2023W2 UBC Individual Instructor Report for CPSC 203 201 - Programming, Problem Solving, and Algorithms (Firas Moosvi)

Project Title: **2023W2 UBC Instructor SEI Surveys**

Course Audience: **117**
Responses Received: **34**
Response Ratio: **29%**

Report Comments

Recommended Minimum Response Rates

Class Size	Recommended Minimum Response Rates based on 80% confidence & ± 10% margin
< 10	75%
11 - 19	65%
20 - 34	55%
35 - 49	40%
50 - 74	35%
75 - 99	25%
100 - 149	20%
150 - 299	15%
300 - 499	10%
> 500	5%

Legend

N: Invited
n: Responded

Frequency Distribution
SD: Strongly Disagree

UBC Student Experience of Instruction

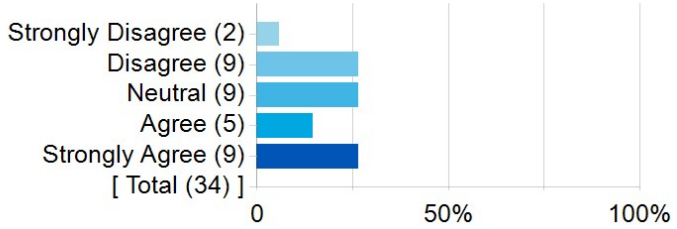
D: Disagree
N: Neutral
A: Agree
SA: Strongly Agree

Creation Date: **Tuesday, May 7, 2024**

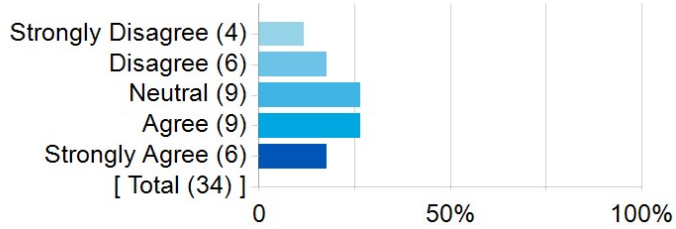
University Module Questions

University Module Questions

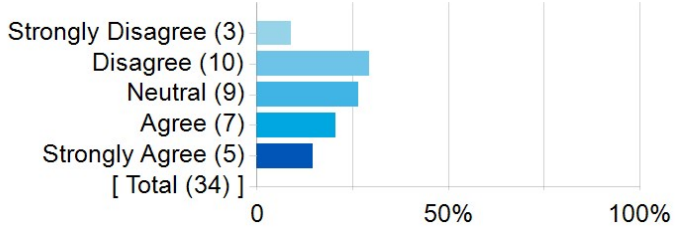
1. Throughout the term, the instructor explained course requirements so it was clear to me what I was expected to learn.



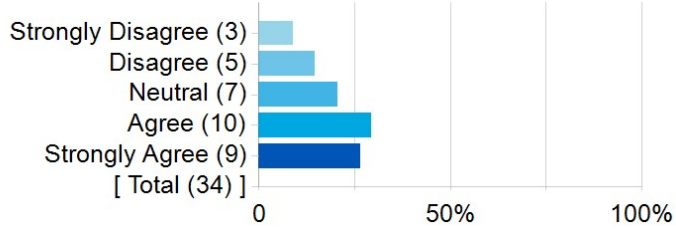
2. The instructor conducted this course in such a way that I was motivated to learn.



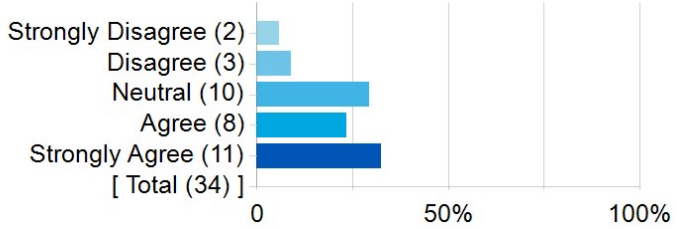
3. The instructor presented the course material in a way that I could understand.



