# Final Evaluation (CTEF Numeric) for Lathrop, Richard COMPSCI 171 LEC A (34280), Winter Qtr 2014

Responses: 62/71 (87.32%)

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

1. What are the instructor's teaching strengths?

- - he really cares about the class and teaching students to the best of his ability; he's passionate about what he teaches, too - he makes a lot of effort to make things as smooth, fair, and clear as possible - he provides a lot of opportunities for students who are interested to get extra credit or learn the material more in depth - he provides a lot of resources to students, including past quizzes, which is really helpful - he shows "cultural interests" in attempts to make the students more interested about the subject matter, and it is interesting Thanks, Professor Lathrop!

- - Very detailed, straight to the point, informative and organized

- Ability to clearly explain material. Makes sure to answer in-class questions.

- AI

- Answered all questions very clearly and with attention to detail.

- Clarity and fairness.

- Class structure, energy, grading, and a lot more.

- Clear, enthusiastic, good videos. Also, I love all the jokes.

- Competence, critical thinker, makes complex understandable, organized, funny, taking dry material and making it not boring, nice sidetracks/tangential topics

- Easy to follow in Lecture

- Enthusiasm, lecturing, humour

- Enthusiastic about the subject

- Experience

- Extremely well organized.

- Good at keeping the students concentration by breaking up the lectures in the middle. Good at presenting the material and keeping a brisk but fair pace.

- great

- Great professor. Funny in that goofy kind of way. He clearly put a great deal of thought into every thing about the course and has a passion for what he does. Very thorough.

- Has in depth knowledge of topics. Shares both lecture material and real world applications.

- He is completely fair and tries to offer a fair learning environment where everyone is evaluated equally

- He is very knowledgeable and passionate about AI. He is also approachable which is nice.

- He is very knowledge and friendly. He makes everything clear and easy to understand , even though the material is very hard.

- He is very passionate about the material and is happy to help students and is willing to take advice.

- he is very very nice to students

- He knows his material extremely well. He is very good at describing most topics. He appeals to students concerns. He let's class take much needed breaks to watch interesting videos

- He shows enthusiasm for the subject. I like the cultural enrichment portions of the class.

- He speaks slowly and clearly. His exams and quizzes are very fair (although I could do without the odd grading system for the quizzes). He does not have a ego problem, and if you bring up a viable point, he will take an appropriate course of action. He also responds to emails in a very timely fashion.

- He was great and really cares about students.

- Highly motivated and enthusiastic in teaching students.

- His teaching strengths, is that he is passionate about the material. He tries to find ways to make the material seem interesting and culturally significant.

- Interested in material, seems passionate, the supplemental/cultural items are generally very interesting

- Knows the material very well.

- Makes expectations clear, rewards students for excellence, frequently adds video for cultural enrichmentp giving us context and relevance to the concepts we're learning.

- One of the kindest professors at UCI. I know this man has a heart for his students and wants to see them succeed. I never once saw him lose patience for our questions. He gave us extended time to do both homework and quizzes . This from him believe that time should never be a factor in broadcasting a students knowledge. Cheers Professor!

- previous tests are helpful

- Professor cares about subject matter and is knowledgeable about it. Has a good sense of humor. Puts effort into teaching. Responds promptly to emails.

- Richard is greatly interested in his subject. He's very considerate on the student's interests, and thinks a lot about how to keep his course top-level. I enjoy his detail in presentation and execution. He has great expressive hands. When I am confused about the subject, I watch his hands.

- Sharing previous quarters quizzes and exams.

- showing real life applications of AI, giving students multiple study guides

- Strong knowledge of the subject.

- The instructor explains concepts clearly and slows down the lecture pace so that students are able to fully grasp the material presented.

- The instructor is very good at presenting the material clearly and concisely with the course goals.

- The instructor knows what he's talking about and is always able to respond to student questions with solid answers.

- The professor is very knowledgeable and the course is very well structured; all the material is clear and easy to grasp.

- The singing.

- Understands the material

- very clear, very good at explaining things.

- Very clear explanations, and always checks to see if further understanding needs to be addressed.

