Sci majors can skip this cuz you have to take it anyway. Anyone taking this for another major or out of curiosity, this course may seem scary, but Sara is such a caring and helpful professor that you will feel like a better programmer no matter what. While there are some annoying parts about the course (recursion), it's super rewarding to be able to tear down your fears about programming like you'll do in this class. I encourage you to take this class. Unlike 110 (which I also took, for complicated reasons), you'll be learning in Racket, but I'm finding that understanding how to code in Racket makes you think about learning other languages in a different way, with more of a focus on understanding possibilities (Sara mentioning how to think about constructors, modifiers, etc will be forever stuck in my head) and less on "how do i do this". I highly recommend this class, even if to just make you less scared of Comp Sci.
this class was effective and not difficult. sara was super nice and assignments weren't too difficult
This course is great for people new to coding, though I also think it would be great supplemented by a bit of self study on coding logic in order to best prepare oneself for future courses. Teacher was great, and no complaints on material. Easy class, but still useful for learning Racket syntax.
Sara is such a great instructor and the course is super organized. solid intro course that's not too hard but def helpful
Pretty good course! Professor Sood and the peer mentors were super helpful when helping us with assignments. However, I felt like it was very easy to lose a large amount of points on exams for small mistakes.

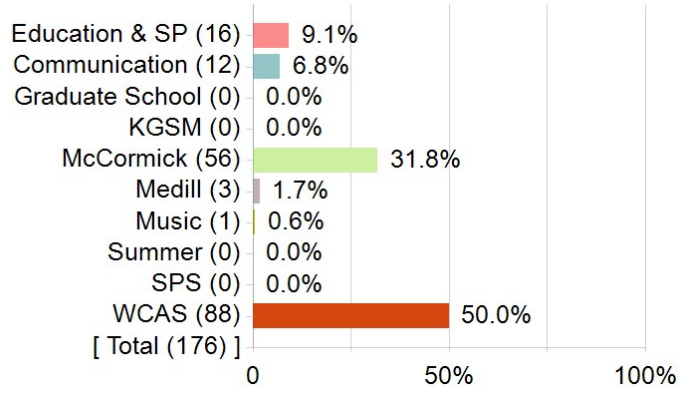
Comments
I didn't have any pror knowldege to coding, so that's the main reason why I struggled a bot in the class. However, Professor Sarah Sood is the BEST! She's so considerate.
Flipped classroom design was low stress but made put a bunch of responsibility on the student. If I wanted to learn a lot, I could, but other times I may have not learned as much as I would have liked to. Mini quizzes were easy as long as the lecture videos were watched. The exercises are definitely manageable given the time and resources given.
Although I was a bit hesitant when it came to using Racket, I found it to be quite instructional and intuitive. I think this course gave me a good foundation in computer science and better enabled me to succeed in any future computer science endeavors. I quite enjoyed the course and am now considering minoring in computer science.
I wasn’t the biggest fan of the flipped classroom, but if you you needed the extra time, it is very good for learning at your own pace and there are plenty of examples to do outside the assignments. If you already know how to code, this class is pretty easy, but if not, there is a lot of support to make sure you get everything. The assignments were pretty easy and the exams weren’t terribly difficult. And Sarah does a good job of keeping class interesting.
I didn't like the flipped classroom. I felt that the reliance on libraries made me even more confused.
This course was absolutely wonderful. Professor Sood is hands down one of the best teachers I’ve ever had. She genuinely cares about each student and is so thorough in her teaching style. Highly reccomend for anyone considering computer science.
I wasn't a fan of Racket, but this class was pretty good overall. I thought it was pretty challening for an intro to CS class, but the plentiful peer mentor hours means you always have help pretty much whenever you want.
Sara is a great professor and teaches the class well, however it is very difficult and you will definitely need to attend peer mentor hours to succeed.
I enjoyed the flip lectures—- where you watch on your own time and go to class to ask questions. I also like that Prof. Sara was very helpful with the assignments and taught very well.
Overall not a super difficult course. Professor Sood really cares about her students and tries to get to know everyone. The only problem I had with the class was the exams because one question could drop you a letter grade which is frustrating.
I initially thought this course would be boring since I am a CS major and have taken many CS classes but I still managed to learn a lot.
it was great
This class was a breeze but I did feel like I learned a lot. The teacher is very reasonable with the work load and also fairly flexible with deadlines. The exams were cake.
I loved the way we used racket (although it was a bit frustrating at times) and how much I have learned. I was very pleasantly surprised since I didn't like how most of the engineering/science courses are taught at McCormick.
Amazing. Midterms were okay. Content was reasonable. So many peer mentors available to help.
This course was a really great introduction to computer programming. It's super accessible to people with know previous knowledge (although having taken 110 definitely makes the class significantly easier and I'm coming from that perspective) and the format of the class is really flexible so you get what you put in. I especially appreciated class time being dedicated to homework. As for the Racket controversy I get why people complain about it being the intro language and it can take some adjusting when you have a basis in another language but I promise by the end you'll have, albeit begrudgingly, a respect for the skill set it offers.
This is a big jump from CS 110, just in terms of the programming language. Racket is much more different than Python, but definitely manageable.
Very easy class. Watch the videos and do the assignments and you should be fine.
This class was interesting and Professor Sood is great!
I thought the class was very fairly graded. Sara is amazing, however be ready to put some time into the class if you are new to coding.
good course professor is really nice
Course was very interesting including an exercise weekly pertaining to the subject we were learning and videos to help explain those subjects
I had this course with Sara and it was my favorite class so far at NW. She makes the class fun and the work load is not too bad. I definitely recommend.
This course is a great intro course. Not a lot of work and pretty easy as long as you stay on top of it.
Professor Sood was amazing! She really was able to make the class of a reasonable difficulty level where you felt encouraged to think and had to put in effort but also made sure that it wasn't discouraging. She also cares a lot of students' mental health which is so refreshing so you constantly felt really supported in the class as a whole. Overall loved this class and def take it with Sara :)
I went into it already knowing computer science so it was really easy
CS 111 with Sara Sood is an EXCELLENT intro CS course. Racket can be frustrating at times, especially you have learned other

