

TEACHER REPORT

Name of Teacher	Min-Yen Kan
Module	CS4248-Natural Language Processing (LECTURE)
Academic Year/Sem	2020/2021 - SEM 2
Department	COMPUTER SCIENCE
Faculty	SCHOOL OF COMPUTING

Raters	Student
Responded	46
Invited	92
Response Ratio	50%

Note:

Class Size = Invited; Response Size = Responded; Response Rate = Response Ratio

A. GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING THE REPORT

The teacher evaluation report is for developmental purposes and is meant to help identify strengths and areas for improvement. Please consider the following recommendations that will aid in interpreting the results:

1. Examine the report by taking note of patterns in order to consider how best to act on the feedback your students have taken the time to provide. Use the reflection section at the end to reflect upon how you might act on the feedback.
2. These evaluations stem from student perception and thus constitute one source of evidence among others as to the quality of your teaching. Any response to the feedback should be based on the most representative results rather than on outlying responses.
3. Upon getting a general sense as to what has gone well, and which areas may require attention and improvement, it is important to drill down to the related questions. These questions can help guide future action if feedback from students suggest areas for improvement.
4. Keep both the likert scale and written comments in mind while reading through the report. High scores (4+) suggest student consensus indicating a strength. On the other hand, low scores (2-) should be considered as an area that requires immediate developmental focus based on student feedback.

B. NOMINATION FOR TEACHING AWARDS

	Response Count
I would like to nominate Min-Yen Kan for teaching awards	10

Comment
- knowledgeable
- This is one of the most well-organised modules I've taken at NUS. The workload is evenly distributed, and Prof. Min holds himself to very high standards of teaching.
- Able to communicate knowledge and ideas well to students. Shows genuine interest in content that he is teaching.
- Dedication in teaching is evident.
- Prof Min is highly approachable, allowing me to ask questions comfortably without any concerns. He is meticulous in making sure every single question asked by students are answered on the Slack channel. The assignments and projects are well-thought and introduce a low-risk, but high-learning opportunity to explore various NLP methods in an open-ended way, which is a skill necessary for NLP at work or in research. Thank you!
- Prof Min is really passionate about the field and his approach in teaching is very balanced, with some focus in theory and also enough focus in the application. He is very genuine in his interaction with students.
- Good lecture
- He is so responsible and effective
- The module is designed to be a good introductory course to NLP.
- Because he is a hero.