- Very enthusiastic about AI, in addition to explaining things in an easy to understand manner. Encourages extra learning.

- Very friendly, responsive to student concerns

- Very interesting and engaging

- Very smart, the level of fairness and class organization is so good its hard to explain how much this helped me. Really I believe all class should be taught like this one I recommend this teacher teach other teachers on how to properly convey information and run a class room. Absolute best in class for fairness and organization which helps tremendously to learn material.

- Very straight forward and thorough, provides plenty of study material for quizzes and exams.
- Well structured lectures
- 9 blank answer(s).

2. How can this instructor improve as a teacher?

- - Not sure, I think he's covered pretty much as much as he can cover.
- A more hands on teaching approach might be more effective.
- analysis the text book with critical points. some times it is hard to catch what we are doing.
- Become more animated! The subject is interesting but the professor isn't super lively.
- Class can drag on...
- Does not teach how to actually implement material. Book has some examples, but for more complex material, just goes over idea and pen-paper simulation, but not code implementation.
- Give more real life examples of how AI can affect us.
- Great....A+++++!!!
- Hard to say.
- He could make the class a bit more interesting rather then just reading through slides, which can get a bit dry.
- He could spend a little more time on how to do the coding aspect of the project.
- I can't help but submit to his extremely calming voice. I find myself falling asleep in class because it is so soothing. This is merely a personal opinion, though, and I do not truly believe it can be helped.
- I dont know if the course is too hard or the material is quite boring, I sometimes cannot concentrate on lecture.
- Improve some slides, hard to understand: i.e slide says Outfitting but no definition in the slide. For AI project help explain heuristic function more, one of the harder parts of the project which is something we did not learn in class
- I think having quiz almost identical to our quizzes does hold the temptation to memorize answers over understanding concepts. I think being discounted points for getting a question wrong prevents a student from being rewarded for the questions he did understand. It masks his knowledge. A compromise would be to weigh wrong answers with less penalty. The last section of the course on probability and machine learning was dense. Doing examples in class of the concept would break the lecture better and help students understand concepts by applying them.
- I think on topics that are more challenging, try to make very simple. Plastic examples getting point across if possible.
- I think that the AI project definitely needs work
- I understand the topic may be a little bland, but maybe make it more interactive so that students can get more interested in it.
- I would've liked to have smaller projects throughout the quarter in addition to the ConnectK project. I'm a very hands-on type of person, I enjoy learning by doing and I felt that this was an aspect that was lacking from the class a bit.
- Lectures are purely based on slides and can be a little boring
- Make homework compulsory and graded. Not having homework makes it less motivating to study. I travel 87 miles weekdays and he could be more fair to commuters by giving the quiz at the end of the class. Make the tests more fair for different personalities. The test was biased towards more concrete detailed thinkers vs abstract generalist thinkers. If you added the iClicker, a multiple choice quizzy device, you could resolve misunderstandings that students

have and you can better explain to students if they got it wrong. You could quiz them about educated guesses of some questions, or quiz them on specific numbers or colors on alpha beta tree or arc consistency, and make learning more fun.

- Make points for quizzes incremental rather than deduction. The quizzes, towards the end of the quarter, felt correctly weighted, while earlier quizzes could severely hurt your grade by making a 16 empty table worth 25 points and each wrong entry deducts 5 points.

- Make the lectures less dry.

- more clear details

- More engaging lectures

- n/a

- N/A

- None.

- One improvement that could be made is the on the quiz. Some of the question if you get one part wrong you would get minus points for each part you answer wrong within that question. It's understandable if it was minus one point per wrong part, but most of the time it's minus 5 points. So even if a question has three parts and you answer the first two part correct but fail to answer the third part you could potentially get the whole question wrong. I'm not saying remove the minus point completely, but I think that you should change it up a bit.

- Provide more examples for things we are expected to be tested on

- Replace quizzes with homework. If the goal of the quizzes is generally to verify that students are learning the material, I feel that homework could serve this role just as well, if not better than quizzes, as students would have more of an opportunity to use real world problem solving techniques, rather than having to rely on rote memorization.

- teach more depth on certain topics and remove so of the material

- The jokes.

