Individual Instructor Report Fall 2025 Version A for C S 371P - OBJECT-ORIENTED PROGRAMMING (55075) (Glenn Downing)

Project Title: **Course Evaluations Fall 2025**

Courses Audience: **67**
Responses Received: **64**
Response Ratio: **95.5 %**

Report Comments

Guide to the Interpretation of Course Evaluations at UT Austin

The goal of course evaluation process at UT Austin is to drive teaching excellence and to support continuous improvement in teaching and learning experiences. Course evaluations provide snapshots of student perspectives on their course-level learning experiences. Most experts on teaching evaluation advise that no individual method gives the complete picture of an instructor's teaching effectiveness, multiple and diverse measures, on multiple occasions, are advised to give a full picture of the teaching effectiveness of a particular instructor. Moreover, other factors, such as size of class, level of the class, and content of the course, can cause small variations in the ratings. Therefore, student perspectives for a particular instructor or course should be interpreted as a snapshot, and not as providing complete information on the teaching effectiveness of that instructor. For additional details, including the scales and how the Mean scores are calculated, please review the Report Guide at the end of this document or, UT Austin's Viewing Course Evaluation Results webpage.

Creation Date: **Friday, December 19, 2025**

Core Questions

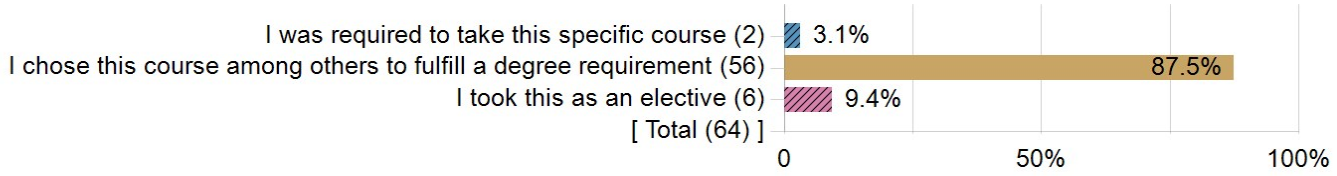
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Responded	Mean
During this course, I gained a deeper understanding of the subject matter.	48.4%	43.8%	3.1%	4.7%	0.0%	64	4.36
The course was well organized.	53.1%	35.9%	9.4%	1.6%	0.0%	64	4.41
The instructor clearly explained the course objectives and expectations.	56.3%	42.2%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	64	4.55
The instructor fostered an inclusive learning environment.	62.5%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	64	4.63
The instructor effectively explained the concepts and subject matter in this course.	53.1%	42.2%	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	64	4.48
The instructional techniques kept me engaged in learning.	46.9%	37.5%	10.9%	4.7%	0.0%	64	4.27
The instructor checked for student understanding of the concepts presented in the course.	62.5%	35.9%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	64	4.61

Overall Questions

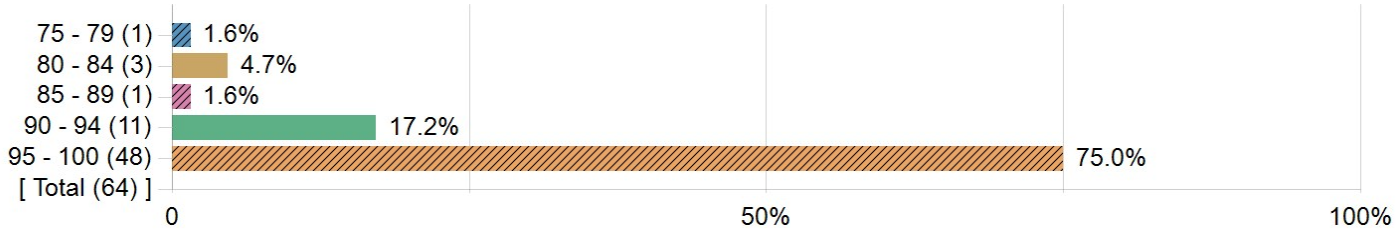
	Excellent	Very Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory	Responded	Mean
Overall, this instructor was	48.4%	40.6%	10.9%	0.0%	0.0%	64	4.38
Overall, this course was	39.1%	37.5%	20.3%	1.6%	1.6%	64	4.11

Other Course Questions

Why did you take this course?