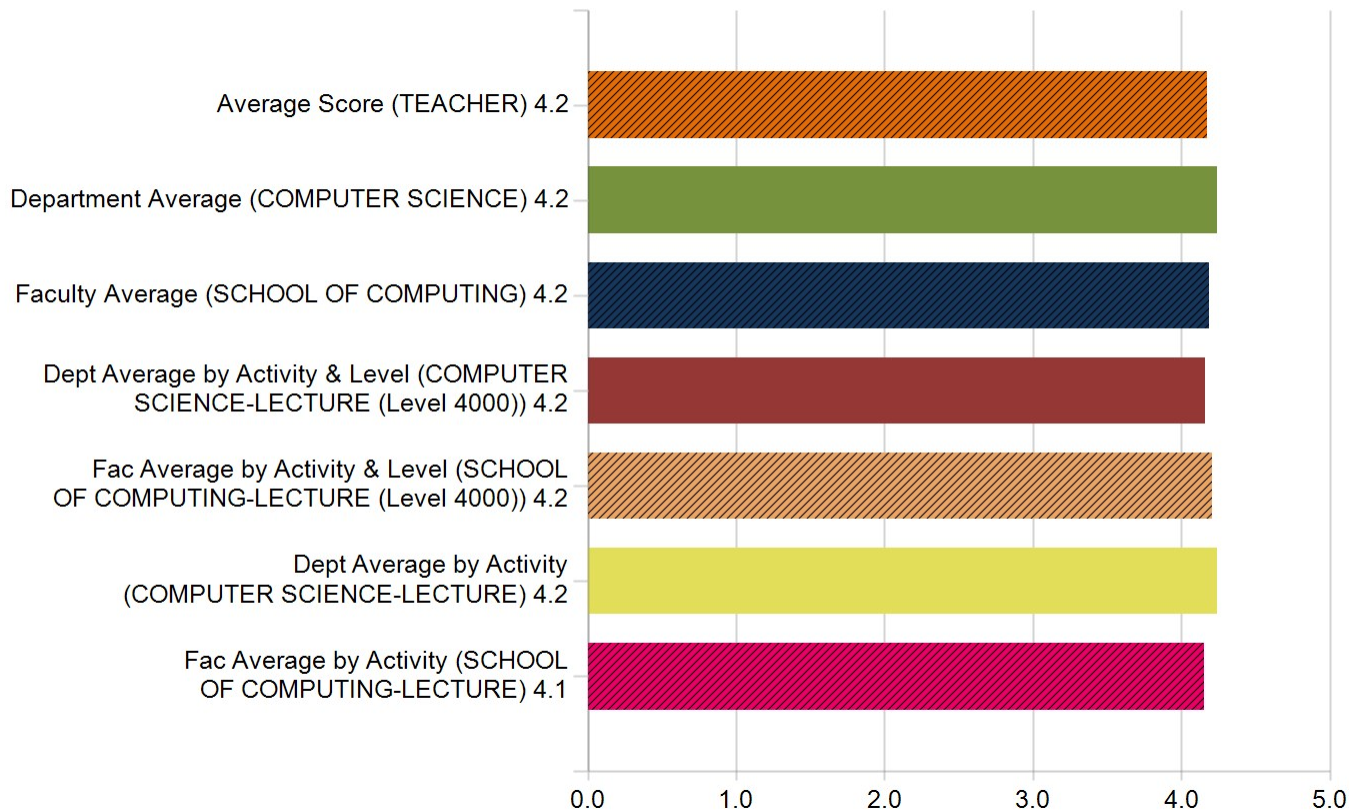
C. STUDENT FEEDBACK SCORES

(i) Rating Score

Question	Average Score (TEACHER)		Department Average (COMPUTER SCIENCE)		Faculty Average (SCHOOL OF COMPUTING)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Overall, the teacher is effective.	4.2	0.9	4.2	0.8	4.2	0.9

Question	Average Score (TEACHER)	Dept Average by Activity & Level (COMPUTER SCIENCE-LECTURE (Level 4000))	Fac Average by Activity & Level (SCHOOL OF COMPUTING-LECTURE (Level 4000))	Dept Average by Activity (COMPUTER SCIENCE-LECTURE)	Fac Average by Activity (SCHOOL OF COMPUTING-LECTURE)
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Overall, the teacher is effective.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1

Overall, the teacher is effective



Question	Average Score (TEACHER)		Department Average (COMPUTER SCIENCE)		Faculty Average (SCHOOL OF COMPUTING)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
The teacher has enhanced my thinking ability.	4.1	0.9	4.2	0.8	4.2	0.8
The teacher provided timely and useful feedback.	3.8	1.1	4.2	0.8	4.2	0.9
The teacher has increased my interest in the subject.	4.1	0.9	4.2	0.9	4.1	0.9
Average of Q1-Q3	4.0	1.0	4.2	-	4.2	-

Question	Average Score (TEACHER)	Dept Average by Activity & Level (COMPUTER SCIENCE-LECTURE (Level 4000))	Fac Average by Activity & Level (SCHOOL OF COMPUTING-LECTURE (Level 4000))	Dept Average by Activity (COMPUTER SCIENCE-LECTURE)	Fac Average by Activity (SCHOOL OF COMPUTING-LECTURE)
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
The teacher has enhanced my thinking ability.	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.2
The teacher provided timely and useful feedback.	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.1
The teacher has increased my interest in the subject.	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1
Average of Q1-Q3	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1

Department Specific Questions

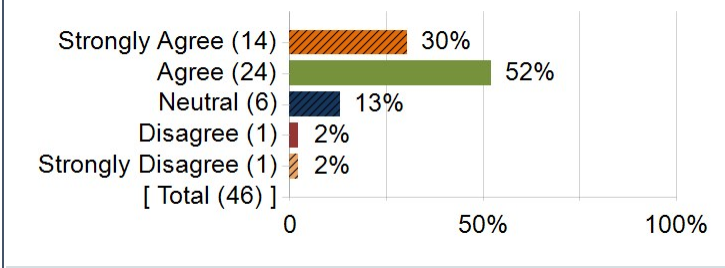
Question	Average Score (TEACHER)		Department Average (COMPUTER SCIENCE)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
The teacher engaged me in useful interactions that have enhanced my learning.	4.0	0.9	4.2	0.8

