OntarioTech UNIVERSITY

MACHINE LEARNING & DATA MINING
SOFE4620U - 001 - 74292

Responses: 18
Enrolment: 72
Return Rate: 25%

Confidential - Winter 2024   **MENNATULLAH SIAM**

The percentages shown are calculated independently of the "Not Applicable" option.

The Instructor

The Instructor...	Responses	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Clearly explained the learning outcomes, evaluation scheme and expectations at the beginning of the course	18	0%	0%	0%	44%	56%
Was prepared and conducted classes in an organized manner	18	0%	11%	0%	33%	56%
Presented material in a clear and easy-to-understand way	18	11%	11%	11%	28%	39%
Encouraged student discussion and participation	18	0%	0%	6%	17%	78%
Responded effectively to questions	18	0%	6%	6%	22%	67%
The learning resources were useful and effective	18	6%	22%	6%	22%	44%
Grading of assignments and tests was fair and consistent	18	0%	6%	6%	17%	72%
The feedback on assignments and/or tests was helpful	18	6%	6%	11%	22%	56%
Student work was returned within a reasonable time	18	0%	6%	0%	33%	61%
Is available for consultation outside of class time	18	0%	6%	0%	33%	61%
Encouraged a respectful environment in the class	18	0%	0%	0%	22%	78%

The Learning Environment

Role of the Learning Environment	Responses	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The physical learning environment contributed positively to my experience of this course.	18	0%	6%	17%	28%	50%
The virtual (e.g. Blackboard) learning environment contributedpositively to my experience of this course.	16	0%	0%	19%	44%	38%
The course schedule (e.g. days and times) contributed positively to my experience of this course.	18	6%	0%	22%	50%	22%
I had adequate access to the resources (e.g. software, library, lab) that I needed to complete my work in the course.	18	6%	11%	6%	50%	28%
The number of students in the course contributed positively to my experience.	18	0%	0%	50%	28%	22%

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The Student

	Responses	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I was highly motivated to take this course.	18	6%	0%	22%	28%	44%
Based on my previous academic experience, including pre-requisites, I was well prepared for this course.	18	17%	33%	6%	22%	22%
I have achieved the expected learning outcomes of this course.	18	6%	0%	17%	50%	28%
Personal issues and/or circumstances affected my performance in this course in a negative way.	13	15%	23%	38%	8%	15%

	Responses	Substantially below Average	About Average	Substantially above Average
Compared with other university courses I have taken, my effort in the course was:	18	0%	56%	44%

22. Please elaborate on any or all of your responses in the "Comments" section. These comments should be honest and direct but also respectful and constructive.

She went through topics way too fast and assumed we knew too much, with very little explanation of important aspects. Slides were low-detail.

One of the areas of concern of this course stems from how much content there is to be included. With a mathematical approach in a very packed course in terms of content, many students found themselves confused at times during the lectures and were not sure how to prepare for assessments, ie. the midterm. A possible solution is to provide practice questions so students have an idea of what to expect. I would also like to encourage to keep the in-class tutorial assignments as not graded for correctness but attendance as we often find ourselves rushing to complete the assignment without having time to take in the material. Having a separate tutorial for this course would be helpful as well, instead of just lectures. Otherwise, the amount and level of difficulty of assignments were good.

This course was the most useful and engaging of this semester. It was challenging since the topic is very difficult, but I learned a lot. I'm going to graduate school this year and I feel this course prepared me to pursue machine learning research. I learned the fundamentals of ML as well as modern topics such as LLM/Transformers.

In addition, I would also highlight the following:

- The content is well organized, so it was easy to follow the sequence (introduction, linear regression, logistic regression, optimization etc)
- It is clear the professor has a deep knowledge of what she is teaching
- The Professor always asked questions to engage the students during the lecture
- She always answered any question during the class in a way the students could understand
- Participation and assignment marks were very fair
- Quickly answered all my messages on Canvas

Suggestions for improvement:

- Cover more topics if possible
- Have tutorials for this course, since we would have more time to work on the programming side

The material the professor provided to learn from was very underwhelming from what was expected from us during midterms and exams, the material would be very vague and not really explain any of the content. I believe it would be beneficial to the students that take this course next if you would, add more information to the slides such as, why is the formula useful, why is it being derived, what are its main applications, how is it used, and explaining the steps you are taking if there are any calculations being done. This way having all the information linked together will make it easier to return to later on when trying to study for the exam. It will also help put things into perspective, instead of searching around for answers through different resources.

