

Teaching Evaluation 1: COGS300: Understanding and Designing Cognitive Systems, University of British Columbia, 2018-2019

Response Rate: 42 out of 60 (70%)

Note. the departmental mean provided as a way of comparison below is calculated as the average of ratings over the past 6 terms that the course was taught by a different instructor. It is worth noting that the response rate for those terms ranged between 10-40% compared to the 70% in the present course.

	My Score	Department's
<i>1: "Strongly disagree" to 5: "Strongly Agree"</i>		
The instructor helped inspire interest in learning the subject matter	4.9	4.1
The instructor communicated the subject matter effectively	4.6	3.4
The instructor made it clear what students were expected to learn.	4.5	3.6
Overall, evaluation of student learning (through exams, essays, presentations, etc.) was fair.	4.3	3.8
The instructor showed concern for student learning	4.7	4
Overall, the instructor was an effective teacher.	4.6	3.6
In classes where the size of the class and content of the course were appropriate, student participation in class was encouraged by the instructor.	4.9	N/A
High standards of achievement were set.	4.5	N/A
The instructor was generally well prepared for class	4.96	N/A
The instructor was readily available to students outside of class (e.g., through email, office hours, or by appointment)	4.8	N/A
The instructor treated students with respect.	4.9	N/A
<i>1: "Very Poor" to 5: "Very Good"</i>		
Considering everything how would you rate this course?	4.7	N/A

Comments from COGS300 (Fall 2018) Students in response to the following prompt provided by the cognitive systems program: Please comment on any aspects, positive or negative, of your instructor's teaching, attitudes to students, class atmosphere, or any other matters affecting the quality of instruction that you consider worthy of note.

- Though the mid-term exam was harder than expected, Sina is by far one of the most effective, engaging, and enjoyable instructors I have had thus far! He made an optimal effort to be available outside of lecture times to answer questions, he highly encouraged participation in class discussions, and he even made an effort to learn the names of all the students in the class. Further, I felt that the additional resources he included in our syllabus, which complemented our class readings but were not required, really showed his passion with the topics he was teaching and as a result, increased the levels of interest in the class as a whole. Sina also made an effort to speak with students about topics outside of class material, generally trying to ensure the well-being of his students. Also, I really liked seeing Sina engaging with students on the Cognitive Systems Facebook groups and sharing different awards, research opportunities, and talks that could be of possible interest. One of my favourite points of the semester was the class dedicated to professional development. I felt that Sina was able to address a lot of stress-inducing questions students hoping to apply to graduate students have. It was also really cool how he contacted people working

within the field of cognitive systems and other relevant fields to talk about the pros and cons of their expertise and how they got there. Overall, 10/10 instructor and 10/10 person!!

- You were a great prof!!!! Thanks for everything
- Sina demonstrated a passion for the material, both in the classroom and in office hours, which encouraged participation and enthusiasm of the class as a whole. Sina was respectful of all the students, allowing for mini-debates during class and never dismissing a student's ideas, regardless of his own opinions. Classes were always well-prepared, the slides well-made and activities well thought out. Overall, I would say I thoroughly enjoyed Sina's course, a big reason being his attitude and methods of teaching.
- Great instructor, very engaging and humorous, and clearly interested in the subject matter.
- Sina is an amazing instructor. He greatly inspired my interest into the topic. Every lecture was very interesting and Sina was very well prepared for them. He showed genuine interest in the topic and seemed to really care that students got any help they needed to learn the course material well.
- One of my favourite classes and the best prof I've had! Sina is very knowledgeable about every aspect of the material and possible applications of future technology. It is a very science-based course and he is able to make it easily understandable and interesting for students such as myself that have very little Science knowledge coming from the Arts stream. Overall I was completely captivated every class at Sina's easygoing personality and effective teaching style – it is obvious that all the students love him! Although the class was not easy, he has motivated me to continue to explore tech and its future applications.
- Sina is incredibly knowledgeable but managed to create a comfortable environment that was never condescending, which made coming to class genuinely very fun. Although high standards of achievement were set, the nature of the course really prioritized learning and application, which is very appreciated. Class discussion was frequently encouraged and the class size was perfect for a course like this, as you have enough people to form a good debate over any topic, yet not too many that it was intimidating. Furthermore, Sina often responded to stressful times for students and within reason extended deadlines for some things to better support student achievement. Lastly, we were able to choose the topics for the last couple weeks of class, which was a good move as it allowed us to explore topics that we're interested in, and also a smart way to mitigate the class attendance dropoff that happens at the end of the year by keeping it fun. I will miss going to this class!
- Sina is a very respectful, well-dressed, and well prepared instructor. He remembers small details about each student, such as what they wrote on the get you know you form about football, and is always available. He turns responses from students in class discussions into more organized and fluent opinions which made it easier for the rest of the class to understand. Although I did not participate as much as I wanted, the in class discussions provided were enjoyable and produced new arguments. I would recommend anyone looking into cogs to take this course (even though its required), or any course taught by Sina.
- I really enjoyed COGS 300 and Sina was a great instructor. He was always prepared, encouraged critical thinking and participation if students wanted to speak. He learned everyone's names which makes a huge difference in such a large university. Communication was excellent. This has been one of my favourite courses at UBC and was definitely my favourite course this semester.
- Sina is approachable, patient and very friendly. He genuinely cares about us as individual students. He also makes time for office hours, stays late during and make appointments for days I can't make it. He also tries to tie the class work to real life experiences, current ones at that. I hope he continues to be a very effective instructor/mentor! Thanks Sina,