Question	Average Score (TEACHER)		Department Average (COMPUTER SCIENCE)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
The teacher's attitude and approach encouraged me to think and work in a creative and independent way.	4.2	0.8	4.2	0.8

Question	Average Score (TEACHER)		Department Average (COMPUTER SCIENCE)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
The teacher cares about student development and learning.	4.2	0.9	4.2	0.8

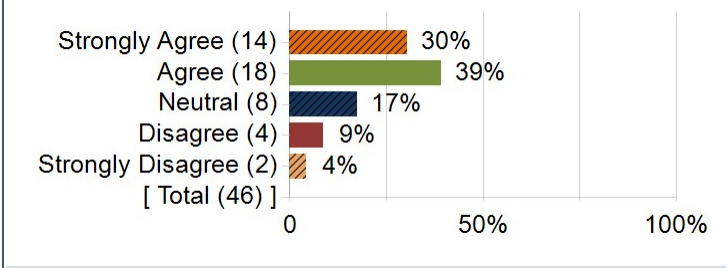
(ii) Distribution of Responses and Additional Statistics

1. The teacher has enhanced my thinking ability.



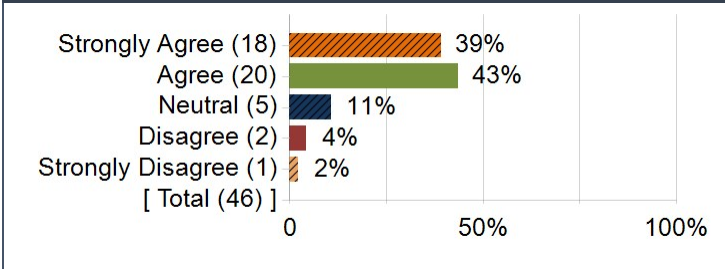
Statistics	Value
Response Count	46
Mean	4.1
Median	4.0
Mode	4
80th Percentile	5.0
Standard Deviation	0.9
Positive Feedback	83%

2. The teacher provided timely and useful feedback.



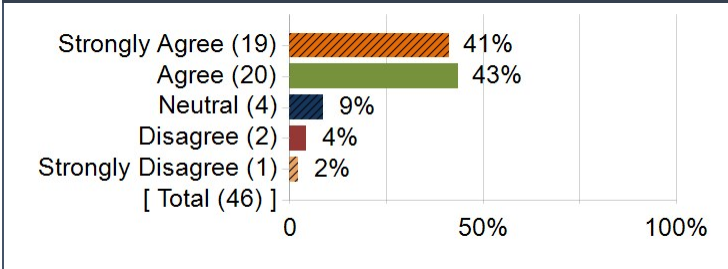
Statistics	Value
Response Count	46
Mean	3.8
Median	4.0
Mode	4
80th Percentile	5.0
Standard Deviation	1.1
Positive Feedback	70%

3. The teacher has increased my interest in the subject.



Statistics	Value
Response Count	46
Mean	4.1
Median	4.0
Mode	4
80th Percentile	5.0
Standard Deviation	0.9
Positive Feedback	83%

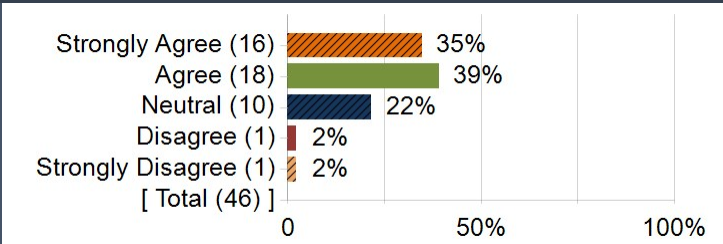
4. Overall, the teacher is effective.



Statistics	Value
Response Count	46
Mean	4.2
Median	4.0
Mode	4
80th Percentile	5.0
Standard Deviation	0.9
Positive Feedback	85%

The teacher engaged me in useful interactions that have enhanced my learning.

