University of Michigan
Fall 2022 Instructor Report
EECS 481-001: Software Engin
Westley Weimer

33 out of 157 students responded to this evaluation.

Responses to University-wide questions about the course:

	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/A	Your Median	Univ-wide Median	School/College Median
This course advanced my understanding of the subject matter. (Q1631)	21	6	4	0	0	0	4.8	4.5	4.3
My interest in the subject has increased because of this course. (Q1632)	19	7	1	3	1	0	4.7	4.2	4.0
I knew what was expected of me in this course.(Q1633)	17	6	6	2	0	0	4.6	4.6	4.3
I had a strong desire to take this course.(Q4)	18	9	3	1	0	0	4.6	4.0	3.9
As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was (SA=Much Lighter, A=Lighter, N=Typical, D=Heavier, SD=Much Heavier). (Q891)	2	9	14	6	0	0	3.2	3.0	2.9

Responses to University-wide questions about the instructor:

	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/A	Your Median	Univ-wide Median	School/College Median
Westley Weimer seemed well prepared for class meetings.(Q230)	27	3	0	0	0	0	4.9	4.8	4.6
Westley Weimer explained material clearly.(Q199)	25	6	0	0	0	0	4.9	4.7	4.5
Westley Weimer treated students with respect.(Q217)	28	3	0	0	0	0	4.9	4.8	4.7

Responses to questions about the course:

	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/A	Your Median
Overall, this was an excellent course. (Q1)	21	7	0	3	0	0	4.8
The textbook made a valuable contribution to the course. (Q64)	3	4	3	2	2	16	3.5
Prerequisites provided adequate preparation for this course. (Q61)	13	12	2	1	0	3	4.4
I felt comfortable asking questions in class. (Q521)	25	6	0	0	0	0	4.9
The discussion section was a valuable part of this course. (Q1771)	8	3	4	3	3	10	3.7
I developed confidence in my abilities as an engineer. (Q1769)	20	7	2	2	0	0	4.7
I developed the ability to solve real world engineering problems. (Q1770)	17	9	2	2	0	1	4.6
I felt included and valued when working with other students. (Q253)	24	5	2	0	0	0	4.9

Responses to questions about the instructor:

	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/A	Your Median
Overall, Westley Weimer was an excellent teacher. (Q2)	28	3	0	0	0	0	4.9

The medians are calculated from Fall 2022 data. University-wide medians are based on all UM classes in which an item was used. The school/college medians in this report are based on classes that are upper division with enrollment of 75 or greater in College of Engineering.

Written Comments

Comment on the quality of instruction in this course. (Q900)

Comments
Wes Weimer is really good. I never really attended the other lectures
I thought the lectures and instruction of the course were top notch. Informative and clear, yet also fun and engaging, and not too long or tiring thanks to the always–interesting blue–border–slide sections in the middle of the lecture. The professors' energy and passion helped me feel invested, and their openness and friendliness (and perhaps the candy too) made me feel comfortable asking questions.
Wes gives amazing lectures
Professor Weimer was an engaging and fantastic teacher who knew how to keep students engaged and make the content applicable to our real careers.
Excellent course
Wes is the best lecturer I've had at the University of Michigan. In that sense, Xinyu was done a disservice to be directly compared in spite of being a much newer lecturer. Wes's lectures felt practiced to a point of effortlessness. I know effortlessness takes a lot of effort. I know that with time, Xinyu is also fully capable of doing the same. Xinyu respects his students and cares about the material — the rest can be learned.
Wes is an amazing lecturer, and keeps students engaged every meeting.
The material, as tested, is explained very clearly. I never even felt the need to ask clarifying questions during class.
Wes is a fantastic and engaging lecturer and is always extremely encouraging to answer students' questions
Westley Weimer was an excellent professor and I enjoyed ever class period. He taught engineering concepts so well and in a stimulating manner.
Very nice. 10/10
Wes was probably one of the best lecturers I've ever had.
N/A
Great quality of instruction and helped me understand more software concepts to prepare me for the industry.
I absolutely loved Wes Weimer's enthusiasm for the course. The projects were great, and I found the readings interesting, but they were really the one that made the course for me :)
Wes was a great instructor and one of my favorite professors so far
Very good.

