Final Evaluation (CTEF Numeric) for LATHROP, Richard H. COMPSCI 171 LEC A (34350), Fall Qtr 2012

Responses: 99/134 (73.88%)

A. Please comment on the following areas and be as specific as possible:

1. What are the instructor's teaching strengths?

- Ability the cover the breadth of the material in a very organized and timely fashion.
- Clear, well prepared, very enthusiastic about class material.
- Clear. Helpful. Organized.
- clear powerpoints, interesting videos after every lecture
- Communicates lessons clearly, with interesting related videos at the end of lectures.
- concise
- Covering a wide variety of topics pertaining to AI that summarize the current state of AI knowledge.
- Covers the material with his lecture slides well and clearly answers any student's questions.
- Easy to talk to, genuinely interested in the material.
- Encourages students to learn and provides plenty of resources to do so. Sends lots of emails out to inform students of what's going on.
- Enthusiasm
- Enthusiastic about and understands subject material. Speaks clearly and easy to understand (something unfortunately uncommon among professors I've taken) Answered questions well.
- Explained the subject very well, enthusiastic about the material
- Fully prepared in his lectures. He knows what he is going to talk about and says it effectively.
- Fun, well prepared
- Funny, encouraging, and creates good slides that make sense both in and out of lecture. Also very polite.
- Good
- Good lectures
- Good slides.
- Good teaching pace
- Great emphasis on order and structure
- Great examples, analogies. Good use of video also.
- Great speaker, knows what he's talking about.
- Had a clear and concise voice so it was easy to listen to him during his lectures.
- He's definitely very knowledgeable in the concepts and the theory of the subject matter.
- He's good at explaining some of the more difficult material in the text
- He is knowledgeable about the subject.
- He is very intelligent in answering questions. He makes the material very clear. He also makes it clear what he will test on. He tells us what to study according to what he will put on the tests.
- He is very well organized so it is easy for students to review material before a quiz/test.
- He really tries as a teacher and listens to students
- His lectures are very clear and concise. He goes through the material in a great pace and he is always willing to clarify any questions we may have. He's also incredibly approachable.

- His passion for the course material.
- His passion on the subject and also his passion to teach. He also puts the actual learning as a priority.
- His quizzes and exams were fair. Having multiple examples to study from was very helpful and appreciated. His distribution of "extra credit" was a nice incentive to encourage students to do a little more, but didn't have an impact so big as to feel necessary to do well.
- His understanding in the material.
- is clear on topics
- Keeps lectures lively and shows interesting related videos.
- Knowledge, and interest to the topic
- Knowledgeable about the material. Lectures are interesting, engaging, and provide useful insight about contemporary applications of the material. Responds quickly to student emails, and makes some questions and answers available to the whole class.
- Knows material
- Knows material very well
- Lectures clearly and challenges us. Very helpful and responsive. Seems to care a lot about the students. Lecture notes were very helpful for the quizzes and midterm.
- Lecture slides are communicated well.
- Lot's of examples, always asks if there are questions
- Makes it clear what the material is and what needs to be known.
- Manly
- none
- ok
- Passion
- Passionate about the material. Shows interesting videos at the end of lecture. Quizzes often.
- Posting lecture slides gave good study material.
- Presents material very clearly, provides detailed feedback on how we did on quizzes,
- Provides lots of context for how the algorithms are used in real life.
- Providing material from previous quarter to give students a feel for his teaching style. Very straightforward, and he wants students to succeed.
- Really good at explaining things, both on the first time and when people ask questions and he has to find alternative explanations.
- Really seems to take his time in fully explaining answers to students questions so that they understand.
- Reinforces concepts very well.
- Seems invested in the material.
- Smart, knowledgeable, friendly, funny.
- Speaks clearly
- Speaks clearly and tries to make the subjects interesting.
- Strong explanations and knowledge over his subject field
- The instructor is very good at lecturing and motivating. Some topics aren't incredibly interesting, but the professor always did a great job lecturing. His mentality on grading and giving tests (a carrot on a stick to learn the material, not a competition) was great, and I wish every teacher had this mentality. The teacher was very professional, and very responsive all the time. I always felt like I could ask any question in class, he never belittled any students. I really liked being able to see past quiz and test material. I hate going into a test/quiz, and not knowing what to expect! I can honestly say he is in the top 3 for professors at UCI.