Overall, approximately what percentage of the course meetings did you attend or complete (online, in person, or asynchronously)?



Statistics	Value
Mean	95.28

Comment Questions

Identify aspects of the course that were the most effective in helping your learning.

Comment
lectures
I learned a lot about OOD and tools from this course. The projects themselves weren't that hard, but implementing them in an OOD way and integrating make/workflows made me learn a lot about practically writing OOD code. The lectures themselves were very detailed and I understand a lot more about classes and polymorphism and the C++ language in general now.
The review of the code done within the exercises was very helpful. Not only that but the collaboration done during them and during quizzes helped build an understanding through both hearing and explaining the topics at hand.
I found the Ed exercises the most effective.
Cold calling. Usually I don't raise my hand much in class, even when I'm pretty sure I know the answer. I think that cold calling takes the pressure off of answering questions incorrectly.
I think some aspects of the lectures and in–class exercises were the most effective. The projects were reasonable for helping, but I think there were some areas that were lacking in understanding the "correct implementation" in relation to OOP design guidelines.
Cold–calling, while I usually don't like it, was actually very helpful in keeping me focused on the topic, as well as gain a deeper understanding while answering questions. I felt comfortable saying that I didn't understand a particular thing when asked about it.
Projects, Exercises
Weekly reading paper.
The TA help sessions were always getting up to speed with the course topics and how to properly run my Makefile with the given specifications. The papers were also helpful in summarizing basic concepts we covered in class and how they are applied in various fields of software engineering.
The best parts were the quizzes, it forced me to work with my group mates and figure out the answers for this
The cold calls were really effective in helping my learning because it made sure that I was always paying attention, prepared and ready to answer any questions.
Exercises and quizzes.
projects
The recorded lectures and how the classroom is designed to make you pay attention instead of staying on your devices taking notes.
Professor was very engaging and taught the topics very well
I like that he takes the notes in class and go over the examples in class and have us check our understanding by doing exercises. It really helps reinforce the learning materials.
The walkthroughs of code were the most helpful.
I think the weekly readings and exercises really helped me.
Cold calls were helpful for making me pay attention at all times.
The aspects that were most effective were the quizzes and the projects.
I really enjoyed the exercises and the hands on practice we got with the concepts.
The most effective thing in helping my learning was probably the projects
I appreciated the deep dive into C++ and inheritance concepts
Very good!
The lectures were incredibly helpful and insightful.
The need to come to class to get grade encourages me to come to class
I think that the problem sets were very helpful in using C++ in practice in addition to the projects.
The projects and exercises
Lectures were informative and engaging. I think cold calling was effective in terms of audience participation and learning.
I liked the weekly problems and biweekly projects, those taught me the most.
Ed discussion, notes
I liked how professor Downing cold calls because it forces me to constantly pay attention in case I get called on.
The daily quizzes helped to solidify previously taught topics.
Class interactivity and asking questions during class time made it easier to pay attention and gain a deeper understanding of the