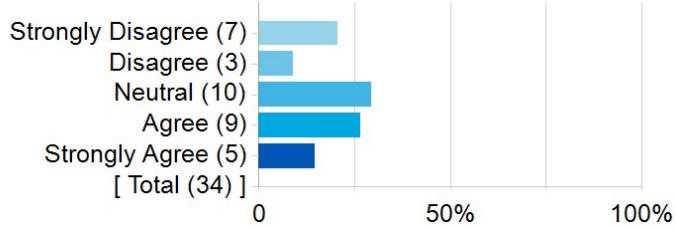
4. Considering the type of class (e.g., large lecture, seminar, studio), the instructor provided useful feedback that helped me understand how my learning progressed during this course.



5. The instructor showed genuine interest in supporting my learning throughout this course.



6. Overall, I learned a great deal from this instructor.



University Module Questions

Question	IM	PF	DI
Throughout the term, the instructor explained course requirements so it was clear to me what I was expected to learn.	3.2	41%	0.7
The instructor conducted this course in such a way that I was motivated to learn.	3.3	44%	0.7
The instructor presented the course material in a way that I could understand.	2.9	35%	0.7
Considering the type of class (e.g., large lecture, seminar, studio), the instructor provided useful feedback that helped me understand how my learning progressed during this course.	3.7	56%	0.7
The instructor showed genuine interest in supporting my learning throughout this course.	3.8	56%	0.6
Overall, I learned a great deal from this instructor.	3.2	41%	0.7

Faculty Questions

Course Questions

Question	N	n	SD	D	N	A	SA	N/A	IM	DI
My academic background provided sufficient preparation for this course.	117	34	2	5	11	8	8	0	3.4	0.6
In this class, I applied facts, theories, or methods to new problems or situations.	117	34	0	2	9	13	10	0	4.0	0.5

Question	%Favourable
My academic background provided sufficient preparation for this course.	47%
In this class, I applied facts, theories, or methods to new problems or situations.	68%

Instructor Questions

Question	N	n	SD	D	N	A	SA	N/A	IM	DI
The instructor treated students with respect.	117	34	0	2	0	12	20	0	4.7	0.4
The ways the instructor implemented the course activities (e.g., in-class activities, labs, tutorials, field trips, online components, assignments) helped me achieve the learning objectives.	117	34	5	2	7	11	9	0	3.8	0.7
The instructor was intentional about cultivating a welcoming and inclusive environment that supports all students and encourages all students to participate.	117	34	0	1	3	12	18	0	4.6	0.4

Question	%Favourable
The instructor treated students with respect.	94%
The ways the instructor implemented the course activities (e.g., in-class activities, labs, tutorials, field trips, online components, assignments) helped me achieve the learning objectives.	59%
The instructor was intentional about cultivating a welcoming and inclusive environment that supports all students and encourages all students to participate.	88%

Open ended feedback

Please comment on what your instructor did well to support your learning.

