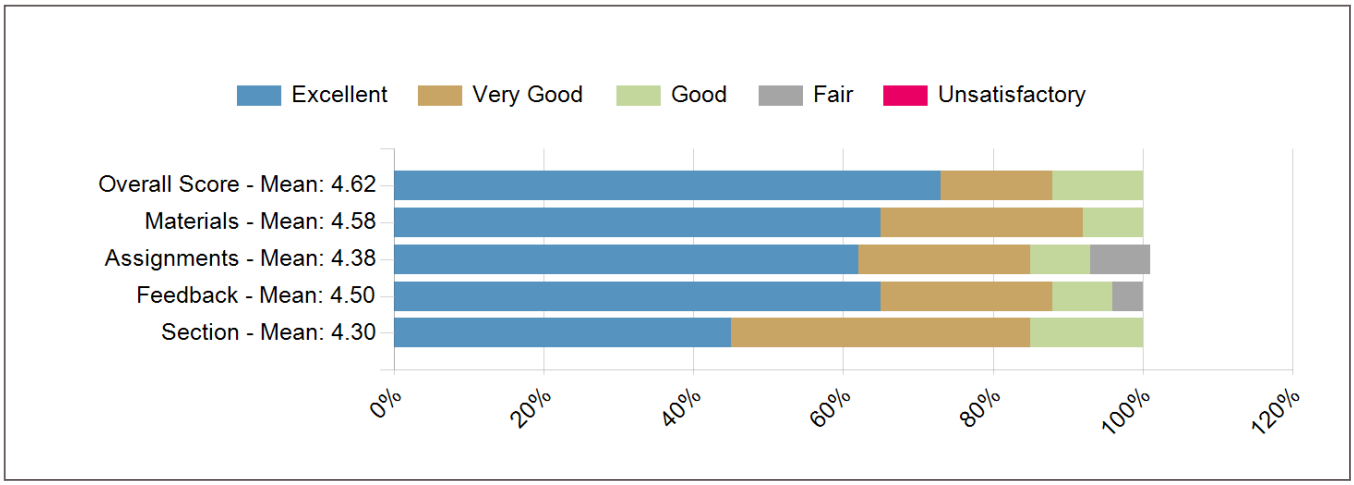
Course Response Rate

Raters	Students
Responded	28
Invited	35
Response Ratio	80%

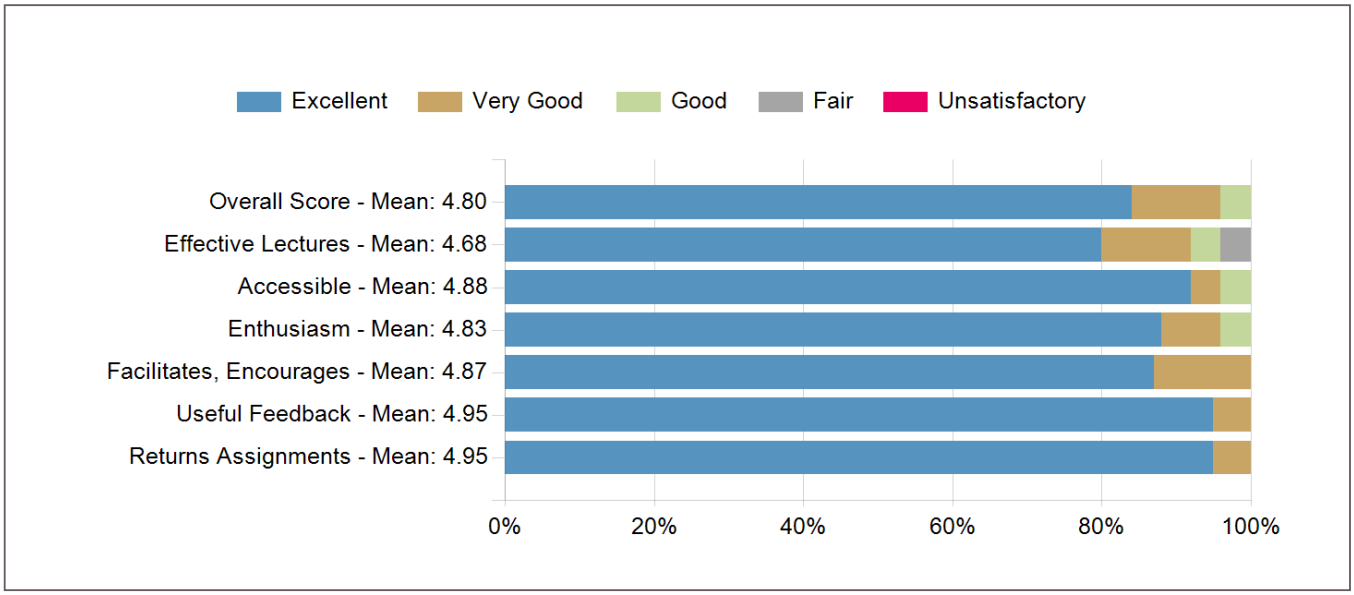
Course Feedback for COMPSCI 229R



Course General Questions

	Count	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Unsatisfactory	Course Mean	FAS Mean
Evaluate the course overall.	26	73%	15%	12%	0%	0%	4.62	4.26
Course materials (readings, audio-visual materials, textbooks, lab manuals, website, etc.)	26	65%	27%	8%	0%	0%	4.58	4.25
Assignments (exams, essays, problem sets, language homework, etc.)	26	62%	23%	8%	8%	0%	4.38	4.10
Feedback you received on work you produced in this course	26	65%	23%	8%	4%	0%	4.50	4.11
Section component of the course	20	45%	40%	15%	0%	0%	4.30	4.22

Instructor Feedback for Salil Vadhan



General Instructor Questions

	Count	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Unsatisfactory	Instructor Mean	FAS Mean
Evaluate your Instructor overall.	25	84%	12%	4%	0%	0%	4.80	4.56
Gives effective lectures or presentations, if applicable	25	80%	12%	4%	4%	0%	4.68	4.46
Is accessible outside of class (including after class, office hours, e-mail, etc.)	25	92%	4%	4%	0%	0%	4.88	4.46
Generates enthusiasm for the subject matter	24	88%	8%	4%	0%	0%	4.83	4.60
If this course was conducted in a lecture format with the involvement of section leaders, one or more of the following questions may not be applicable. Instructor: Salil Vadhan Facilitates discussion and encourages participation	23	87%	13%	0%	0%	0%	4.87	4.49
