

JHU - Krieger School of Arts & Sciences / Whiting School of Engineering
ASEN.2017.SPRING

Course: EN.600.667.01.SP17: Advanced Distributed Systems & Networks

Instructor: Yair Amir *

1 - The overall quality of this course is:												
Response Option				Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses			Means		
Poor	(1)	0	0%							4.73		
Weak	(2)	0	0%							4.08		4.01
Satisfactory	(3)	0	0%									
Good	(4)	3	27.27%									
Excellent	(5)	8	72.73%									
N/A	(0)	0	0%									
							0	25	50	75	100	
										Instructor	School Level	Department Level
Return Rate	Mean	STD	Median	School Level			Mean	STD	Median	Department Level		
11/11 (100%)	4.73	0.47	5.00	9,435			4.08	0.97	4.00	1,641		

2 - The instructor's teaching effectiveness is:												
Yair Amir												
Response Option				Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses			Means		
Poor	(1)	0	0%							4.73		
Weak	(2)	0	0%							4.16		4.03
Satisfactory	(3)	0	0%									
Good	(4)	3	27.27%									
Excellent	(5)	8	72.73%									
N/A	(0)	0	0%									
							0	25	50	75	100	
										Instructor	School Level	Department Level
Return Rate	Mean	STD	Median	School Level			Mean	STD	Median	Department Level		
11/11 (100%)	4.73	0.47	5.00	9,330			4.16	1.01	4.00	1,627		

3 - The intellectual challenge of this course is:												
Response Option				Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses			Means		
Poor	(1)	0	0%							4.82		
Weak	(2)	0	0%							4.14		4.23
Satisfactory	(3)	0	0%									
Good	(4)	2	18.18%									
Excellent	(5)	9	81.82%									
N/A	(0)	0	0%									
							0	25	50	75	100	
										Instructor	School Level	Department Level
Return Rate	Mean	STD	Median	School Level			Mean	STD	Median	Department Level		
11/11 (100%)	4.82	0.40	5.00	9,296			4.14	0.89	4.00	1,618		

4 - The teaching assistant for this course is:												
Response Option				Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses			Means		
Poor	(1)	0	0%							5.00		
Weak	(2)	0	0%							4.15		4.23
Satisfactory	(3)	0	0%									
Good	(4)	0	0%									
Excellent	(5)	7	63.64%									
N/A	(0)	4	36.36%									
							0	25	50	75	100	
										Instructor	School Level	Department Level
Return Rate	Mean	STD	Median	School Level			Mean	STD	Median	Department Level		
11/11 (100%)	5.00	0.00	5.00	9,292			4.15	1.02	4.00	1,612		

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5 - Please enter the name of the TA you evaluated in question 4:

- All of the DSN Lab
- Tom Tantillo
- N/A
- All of them!
- Tom and Amy
- Amy Babay, Tom Tantillo
- Tom

6 - Feedback on my work for this course is useful:

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses			Means				
Disagree strongly	(1)	0	0%								
Disagree somewhat	(2)	0	0%								
Neither agree nor disagree	(3)	0	0%								
Agree somewhat	(4)	2	18.18%								
Agree strongly	(5)	9	81.82%								
N/A	(0)	0	0%								
				0	25	50	75	100	Instructor	School Level	Department Level
Return Rate	Mean	STD	Median	School Level			Department Level				
11/11 (100%)	4.82	0.40	5.00	9,265			1,616				
				Mean	STD	Median	Mean	STD	Median		
				3.90	1.05	4.00	3.86	1.09	4.00		

7 - Compared to other Hopkins courses at this level, the workload for this course is:

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses			Means				
Much lighter	(1)	0	0%								
Somewhat lighter	(2)	0	0%								
Typical	(3)	2	18.18%								
Somewhat heavier	(4)	5	45.45%								
Much heavier	(5)	2	18.18%								
N/A	(0)	2	18.18%								
				0	25	50	75	100	Instructor	School Level	Department Level
Return Rate	Mean	STD	Median	School Level			Department Level				
11/11 (100%)	4.00	0.71	4.00	9,274			1,617				
				Mean	STD	Median	Mean	STD	Median		
				3.30	1.00	3.00	3.55	1.02	4.00		

8 - What are the best aspects of this course?