Comments
languages before, however Professor Sood is amazing and there really are a lot of resources to help you succeed. The course utilized a flipped classroom model, so we had to watch an hour long lecture before each class period. Overall, I recommend this class.
Sara was a great instructor and always helpful! Fairly easy class if you have prior background with any high school CS class. There is plenty of help available for the work that is due and before exams.
Take this class with Sood, she’s the best professor in the department.
Sarah is a great teacher! Her lectures are effective and easy to follow. As long as you keep up with the video lectures, the assignments tend to be pretty intuitive. One thing I will say– throughout the class, recursion is said to be the most challenging concept, but I happened to find the lessons after recursion to be more difficult.
Sara relies on her Peer Mentors to teach you (PMs have office hours outside of class time and they're designated to help you on assignments, but nearly every time I went on a PM's zoom office hours, the meeting hadn't even started/they don't even show up) and she banks on the fact that people will watch her pre–recorded lectures and then come to class the next day ready to put their new computer science skills or knowledge already to use. She barely does any teaching. I learned how to get by in the class, not how to code in Racket. With that being said, I do have to say that Professor Sood is a nice woman and assesses the progress of the class and caters the schedule to what she thinks students need.
The way the course is designed is great. It challenges you, while giving you all the necessary resources to succeed. It is not necessarily easy though. Professor Sood makes everything better, with her amazing teaching and will to make everyone understand not only how to code, but what the computer is doing while you run your program.
This class was a wonderful introductory course for Comp Sci. It was exactly what I wanted from a comp sci class!
The teacher was great, but it was not an intro compsci course, and the language was really redundant.
The reverse learning style used in this course makes it very difficult for me to personally motivate myself and learn the material. The extremely large class size also compounds this, making it difficult to ask questions and follow along during class time. The saving grace is the office hours, which are organized extremely well and open almost all hours of the day. The TA's are a blessing and help you fill in whatever you missed during class.
The structure and the presentation of the content is very well done where you have video content every other day on the basic ideas and terms needed. Furthermore, there are exercises that are assignments in place where you practice what you have learned throughout the week. However, midterm exams for this class were difficult to study for as finding bugs in code is something that you learn as you go along with the course and with your experience in coding.
Racket is a super annoying language but the professor is very helpful and there are lots of TA hours you can go to, weekly assignments can be hard but TAs will help a lot. Exams aren't that hard and outside of weekly assignments not too much work
You really get out what you put into this class, though it is easy to get by with little effort. Easy A if you try. You don't really need to go to lecture, we only occasionally get a hint for the activity that week or an answer to a part of the activity. All learning takes place through weekly lecture recordings and quizzes which are slightly time consuming but manageable. Only assignments are exercises which are weekly, can be time–consuming but you can get through them a lot faster if you go to office hours (available all day throughout the week!)
This course was a really good course to take, especially with Sara. The peer mentors are extremely useful in helping to complete the exercises each week and the exams themselves are not too difficult with Sara being very clear on the format and providing practice to help prepare for them.
I don't feel as though I got an actual feel of what coding is like. I wish we had used Python or a more applicable language.
This class was very flexible. There were many peer mentor office hours to attend to complete exercises and class time was usually time to work on our own or in groups.
I would not have taken this course if it were not a prerequisite to basically every single CS class. It's not too difficult but the course material is not at all fun.