Comments
It was clear to me that prof Moosvi really cared about the success of his students. On the first day, he preached about how he tries his best to minimize the stress/anxiety in his class, and while I had originally believed that was just one of those things some professors say before having nothing to show/back it up with, over the course of the term, Dr. Moosvi showed definitely backed it up. He responded incredibly well to feedback, he was open to helping students troubleshoot different problems, and he oriented his class to be as fair as possible.
He would respond well to our request about moving deadlines.
Practice exams which are similar to exams really helped me understand this course, due to the lack of knowledge and sources for the material provided in this course, these practice exams helped me understand the material taught. I did not say this because I got relatively good grades because of it, it because that that is the only thing or the most useful thing that help me actually understand the purpose of this course is. The thing that help me survive and get relatively good grades this course is the knowledge that I got from CPSC 103.
provided weekly opportunities for us to express our learning progress and provided review classes.
He used multiple approaches such as labs, POTW and class activities and practice exams, which helped me to learn what is expected in the course.
Prof. Moosvi was very compassionate towards students if they raised an issue. For example, dropping our lowest mark for each section of our grade, and extending deadlines.
He responded to questions on Ed Discussion and gave us lots of practice problems and possibilities to test ourselves.
The instructor provided a course schedule and an outline of what topics were covered at what point during the course.
The best thing he did was use the lectures from the last professor that taught the course
He was available and would respond to EdStem inquiries
Pre–class videos.
The instructor is very considerate and supportive. He made his best to make the testing environment in the CPSC labs for the bi–weekly examlets accommodating for me since I'm not usually comfortable writing an exam in a room full of people and distractions.
He always conducted class in a way that was understanding and inclusive. I really enjoyed the little breaks throughout lectures in order for us to seek help or catch up. The 48–hour grace period was also very nice and helped reduce my stress.
Dr. Moosvi have implemented some great resources which I found to be really helpful in my learning. They are: – Course website, Ed discussion, PrairieLearn – weekly overview – practice exams – examlets, it was surprisingly a great way to stay on top of the course material and it was low stake so it's not stressful – the catch–up week and the policy of having the lowest assignments to be dropped – Office hours – Assigned videos – using CBTF for exams and the timeframe in which we can take the tests – video for introducing project 2 – the instructions to clone repo before class
Prof was extremely understanding and supportive and showed genuine interest in my learning and how I was doing mental health–wise.
The problems of the week were a good part of the course
At the start of the class, I did like Firas as he prioritized caring for our mental health and he seemed like a very nice guy. However, after going to his office hours I felt that he was a bit condescending and made me feel a bit stupid for not getting a question correct on the exam. Further, when asked if we can go over a question, he was quite unprepared and

Comments
couldn't walk through with it for me and just told me, or watch the pre–lecture video (i did but I also want help from the professor). I still give him benefit of the doubt as it seemed like the class was just handed to him last minute, but I did wish we got more assistance.
The instructor implemented the Learning Logs in the course, for example, which made us reflect on our progress, and our ability in the course each week. He also leaves an area where we can ask him questions, or voice any concerns we have. This shows me that he is genuinely interested in furthering our learning. He also leaves grace periods for assignments, which again supports the idea that the course is actually about LEARNING, and not so much about a number grade as in other courses. I really appreciate the amount of love and care that has gone into Firas' preparation and execution of this course. Makes me want to take one of his courses again.
We had lot's of practice questions each week (tutorial, problem of the week, and practice exams).
all great!

Do you have any suggestions for what the instructor could have done differently to further support your learning?

Comments
Obviously in coding classes like this where the professor is going through a problem/set of problems live, there are going to be hiccups. I think that at times, some of the hiccups harmed to pace of the lectures a bit, but this was his first (or second?) time teaching this course, so I know that in the future Dr. Moosvi will have managed to smooth everything out.
I honestly don't think he knew what he was teaching during lectures or even prepared. Often times, a lot of us felt lost while he would work on posting the slides or materials to show us which would waste a lot of time on our learning during lectures. slides or materials were never posted on time so i can never really prepare myself before lecture. He would also often search up the answers himself when he should be more prepared for next time. I'm just very disappointed that I didn't learn as much from him because he was just as lost as we are. for the most part, I was teaching myself through external resources rather than learning anything from the professor. I am paying so much tuition fee just to teach myself and I don't think this is an instructor I would recommend to someone based on my experience. At this point of the semester, I still feel like i haven't learned anything important that I could use for jobs in the future. I also remember he made a comment during lecture and said "you guys are the ones paying for the course, not me" which i found really unnecessary and disrespectful because he did not even provide us with the proper learning materials and support to actually learn anything from it. And yes, we are paying a lot so I expect the teaching to be of higher quality than being treated as a joke.
Be more detailed or specific in teaching the material, make sure the material in the lecture is correct so that there are not many mistakes in class. Adjust what is explained in class with what will be assigned and tested so that you don't just rely on practice exams. Provide more specific or detailed videos in the pre–lecture video. Also, answer all questions in the discussion column used. I was asked to ask questions in the discussion forum by the instructor after office hours but it remained unanswered until now and I saw that there were a lot of important questions that had not been answered until now by the instructor and the TAs.
be more organized before coming to class and explain complex concepts better. Also upload class recordings in a timely manner instead of weeks later.
The projects are a bit too challenging as we mostly discussed the logarithm and focused on understanding the concept behind the codes, I wish there were more smaller, easier coding practices that help us go towards the project, instead of having a big chunk of a project and not knowing where to start.
There felt to be a lack of organisation in the class, but I'm not sure whether that was Prof. Moosvi or the course in general. I felt that responses on our discussion board (Ed Discussion) often took a while to be responded to if it was not an "easy" question. Sometimes when I posted a question, I would not hear back from Prof. Moosvi or a TA but I would see them responding to more recent posts.
Be more prepared to teach the class. I understand it was Dr. Moosvi's first time teaching this course, but unfortunately, it was very evident that he was ill–prepared both overall and each week. He often failed to break down concepts and thus was not helpful when students had questions, for example on practice exams. The TA's did a better job of explaining concepts than Dr. Moosvi did.
Nothing in particular. I didn't find the learning logs very useful but I understand what they were trying to do.
The instructor could have been more accessible to contact for assistance on course work and personal matters that impact learning. The instructor was not supportive of adversities that could impact course success and expected students to be in good health, both physically and mentally, throughout the course. The instructor also did not have a lecture style that contributed to student understanding and a lot of the course was self–learned.
Please just learn how to teach effectively. I understand that the flipped classroom approach is supposed to let students direct their own learning, but I spent most of the course basically just googling all the major concepts. He doesn't use any original material at all, all the lectures are recorded from the previous iteration of the course (which was