Gives useful feedback on assignments	21	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%	4.95	4.46
Returns assignments in a timely fashion	22	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%	4.95	4.43

On average, how many hours per week did you spend on coursework outside of class? Enter a whole number between 0 and 168.

Frequency chart and mean excludes students who answered 31 or more hours.

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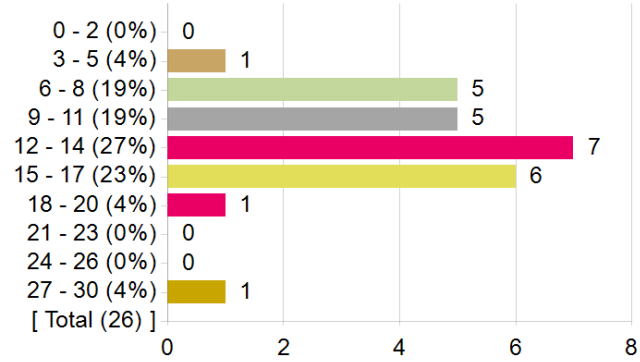

Statistics	Value
Response Count	26
Response Ratio	74%
Mean	12.35
Median	12.00
Mode	15
Standard Deviation	5.05

How strongly would you recommend this course to your peers?

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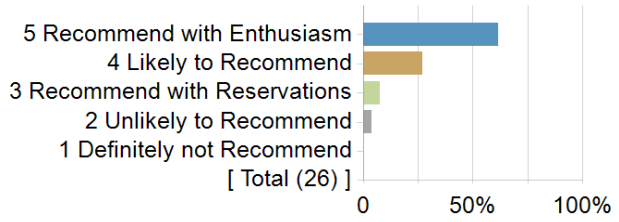

Options	Score	Count	Percentage
Recommend with Enthusiasm	5	16	62%
Likely to Recommend	4	7	27%
Recommend with Reservations	3	2	8%
Unlikely to Recommend	2	1	4%
Definitely not Recommend	1	0	0%

Statistics	Value
Response Ratio	74%
Mean	4.46
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.81

What was/were your reason(s) for enrolling in this course? (Please check all that apply)

Options	Count
Elective	16
Concentration or Department Requirement	12
Secondary Field or Language Citation Requirement	2
Undergraduate General Education Requirement	0
Expository Writing Requirement	0
Foreign Language Requirement	0
Pre-Med Requirement	0
Divisional Distribution Requirement	0
Quantitative Reasoning with Data Requirement	0

Comments from students

What would you like to tell future students about this class?