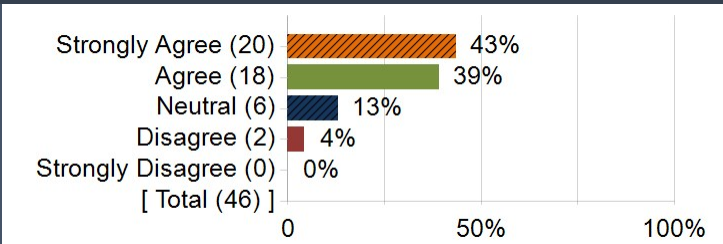
The teacher engaged me in useful interactions that have enhanced my learning.



Statistics	Value
Response Count	46
Mean	4.0
Median	4.0
Mode	4
80th Percentile	5.0
Standard Deviation	0.9
Positive Feedback	74%

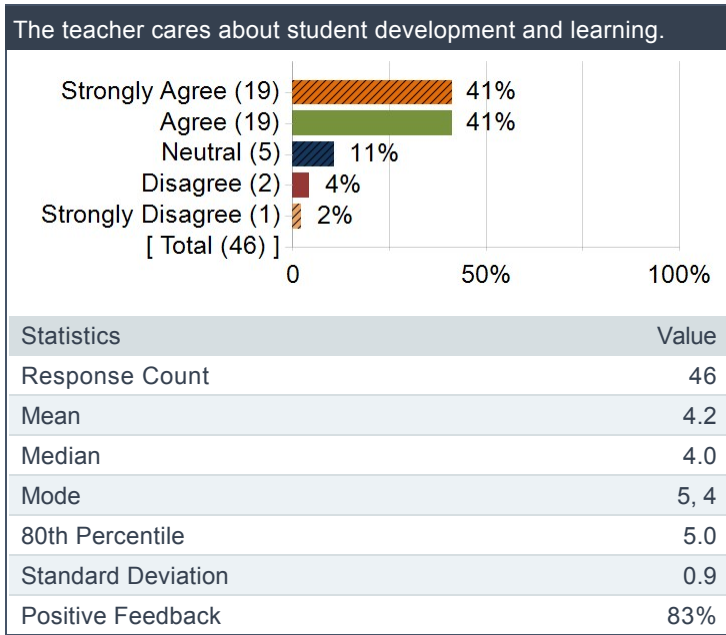
The teacher's attitude and approach encouraged me to think and work in a creative and independent way.

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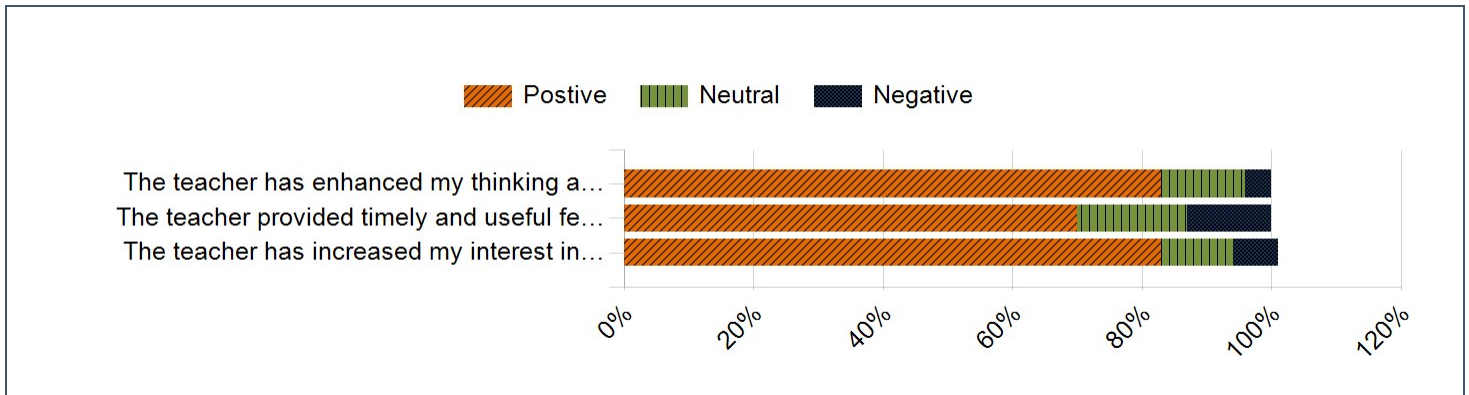


Statistics	Value
Response Count	46
Mean	4.2
Median	4.0
Mode	5
80th Percentile	5.0
Standard Deviation	0.8
Positive Feedback	83%