- He was helpful whenever anyone needed a question answered and was available after class, by email, office hours and by appointment. His enthusiasm and genuine interest encouraged students to learn the course material but also keep exploring related field outside of the classroom. One of the best professors I have had at UBC.
- By far my favourite UBC professor so far. Made class exciting and fun.
- Sina was very passionate about this course. It really reflected on the class and encouraged us to participate more. He is a great teacher and provides amazing feedback on response papers and other work. He knows everyone's name (I rarely participated so I was shocked by this)!
- Sina was a great instructor! He made classes very fun and engaged all students with the material. He is very approachable and the class atmosphere was fantastic.
- I thoroughly enjoyed this course with Sina. He's a kind, patient and knowledgeable instructor. He answered all our questions and always made an effort to make the class interesting.
- Professor Sina is a great professor in ways. He makes sure he gives valuable advice to students. His classes are always fun and it seems like every student is enjoying the discussions. I would say he took a huge part in increasing my interest towards cognitive systems and removed many of the doubts I had about choosing this field of studies.
- Sina obviously cared about the content of the course and the success of the students in the class. He was well-prepared for every lecture and encouraged discussion and for people to voice their opinions. Readings were interesting and from a variety of sources.
- Great Professor. He made the class environment really fun. But I wish he explained the material more, Maybe by adding the reading material to the lecture explanation. Also I loved the black background slides. His comments on assignments really helped me to do better on the next assignment.
- He encouraged class participation but I would have preferred it if more class time was devoted to lecture or multimedia teaching and less was devoted to a few loud students, who had limited or flawed understanding of the class material, engaging in hard-headed philosophical debates which often were only tangentially relevant to the lesson at hand.
- Sina is an amazing professor. He has a great sense of humor which he uses in lecture to deliver specific points which works well in making his lectures engaging and memorable. He answers all questions with patience and is always open to hearing students' opinions about the material and having small debates in class. The classroom atmosphere is very positive in my opinion. He is also extremely fair – he listens to our concerns in class regarding course material and evaluation and adjusts accordingly. Personally, he also helped me after I was feeling sick. I feel extremely lucky to have had Sina as my professor this term.
- Great class, and great instruction from Sina. He was always well-prepared, provided very thorough and clear explanations of concepts and material, and welcomed in-class discussion and questions.
- I felt Sina had a great light hearted attitude in class, and the class was encouraged to participate. I enjoyed everything else about the course
- This was a difficult course for me with A LOT of information, but Sina communicated the information very well and showed concern for the students. Some topics were covered quite quickly which increased the difficulty. Overall, Sina was a great professor!

- Keep doing what you do when you adjust the course to meet everybody's prior experiences (polls on who has done matrix algebra etc) and student interest (polls on what last two topics we chose)! Super effective with the small class size
- One of the best professor I have had here at UBC! Super engaging. Made the class funny. Used relevant examples. Was relevant in general. Felt like I was learning stuff ahead of the curve.
- The instructor had a great positive attitude and inspired interest in the course material/curriculum/subject/topic.
- Prof. Fazelpour has good sense of humor and was effective at making the material interesting. Good class atmosphere.
- Very engaging and communicated the content clearly.
- Absolutely fascinating material, well covered and engaging.
- Instructor remembers names of just about everyone in the class