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Comment
material.
The lectures were in–depth and had plenty of examples to help understand the specifics
1. Clear cut rubrics with thorough directions and grading scheme. 2. TA's available outside of class most of the time. 3. Professor takes notes for us, we just observe and participate 4. Cold calling: kept me awake and constantly paying attention to not get caught in an embarrassing situation 5. Corollary to above– Professor was not harsh or rude if we were lost or didn't understand something.
The quizzes and last project were good for learning, as the quizzes helped ensure that I kept up with the material and picked up on the important details.
I really enjoyed the unique course structure (0–3 grading, daily collaborative quizzes, and problems/projects)! The daily quizzes especially were super useful, and I was surprised how being able to talk to others didn't seem to diminish them.
The quizzes and exercises were the most effective in helping me, as it made me have to understand what we learned the previous classes to be able to complete them.
Quizzes were great to encourage participation and helped reinforce learning by going over previous topics, and projects related very well to the lecture material given around the time we started them.
The cold calling helped me stay engaged in the lecture to make sure that I wasn't lost when it was my turn to speak. I liked the weekly problems that weren't too difficult but helped me brush up on my c++.
the lectures
Getting cold called was effective in making sure we understood the content covered in lecture.
project
The projects were helpful
The projects, lectures, and exercises.
The professor explained the concepts in class with a lot of detail and many examples that were helpful
The projects helped me practice my C++ skills and I actually enjoyed doing the Kattis problems instead of the blogs because I got to practice my problem–thinking skills
Professor Downing always reviewed exercises, which were very helpful in practicing the things we learn, and was very transparent about the grading schema of the course. In the cold calls, I appreciated how we were asked a casual question like what we would recommend to the class to make the experience a bit more comfortable!
The lectures and daily quizzes and especially the exercises were very helpful in applying what I learned to a toy problem
The lectures were essential for my learning

Identify the aspect of the course that you found most challenging, why you found it was challenging, and suggest one thing that could be done to help future students meet that challenge more effectively.

Comment
ed lessons were challenging but it's good that you can work together.
I frequently miss things even after double / triple checking, and it's a little nervewracking to wait for project grades not knowing if you'll have to resubmit for a minor missed detail. The final project even moreso because there's no resubmits. Maybe have a checklist / common reasons why people have to resubmit for students to look at
The most challenging was overthinking the exercises at first. Just reiterate not to over think the problem and that the tools to complete it are not only given but told during lecture.
I found following along in lecture the most difficult because we are not allowed to use devices to take notes so I felt like I wasn't retaining information well.
Not much flexibility around the quizzes. One time I entered class around 5 minutes late but didn't have enough time to do the quiz, but I still stayed the entire time for the class. I also didn't enjoy how the makeups were 500 word summaries. I would have preferred a shorter word count requirement or some other alternative to quiz makeups.
I think the challenging aspect is that there's essentially little room for error. I think the makeups were reasonable, but I don't like how underperforming on one project would move you from an A to an A–.
I think the exercises were probably the most challenging. While most of them are quite easy to do, there were a couple that I struggled to understand. The time limit was also quite stressful. I think I would suggest more preparation before the exercise, but I feel like there already is enough preparation, so I don't really have a suggestion.
Being in class every single Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 1–2 pm.
Project requirements.