- The instructor offers decent examples in class and plenty of opportunities to seek help if there is any misunderstandings.
- The professor goes over the material well in class, but I wish we had more examples and less definitions.
- Uses powerpoint slides for lecture and in discussions, TA goes over problems
- Very calm and appropriate voice when explaining material
- Very clear, passionate about AI
- Very detailed, fair quizzes and midterms, extra credit opportunities
- Very enthusiastic. Willing to help students and try to explain until students understand
- Very enthusiastic about subject, very knowledgeable about material, presents material in a concise and easy to understand way
- Very fair professor and knows his subject.
- Very fun and enjoying. Excellent slides and explanations on them.
- Very intelligent and kind man. He takes a very good interest in the welfare of the class, and pays attention to what people are having trouble with and updates the lecture slides and examples accordingly so that we perform better for the next quiz or exam. I really liked the cultural interest links on the class website too. It gave insight into other interesting areas of AI that weren't just limited to the theory we were learning in the course, it really got me interested in AI even more (especially the soccer robots, they were so cute!) I really liked the forwarding of emails to the entire class when someone in the class emailed something relevant (like the project) to the professor. It really helped me think about things I needed to do on the project that I hadn't considered before. Tests were, for the most part, very fair, as a lot of it was taken directly from previous tests and I was able to study very effectively for them by walking through those examples.
- very knowledgeable. will answer any question no matter if it is off topic
- Very knowledgeable and has great enthusiasm about subject.
- Very organized and repeats things a lot.
- well-explained
- 21 blank answer(s).

2. How can this instructor improve as a teacher?

- Actually help students with the project, and post instructions before week 7!
- AI shells can be improved.
- Become more personable for students
- Be more concise in lecture.
- Be more organized. The shell's were very poorly written, and things felt like they were just winging it.
- changing the slides to improve information transfer Some oft he slides contain to much information and its hard to try and go through everything
- could spend more time talking and helping out on class project
- Don't skip over the material so quickly when we are running out of time.
- Get the class more involved, go through examples on the board don't just lecture.
- Give more examples in lecture.
- Good instructor
- Had a hard time with project since TA and instructor couldn't help with understanding the code.

- Having experience using Java could help students more with the project in terms of setup and troubleshooting.
- He's as solid a teacher as you can get
- He cannot. He is a beast.
- He is too boring.
- He often plays videos at the end of lectures, but maybe playing them at the beginning or middle of the class would be better.
- His lecture slides should be simpler and easier to understand.
- His notes are hard to understand and don't have a lot of examples, it's mostly proofs and theories.
- I don't really like to see answers after the quiz, but that's just me. Most students definitely needed more time on the first quiz, but every quiz after that you were good at giving extra time if it made sense.
- I dont know
- I have no complaints
- I think he does a find job the way he teaches
- I think using more examples could help the students understand the material.
- I wish we did a little bit less on powerpoint, but the material learned in class was well put and I enjoyed learning wide range of stuff this quarter.
- Learning about different concepts are good, but should put more emphasis on the connection between them. An example would be that we use a more specific approach to solve problems rather than try to build a general problem solver because it is faster. There should be a way to tie these concepts down. The book does it however.
- Maybe not dwell on the subjects that we learned previously and go faster paced.
- Maybe not use a monotone voice in lecture. And not go off and explain a answer to a student's question with unnecessary details.
- Maybe provide more examples for important topics (such as tree searches).
- More EXamples of relavant course material
- N/A
- n/a
- no
- No discernible improvements.
- none
- No need to spent over 20 minutes going over 5 propositional logic questions we've been over in almost every other CS class since 1st year. Incredibly tedious, that's why people started walking out when quizzes were corrected, incredibly slow and boring going over things. Quizzes were generally disorganized. The sheet of paper, neighbors ID's and inconsistent row and seat numbering was completely unnecessary and overcomplicated, wasted a large amount of time and created unnecessary stress. The code for the project was really really bad. I understand that Java isn't a first language for you or the TAs, but as a CS professor, you could learn Java and make a better shell than the provided one in a weekend! Java is the main language they teach undergraduates here, and I don't think it's unreasonable to expect our professors are able to work in it, especially when we're paying $> \$15,000$/year in tuition, it just feels like we're being taken advantage of! Having student written projects that depend on Massively outdated versions of Java (1.6 and Swing!) seems quite unprofessional, me and my partner had to spend a large number of hours just getting the project to build before we even started to think about coding the AI.

- None that I can think off.

- Not spend so much time working through long problems by hand on the board.