Comments
excellent by the way, very good and informative lectures) and all the "homework" is literally copy and pasted from leetcode. On top of this, when the class did meet in person half the time was spent troubleshooting constant technical issues or watching him literally google articles on the concepts we were learning that he would just read verbatim. This would then be followed up by some buggy in class activities that hardly worked, and were also obviously recycled from the last professor to teach the course.
Not yet.
It would have been great if the instructor went over the code outline used for the in–class problems in addition to the pre–lecture videos since I often found myself lost while trying to figure out what's actually going on in the code despite having watched the videos and having a good understanding of the topics. I would also really appreciate if we could have access to our submitted assignments such as the Learning Logs and the examlets and view our answers. Moreover, the classes dedicated to office hours during the term could be reduced so that we have more time to go through each topic instead of rushing through them.
I would have liked for there to be more detail on the course slides that are posted. Most of them are a direct repeat of the videos that we watch before class. When I miss a class and try to catch up, it isn't very clear what was talked about in class. For example, it just says Announcements but there are no details, so I often worry about missing something important.
It would be great if Dr. Moosvi go over the major concepts in more detail which would really help us in preparing for the examlets and if he post the lecture slides before the lecture. Also, it would be great if project 3 was not due too close to the final and if the answers to the problem of the weeks are posted.
It seems as if the prof Moosvi was kind of thrown into this class last minute and had to learn the material along with the class. This often made lecture feel unproductive and disorganized and I sympathize but it wasn't super great for learning and going to lectures. It seems like there was a disconnect between the material in lecture and what was expected in labs/exams.
Release the code earlier potentially
Please provide additional videos that go over the content or at least make the lectures available immediately after class.
Though I like Firas as a person, I definitely felt like this class was handed to him to be taught at the very last minute. The content was recycled from Cinda (the usual course instructor) as it was prepared in her teaching style, so I felt a ton of disconnect from what was taught to us in lecture vs. the pre–lecture videos pre–recorded by Cinda. The class was a lot of self–learning. However, Firas was ready to help in OH.
Reflecting on the course, I've pinpointed areas that could be enhanced. Firstly, there were instances, notably in the first half of the term, when the instructor seemed unprepared for class, leading to occasional lateness and coding errors, some of which weren't adequately addressed during class, leaving me quite confused. Secondly, offering prompt feedback on assignments like examlets and learning logs would greatly enrich our learning experience.
The lectures often felt rushed and unprepared. It became confusing when we encountered errors in the code, and debugging together in class was challenging, especially for me as a beginner in this topic. It would have been helpful to have the pre–lecture materials posted earlier. Sometimes, the pre–lecture videos were only posted the day before or the day of class, leaving me with not enough time to review them beforehand.
all great!

Please identify what you consider to be the strengths of this course.