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Comment
The projects were difficult for me in that they required learning how to fulfill the given requirements, running different kinds of test files, and knowing when to revise my code using the tools provided. I largely stayed away from applying what I learned in class as I could barely comprehend what we learned, but as mentioned before the TAs and papers were great in getting me on the right path.
Some things that were challenging were the projects, I think the unfamilarity I had with C also worked with this
At the same time, the cold calls were also the most challenging part of the class. They were pretty nerve wracking and it was scary to get cold called. I would suggest maybe some sort of way to let a student get ready for cold calls, such as knowing that they will be cold called in a certain day or week.
I found the exercises most challenging since we have to immediately implement what we just learn. One thing that could help would have the new material on the board so we can reference it as we try to complete the exercise.
in class exercise
The most challenging part were the projects, sometimes the wording I found a little bit ambiguous. I would just recommend on making it a bit clearer but other than that the project overview was presented in a good manner and was generous with the information it provided.
Grading on the projects was way too strict. Failed me on a project and made me waste a resubmission purely because I forgot to close 1 issue on the issue tracker? I understand him wanting us to follow through with every detail and what not. but that was too intense.
I found the course most challenging is the content. The concepts are very abstract and tough for me to understand. I think doing the daily quizzes and exercises really helped with reinforcing learning a lot.
I found the exercises to be the most challenging part. I think that having more guidance in the instructions could help.
I think the most challenging part of the course were the way exercises are handled. We are only given a certain amount of time for them, but debugging can be incredibly challenging when we aren't able to see where errors occurred. I think that it would be more beneficial for students to be shown where their program failed, as it can speed up debugging and help identify what parts of the exercise we aren't getting down right. Alternatively, I think exercise makeups could be handled differently, as the most difficult exercises are at the end of the course when we aren't allowed to make anything up. For example, students could be given another chance to complete an exercise at home if they weren't able to do it in person.
Attendance is mandatory for the quizzes, so I needed to show up to every class and also do okay on the quizzes for my grade.
I found the projects challenging, especially Project #5. I think putting the due date as Friday would make it easier for students to manage the time.
I found the quizzes quite challenging, but one thing to help future students would be to provide more study materials other than the notes.
The most challenging aspects of the course were the exercise since I am not good under pressure and it's a big part in getting a good grade. The exercises also have a strict time limit.
Papers felt repetitive and didn’t really build on class knowledge
The most challenging aspect were the quizzes. I wish there a few more makeup’s or excusals to account for extracurriculars taking away from attendance.
The excercises. Yes Downing did go over like the concepts but it was still really confusing
I found the exercises to be most challenging mainly due to the time constraint.
The notes system. Wouldve been helpful if there were slides on the material and we could take our own notes. The notes that the professor gave were pretty vague and didnt explain much.
The exercises were challenging at times with the sometimes limiting time constraints. I think going emphasizing going over the test cases or allowing more time on the exercise would help.
I didn't reading and annotating the papers, it took a while for me to get through and they were hard to understand.
N/A
I think for me some of the exercises have been challenging because of the 20 minute time constraint, and given a bit more time I probably would have been able to perfect them. However, allowing us to talk to our peers about it really helps so everyone is working together.
Time management with the projects was difficult, but was overall structured well.
I think further explaining project implementation. Right now I feel like you're thrown in the ocean with no way to save yourself.
Exercises were probably a bit harder than anticipated, at least early on. The logic itself wasn't very difficult, but the system felt a bit unforgiving. Part of the struggle was figuring out what exactly the program was doing/expected, and there was unfamiliar syntax that had to be figured out. Things got easier as the semester went on, though.
Number of late days available were really small compared to other classes. Some of the requirements were finicky, so it was possible to get a 1/2 on a project for small things (if you had no resubmits left... yikes!). I think everything was well done. I don't really

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Comment
have a suggestion.
I found the lecture style to be difficult to learn from. I think that the cold calls do not foster effective learning when nobody has any sort of background knowledge. I think this is best used in conjuction with some sort of reading or pre–class videos. Otherwise, the lectures are much slower than they need to be, and very little material is covered, in minimal depth.
I think that the way the professor taught was the most challenging, as I did not find it engaging and it often made me need to double back on what was learned. Not only that, I struggled with the grading scheme and thought that it was harsh in terms of cutoff.
Sometimes it was frustrating when I had to use a quiz makeup even when I was present in class because I missed the questions, so then when I actually did need to miss class for sickness or events, it was harder to plan out and a little stressful making sure I had enough makeups and drops for the semester.
The projects were a bit challenging especially when working alone. Finding a partner is difficult especially when you don't know many people in the class.
the excersizes and their time limit was stressful
I found the content to be challenging. I wish the notes in class that were shared later were more descriptive in what we would cover today to clarify and solidify our understanding.
projects
The most challenging part was also the projects and the requirements for each one
I found the projects the most challenging because they took the longest and were a combination of all the things we were learning. I suggest to future students to start early and attend office hours.
The exercises and quizzes felt a bit unforgiving sometimes, especially the exercises. I think there could be more time spent on going through the exercises afterwards
The exercises were really challenging because of the time limit. I know that Prof. Downing probably didn't want to tell us when the exercises were so we would pay attention every class, but for me this was unrealistic and I think it would be helpful if he told us when the exercises were so I could focus extra hard on the content that day. I probably would've done better.
Sometimes, the cold calls in class were a bit difficult and nerve–wracking. Although the actual question being asked may not have been the most complex, it's difficult to think on the spot and answer immediately right after being shown a piece of code. Maybe introduce the problem more during cold calls.
More exercises would be very interesting or more hands–on things
The most challenging thing about the course were the projects because they involved a full setup of testing and integrating version control to solve a Hackerrank problem. I suggest starting sooner and with a partner to meet the challenge more effectively.