- ok

- Other than a few formulas and some examples, the lecture slides weren't very useful at all. Most of the material seemed to be taken directly from the book. The theory was interesting, but really didn't prepare us for the exam, especially when compared to the practice tests, which actually walked us through examples such that we could actually understand what was going on. If the lecture slides focused more on practical examples rather than theory, this course would have been a lot easier to understand from the lecture standpoint. Additionally, I didn't really like how some of the quizzes used material from past quizzes. I understand it was a motivation for us to keep current on the material, but I spent a lot of time trying to learn the new material, and as such, suffered on the next quiz because I had forgotten some of the previous material. This is something, in my opinion, that should have been saved for the midterm. It was, and at that point it was hardly fair because we'd seen the same problem 3 times and it wasn't so much about learning the material as it was memorizing answers.

- Provide more description with figures/diagrams on ppt

- Provide well-designed shells

- Send out too many emails

- Simulating examples on the board is very helpful for searches

- Some minor things were more complicated than they had to be such as your seat's location.

- Some of the lecture slides could be made a bit clearer

- Test material is often reused word-for-word or otherwise pointless or easy to figure out intuitively (for example, matching definitions often requires only a very cursory knowledge to do well). SAT-style negative points for wrong answers don't add any value or accuracy to test grading in almost all cases. The purpose of these is usually to penalize guessing, but on most questions, such as the search simulations, it's nearly impossible to guess effectively. The negative points only penalize students who know what they're doing but make small mistakes like opening node children in the wrong order.

- The class schedule is confusing.

- The lecture material seems way more complicated that what is actually tested. I'm lost during the lecture but do well on the quizzes.

- The lectures were a little difficult to get through. While his overall speaking tone was nice, the pace through material would be very slow at times, and very quick at others (making notes taking difficult). Also, while little videos related to the material were nice, showing them at the end of the class made them difficult to watch because many people would start packing up making it difficult to hear or see the video (having REALLY low volume didn't help much). One final thing, the code provided as a shell for the final project was VERY buggy and outdated, meaning we had to spend several hours debugging the shell code before we could even begin working on our own code, and some issues only showed up at the very end (creating a jar to turn in) causing panic as we had to find solutions to problems more or less last minute.

- The teacher can improve by perhaps being a bit more involved with the students. While AI is interesting, it does not always allow for close interaction from students. Offering questions in class and encouraging the students to solve it or offer up answers would help.

- The website is miserably organized. It's all on one page that has to be scrolled through. Pages would be nice. When the code was given out for the project it should have been clearer as to what was the official code, and in decent working order before being handed out. It was annoying to get setup properly.

- towards the end i was daydreaming a lot. It's really my fault, but if you showed a bit more interest it would be good.

- Try motivating students to learn. Focuses too hard on the failures of the students rather than success. For example, on first quiz, average quiz score was low. Repeatedly told students how disappointed he was in us (he sent us multiple emails to inform us how disappointed he was) and blamed the students for not studying hard enough. Does not trust students.

- Try to cut down on the length of time spent going over a quiz in class when it means the lecture will get scrunched to 30 minutes.

- Understand lab and instruct lab

- Unsure.

- Use more examples.

- use simpler explanations, better starting code for project, lecture can be too explicit (already in slides) where I find myself writing down no notes

- WRT the course, I can't think of anything off the top of my head.

- 39 blank answer(s).

3. Any other comments about this course?

- As far as I can tell, an excellent introduction to artificial intelligence.

- A very interesting and worthwhile course. Also I really enjoyed the project.

- Easily one of my favorite courses so far.

- enjoyed the project and learned a lot from it

- Fascinating.

- Good class. Project was hard. I learned material though.

- Good pacing, interesting and useful project

- Great course. Really enjoyed it. Just wish I could have dedicated more time to the class.

- He lectured too much, it never sparked my interest in the subject. Lecture was boring.

- interesting field in CS

- It's alright. Not too satisfying, but then agian, it is an intro course.

- I think it would have been cool to have some smaller projects devoted to other aspects of the course (knowledge engineering, logic, etc.). It would have been more work but I think I would have greatly appreciated seeing how it is done in the real world, rather than just the theory or paper examples.

- I thought it was very interesting

- I wish the project had some help from TA. It was very hard to do on own. It is introductory class so it should be easier for coding...I wish I could have learned techniques from the TA on how to tackle coding assignments. It would prepare us well for other AI tracks.