- The lectures can feel a bit dry and monotonous - makes it difficult to maintain attention. The quizzes seem too difficult - makes it feel like the points go to students who get lucky, and those who haven't quite understood the concepts perfectly lose many points because of harsh punishments for incorrect answers.

- The lecture slides were dry and down right confusing at times.

- The one thing that me and my group of friends, discuss about is that his tone of voice can be dry and boring. This causes us to lost track of what he is talking about, however when he gets to a topic he really cares about his tone changes to one that is easy to follow.

- The test questions often have a finite number of unique questions within themselves and yet they are not hashed to unique values. This makes the == operator O(n) where n is the number of subquestions in the question. IE to check which question is 4.5 you must start at 1 and step one by one to 4.5. This could be done faster with a hash.

- Wear a bear suit to class.

- 24 blank answer(s).

3. Any other comments about this course?

- - the course is very organized and structured (it's true that the professor relies a lot on material from previous quarters, but even so, he's always prepared and tries to introduce new material from time to time as well) - I still kind of didn't understand the point of some of the things taught in lecture, but that might've been due to my lack of attention/not reading enough in the book. - at first, I didn't like how points were taken off the first quiz for wrong answers (which included blanks) - few seemed to like it, and it was nice that on quizzes afterwards, this was changed. Thanks!

- Class has alot of material hard to get much out of the material when you learn very little about many topics, would rather go in depth on a few topics instead of broad depth on many topics. This way I could actually remember the material, with so much material its hard to learn really anything.

- Course site could have been organized better.

- Definitely better without the massive penalties to mistakes on tests. Also, I'm doing fairly well in this class and haven't really touched the book, so I think the book is pretty unnecessary

- Fairly simple and straightforward; easy to get a good grade but lots of chances to explore the field more if you're interested.

- Fun

- Good class. Project is hard though.

- Good course.

- Great course.

- He downplayed important algorithms and gave least important algorithms too much weight to others. For example A* search is very important for video games especially maze games. You can at least do a mini project of maze finding using impassible walls which you can have questionnaire to report findings about accuracy vs speed, AI movement path smoothness vs jaggedness. I have used a library that uses it, but I still don't know how to implement it in code. It also would be beneficial to computer game science majors. When coming to UCI I was hoping to learn more about artificial neural networks. I feel that I learn as much today as before taking this class about it – very little. You covered classifiers well but ANN you could have went into more detail. I feel like I learned things but didn't get much from things that I wanted to learn. For the PowerPoint file names, you should rename them with important topics that were covered instead of useless information. The PDF of the book had writing that was scrambled, especially for alpha-beta pruning pseudocode. You should put a warning next to the assigned reading.

- I feel the having the past quizzes available and that the quizzes are very similar to those tests make the class a bit too focused on looking at past quizzes, rather than studying the material. Mixing up how problems are presented may make student understanding of the concepts better.

- I like the project a lot! It is very challenging but can be fun at times and it feels like a lot is being learned.

- Interesting side stuff!

- I think seeing past exams is a great way of studying for midterms and finals

- I thoroughly loathed how the tests and quizzes were simply copypasta from previous quarters and years. I know Lathrop viewed this style as getting people to really learn, I strongly disagreed. I found a lot of students, including myself in order to simply succeed in the class, merely memorizing rather than truly learning the content. I know my peers would disagree since this obviously makes the class trivial, but learning is still the priority. Moreover, I really felt the course was too broad. Too much material glazed over. I would have liked to have targeted certain topics more than glossing over others. Namely, since our project dealt with game AI and adversarial search, I would have benefited more with more emphasis on related content.

- LOSING points on quizzes/midterms for wrong answers is a terrible thing to do.

