CSE Student Representative Report 2014s1

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Student Representatives

	Representatives
First Year	Octavia Soegyono Harry Day
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About

The CSE Student Representative Report is all about gathering feedback on CSE and courses midway through the semester, and addressing them to the Head of School so that any issues arisen can be fixed sooner rather than later. Positive feedback also helps as it gives lecturers an indication of how they are going.

This semester we offered surveys in two varieties - a whole survey, involving life at CSE as well as courses, and a course only survey - for those who are lazy and would just like to give their say on a single course. We provided the incentive of a prize for a participant of the survey, and we have this year visited lectures and asks lecturers to advertise the survey for us. We found we had a higher response rate from the lecturers who asked their students to participate in the survey.

Altogether, we had 78 participants of the whole survey, and 108 responses to the course only survey. We have read and compiled this report based on those responses.

This year, we have also decided to put qualitative results of our survey into our report, provided there are enough responses to make it valid.

We thank students for their time in completing the survey, and lecturers who have helped to advertise it. We hope the report is informative, and you will see a reflection of changes for areas this report has addressed.

You can view the sturep website at https://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/~stureps/. We are instigating a banner with our faces on it soon!

<div align="right">

Sincerely,
Your Student Representatives of 2014

</div>

Life at CSE

How are you finding life at CSE?
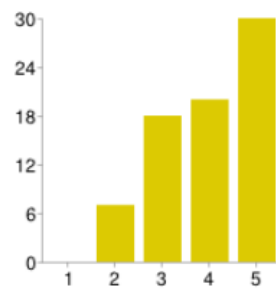
1	0	0%
2	7	9%
3	18	24%
4	20	27%
5	30	40%

The lower ratings are usually made by those in the postgraduate years.

Do you feel like you are receiving sufficient support in understanding your degree?
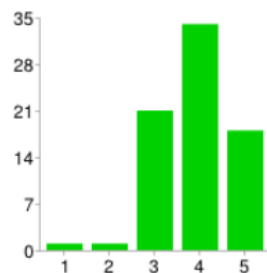
1	1	1%
2	1	1%
3	21	28%
4	34	45%
5	18	24%

Students are generally satisfied at the level of support given at CSE.

General Feedback

General positive comments include:
- Friendly atmosphere and student community
- Great student development
- Great events run by the societies
- Free pizza, food and beer
- Undergraduate tutoring opportunities

General areas of improvement include:
- Socs office back in the basement
- More emphasis on teaching - some courses are not in great shape (one cited COMP9844)
- More subjects being offered - in modern/emerging technologies
- Subjects being offered more frequently than one semester
- More notice about subjects being run (e.g. COMP4141 being cancelled last minute)

CATEI Responses

Do you typically fill out all CATEI evaluations on myUNSW? If no, why not?

Yes	**46**	59%
Other	**32**	41%
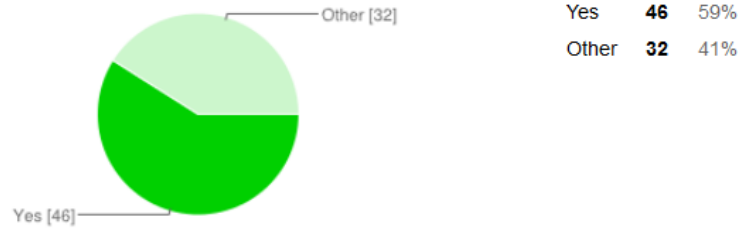
First years were the least likely to know about the surveys with only 12 out of 28 students responding that they did. This could be due to the fact that they have not needed to fill out the CATEI surveys yet.

Many students said that they couldn't be bothered to fill out the survey, whilst others commented that the survey questions were generic, and felt that their feedback was ignored.

Student Resources

Where Students do Assignments

My own compu [61]

Lab Machine [13]

Lab Machine	**13**	18%
My own computer	**61**	82%
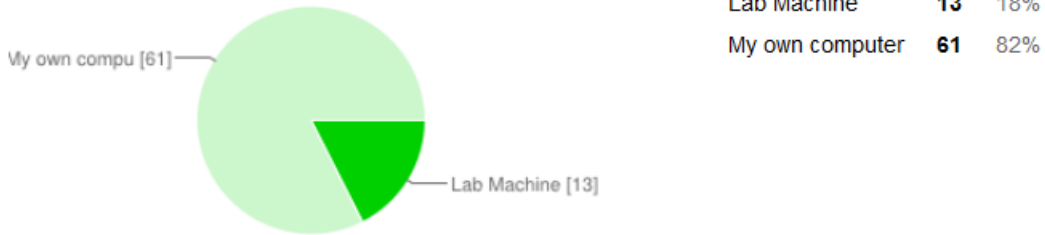
Disk Quota

Was the amount of disk quota allocated to you sufficient for your courses this session? If no, why not?