What were the strengths of the course ? (Q953)

Comments
Good teaching, valuable material
The course taught me skills or concepts that I think will be more applicable and useful to me in the future than most project–based courses. I feel more prepared for the future, and I have a lot more tools in my metaphorical arsenal now as a result of this class!
Relevant topics accompanied by interesting assignments
The homework assignments were a strong part of this course and were explained very clearly.
very helpful for our future career
This course spurred interest in topics tangential to the material. I've never been so excited to go to a CS class, and I've never been so excited to do out–of–class research.
Reading–heavy, with projects that do a good job of applying content learned in lecture.
This course covers a lot of bases which can help inspire interests in new topics. The course also made me more comfortable with unclear goals.
The wide range of software engineering topics covered and learning how things are actually done in industry
The professor and course structure
Lectures were great and the homework, while tedious at times, was very structured and well thought out
The lectures and the piazza.
N/A
Useful hw assignments
Interesting highly–relevant projects and readings, and lectures taught by an extremely enthusiastic & knowledgable professor.
breadth
This course did go over some useful material, and the instructor did a good job in keeping the class engaged.

What suggestions would you make for improving the course ? (Q955)

Comments
Less homework
I wish more could have been done to prepare us students for the homework assignments. While I'm sure they were intended to teach students new tools and languages outside of our comfort zones, it was sometimes difficult to keep up with all of those new things with self–learning, which didn't always prove to be fruitful.
I do not have any suggestions
homework workload is large, and quizzes are too much
The discussions as office hours led to me simply not caring about them. I knew I could do the homework, so there was no reason for me to go.
Flexibility with attending different lecture sections.
This course covers so many topics it seems to leave less room for going in depth into a few critical engineering topics. The main one that comes to mind is project design. The two lectures that covered it provide a strong intro but I wish we had more time to practice it. In fact, setting aside a homework assignment that is all about designing and justifying a design for a project would have taught me a lot.
N/A
Keep Westley Weimer as the main professor
None that I can think of
Making the homework specifications slightly more clear. I got lost in them sometimes even though they had all of the info I needed.
N/A
NA
I don't think the special topics lectures (at the end of the semester) should be included in the final exam. Despite their fun–ness, some students have greater motivation in the lectures but most students did not vote for the options that were presented (most students did not vote). It felt weird to have to review romance novels etc. in a software engineering class knowing that I won't do well on this material compared to actual software engineering topics. Also, I know the principal topic of instruction is the fact that reading comprehension is hard, but every homework description has been extremely long and somewhat hard to follow. Beyond a point, this feels unnecessarily confusing to students (or at least, myself).
Make the content more interesting, at times it feels very dull and boring due to the nature of the material.
I wasn't able to see the purpose of some of the assignments we were given. I understand that having open ended, or intentionally vague problems does occur in real world, but some of the assignments that were meant to model this seemed to only provide frustration, without much valuable learning.

Among the courses you have already taken, which proved the most (or least) effective in preparing you for this course, and why? (Q1098)

Comments
EECS 497 was a very similar course to this one and I took that already
This is a tough question, since EECS 481 is unlike many classes in the major, being less project–based and more understanding and application–based, also involving new tools and languages and concepts that were not taught in those other classes. In that sense, many humanities classes actually prepared me more for the schedule of doing pre–readings before classes, while classes like EECS 280 and EECS 281 helped prepare me for the long and looming deadlines of the homework assignments.
This class was very different from other coding classes I've taken, what prepared me the most was having an internship before taking this class
N/A
I feel like anyone could take this course after even EECS280. The concepts it teaches feel relevant to other upper–level CS projects.
EECS 494 helped me a lot with getting in the habit of meeting regularly with my partner.
EECS 485 – they systems integration experience made 481 hw easier
EECS 201 because every hw had to be done in an Ubuntu
EECS 281, introduced me to more projects and coding approaches.
281 and 493.
N/A
EECS 497, taught some similar software concepts such as agile, etc.
eecs 281 since you learned most of the technical aspects to understand the content.
EECS 485, as I thought both classes were more 'using Google' classes, rather than explicitly applying content learned in class.

