

Fundamentals of Computer Sci 2 (Spring 202130)

Instructor: **Derbinsky, Nathaniel**
 Subject: **CS**
 Catalog & Section: **2510 04**
 Course ID: **32861**
 Objectives:

Enrollment: **112**
 Responses Incl Declines: **46**
 Declines: **3**

Questions to Assess Students' Online Experience

Question	Number of Responses	Response Rate	Course Mean	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Course Median	Dept. Median	Univ. Median
Online course materials were organized to help me navigate through the course week by week.	43	38%	4.6	4.3	4.4	5.0	5.0	5.0
Online interactions with my instructor created a sense of connection in the virtual classroom.	43	38%	3.9	3.9	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.0
Online course interactions created a sense of community and connection to my classmates.	43	38%	3.4	3.7	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0
I had the necessary computer skills and technology to successfully complete the course.	43	38%	4.4	4.4	4.6	5.0	5.0	5.0

Note: 5:Strongly Agree; 4:Agree; 3:Neutral; 2:Disagree; 1:Strongly Disagree; 0:N/A;

Course Related Questions

Question	Number of Responses	Response Rate	Course Mean	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Course Median	Dept. Median	Univ. Median
The syllabus was accurate and helpful in delineating expectations and course outcomes.	43	38%	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.0	5.0	5.0
Required and additional course materials were helpful in achieving course outcomes.	43	38%	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.0	4.0	5.0

Note: 5:Strongly Agree; 4:Agree; 3:Neutral; 2:Disagree; 1:Strongly Disagree;

Learning Related Questions

Question	Number of Responses	Response Rate	Course Mean	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Course Median	Dept. Median	Univ. Median
In-class sessions were helpful for learning.	43	38%	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.0	4.0	5.0
Out-of-class assignments and/or fieldwork were helpful for learning.	43	38%	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.0	5.0	5.0
This course was intellectually challenging.	43	38%	4.7	4.3	4.3	5.0	5.0	5.0
I learned a lot in this course.	43	38%	4.3	4.3	4.4	5.0	5.0	5.0

Note: 5:Strongly Agree; 4:Agree; 3:Neutral; 2:Disagree; 1:Strongly Disagree;

Instructor Related Questions: Nathaniel Derbinsky

Question	Number of Responses	Response Rate	Course Mean	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Course Median	Dept. Median	Univ. Median
The instructor came to class prepared to teach.	43	38%	4.9	4.5	4.6	5.0	5.0	5.0
The instructor used class time effectively.	43	38%	4.8	4.3	4.4	5.0	5.0	5.0
The instructor clearly communicated ideas and information.	43	38%	4.7	4.2	4.4	5.0	5.0	5.0
The instructor provided sufficient feedback.	43	38%	4.4	4.2	4.3	5.0	4.0	5.0
The instructor fairly evaluated my performance.	43	38%	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.0	5.0	5.0
The instructor was available to assist students outside of class.	43	38%	4.1	4.4	4.4	5.0	5.0	5.0
The instructor facilitated a respectful and inclusive learning environment.	43	38%	4.7	4.5	4.6	5.0	5.0	5.0
The instructor displayed enthusiasm for the course.	43	38%	4.8	4.5	4.6	5.0	5.0	5.0

Note: 5:Strongly Agree; 4:Agree; 3:Neutral; 2:Disagree; 1:Strongly Disagree;

Instructor Effectiveness: Nathaniel Derbinsky

Question	Number of Responses	Response Rate	Course Mean	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Course Median	Dept. Median	Univ. Median
What is your overall rating of this instructor's teaching effectiveness?	43	38%	4.7	4.3	4.5	5.0	5.0	5.0

Note: 5:Almost Always Effective; 4:Usually Effective; 3:Sometimes Effective; 2:Rarely Effective; 1:Never Effective;

Instructor Related Questions: Nathaniel Derbinsky (76 comments)

Q: What were the strengths of this course and/or this instructor?