Comments
Lots of practice problems. Besides the final, nothing worth a lot of our grade, which helped reduce some of the stress.
Practice exams which are similar to exams.
Interesting applications of Python. No assessments are worth too much, making it less stressful.
The topics are interesting and introduced many useful concepts to understand the python packages.
I think the final grade distribution is very fair, as it seems to properly represent our learning, unlike having a final exam worth 40–50%. I liked having the bi–weekly tests to keep me up to date with the course material. I appreciated having the videos posted on Canvas, I found those very helpful.
This course is very experience–based, where we do problems and those problems teach us the concepts and solidify the information. I think that this is the correct approach for a coding class and pushes us to learn problem solving and learn to be flexible.
The course covers a wide variety of material that is useful for students pursuing a degree in computer science.
It's extremely easy to get a good grade to the point where it's basically a grade booster, and also the recorded lectures (which were made by the previous professor) are very informative and understandable
weekly activities and Dr. Moosvi's openness
Introduction of the use of github.
– Course website, Ed discussion, PrairieLearn – practice exams – examlets, it was surprisingly a great way to stay on top of the course material and it was low stake so it's not stressful – the catch–up week and the policy of having the lowest assignments to be dropped – Office hours – Assigned videos – using CBTF for exams and the timeframe in which we can take the tests – video for introducing project 2 – the instructions to clone repo before class
I like the diversity in how we can get marks. The weight is not solely on one final exam or such. The exam structure is very student–favorable.
Theoretical portion of graph theory
–Pre–lecture videos
The grace periods, the problems of the week, the learning logs, and the Ed discussion.
Large emphasis on Data Structures and Algorithms for students who dont want to go down the Computer Science route. Really appreciated how real world applications were used to deliver the course.
I prefer having bi–weekly exams over a single midterm. It allows me to focus on one section at a time and really understand it, rather than trying to memorize a large amount of information all at once.
all great!

Please provide suggestions on how this course might be improved.

Comments
I was not particularly a fan of the amount of out–of–timetable examlets there were. Yes, it makes it more flexible for students, but it was very challenging at times, especially in the middle of midterm season to find a time outside of regular class time to fit an examlet in. This might come across as dramatic, but maybe fitting time into the lab times to do the examlets?