How might the class climate be made more inclusive of diverse students? (Q910)

Comments
Not possible. Maxxd out right now
They did a great job!
N/A
Great question. I think Wes has a deliberate and calculated approach to fostering student involvement. I'd encourage him to share it with other instructors. I'd also encourage, in such a large class, to have students seated in the back of the room come to the front. It can be harder for people in the back to participate. Shuffling up the seating every once in a while could be helpful. https://soar.suny.edu/bitstream/handle/20.500.12648/5615/ehd_theses/414/fulltext%20(1).pdf?sequence=1 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7406012/ http://english2010information.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/59515505/Patrisha%20Ganowsky_Effect%20of%20Classroom%20Seating%20on%20Student%20Academic%20Performance.pdf
All the industry examples come from American companies. Maybe large foreign employers could be included?
N/A
If the reading comprehension was a bit more forgiving.
I think it does a great job of this already
N/A
It is very inclusive
It does a great job at that already!

University of Michigan
Fall 2022 Instructor Report
EECS 481-002: Software Engin
Westley Weimer

29 out of 136 students responded to this evaluation.

Responses to University-wide questions about the course:

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This course advanced my understanding of the subject matter. (Q1631)	18	9	0	0	0	0	4.8	4.5	4.3
My interest in the subject has increased because of this course. (Q1632)	15	8	2	2	0	0	4.6	4.2	4.0
I knew what was expected of me in this course.(Q1633)	14	11	2	0	0	0	4.5	4.6	4.3
I had a strong desire to take this course.(Q4)	13	11	2	1	0	0	4.5	4.0	3.9
As compared with other courses of equal credit, the workload for this course was (SA=Much Lighter, A=Lighter, N=Typical, D=Heavier, SD=Much Heavier). (Q891)	1	4	18	4	0	0	3.0	3.0	2.9

Responses to University-wide questions about the instructor:

	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/A	Your Median	Univ-wide Median	School/College Median
Westley Weimer seemed well prepared for class meetings.(Q230)	25	2	0	0	0	0	5.0	4.8	4.6
Westley Weimer explained material clearly.(Q199)	23	4	0	0	0	0	4.9	4.7	4.5
Westley Weimer treated students with respect.(Q217)	22	5	0	0	0	0	4.9	4.8	4.7

Responses to questions about the course:

	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/A	Your Median
Overall, this was an excellent course. (Q1)	16	8	3	0	0	0	4.7
The textbook made a valuable contribution to the course. (Q64)	6	3	9	0	1	8	3.4
Prerequisites provided adequate preparation for this course. (Q61)	12	13	1	0	0	1	4.4
I felt comfortable asking questions in class. (Q521)	14	8	0	0	0	5	4.7
The discussion section was a valuable part of this course. (Q1771)	9	5	3	3	2	5	4.1
I developed confidence in my abilities as an engineer. (Q1769)	17	9	0	1	0	0	4.7
I developed the ability to solve real world engineering problems. (Q1770)	14	12	0	1	0	0	4.5
I felt included and valued when working with other students. (Q253)	15	6	0	0	0	6	4.8

Responses to questions about the instructor:

	SA	A	N	D	SD	N/A	Your Median
Overall, Westley Weimer was an excellent teacher. (Q2)	22	5	0	0	0	0	4.9

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Written Comments

Comment on the quality of instruction in this course. (Q900)

