Student comments for Arup Guha, dmarino@cs.ucf.edu

University of Central Florida
Student Perception of Instruction Comments

Year/Term: 2010/Summer
Semester: 1390

Instructor Name: Arup Guha

Computer Science/College of Engr & Comp Sci	COP3503CC001	COMPUTER SCIENCE II
Department/School	**Course-Section Number**	**Course Name**

52	34	65.38
Number of Students Enrolled	**Number Responding**	**% of Response**

The thing(s) I like the MOST about this course:

Hands-on in-class activities

The level of expertise and communication skills of the instructor.

I honestly feel like I got a great handle on the content taught. Arup is an EXCELLENT instructor and should receive several consecutive raises. I loved having a small program every week in lab, great compliment to the more exhaustive assignments.

This course was very challenging but the professor made sure you were prepared and understood before going onto the next topic.

The course was very interesting, and I felt that my grades on the tests accurately measured my understanding of the material.

You are an excellent teacher as always.

Arup not only taught the material that was required to be learned by the end of the semester, but also managed to tie it together with examples of real world applications. He kept the class interesting, whether with entertaining examples of how to better understand a given algorithm or with examples where the students physically participated (and were often awarded candy for it).

Initially, I had no real interest in this class. I assumed it to be another subject-mill class where loosely held technique, poor thinking, and useless memorizing would prevail (this has its place in some introductory classes). I was wrong and very happy. Prof. Guha gives this class an extra shot of what it really needs, which if formalization and proper thinking. Not all results were rigorous in their development (this is a side effect of the type of student attending this class and NOT because of negligence by Prof. Guha). But formalization was conceptually outlined. Something that doesn't appear to happen in other classes. The range of subjects was vast. I believe this was an added bonus for this class. Many algorithms were covered that don't seem to be covered by other professors but are truly important. Initially his obsessive liking over ACM (competition style programming) was irksome. But I realized that this forced me to think a different way, and ultimately, gave a nice way to illustrate an algorithm by not be trivial or too complicated.

Enjoyed the class

The Volunteering opportunity was what I liked the most about this course. I found a place that refurbishes computers and donates, and i want to go back. Graphing, for an advanced topic (compared to the other topics I covered,) I found myself motivated to learn it and found it enjoyable. I'd say typing distance (a dynamic program with an adjacency matrix) and Kruskals were my two favorite programs.

making the material relate to everyday life

Arup always tries to make sure the class is actually learning the material. He tries to make the topics fun which helps. His excitement and passion is always evident.

Learning the different algorithms and being able to improve my programming skills.

Interesting. Great professor. Very helpful

The thing(s) I like the LEAST about this course:

When you take this course, you have not had as much of a foundation in the language used as I would like to have had prior to taking this course.

I am not great at it.

No complaints.

I'm not sure the following is a defect of the class. I include it only as commentary for consideration. Prof. Guha seemed to be trying different teaching methodologies this semester. I applaud any steps toward improving pedagogy, but I personally found some of the class activities to be insipid and bland. But I do understand that Prof. Guha was making every attempt to be democratic in teaching every learning style.

I wish certain details were more straight forward, specifically with the priority queue program. The grammar and spelling errors in the notes hinder their usefulness, I'm sure to some people can over look it, but I'm not one of those people.

tests

Two-hour long classes.

na

What is your reaction to the method of evaluating your mastery of the course (i.e., testing, grading, out of class assignments (term papers), instructor feedback, etc.):

Testing and grading criteria are excellent. Dr. Guha is an excellent professor who has a very helpful and inspiring teaching and evaluation methodolgy.

Students get out of this class what they want to.

I like that the tests were pretty difficult. Instead of just asking if we remembered material that we covered, the questions tested to see if we could apply that material to solve problems that we hadn't seen before. I liked that, because instead of studying to remember facts I study to practice my ability of applying the things I'm learning, which is obviously more useful in the grand scheme of things.

The tests were fair and well designed to evaluate more than just our ability to solve problems we have been previously exposed to, but also to test our overall grasp of the material we had been taught. The programs were surprisingly challenging given the simplistic nature of the problems we were to solve, but they weren't impossible. They took a few days of chipping away at the code until you hit a road block, then asking for help, getting past it, and chipping away again.

Homework in this class was interesting and properly geared towards the goal of improving programming style and algorithmic thinking. Homework problem statements were not always clearly designed. Whereas some students saw this defectively, I found this to allow a more open problem solving technique in finding the solution. As Prof. Guha poignantly explained, in actuality, not all problems will be cut-and-dry. I feel criticism of his homework assigning is unfounded; He did an excellent job. Lab assignments were also interesting problems, but not as interesting as the homework. But the design of problems were in accordance with what Prof. Guha laid out as the expectation of the lab which was quick assignments that illustrate a direct and simple point. Exams were okay. I personally find rapid fire solution building to be difficult, but my disliking of his exams does not warrant any useful criticism, since no improvement would add to quality. I believe his exams are fair, but I still dislike them.

I felt all the tests and assignments were fair and comprehensive in testing our grasp of the material. The grading was very fair.

Very fair. Hard but fair

Additional comments and suggestions for improvement:

Maybe we could have spent more time on some of the most complex techniques.

Keep up the interactive and social exercises. They make us think and are helpful to those of us with different learning styles.

While I enjoyed the freedom to pick two of the seven programs assigned in the lab (it allowed me to find the programs which utilized algorithms I enjoyed coding up rather than shoving tedious concepts down my throat), I don't think it worked out as well as you had hoped. You could tell which students had completed their two programs, as they were the ones simply hanging out in the classroom until the attendance sheet was passed around. Again, it was a refreshing and relaxing time, but I'm not sure if that was what you were going for.

I love this subject, and I like this class because proper treatment was given to the material by Prof. Guha. Mostly, I enjoyed using his office hours. I found him to be helpful and willing to answer questions beyond the scope of the class. I feel I was able to get more from the class by being able to understand the edges beyond the 'required' material. His pick of book was also excellent, but I think as suggested reference material he should include on his syllabus the CLRS Algorithm book. CLRS picks up on things where Weiss leaves off. I understand why a cult of personality surrounds Prof. Guha, because not only is he a damn good proctor, he's also willing to go the extra mile for his students. Mark Twain gave us a good "acid test". I believe that Prof. Guha truly passes it. Twain said, "Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."

One of the best teachers at UCF!

I felt the course was generally very good.

Keep it up

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Instructor Name: Arup Guha

Department/School	Course-Section Number	Course Name
Computer Science/College of Engr & Comp Sci	COT3960C001	CS FOUNDATION EXAM

Number of Students Enrolled	Number Responding	% of Response
32	21	65.62

The thing(s) I like the MOST about this course:

The language knowledge portion seemed particularly easier.

I passed :-)

I have to evaluate you for the foundation exam?

x

The thing(s) I like the LEAST about this course:

I wasn't thrilled with the whole foundation exam.

The concepts and logic portion of the test is much more difficult, but I suppose this could be due to inadequate emphasis in Introduction to Discrete Mathematics.

x

What is your reaction to the method of evaluating your mastery of the course (i.e., testing, grading, out of class assignments (term papers), instructor feedback, etc.):

I did like the improvement in the grading system.

x

Additional comments and suggestions for improvement:

Foundation exam class slot, not actually a class. Just for proof that I passed it.

Thanks Arup

it wasn't really a class...

x