- Loved the course, was difficult but rewarding. Appreciated that he wanted us to succeed and that he was kind

- N/A

- n/a

- N/A

- none
- None.
- One of the best professors I've ever had
- Overall, I love this class.
- Overall a good and interesting course.
- Overall was a good course.
- please keep the quizzes from previous quarters. those are much appreciated study material, that without would have made this class even more difficult than it already was.
- Really interesting course , challenging but adequate and fair, ejoyable and difficult but Richard tries his best to make it a good course for student to learn. I think, the slides sometimes they're not as informative when you look back at them, like if you get lost in class looking at the slides later may not help the most. However I think he's really accessible so it make up for any confusion.
- Sometimes I think he is an actual robot, He has a very measured and uniform mode of speech and is very very thorough.
- The AI tournament was the most interesting class project I have ever worked on.
- The cultural enrichment videos/links were a very fun addition.
- The material was fairly dry in some areas, despite the professors attempts to keep everyone interested. I suppose AI is not just for everyone.
- The optional videos are super interesting!
- the room this class was in is very warm, no windows and has comfy chairs. mixed with the professor's calm, monotone voice, it is the perfect environment for a nap. just saying.
- The tournament run on project is very good idea
- This is one of my favorite course.
- Was FUn
- Well structured course with a professor that teaches with a lot of energy.
- Well taught in my opinion.
- 23 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.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **39** | 9 (Excellent) | Value: 9 |
| **12** | 8 | Value: 8 |
| **7** | 7 | Value: 7 |
| **3** | 6 (Good) | Value: 6 |
| **0** | 5 | Value: 5 |
| **0** | 4 | Value: 4 |
| **0** | 3 (Fair) | Value: 3 |
| **0** | 2 | Value: 2 |
| **0** | 1 (Barely Satisfactory) | Value: 1 |
| **0** | 0 (Unsatisfactory) | Value: 0 |
| **0** | Not Applicable | No Value |
| **8.43** | Mean | |
| **9.00** | Median | |
| **0.88** | Std Dev | |

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

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **22** | 9 (Excellent) | Value: 9 |
| **11** | 8 | Value: 8 |
| **7** | 7 | Value: 7 |
| **15** | 6 (Good) | Value: 6 |
| **3** | 5 | Value: 5 |
| **1** | 4 | Value: 4 |
| **0** | 3 (Fair) | Value: 3 |
| **0** | 2 | Value: 2 |
| **1** | 1 (Barely Satisfactory) | Value: 1 |
| **0** | 0 (Unsatisfactory) | Value: 0 |
| **0** | Not Applicable | No Value |
| **7.42** | Mean | |
| **8.00** | Median | |
| **1.64** | Std Dev | |

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

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **34** | 9 (Excellent) | Value: 9 |
| **15** | 8 | Value: 8 |
| **5** | 7 | Value: 7 |
| **6** | 6 (Good) | Value: 6 |
| **1** | 5 | Value: 5 |
| **0** | 4 | Value: 4 |
| **0** | 3 (Fair) | Value: 3 |
| **0** | 2 | Value: 2 |
| **0** | 1 (Barely Satisfactory) | Value: 1 |
| **0** | 0 (Unsatisfactory) | Value: 0 |
| **0** | Not Applicable | No Value |
| **8.23** | Mean | |
| **9.00** | Median | |
| **1.06** | Std Dev | |

7. The course instructor is accessible and responsive.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **34** | 9 (Excellent) | Value: 9 |
| **13** | 8 | Value: 8 |
| **3** | 7 | Value: 7 |
| **6** | 6 (Good) | Value: 6 |
| **3** | 5 | Value: 5 |
| **0** | 4 | Value: 4 |
| **0** | 3 (Fair) | Value: 3 |
| **0** | 2 | Value: 2 |
| **0** | 1 (Barely Satisfactory) | Value: 1 |
| **0** | 0 (Unsatisfactory) | Value: 0 |
| **1** | Not Applicable | No Value |
| **8.17** | Mean | |
| **9.00** | Median | |
| **1.21** | Std Dev | |

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

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **34** | 9 (Excellent) | Value: 9 |
| **14** | 8 | Value: 8 |
| **6** | 7 | Value: 7 |
| **3** | 6 (Good) | Value: 6 |
| **2** | 5 | Value: 5 |
| **0** | 4 | Value: 4 |
| **1** | 3 (Fair) | Value: 3 |
| **0** | 2 | Value: 2 |
| **0** | 1 (Barely Satisfactory) | Value: 1 |
| **0** | 0 (Unsatisfactory) | Value: 0 |
| **0** | Not Applicable | No Value |
| **8.18** | Mean | |
| **9.00** | Median | |
| **1.24** | Std Dev | |