Comments
The instructors were the most engaging I have ever had at UM! This made it really easy to stay focused and learn a lot!
The quality of Wes Weimer's instruction is phenomenal. His style of explaining concepts in lectures, empathy towards students, and sophisticated articulation stand out most, and I found it better than that of most other professors I've had at college.
I thought the instructors were well prepared and I appreciated how active Westley Weimer was on piazza.
The lectures were good, but some seemed outdated/irrelevant to what I have seen in internships. Like some of the Google info did not match up with what I experienced at my internship there.
Wes's lectures are the best I have seen in all of my time here at umich. Wish he taught all of the courses I want to take.
I really enjoyed the lectures, and thought the material was presented in a very convincing manner.
W instruction
The lecture material was taught in a fun and informative way.
Good
The quality of the instruction in this course was great. Wes's lectures were very engaging and made the material very applicable
By far one of the best courses here at the university. It covers topics that are necessary for software engineering.

What were the strengths of the course ? (Q953)

Comments
The strengths were definitely the lectures and the homeworks, especially homework 6. The lectures were extremely engaging and taught even more than I asked for with the bonus trivia and psychology. The homeworks were directly relevant to lecture concepts, and most of them were interesting! I liked homeworks 1, 3, 5, and 6 the most! Although I dreaded going into it, I ended up liking homework 6 since it was one of the only assignments at UM where the experience seemed more important to me than the grade.
Course homework is designed well with a decent level of rigor. I came out of each assignment with a better understanding of some aspect of software engineering. The lectures by Wes Weimer lead to lots of learning and new knowledge.
Guest speakers!
Covers a lot of different topics, so I was not too confusing.
I working on the homeworks felt very free and realistic to what actual SW engin is like. It felt very practical
projects
Lectures
Instructors
Strong lecture materials and lots of office hours.
Topics / organization
Breadth of topics and applications to the real world, openness and transparency from course staff
The professors and class material

What suggestions would you make for improving the course ? (Q955)

Comments
I think the readings are important, but reading research papers in their entirety did not ever feel very valuable to me. My suggestion would then be to section off which parts of the research papers to read or to assign less research papers to read.
I'd suggest reducing the structured participation activities because 1. they add another layer of complexity beyond reading quizzes & homework for a low benefit and 2. lecture summaries can serve as a better way to ensure we watched recordings. I found these to be redundant with lecture content, especially since students watching the recording can listen to the discussion in which the students and professor share their responses to the in–class participation activity.
I thought the guest speakers were great, however it might be interesting to hear the perspective of a software engineer working for a smaller company or a start–up, rather than just big tech.
Readings / participation activities did not benefit me at all.
Maybe extend the section 2 activity due time to 11:59. I understand the rationale for making it exactly 48 hours, but there were many times I mistakenly planned around doing it in the evening of the day it was due (which is, of course, my fault, but as a student when everything else in every class I take is due at 11:59, thats what being due on a specific day means to me)
I felt that the final exam was more about answering the questions as quickly as possible rather than testing concepts from the course.
Make the due dates for participation and quizzes the same time instead of different times.
homework reports feel more like busy work than a reflection
I would recommend adding practice problems to discussions

Among the courses you have already taken, which proved the most (or least) effective in preparing you for this course, and why? (Q1098)

Comments
EECS 280 and 281 just because they taught me how to code
The core EECS path of 183, 280, and 281 prepared me best for this course.
EECS 485 prepared me the most for this class since there was more real–world software engineering and lots of command–line skills involved.
EECS 218, EECS 485, EECS 376
EECS 201 was the most effective because it prepares you for dealing with UNIX and Python for the assignments. EECS 390's fourth project was useful for the mutation HW.
EECS 281, there I learned about some of the testing concepts we learned for this course.
Basic programming skills (intro courses like 280, 281) were sufficient to be able to do all of the coding activities for homework assignments

How might the class climate be made more inclusive of diverse students? (Q910)

Comments
I do not have any suggestions in this regard.
There doesn't need to be a change in the way the class is run to make it more inclusive, but it's possible that having more guest lectures from people with different backgrounds would add more perspective.
N/A, was pretty good.
N/A
The climate is very inclusive.
I think the course staff is great about being inclusive. However, the wording about strict deadlines was kind of off–putting for someone who was likely to have to ask for an extension or two for assignments