- 1 Engaging commentary
- 2 He was very good at making the student's ideas feel valid. Also including typed out note templates to fill in during class was EXTREMELY helpful. It allowed me to focus on the concepts of the lecture rather than typing all the syntax.
- 3 Professor Derbinsky would post Eclipse files beforehand so that we could type out the lecture notes with him. I think he was the only professor who typed out the notes, and I was really thankful that he didn't write on a whiteboard. He was also very patient in answering questions and he explained most topics in an easy-to-understand way.
- 4 Lectures were well-organized and helpful in explaining/expanding upon posted lecture notes.
- 5 N/A
- 6 Lecture notes are very helpful because he uploads the files. Very passionate and willing to answer any types of questions
- 7 Very engaging
- 8 Course had some not so interesting topics, but Derbinsky was always helpful and full of energy, so it made it easier to get through. I also like how we got time to experiment with code on our own during class.
- 9 Fundies 2 is generally very difficult, but Nate is a cool guy. Clearly has a lot of experience & knowledge.
- 10 -Prof. Derbinsky was super communicative about when he would be in person for class and when he would be at home.
-played fun music (sometimes) during class while we coded
- 11 Professor Derbinsky made lecture very interesting and was useful in sorting through the material from the lectures more carefully after an initial read through/
- 12 The professor was very friendly and made the class light-hearted while remaining rigorous.
- 13 Professor Derbinsky is consistently enthusiastic and definitely makes class very fun!
- 14 This Professor has a great understanding of the course material and was able to convey those material effectively. I enjoyed the jokes that he made during the lecture.

- 15 I have almost no complaints for this class, except one major one...
- 16 He was really nice and not hard to pay attention to.
- 17 Prof. Derbinsky is an excellent professor all around. He makes me excited for my future in CS. I am likely to take other courses with him in the future simply because he teaches them
- 18 Very enthusiastic and intelligent!
- 19 conducted lectures effectively
- 20 Professor Derbinsky always explained everything well and I always felt like I knew what was going on.
- 21 What we learned in class would be in the homework and were the fundamentals of java
- 22 Professor Derbinsky was always energetic during lectures, and engaged with the classroom both online and in person. Sectioning off time for students to attempt to solve in class-problems on their own really helped with the learning experience, and understanding why things were done. He always answered student's questions, making sure they understood.
- 23 The written lectures were very detailed and well constructed. They are a very good resource! The class lectures were also great before I lost all confidence in my ability and stopped participating. But that was a me problem. Participate, confidence or no!
- 24 The instructor did a great job teaching. He was able to clearly communicate ideas while teaching, and he was always very enthusiastic while teaching.
- 25 being able to make the topic a bit more interesting than it actually is
- 26 his OH weren't at a time that worked well for me, but he's good
- 27 Typed up code instead of writing it by hand - much easier to follow along
- 28 The instructor made Fundies my favorite class. Fundies 1 scared me a little, but with my professor, I now know for a fact I want to pursue CS.
- 29 Derbinsky is a joy as a professor

Q: What could the instructor do to make this course better?

- 1 More applicable course contents
- 2 If possible, come to the classroom rather than teach remotely. Although of course, it is not always possible.
- 3 I know that Professor Derbinsky had other life circumstances going on, but I do think that hosting office hours would be useful for students, especially because he explains things very clearly.
- 4 N/A
- 5 I feel that the assignments and the lectures/notes are sometimes detached. It is not very detached, but it would be better if the student could work way through the assignment by referencing from lecture notes more than going to office hours.
- 6 I think the class was fine. Honestly, everything can be learned from the online lectures alone, but Derbinsky adds some good commentary on top of that and helps if you need more practice.
- 7 Mastermind and Maze assignments were excessive. The office hours queue during a normal week tended to be 10-15 people long, but during the game weeks, the queue got to be 70 people long. The classroom environment was cold and the professors seemed to be generally uncaring about students' wellbeing.
- 8 -Go slower at the beginning with new Java lingo.
- 9 N/A
- 10 While I understand the importance of efficiency, I felt that we spent more time on that than any other topic when it felt to me to be the least important topic of the year.
- 11 The course moved very fast and we always seemed to be running out of time by the end of class to ask any questions.
- 12 More nerdy outside knowledge/jokes, and movies OST like Tron. Maybe I'm just nerdy but I enjoyed those, like the Y2K bug among others that I can't remember.
- 13 I cannot stress this enough... DO NOT MAKE THE HARDEST ASSIGNMENT DUE ON MIDTERM WEEK WHILE THIS CLASS HAS A MIDTERM. In my opinion that was nothing shy of just blatant lack of caring from the professors collectively. It was almost impossible to balance the hw with all midterms, and it is crazy that the professors thought this ok. On top of that, after immense complaining from the students, the response from the teachers was just as bad, stating that it was just bad timing with midterms, and that "there is no way to gauge difficulty in assignments" which is a blatant lie. Nothing has made me more mad in college, and I dont think anything will in the future. I BEG the professors to learn from the mistakes this year, and show a crumb of respect towards students.
- 14 I would suggest working more with the image libraries during class. For the last few homework assignments, I would have also liked to see some more related code since it was difficult to just work off of the limited explanation/pseudocode given. I also felt that the lectures in the last couple of weeks were really rushed and since this is a highly used topic in the workplace I would have liked to spend