I think Dr. Siam taught the course very well overall. She put a lot of effort into explaining concepts and reasonings and made sure students had the foundational knowledge before teaching new course content. Her exams and assignments were also very fair. She also encouraged class participation by asking questions and took an effort into remembering student names which in my opinion made the classroom environment to feel more engaging. I also appreciated how she provided code demonstrations and walk throughs of some of the course concepts.

As a fourth year student having completed the entire Software Engineering program here at Ontario Tech, I can honestly say that Dr. Mennatullah Siam is one of the best professors I have had overall but I feel especially lucky to have had her for the Machine Learning course. She is passionate about the subject and cares deeply for her students success. She does an excellent job at breaking down complex subjects and frequently engages students in classroom discussion to ensure that we are following along with the material.

I found this course very useful, especially with the rise in the usage of machine learning concepts and AI. Dr. Siam was extremely knowledgeable about the topics in this course and was enthusiastic about sharing that knowledge, making me enjoy the course. A couple of issues that I faced: Dr. Siam was unclear sometimes on what she wanted for her assignments and in her announcements. The final project was poorly outlined as well, and I would like to see maybe some deliverables to submit, just so that we know we are on the right track (along with some comments). It was often difficult to follow Dr. Siam's lectures, and while she did often stop to ask if we had any questions, it was difficult to understand what we didn't understand. The topic itself is difficult to understand, and it didn't help that relevant topics (calculus, linear algebra, stats) were from a couple of years ago, making it difficult to recall.

Despite these shortcomings, I still believe that this course should be taught (perhaps a year or two earlier so that the relevant courses are fresh in our minds) and that Dr. Siam is the perfect candidate to teach this course, due to her relevant experience and enthusiasm. The shortcomings outlined come with experience in teaching this course over a couple of years, experience that I wish Dr. Siam will continue to learn.

Professor Siam did an incredible job teaching this course, to the point where the people that have taken this course previously were envious of everything I was able to do. The marking scheme was extremely fair, and everything was outlined clearly for us. Her expectations at the start of the course were also fair, and the grading scheme was solid; the weight of everything made sense and the time allotted was perfect.

She would answer people's questions during class, and if she was unsure of an answer, she would even send an announcement correcting herself or expanding on an answer she gave. She put a lot of effort into the course and making sure that we were prepared for everything, and the effort that she put in clearly affected us, as we were able to succeed.

I put more work into this class than other classes because I was motivated by professor Siam, and this course was able to live up to the expectations I had going into it.

I thoroughly enjoyed this class and believe that she is not only capable, but deserves to be able to continue teaching it.

Dr. Siam was an excellent professor. The course did have a lot of content, and that made it difficult for her to get through it, but she did a great job regardless. She got me more engaged in school than I have been at any point int he last four years of my degree program, and it really helped my learning. I think the fact that she is literally doing research in this field is a huge plus, and she should definitely teach this again next year.

I really enjoyed her class, it was like a breath of fresh air because I actually had to think for myself and participate in class.

Personally, and I say this as unironically as possible, if people were complaining about this course its because they are used to skating by for free instead of actually trying. I think this is a consequence of the pandemic, as most students who primarily got their degree through online school got free grades for 2 years, including me. Ive actually noticed it in so many of my groups that other than my partner in this class, "_____".

, every group member ive had in every single group this whole year has been either dumb or extremely lazy. I did more than 80% of the work in three of my course projects this semester alone solely because my groups members actually dont care. This is a systemic problem at OntarioTech since the pandemic. In fact, none of my groups members can even present properly, they all just read scripts off of their phones and dont even look at the audience. I think this and more are just obvious problems that need to be addressed in the student population. I honestly feel like most of the students in my grade should have failed third year, so dont let that reflect badly on Menatullah. I dont thjink anything will be done, because no matter what I say professors just keep telling me to "work with them" instead of actually doing anything. My capstone group has four people in it, but only 2 of us actually did anything other than a paragraph in a report here or there.

My group member and I even told our faculty advisor about this and he just let them stay in our group even though its a huge academic violation that they are getting free marks. All of this is to say that if students did badly in this course and it looks bad on Dr. Siam, then its because the students are horrible.

As a final statement, I learned more in this class than any other course in my degree. Keep Dr. Siam or you're making a terrible mistake

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Instructor was very helpful in teaching concepts. Covered a great deal of content relevant to the field in the modern age. Marking scheme was fair and balanced to promote good understanding of the concepts

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