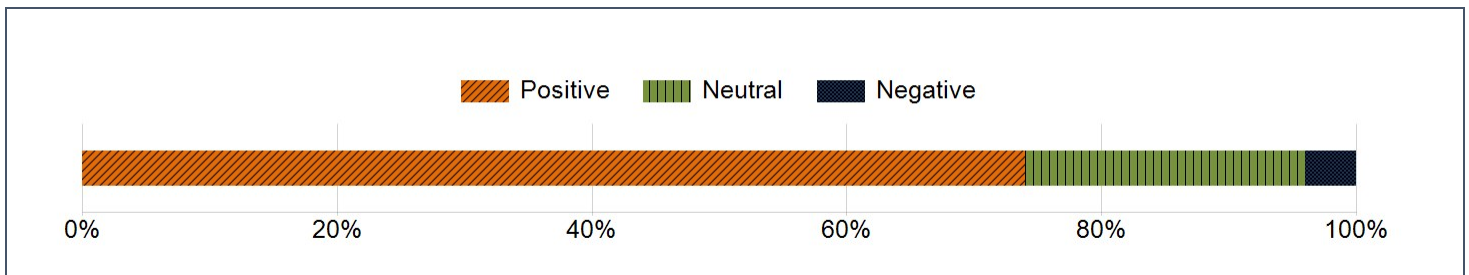
The teacher cares about student development and learning.



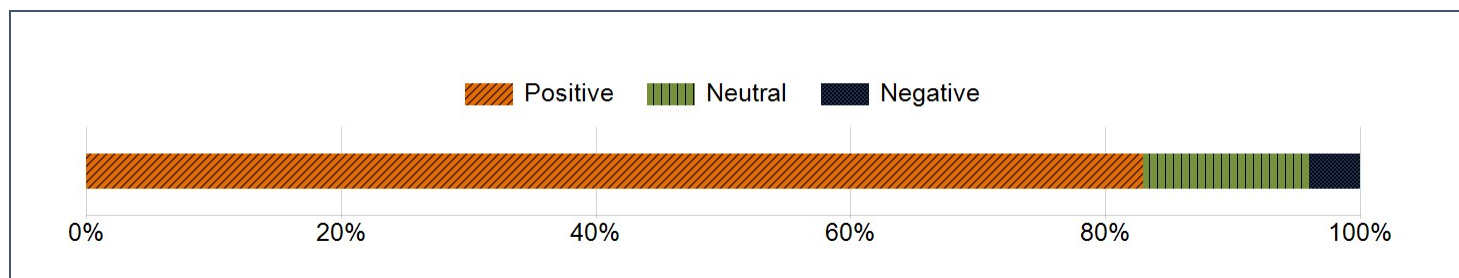
(iii) Scale Distribution of Responses



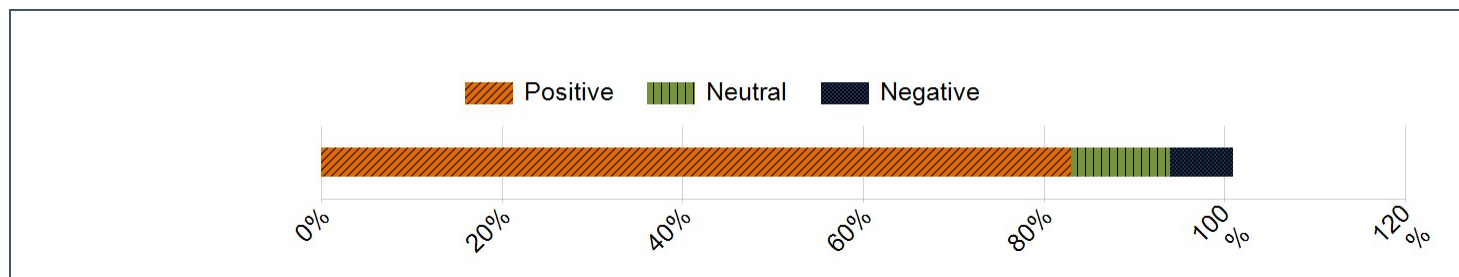
The teacher engaged me in useful interactions that have enhanced my learning.



The teacher's attitude and approach encouraged me to think and work in a creative and independent way.



The teacher cares about student development and learning.