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

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **28** | 9 (Excellent) | Value: 9 |
| **15** | 8 | Value: 8 |
| **6** | 7 | Value: 7 |
| **5** | 6 (Good) | Value: 6 |
| **2** | 5 | Value: 5 |
| **2** | 4 | Value: 4 |
| **2** | 3 (Fair) | Value: 3 |
| **0** | 2 | Value: 2 |
| **0** | 1 (Barely Satisfactory) | Value: 1 |
| **0** | 0 (Unsatisfactory) | Value: 0 |
| **1** | Not Applicable | No Value |
| **7.80** | Mean | |
| **8.00** | Median | |
| **1.59** | Std Dev | |

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

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **26** | 9 (Excellent) | Value: 9 |
| **12** | 8 | Value: 8 |
| **9** | 7 | Value: 7 |
| **10** | 6 (Good) | Value: 6 |
| **1** | 5 | Value: 5 |
| **0** | 4 | Value: 4 |
| **1** | 3 (Fair) | Value: 3 |
| **1** | 2 | Value: 2 |
| **1** | 1 (Barely Satisfactory) | Value: 1 |
| **0** | 0 (Unsatisfactory) | Value: 0 |
| **0** | Not Applicable | No Value |
| **7.61** | Mean | |
| **8.00** | Median | |
| **1.74** | Std Dev | |

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

|  |  |  |
|---|---|---|
| **34** | 9 (Excellent) | Value: 9 |
| **13** | 8 | Value: 8 |
| **9** | 7 | Value: 7 |
| **4** | 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 |
| **0** | 0 (Unsatisfactory) | Value: 0 |
| **0** | Not Applicable | No Value |
| **8.16** | Mean | |
| **9.00** | Median | |
| **1.32** | Std Dev | |

12. What overall evaluation would you give this instructor?

|  |  |  |
|---|---|---|
| **27** | 9 (Excellent) | Value: 9 |
| **21** | 8 | Value: 8 |
| **6** | 7 | Value: 7 |
| **4** | 6 (Good) | Value: 6 |
| **1** | 5 | Value: 5 |
| **1** | 4 | Value: 4 |
| **0** | 3 (Fair) | Value: 3 |
| **0** | 2 | Value: 2 |
| **0** | 1 (Barely Satisfactory) | Value: 1 |
| **0** | 0 (Unsatisfactory) | Value: 0 |
| **0** | Not Applicable | No Value |
| **8.10** | Mean | |
| **8.00** | Median | |
| **1.11** | Std Dev | |

13. What overall evaluation would you give this course?

|  |  |  |
|---|---|---|
| **20** | 9 (Excellent) | Value: 9 |
| **24** | 8 | Value: 8 |
| **5** | 7 | Value: 7 |
| **5** | 6 (Good) | Value: 6 |
| **4** | 5 | Value: 5 |
| **0** | 4 | Value: 4 |
| **2** | 3 (Fair) | Value: 3 |
| **0** | 2 | Value: 2 |
| **0** | 1 (Barely Satisfactory) | Value: 1 |
| **0** | 0 (Unsatisfactory) | Value: 0 |
| **0** | Not Applicable | No Value |
| **7.72** | Mean | |
| **8.00** | Median | |
| **1.45** | Std Dev | |

## C. Please answer:

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

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **30** | A | Value: 4 |
| **20** | B | Value: 3 |
| **9** | C | Value: 2 |
| **0** | D | Value: 1 |
| **0** | F | Value: 0 |
| **2** | NA | No Value |
| **3.36** | Mean | |
| **4.00** | Median | |
| **0.73** | Std Dev | |

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.
        - **0** A lot
        - **0** Some
        - **2** A little
        - **58** None I could discern

    2. Examples:
        - 62 blank answer(s).

16. How helpful were the textbooks and/or readings to your overall learning experience?
    - **10** Very
    - **12** Adequately
    - **23** Somewhat
    - **16** Not at all

17. How challenging was this course?
    - **12** Very
    - **37** Adequately
    - **12** Somewhat
    - **0** Not at all