DEMOGRAPHICS

What is the name of your school?

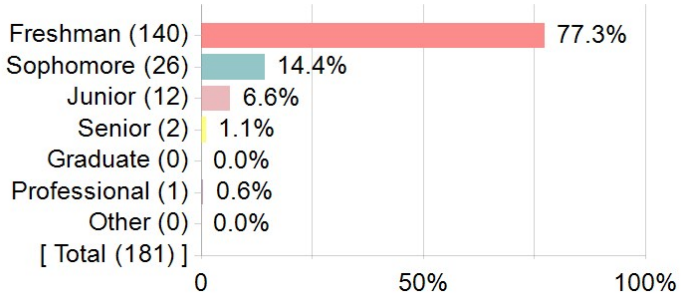
Your School



Options	Count	Percentage
Education & SP	16	9.1%
Communication	12	6.8%
Graduate School	0	0.0%
KGSM	0	0.0%
McCormick	56	31.8%
Medill	3	1.7%
Music	1	0.6%
Summer	0	0.0%
SPS	0	0.0%
WCAS	88	50.0%

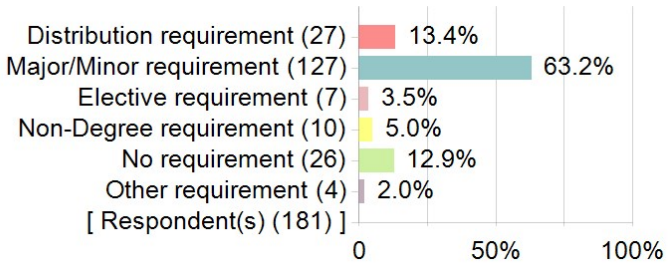
Your Class

Your Class



Options	Count	Percentage
Freshman	140	77.3%
Sophomore	26	14.4%
Junior	12	6.6%
Senior	2	1.1%
Graduate	0	0.0%
Professional	1	0.6%
Other	0	0.0%

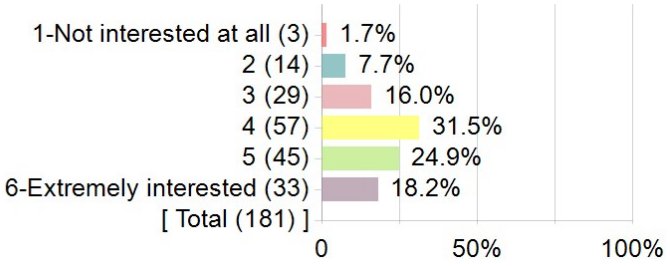
What is your reason for taking the course? (mark all that apply)



Options	Count	Percentage
Distribution requirement	27	13.4%
Major/Minor requirement	127	63.2%
Elective requirement	7	3.5%
Non-Degree requirement	10	5.0%
No requirement	26	12.9%
Other requirement	4	2.0%
Respondent(s)	181	

What was your Interest in this subject before taking the course?

What was your interest in this subject before taking the course?



Options	Count	Percentage
1-Not interested at all	3	1.7%
2	14	7.7%
3	29	16.0%
4	57	31.5%
5	45	24.9%
6-Extremely interested	33	18.2%