

October 27, 2019

Mr. Wei,

I observed your class of MIS 507 on October 17<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm. The class introduced new design pattern, the strategy pattern. There were 19 students in your class, with 6 sitting in the U-shaped front row and 12 sitting in the back row. (Only one student sat in the middle row.) The room capacity is set for 64 students, and the seating is tiered, with fixed tables on each tier.

As you taught the class, I appreciated that you first provided an overview of the class: motivation, UML and implementation. The motivation section helps to give the students context for why they would want to know and use the strategy pattern. It builds curiosity. I also appreciated that when you would ask questions (for example, in the adapter vs façade pattern review), you would pause and give the students time to think of a response. You were comfortable with a little silence while they figured it out.

As classroom dynamics went, I noted that when you asked questions of the class, the majority of answers were provided by three people, with the one in the front row providing the most responses. There was a student in the back row, who would answer the questions, but only softly to himself. When breaking into groups, out of the 19 students, there were only two groups of people (2-3 people) who actually formed groups to work on the material. The remaining 14 students sat quietly or discussed things not related to the class. Not surprisingly, central to the two active groups were the students who responded to your questions.

I would like to suggest a way to foster a more collaborative work and build in some way to ensure people are discussing the class topics together. Even though the furniture is not ideal for groupings, the students in your class made it work. To get the students to actually work together, you could possibly have the groups draw their own UML diagrams and then randomly walk around and share them with the rest of the class. By walking around and visiting the students, they will see that you expect them to be working together on the assignment. By sharing their work with the class, they will be more likely engaged to do the assignment. This would work best if the students understood the expectation that you will be sharing their work with the class, so they are not surprised by this. This is a little harder when you are not the regular instructor.

Overall, I enjoyed listening in and observing your class. Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Walter Ries