Comments
all the labs and assignments were hard core level leetcodes which is not helpful in our learning because it was frustrating for the most part. I think the course shouldve been carried out using jupyter notebook and just canvas instead of using so many external platforms like prairie learn and ed discussion. there was too many platforms to keep up with when canvas is already there. It was hard to keep up with our assignments because its not lined up with our calendar unless we asked them to. there also needs to be more office hours from TA's and the instructor.
Be more detailed or specific in teaching the material, make sure the material in the lecture is correct so that there are not many mistakes in class. Adjust what is explained in class with what will be assigned and tested so that you don't just rely on practice exams. Provide more specific or detailed videos in the pre–lecture video. Also, answer all questions in the discussion column used. I was asked to ask questions in the discussion forum by the instructor after office hours but it remained unanswered until now and I saw that there were a lot of important questions that had not been answered until now by the instructor and the TAs. Add more practice questions and material videos or something like that, and hopefully the TAs will also be better at explaining the materials.
Instructor should be more organized, and explain complex concepts better. Also provide lecture recordings in a timely manner.
Maybe we need to rearrange the structure of the course and focus a bit more on introducing different data structures at the start of the term. The CPSC 103 as a pre–req of this course, does not introduce dictionaries and sets etc. The new data structures at the first weeks brought lots of confusion, which may make students have a less steady foundation for future studies.
I found that there was so much content on the bi–weekly tests that was never taught in class (as someone who ALWAYS attended class and did the practice examlets). As one example, we were tested on binary, which although was in the practice test, we had never learned it in class. I also wish there was more practice provided for the final exam.
I think this course would be better if we didn't have to watch videos and were instead taught the concepts in class. The in–class activities weren't very useful, and I feel like the time could be better spent really drilling into the concepts. Videos + class + problem sets + labs + learning logs + projects made this class too time–consuming, and removing the videos would significantly help with that.
The course demands too much from its students and requires three assignments due each week, 6 exams every 2 weeks, a final project, and a final exam. This is a heavy courseload for a 200 level course, especially for students who are taking many classes and extracurriculars.
Just get someone else to teach it. I don't know if it's apathy or just a rough adjustment process because he did mention he recently came from UBCO, but Professor Moosvi is just clear not fit to teach this course. Like I said earlier, he puts very little effort into his teaching and acts like he would rather be anywhere else whenever he's in the classroom.
It would help if we worked with actual code alongside the concepts so we know what code corresponds to what.
Not yet.
– going over concepts that are more – more active on ed discussion – timely grade release, especially learning logs and examlets – posting lecture slides before class – better timeline and duration for project – solutions to POTWs
The projects are not very conducive to my learning. There is so much going on in this course that it is hard to dedicate time to these projects and not feel like you are falling behind on course content. Please consider restructuring how these are given out.
Test all files for the class demos, as students do not understand when the solution files and the demo files are completely different or if the python library does not work. Please answer student messages.
–The lecture demos should be explained more thoroughly
Sometimes I thought the instructions on the projects were too vague, where I didn't exactly understand what I was supposed to do to get it to work without speaking to the TA in the lab. Maybe give us more exact / precise instructions, and more information about the different variables/objects/functions being used.
Pre–Requisite courses (at least CPSC 103) provided absolutely no preparation for this course and it felt completely different from what was taught in 103. Lots of new basic python to learn at the start of the course (sets, dictionaries, more advanced list comprehensions) which were not covered in 103. Honestly felt like I could have done this course without 103 and have done very similarly. With that being said, I wish one of the 2 courses would allow us to go deeper into concepts such as dictionaries. It is a shame that the first half of this course felt like "catch up" from content that was assumed to be pre–requisite but wasn't dealt with in CPSC 103. Instead 103 wastes time with their useless HtDAP

Comments
approach which when utilised in CPSC 203 was presented in a VERY DIFFERENT WAY. This course could benefit from removing random topics with little to no connection to the rest of the course. Week 5 "Web scraping" comes to mind. We learned pandas and web scraping but we see none of it appear beyond that week. While Week 8 to 13 are all interconnected Week 5 is just there. Would be better used to go into more depth of basic python such as dictionaries, sets, etc because CPSC 103 does such a terrible job at doing so. I do appreciate that Week 5 taught Pandas though especially as a student in the Data Science path. What was unfortunate is that we literally used it for a week and then never used it again.
I found it difficult to understand and follow along with the long, complex codes discussed in class. I would have preferred if we had started with smaller examples and applications of the code before being introduced to larger blocks of code.
all great!

Explanatory Note

The reported metrics are as follows:

1. Percent Favourable Rating

This is the percentage of respondents who responded with a 4 or 5 (Agree or Strongly Agree) on a scale of 1 to 5.

2. Interpolated Median

The data collected for Student Experience of Instruction (SEI) are ordinal in nature, with a natural order (from 1 to 5). The usual measure of central tendency for ordinal data is the median (50% percentile). The Interpolated Median (IM) is an adjusted median that considers the number of responses less than the median, greater than the median and equal to the median. As such, IM reflects the distribution of students' responses.

Consider the following example:

Frequency Distribution

Response for University Module Item	Section 1	Section 2
5 = Strongly agree	5	5
4 = Agree	3	5
3 = Neither agree nor disagree	6	0
2 = Disagree	1	2
1 = Strongly disagree	0	1
Mean	3.8	3.8
Median	4.0	4.0
Interpolated Median	3.7	4.2
Percent favourable rating	53%	77%

3. Dispersion Index

The dispersion Index is a measure of variability suitable for ordinal data (Rampichini, Grilli & Petrucci 2004). This dispersion index has values between zero and 1. A zero dispersion index indicates that all students in the section gave the same rating. An index value of 1.0 is obtained when the class splits evenly between the two extreme values (Strongly Disagree & Strongly Agree), a very rare occurrence. In SEI data at UBC, the index rarely exceeds 0.85, and mostly for evaluations not meeting the recommended minimum response rate.