(iv) Rating Scores vs. Gender

Question	M	F	Overall
The teacher has enhanced my thinking ability.	4.0	4.2	4.1
The teacher provided timely and useful feedback.	3.8	4.0	3.8
The teacher has increased my interest in the subject.	4.1	4.3	4.1

D. STRENGTHS

What are Min-Yen Kan's strengths?

Comments
deliver the lecture clearly and prepare well
– Prof is very well-informed and knowledgeable in the areas of NLP, often informs us about the new and emerging technologies in this field during lectures.
He puts in a lot of effort to teach as much relevant content to students as possible. He is also knowledgeable in and passionate about what he teaches.
Effectively communicating the curriculum and course outline way in advance.
Well constructed lecture slides, and doing a great job explaining the content.
Carefully designed assignments that have very clear learning objectives.
Module content is great, explication of concepts is clear.
The accent is very good haha, easy to understand.
Able to communicate knowledge and ideas well to students. Shows genuine interest in content that he is teaching.
– Patience in answering questions – Open-ness to QnA for every lecture
– Fluent lectures – Cares about student development – Provides timely feedback to emails
Prof Min's continual engagement in class through responding to students' questions over Zoom chat and Slack provided a great learning opportunity to clarify any doubts or uncertainties I may have. I really appreciate how he managed to still curate high quality resources (lectures and assignments) despite this being the first run of the module.
–
Dedicated prof, knows his stuff, prof with very good manners and apologising when there are corrections in homework / response is slow.
– He understands the topics well, he explains well. – He doesn't focus too much on the maths like my previous ML modules but focuses more on the theory, really wanting us to understand the ideas intuitively.
well organised course materials with communication well established channel with for students and teaching team to discuss with
I think prof was one of the better professors I've learned under during my time at nus so far. The content was (mostly) clear. He was also very kind, approachable and just throughout the course.
Lectures are very clear and concise. Can tell he puts in a lot effort in slide preparations and lectures.
Engaging. I become more interested in NLP. The lectures try to explore as many areas in NLP as possible which makes it a very good introductory course to NLP. The formats of course work vary, which give a good coverage of hands-on practice, theories, and some tastes of research.
He is good at explaining stuff and seems to take a genuine interest in students' learning.
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E. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

What improvements would you suggest to Min-Yen Kan?

Comments
The notations used in the slides are sometimes a bit inconsistent or does not seem precise enough for understanding. Causes quite a bit of confusion
Perhaps because Prof is new in teaching this module, but the administration for this module seems to be severely lacking. Assignments could be better clarified and the project requirements seems way too heavy for just 6 weeks, when we are essentially completing the same amount of work for CS3244 (just that we are given less time and less manpower)
Listen to student feedback on teams in project

Comments

Don't have submissions in reading week

Please do not succumb to having a project. It really does not enhance learning, and feels like a massive waste of time.

I understand that it is the first iteration of the module under this prof, but changing assignment requirements even on the day of submission, important details that were vague and only clarified at the last minute because there were questions raised by students, and yet refusing to budge with regard to the deadlines for students to adjust is simply unreasonable. This is aggravated by the fact that this module has no finals and is extremely assignment-heavy.

While I can empathise that being a first-iteration module there are many kinks to work out, the one improvement I would offer is that your responses to unexpected gaps, loopholes or changes to your plan and timeline be made with more consideration of the students, who sometimes are literally waiting on the day of submission being unsure of whether they can submit and move on to work on other modules.

On another note, using Slack as de facto mode of communication seems to be unpractical when a lot of scattered information was disseminated. It is not optimized for forum-style usage, where questions and answers can all be collated on one thread.

Usually takes up 2++ hrs.

better time management during lectures would be appreciated

I think having bi-weekly tutorials for this module can be considered. Certain concepts (especially in the second semester) were not examinable and assignments are not based on them. These concepts are easily forgotten since the students have not applied them. Having bi-weekly tutorials can help with that.

- Slow down the pace of lecture and spend more time explaining chim equations
- Use more consistent math notations and symbols in slides
- Enlarge text size in some slides (too small to read)
- Reduce use of screenshots in slides (difficult to highlight)
- Use more clear instructions in assignments
- Do not drag lectures beyond 1h40min

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Project admin can be handled better – information was not conveyed to students very effectively, and many materials are left till late to publish. Prof might be too busy to be handling this many modules and commitments.

