

North Carolina State University - ClassEval Report

Emplid: 001123529	Name: Jonathan Williams -- Course: Fundamentals of Inf
Term: 2019 Fall	ST 502 001 Courses surveyed - ST 502 001
Question	Response
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	Very invested on getting concepts understood and very understanding to students
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	Some things were way too theoretical but final project was a great idea. Learnt a lot working on it and things learnt in class started to make sense a lot more.
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	More application based explanation might be useful
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	We have too many homeworks and a lot of questions were tested the same thing.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	This professor made an intimidating subject much more digestable. I found that I was never afraid to attend office hours or ask question. I really enjoyed this professor.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	Dr. Williams is a really nice person, very welcome to students' questions and ideas. He treats us with high respect and we all like him.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	I think it is quite useful!
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	As for Dr. Williams' teaching style, we all think he is a genius in stat but we are probably not! Therefore, sometimes I am kind of lost in plenty of proofs though I know it is important. Honestly, my primary interest in statistics is how to apply it for my project or in my area, so I would hope to have more sense of how to apply these concepts in real life practices. I kind of feel there is a difference between master-level and phd-level courses which might be the balance of theoretical and practical learning. This is my biggest impression for this course.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	He is absolutely the best teacher I ever had. Thanks to NCSU. He has the right attitude to be the best professor. The best thing is he comes to the student level to help the student. He is always available for course doubts. His teaching style, asking questions in the class is fantastic. When I told him that I need more time to answer questions as I write, understand and try to answer question, all at a time, he started giving time and a way to do this interaction better.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	Course is really hard to learn but the professor made it simple.
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	I feel if there are any videos recording for this session, it will be really great. Small numerical examples for practice in the class might be good as it concretizes the understanding of the topic.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	Dr. Williams is very very care about his students. Very patient and knowledgeable.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	This course gives me everything I need to know for my job interview.

Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	I like this course.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	Dr. Williams was very receptive to students outside of the class to ensure his students fully understood the material; one example of this is when along with another student I went to his office, not during office hours or with an appointment, and he met with us for an hour. Dr. Williams was very enthusiastic about teaching and made it a point to share real examples of how the methods we were learning were useful. One thing that could be improved is to talk with the previous ST501 professor to see what material was covered; for example, the beginning of the semester I feel like we spent more time on chapters 1-4 than were necessary.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	I think that this course does a good job teaching the theory that is important for understanding statistical tools. Coming from a statistics undergraduate program this course was not a huge step from the mathematical statistics courses I have taken; I think this course could be made more rigorous.
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	I think this course could be made more rigorous, and less time could be spent on review from 502 (maybe a week at most).
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	The instructor is great at explaining some of the abstract statistical concepts into simple example. It really helps understanding why the things we are learning are important. The R code examples also help a lot. Especially for people who do not have lots of experience with R.
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	One thing I would recommend is to create a pdf that has all the Lemma/Theorem that will be learned in this course with a blank part of each Lemma/Theorem for students to take notes on the examples and proofs. I don't know how it can benefit all other students, but I myself just personally like this form of summary.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	He contributed lots of his time to help students. longer office hours usually and extra office hour before the exams.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	Most of all topic was pivotal to know the principle of statistics
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	If there is a lecture note which students can prepare before the which class, the course would be more efficient.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	I thought Dr. Williams was a very nice, receptive professor. I learned a great deal of mathematical statistic theory in this course. However, I thought lectures were hard to follow and often unnecessary details were stressed. He wrote really fast as well so it was tough to copy notes down and pay full attention to what was being said.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	It was hard to know what we were responsible to know for exams. HWs were very long. The final project was interesting, I thought it was a good experience.
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	Maybe it would be good to write down the notes and then pause to allow students to catch up, and then speak about what what was written. I felt lost at times since we went so quickly.

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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	I really appreciated how open the instructor was to questions and the conversational style of the class. I also appreciated how the instructor took time to break down every step and every theorem. It helped with comprehension. The instructor could write on the board quicker to make the pace of the class quicker and able to cover more material in the semester.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	There was a lot of homework for the class. I think to better manage the amount of homework, since many problems were repetitive would be to have some assigned homework and the rest of the problems assigned as extra practice.
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Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the instructor	Dr. Williams made it clear from day 1 and throughout the semester that helping his students succeed is a priority to him. He made himself outside of class for office hours, exam review, and 1-1 questions as needed, and would follow up with students as well. Many professors forget that their students are not just taking their class, but (especially for masters students) have other obligations to families, work, and other instructors. Dr. Williams conveyed appreciation of this reality and really truly helped his students be as successful as possible - while also learning as much of the material as possible - I have never had a professor I have felt to be as genuine and considerate. I would like to point out that while Dr. Williams made this course challenging, it was clear that he did so in order to facilitate understanding of difficult yet fundamental concepts in statistics. If I had to comment on a weakness, I would say that the mathematical rigor of the lectures often made it difficult to keep sight of the high level objectives. While Dr. Williams made himself available outside of class hours to remedy this, I recognize that not every student has the time to spend on interpretation outside of class.
Comment on strengths and weaknesses of the course	Dr. Williams went above and beyond with this course. 502 is the second in a two part series that is by far more theoretical than anything else covered in the Masters of Statistics program. After completing 501, despite getting a good grade, I didn't feel confident in my knowledge of the material, and I also did not really understand how it was applicable to anything else I was learning. Dr. Williams greatly helped on both of those counts - if anything, I now wish that the other courses in this program are more theoretical so I have as much of an understanding as was hinted at in 502. This class was very challenging, but as a result of taking it with Dr. Williams I feel much more confident in my statistical understanding of concepts and more prepared for interviews and applying my knowledge outside of the classroom.
Give suggestions on how the course or how the instruction could be improved.	My overall suggestions are less on 502 specifically and more on the 501/502 series vs the rest of the courses in the Masters of Statistics program. 501 and 502 are theoretical courses in an overall very applied program. After 502 I understand how important they are, but even that understanding is largely because I work in an industry that needs a lot more application of the knowledge in this series. If 501/502 could be made more applied, or the applied classes could show more how the theory is used (503 does a good job of this), I think that overall students would be more motivated to learn the material and not just seek the grades in these courses.