- I would say for the project next time try something a bit different Maybe instead of doing something that involves making a game with complex A.I we could focus more on knowledge base computation. It seems like a much more worth while area to focus as it deals more intelligently then a alpha-beta search method

- Java Shell for projects is not very easy to understand

- Lab was extremely unorganized

- Loved it! Very enjoyable

- maybe split the project up, 2 due dates. I kept pushing it off, didn't get to finish in time.

- Much more interesting than I anticipated

- N/A

- N/A

- No.
- No.
- no comment
- none
- None
- None.
- None.
- None.
- Nope
- ok
- Over the course of this quarter, I've learned that AI is a very broad topic; one that can't be covered in ten weeks. I know that it's not possible, but if it was, it would be better (in terms of digesting and appreciating this subject the way that it was meant to be appreciated) if this course was actually split up into two courses. For the first four weeks of the course, even in spite of the instructor's suggestions (which I did follow) on how to study for this course, it didn't really occur to me exactly what was going on until about week 4. I doubt that I have a shot at getting an A in this course, but without regarding scores and grades, it has sparked a genuine interest in the subject, and I could see myself mastering the material over time, on my own. The only thing negative that I would have to say about the course, is that I have had to spend more time than I would have liked sifting through jargon to get to what I needed to understand.
- Posting previous quizzes and exams made it very clear what is expected. I liked that.
- Quite possibly one of the worst most disorganized course websites I've seen here at UCI. I'm surprised being a CS class, that you weren't able to either make a better one or find a student with some knowledge of webdesign. Weeks started on Thursdays, week numbers were labeled incorrectly. Basically a disorganized wall of text, horrible to navigate and all the weeks mislabeled. Pretty embarrassing for a computer science course, I've seen history professors who can make a better website.
- Quizzes really helped keep me on track/prevented me from falling behind
- So far, it's been a great course. If there was a intermediate course on AI that you taught, I would definitely take that as well.
- The course was interesting and helpful.
- The project component of this course was managed very poorly. The instructor simply blew off student questions, saying "I only know Lisp", and basically distanced himself from the (poorly-written) code he gave us. Also, a guide for the project was not even posted until late in the quarter, so I ended up having to re-write most of my group's project to conform to the new specifications. This is total BS, especially at the end of the quarter.
- The project was very interesting, and the course highlighted many interesting aspects of AI.
- The quizzes, midterms, and finals from previous quarters helped a lot in understanding the material, and for studying.
- The re-use of questions really helped me learn the material since it pushed me to figure out what I did wrong on the quizzes and exams.
- The videos he frequently shows at the end of class are always entertaining, and they really exposed me to the amazing feats of AI.
- Too many emails, will probably get lost in mailbox.
- Very interesting and enjoyable course.
- Would be a lot better if the tournament shell was released early

- 53 blank answer(s).

B. Please choose the appropriate rating:

If you have no opinion on the question asked or if it does not apply, please select "Not Applicable."

4. The course instructor shows enthusiasm for and is interested in the subject.

52	9 (Excellent)	Value: 9
26	8	Value: 8
9	7	Value: 7
9	6 (Good)	Value: 6
0	5	Value: 5
0	4	Value: 4
1	3 (Fair)	Value: 3
0	2	Value: 2
0	1 (Barely Satisfactory)	Value: 1
1	0 (Unsatisfactory)	Value: 0
1	Not Applicable	No Value
8.12	Mean	
9.00	Median	
1.37	Std Dev	

5. The course instructor stimulates your interest in the subject.

30	9 (Excellent)	Value: 9
20	8	Value: 8
14	7	Value: 7
19	6 (Good)	Value: 6
8	5	Value: 5
1	4	Value: 4
2	3 (Fair)	Value: 3
0	2	Value: 2
2	1 (Barely Satisfactory)	Value: 1
1	0 (Unsatisfactory)	Value: 0
1	Not Applicable	No Value
7.15	Mean	
8.00	Median	
1.90	Std Dev	

6. The course instructor meets stated objectives of the course.

50	9 (Excellent)	Value: 9
20	8	Value: 8
14	7	Value: 7
10	6 (Good)	Value: 6
0	5	Value: 5
0	4	Value: 4
1	3 (Fair)	Value: 3
0	2	Value: 2
0	1 (Barely Satisfactory)	Value: 1
1	0 (Unsatisfactory)	Value: 0
2	Not Applicable	No Value
8.03	Mean	
9.00	Median	
1.42	Std Dev	