more time on it.

- 15 Not much can be improved unless it was in person.
- 16 I wish we could've spent more time on Lectures 30-32. I had a hard time wrapping my head around the algorithm for UCS
- 17 Slow down on more complex concepts especially later in the course
- 18 have assignments that correspond to what we do in lecture and what shows up on exams
- 19 n/a - I thought this course was perfect and was very happy this semester.
- 20 Allow more leniency in grading
- 21 I think slightly more time for working on the in-class problems individually would be helpful, but there is only so much time in one session.
- 22 The office hours were hit or miss this semester. At times, it seemed like the TAs themselves didn't understand the assignments either, particularly the game assignments, which was a bit demoralizing (if you don't know how to do it, how could I?)
- 23 I think the instructor could have made himself more available to students outside of class.
- 24 n/a
- 25 N/a
- 26 Shorter assignments.
- 27 the only pains is the fundies curriculum

Q: Please expand on the instructor's strengths and/or areas for improvement in facilitating inclusive learning.

- 1 I noticed that in the first half of the semester, the professor wasn't really enthusiastic like he used to, but this is to be expected because he caught covid and was feeling fatigue (as someone who caught covid in the second half of the semester, I could understand how that fatigue had affected his teaching). You could see the improvements as he gave lectures in the second half of the semester, especially when he was in classroom. Would go to one of his lecture once this Covid pandemic ends.
- 2 .
- 3 I really enjoyed this professor's teaching style and I hope to have him teach my future classes at Khoury.
- 4 This doesn't have to do with Professor Derbinsky, but the course as a whole. I do wish there was more explanation on how the image library worked. I know the point of the image library was to simulate the 'real world,' but in the real world, there are other resources that explain how certain parts of libraries work. You can just look it up. Yes there were TAs who could help, but since the lines were always ridiculously long for homeworks that used the image library, there was no other resource we could look to.
- 5 No complaints whatsoever
- 6 n/a
- 7 Professor Derbinsky did a good job of engaging both parts of the class in-person and online, and he was always good at answering any questions people had and would take the time to review material thoroughly.
- 8 N/A
- 9 Sometimes it is easy to get lost when he uses terms that students have only been introduced to recently
- 10 Prof. Derbinsky is great with explaining concepts, but it is definitely recommended that the student read the material in advance. However, the instructor can prove the course by creating connections between the two topics as the course progresses.
- 11 I think everything was overall solid.
- 12 The classroom environment in Khoury is generally cold, and the course staff seemed uncaring about students' struggles during the semester, especially during a term when students are struggling with being quarantined, facing world event-related stress, etc. I don't think this is unique to this course, though - I think it is a characteristic of the college in general.
- 13 The professor engaged with both the online and in class students, engaging with the class over teams a lot better than most professors, answering questions as they came up and making interactive polls when he asked the class a question.
- 14 -Need to be more aware of all the CS language that is being used because not everyone comes in with prior knowledge.
- 15 Same as above
- 16 The instructor did a great job teaching in his lectures.
- 17 n/a
- 18 The professor was always inclusive and never made class uncomfortable.
- 19 Was always willing to listen to student feedback and adjust
- 20 Derbinsky is able to make using java as a functional language enjoyable

Questions to Assess Students' Online Experience (25 comments)

Q: Please comment on your experience of the online course environment in the open-ended text box.