- I really enjoyed the opportunity to pursue a long-term project and the general freedom of the course.
- The course was a fun exploration into more advanced topics in distributed.
- You get to work on a project of your own design from the very start of the course. The meetings are pretty informal, and are just a chance to get feedback, so we could do what we wanted.
- This class is amazing
- You get the opportunity to really dive deep into a topic of your choosing. You get out what you put in but the whole course is a wonderful opportunity to really push yourself in the field of Distributed Systems.
- Being able to pick a project is great
- You get to choose your own project that you are interested in and give your best try in it! Yair and his lab people are very knowledgeable and critical in the area of Distributed Systems, so you can definitely learn a lot from them and your model will be well refined after being challenged from Yair's people as well as fellow students. This course is very intellectually challenging but rewarding at the same time. Projects here are emphasized to be practical, so you will see solid real-life applications of your work. The high emphasis of practicality in this course is also one of its most distinguishing features from other courses at Hopkins.
- Freedom to explore what you want, good guidance, help in pushing the envelope

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9 - What are the worst aspects of this course?

- The discussions could drag on at times, and the amount of time spent discussing each group's progress was sometimes unbalanced - especially when some groups had made much more progress than others. Sometimes
- Meetings ran long sometimes as we often got caught up on (arguably) insignificant details of a particular group's project.
- Perhaps the large meeting every week was somewhat wasteful, as it was hard to understand what the other groups were talking about sometimes.
- There aren't any
- If you're not dedicated to the project you end up choosing, you will not enjoy the course to it's fullest extent or get as much out of it.
- Class tends to go over a lot, and it probably doesn't have to. Much of course meetings simply revolve around Yair having extended discussions with students about their project. Which is sometimes okay, but often the discussions aren't necessarily useful for other students.
- The course gives you lots of freedom, sometimes too much freedom that you might not know what to do next or you might go down a wrong path. Some projects can be very tough and have high barriers to break. If you are not willing to spend enough time in this course, you will not get much from it.
- n/a

10 - What would most improve this class?

- I think utilizing the mailing list for general status updates was a good thing, and perhaps each group could send an update before each class. This might make the discussions in class more productive and interesting, and keep everyone on track throughout the semester.
- Better allotment of meeting times.
- Maybe if meetings were more one on one, where groups can talk and work amongst themselves, or listen in on other groups if they want. Professor/other people in the lab can give feedback to each group individually that way, and gives more time for group members to touch base.
- More time
- I think that our class was a little larger than ideal (as noted throughout the course itself). My group in particular ran into problems due to the sheer size of our group. I would recommend trying to keep group numbers smaller and being more open to project ideas that may not be the cutting edge, but would still be highly educational.
- The course can be more structured by having timeline milestones and more guidance. Also, it is a bit too heavy on the practical side and a bit too light on the theoretical side.
- Consider switching to a once a week schedule. It seems like not as much productivity happened between tuesday and thursday classes, due to the short time between.

11 - What should prospective students know about this course before enrolling? (You may comment on any aspect of this course such as assumed background, readings, grading systems, and so on.)

- You need a strong distributed systems knowledge and a motivation to work on a self-generated (or group-generated) distributed project.
- This is a very individually guided course. You should be able to work with a team, and know how to do systems work.
- You need to be able to get along with Prof. Amir in order to take this class.
- If you enter the course and find yourself not gravitating towards a topic, do not be afraid to drop the course. This is the type of course that to get the most out of it, you really have to want it and push yourself.
- You get out of this course what you put in. If you take this course, you should really enjoy distributed systems/networking.
- This course is challenging but highly rewarding if you work hard and manage to pull through. Also, due to the high emphasis on practicality, if you are a theory-oriented person, this course might not appeal as much.
- Only take if you are interested in a project :)