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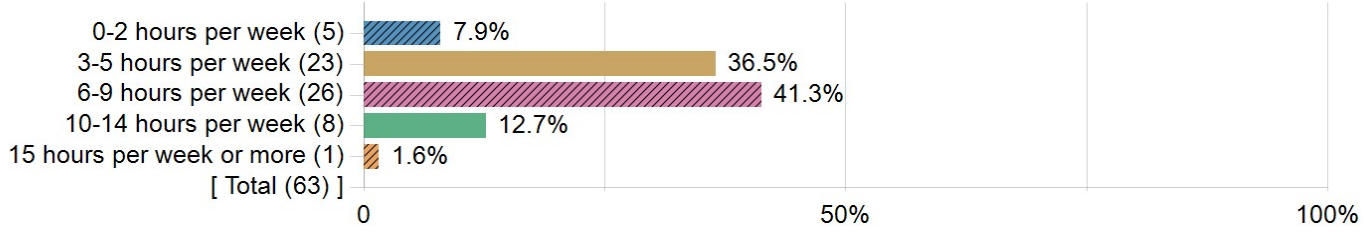
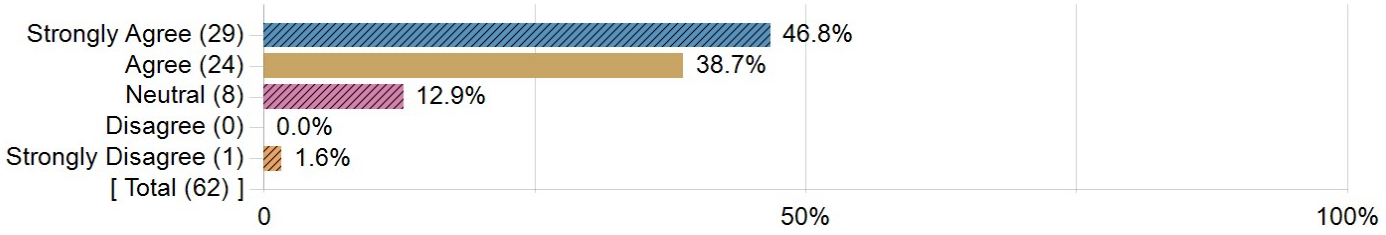
College, School, or Unit Questions

On average, approximately how many hours per week did you spend working outside of the course? Include time on homework, reading, reviewing, papers, projects, etc.



Statistics	Value
Mean	2.63

The course format (online, hybrid, face-to-face) helped me to learn.



Statistics	Value
Mean	4.29

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Report Guide

Guide to the Interpretation of Course Evaluations at UT Austin
The goal of course evaluation process at UT Austin is to drive teaching excellence and to support continuous improvement in teaching and learning experiences. The two sets of scales used for core evaluation questions and the associated weights are:

Strongly Agree (5)
Agree (4)
Neutral (3)
Disagree (2)
Strongly Disagree (1)

Excellent (5)
Very Good (4)
Satisfactory (3)
Unsatisfactory (2)
Very Unsatisfactory (1)

The Mean is calculated by adding all of the weights for a single question and dividing by the number of respondents. The course workload question is not averaged.

The number of students (e.g. respondents) marking each option is reported for each of the items. These frequency distributions provide information about the level of student ratings and the spread and shape of the class distribution of responses. The distributions thus provide a picture of student perception of a course.

Course evaluations provide snapshots of student perspectives on their course-level learning experiences. Most experts on teaching evaluation advise that no individual method gives the complete picture of an instructor's teaching effectiveness; multiple and diverse measures, on multiple occasions, are advised to give a full picture of the teaching effectiveness of a particular instructor. Moreover, other factors, such as size of class, level of the class, and content of the course, can cause small variations in the ratings. Therefore, student perspectives for a particular instructor or course should be interpreted as a snapshot, and not as providing complete information on the teaching effectiveness of that instructor.

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