Comments
Not sure if the SGT class will be offered again, but a fascinating class with lots of really useful material. (It's also very hard, especially the psets.) Salil is great, I would take a 229 with him again!
This class really rewards you the more work you put into it.
You're going to be asked to synthesize a lot of math and CS concepts, but be creative and try hard. You'll get as much out of it as you give in terms of engagement with the readings and lectures. Working with others on the psets is essential.
I really learned so much in this class but as an undergrad I found it to be hard! Make sure you have a good study/pset group as you will need it to get through the class. The teaching staff was truly excellent though, so don't be intimidated by the difficulty, just be prepared (and make sure the rest of your schedule will allow you to devote significant time to this class, especially in the weeks psets are due).
This is a great class if – you want to learn tools in theoretical CS and if you want to get better at linear algebra. It is a LOT of work but rewarding.
If the idea of studying graphs with linear algebra intrigues you, I highly recommend this class. Spectral graph theory is a powerful toolkit, and this course covered it deeply and widely. Salil really cares about his teaching and it shows. The whole course staff did a great job making this course work online.
If you like combinatorics, graph theory, or theoretical CS, you should extremely consider this course–it's worth the time.
This course is great, the lectures are amazing, the problem sets and project are really fun, and it's also not an unreasonable amount of work; there's readings to go along with the material, which makes it a lot easier to follow everything.
This class was great. Professor Vadhan was an amazingly engaging and encouraging professor, even over zoom. He is also so kind and supportive with his students. I was able to come to his OH just to hang out and feel like I was actually seen as a part of a class, not just a passive participant. Even small things, like him asking us to display our pronouns or giving detailed feedback at several stages of our projects made a huge difference. There was also an incredible about of outside class support, though several OH times throughout each week and an active Piazza page. This felt like more of an experience instead of a class, and not in the cheesy cs 50 way. The content is engaging and current, introducing me to many problems and concepts I want to keep studying. Only downside is that occasionally the more technical proofs presented were difficult to follow, and there is a good deal of notation to keep track of, which isn't always consistent across multiple sources.
This course will be an excellent chance to build insights into spectral graph theory even if you are not coming from a pure math background but enjoy mathematical reasoning in general.
The course load is on the heavier side and the assignments are time–consuming. But if you could keep up with the pace of the course, it's a great course and there are a lot of learning opportunities.
If this is your first CS grad course, this will probably be one of your hardest classes ever, and you'll probably be confused most of the time (like the confusion when you do research). This is all very natural. There is a huge learning curve and this course is very heavily math based. A lot of the time, I don't understand what was going on in class and don't have an intuition. Because of that, doing the homework takes time and can be really confusing. Make sure to make good use of office hours and don't struggle too long on your own and work on applying the theorems and ideas from class to the problems. The homework was really challenging but you learn a lot of the concepts from the homework and the problems are often quite rewarding once you understand what's going on. (And make sure to work with a group – a lot of people in the class are quite nice, humble, and motivated to learn the material, so don't be afraid to reach out to others.)
In this class, you will learn the basics and some advanced topics of spectral graph theory, an exciting field of research. Salil will explain very difficult concepts very simply. However, don't be fooled by the simplicity – you may find that things he explains almost instantly have won major prizes in computer science.
This class is not easy. It requires more than basic experience with math or a serious commitment; either way the problem sets are difficult and time consuming (even for math concentrators – on par with CS 124 workload but more math). The course is not inherently applied though some applications are discussed at the end of the course. That said, the course enables students to develop a skill and set of graph problem solving strategies that few others have and that have enabled some of the most efficient graph algorithms.
I loved this class so much and am so glad I took it. My only hope is that Salil teaches another TCS course like this before I graduate :). His exposition of the course material was extraordinarily intuitive and clear, and he was able to integrate this with the course readings in a really successful way, often responding to student questions on Perusall about particularly interesting or confusing points and making the course really interactive.