The project is very difficult without any instruction or explanation to start with
No any similar questions or problems that can be prepared for the midterm.

There were really a lot of submissions for a 4MC module. Each submission also felt like a very high amount of effort for the weightage that was given. While the assessment was definitely fair across the board, it felt overwhelming at times. I do appreciate that there was no final though and understand limitations that could come with that.

maybe reduce the content in one lecture? sometimes it's a bit rushing and certain content was not well explained.

Nothing major, I think he was really great. I only have nitpicky stuff like "be explicit about how long breaks are". A few times during lectures he would say "let's have a 10 min break" and then start way before the break actually ended. I learned my lesson though after coming in too late the first two times.

I would appreciate it a lot if Prof Kan can listen to students' feedback and be more flexible in his curriculum planning.

On several occasions, I have feedback that the pace of the lecture is too fast, covering 2x more content in the same amount of time as compared to other modules. By trying to rush through an excessive amount of content, it has adversely affected students' ability to understand the bulk of the content. It would have been better if Prof Kan can reduce the content, and give some time for the students to digest and ask questions in class, which I believe, would have been much more effective for their learning.

Most of the time, Prof Kan rushes through the content, with no in-depth explanation and no time for students to think through and ask questions, especially when he moved on immediately after asking if there are any questions. A lot of times, students are expected to continue the lecture without clarifying doubts from the previous section, which makes it very confusing and difficult for them to catch on. In other modules I have been to, professors are willing and flexible in altering their syllabus appropriately when there is insufficient time to cover everything, hence I believe that it is definitely possible to cut down on the content.

Additionally, from what I understand from NUS guidelines and other modules taken, lectures should end 25 minutes earlier for students to travel/eat lunch before the next lecture. However, Prof Kan makes use of online teaching, delaying the lecture by 10 or 15 minutes almost every lesson, with the reasoning that we can view the lectures at home. I feel that this is unfair, and I have not seen other professors doing this in other modules I have taken this semester, and this is another point to show that he might have intended to cover too much content in this module, which is adversely affecting students' learning and his teaching.

Last but not the least, as this is personal, I hope that Prof Kan can be more empathetic towards my situation.

Comments

As my dad is in a very critical situation since year 3, I have sought understanding and help from professors of modules I have taken, and most of them have offered great help, which I really appreciate.

However, for Prof Kan, despite asking for medical documents as proof of my dad's conditions and my difficult situation, has offered minimal help. Before the assigning of groups for the projects, I have told Prof Kan that it would be very difficult for me to contribute to the group project due to my dad's critical situation, and I might have to accompany him to the A&E now and then, and although I am very willing to take up responsibility for my lack of participation if any, I hope he can take into account of this and assign me to a group that is more balanced and be able to take up the project even if I have to make a minimal contribution to the project. However, he has put me in a group with an exchange student, and no one had a strong foundation in machine learning, even when he told me that he feels sorry of my situation.

As such, I had to juggle a lot more work than I expected, and I even had to arrange appointment with NUS counselors due to stress from school work and family issues.

Additionally, out of the 4 people group, there were 2 who were freeloading and refusing to contribute until week 11, which is basically one week before we had to finalize and work on our poster already. Even after I feedback to Prof Kan in week 7, he advised us to continue with doing a 4-person project, with just 2 contributing. This is especially disappointing as I have told him about my dad's condition, and sought his understanding and help on this.

Not just that, Prof Kan did not take any action against the 2 freeloaders and continued to advise us on our project as though we are working with 4 people contributing during our consultation in week 10. It is fortunate that I am a strong-willed man that I am able to struggle through, without utilizing any form of help from the teaching team such as time extensions for assignments or the project.

I am very skeptical that Prof Kan's approach will allow him to objectively and fairly take into account the contribution made by my team against the rest of the class with 4 working members from the start, and grade us fairly in this case. Moreover, how much are the freeloaders going to be penalized in order to be fair to Ignatius and me? I feel that this is a very unfair approach to both Ignatius and me, who have been working hard and contributing entirely to the project.

F. SELF-REFLECTION

1. When comparing these results to the previous year's results, what areas have shown improvement?
2. What areas remain to be improved and what are the necessary steps / actions to do so?
3. Are there colleagues who could potentially guide me?
4. Are there issues that require departmental or institutional support?