7. The course instructor is accessible and responsive.

55	9 (Excellent)	Value: 9
19	8	Value: 8
5	7	Value: 7
9	6 (Good)	Value: 6
0	5	Value: 5
0	4	Value: 4
1	3 (Fair)	Value: 3
0	2	Value: 2
0	1 (Barely Satisfactory)	Value: 1
1	0 (Unsatisfactory)	Value: 0
5	Not Applicable	No Value
8.21	Mean	
9.00	Median	
1.42	Std Dev	

8. The course instructor creates an open and fair learning environment.

50	9 (Excellent)	Value: 9
21	8	Value: 8
9	7	Value: 7
13	6 (Good)	Value: 6
0	5	Value: 5
0	4	Value: 4
0	3 (Fair)	Value: 3
0	2	Value: 2
1	1 (Barely Satisfactory)	Value: 1
1	0 (Unsatisfactory)	Value: 0
1	Not Applicable	No Value
8.00	Mean	
9.00	Median	
1.54	Std Dev	

9. The course instructor encourages students to think in this course.

39	9 (Excellent)	Value: 9
16	8	Value: 8
20	7	Value: 7
15	6 (Good)	Value: 6
2	5	Value: 5
1	4	Value: 4
1	3 (Fair)	Value: 3
1	2	Value: 2
0	1 (Barely Satisfactory)	Value: 1
1	0 (Unsatisfactory)	Value: 0
1	Not Applicable	No Value
7.58	Mean	
8.00	Median	
1.65	Std Dev	

10. The course instructor's presentations and explanations of concepts were clear.

33	9 (Excellent)	Value: 9
17	8	Value: 8
16	7	Value: 7
23	6 (Good)	Value: 6
3	5	Value: 5
1	4	Value: 4
2	3 (Fair)	Value: 3
1	2	Value: 2
0	1 (Barely Satisfactory)	Value: 1
1	0 (Unsatisfactory)	Value: 0
1	Not Applicable	No Value
7.32	Mean	
8.00	Median	
1.73	Std Dev	

11. Assignments and exams covered important aspects of the course.

50	9 (Excellent)	Value: 9
19	8	Value: 8
13	7	Value: 7
9	6 (Good)	Value: 6
1	5	Value: 5
0	4	Value: 4
1	3 (Fair)	Value: 3
1	2	Value: 2
0	1 (Barely Satisfactory)	Value: 1
1	0 (Unsatisfactory)	Value: 0
1	Not Applicable	No Value
7.97	Mean	
9.00	Median	
1.57	Std Dev	

12. What overall evaluation would you give this instructor?

36	9 (Excellent)	Value: 9
26	8	Value: 8
18	7	Value: 7
12	6 (Good)	Value: 6
1	5	Value: 5
1	4	Value: 4
1	3 (Fair)	Value: 3
0	2	Value: 2
0	1 (Barely Satisfactory)	Value: 1
1	0 (Unsatisfactory)	Value: 0
1	Not Applicable	No Value
7.73	Mean	
8.00	Median	
1.48	Std Dev	

13. What overall evaluation would you give this course?

31	9 (Excellent)	Value: 9
28	8	Value: 8
20	7	Value: 7
12	6 (Good)	Value: 6
1	5	Value: 5
2	4	Value: 4
0	3 (Fair)	Value: 3
0	2	Value: 2
1	1 (Barely Satisfactory)	Value: 1
1	0 (Unsatisfactory)	Value: 0
1	Not Applicable	No Value
7.59	Mean	
8.00	Median	
1.57	Std Dev	

C. Please answer:

14. Based on completed assignments thus far, what is your current course grade or approximate standing?

A	B	C	D	F	NA
50	39	7	0	0	1
Value: 4	Value: 3	Value: 2	Value: 1	Value: 0	No Value

Mean	Median	Std Dev
3.45	4.00	0.63

15. How much academic dishonesty seemed to occur in this course? If applicable, please describe the type of academic dishonesty that occurred (not the particular students involved).

    1.

A lot	Some	A little	None I could discern
1	1	3	93

    2. Examples:
       - This was one of the first classes where I don't see cheating.
       - 98 blank answer(s).

16. How helpful were the textbooks and/or readings to your overall learning experience?

Very	Adequately	Somewhat	Not at all
16	38	30	14

17. How challenging was this course?

Very	Adequately	Somewhat	Not at all
16	63	14	5