- 1 Entertaining
- 2 I definitely vastly preferred when the professor was in the classroom because of how much easier it is to learn in that environment, although I know that it wasn't always possible given the circumstances.
- 3 There were too many students and the online course was not really built for student interaction. However, I was able to get all the necessary information out of the online course.
- 4 N/A
- 5 Great
- 6 It needed to do what it needed to do. I had no problems with it.
- 7 Online course environment was fine. Fundies lectures are usually so big anyways, so I didn't feel like I was missing any classroom community environment or anything.
- 8 -Was not engaging as cameras were not required to be on.
-Did breakout rooms a few times, they were really awkward.
- 9 Lectures worked fine online. Sometimes there were technical issues, but they were sorted out pretty quickly.
- 10 The online environment was very helpful for this course as I could rewatch lectures and follow along on my computer in class.
- 11 I felt like this class was taught very well online
- 12 The main problem I had with the online environment was the office hours queue. I found them to be extremely long and not worth the hours of waiting. I would highly recommend each instructor hold office hours on teams once or twice a week where students can join in if they want without having to wait in line. That way more students can be helped on the general approach to homework problems. I also never got to meet with any professors during office hours, I just met with TAs who were not as knowledgeable about the issues we were having and often couldn't help us.
- 13 Lectures were informative and somewhat engaging but the fundies website felt overwhelming.
- 14 Prof. Derbinsky was out for the first half of the semester for health-related reasons. However, he still made his online lectures as engaging as his live in-person lectures
- 15 Online environment works well for this course in particular. In terms of curriculum the course's pacing is weird -- it's very slow for the first half of the year and then accelerates to a very fast pace with very complex concepts in the latter half of the course, leaving students such as myself a little disillusioned with the course by the end
- 16 very well done
- 17 Professor Derbinsky was an amazing professor and his lectures were always very clear.
- 18 We had our classes remotely on Teams and in-person. The classes were very productive as an online course as Professor Derbinsky would always upload template code on Teams which we would later fill out in class.
- 19 Professor Derbinsky was always very energetic in lectures and made them a little fun, which resulted in a great learning environment and kept students engaged. The starter code included with lectures was easy to access in teams, and it helped with following along in lecture.
- 20 I felt far more isolated in this fundies course. I didn't feel a strong sense of community. Maybe, encourage students to create group chats and collaborate on in-class concepts?
- 21 The lectures were very informational.
- 22 it felt really distant, due to it being online through a screen; I was able to interact with fellow peers but not on the same level if this class was primarily in person.
- 23 10/10
- 24 We did the best that anyone could.
- 25 Derbinsky is an excellent professor!

Student Self-Assessment of their Effort to Achieve Course Outcomes (24 comments)

Q: What I could have done to make this course better for myself.

- 1 Maybe read the lecture notes before going to lecture
- 2 Attend more
- 3 I should have started going to in-person classes as soon as it was available rather than attending online.
- 4 I felt like I tackled this class very well
- 5 Read the textbook.
- 6 I could have tried scheduling appointments with tutors, rather than just studying on my own.
- 7 Nothing
- 8 n/a
- 9 I would have liked to attend lectures while they were taking place more often instead of just watching recordings.
- 10 N/A
- 11 Made sure to pay attention to most aspects of the class which would help me in the homework assigned in class.
- 12 Take more notes during lectures and go to more OH.
- 13 Go to class in person more - helps me focus
- 14 I could have taken more time to read through the lecture notes provided on the CS 2510 website, which were more detailed than in-person lectures.
- 15 -Read the lecture notes
-Pay attention in class more
- 16 Start the homework earlier.
- 17 idk I felt like I did the best I could given the workload and time given. Maybe, deconstruct the written lectures to the parts where they're most relevant for the homework, I did that for the last assignment and it helped a bit
- 18 I could have gone to more office hours to get more help on homeworks and such.
- 19 Read lectures beforehand.
- 20 not procrastinate
- 21 Being more focused in Lecture and giving myself more time to do the homework would have helped me do better.
- 22 I could have gone to class in person more often
- 23 I would have asked more questions during lecture.
- 24 Start assignments early