Other [18]

Yes [53]

Yes	**53**	75%
Other	**18**	25%
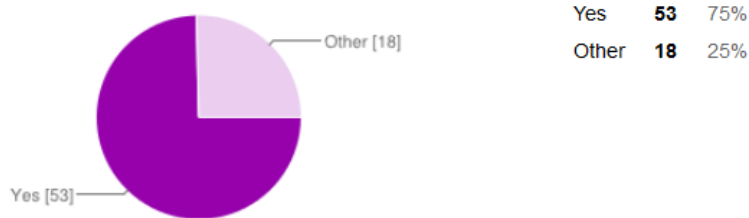
Of those who said they did not have enough:
- MB disk spaces should not be an acceptable CSE allowance
- Eclipse seemed to hog up a lot of disk space - with some getting a warning after each lab
- Seemed to not be enough to tutor and take courses
- Not enough to customise their session (addons on firefox, vim plugins, local builds, etc.)
- Cannot keep previous semester's work for reference

Internet Quota

Was the amount of internet quota allocated to you sufficient for your courses this session?

Other [4]

Yes [70]

Yes	**70**	95%
Other	**4**	5%
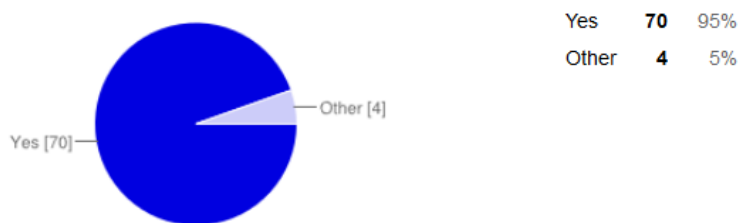
Of those who said "other", they all specified that they did not know of such "quota"...

Print Quota

The merging of CSE printing with UNSW IT has proven very unpopular. Comments include:

- Older system was faster, simpler and cheaper - the new system is expensive, slower and hard to use
- Overcentralisation - if the UNSW print servers were down, we are affected too
- A small amount of free quota - even if it was not 800 - would still be helpful - for printing assignment specs, course notes, CSE assignments, etc.
- Some students noticed a larger tuition fee, and feel that a decrease in resources is unfair.
- Lab0 print instructions are outdated.

Laboratory Feedback

Many are satisfied with the laboratories provided, in particular:

- connectable laptops to screens
- basement labs are nice
- satisfaction tuba's doors stopped squeaking

A number of improvements had been recommended:

- a large lab to walk in and do work
- a cleaning schedule for machines, or hand sanitizer available
- electrical engineering air conditioning needs to be improved
- easier access to laboratories after hours
- sound on some lab computers
- a better window manager
- more screens around labs showing which labs are free (like the one outside G01)

Devspace

Do you know what devspace is?
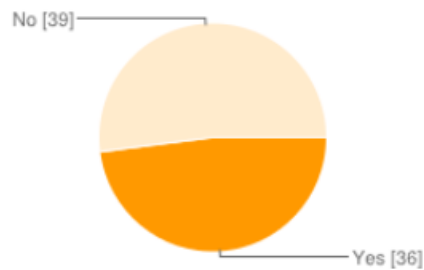
No [39]

Yes [36]

Yes	**36**	48%
No	**39**	52%

Have you been to devspace?
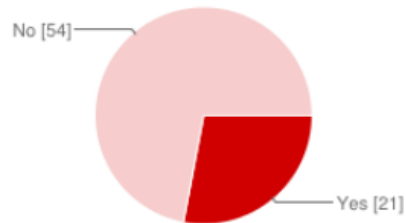
No [54]

Yes [21]

Yes	**21**	28%
No	**54**	72%

Tech Suggestions
- Less arduinos; more mechanical robots
- Programmable robots
- XBox Kinect
- Large Screen
- Oculus Rift Dev Kit 2
- PS4
- Graphics Tablets

Miscellaneous Suggestions
- A bigger space
- Advertised better
- DevSpace seems to be a special group of certain people - try make it more inclusive
- A way of making one feel less guilty making the supervisor stay there just so one can use the space (inviting more people perhaps)
- More opening times

New Basement

What is your overall rating for the new basement?
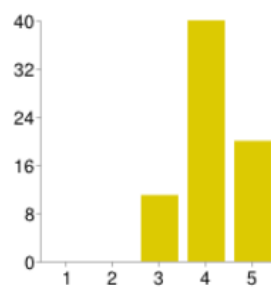
1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	11	15%
4	40	56%
5	20	28%

Likes about the New Basement

- The big tables and more spaces to work encourage a sense of community and more space to do work
- The open space is more practical
- More areas to charge laptop, phone and tablet
- Ability to eat and use your laptop at the same time
- Good lighting
- Clean bathroom
- Easily found
- A nice division between the noise (with the laptop chargers) and quiet area
- Not having to go to the library anymore

Likes about the New Basement Labs

- More modern feel
- The labs have good facilities (and a good smell!)
- Nice and bright, ergonomic and large enough desks and computer screens
- Glass walls were aesthetically pleasing

Suggestions for Improvement

- Ergonomic seats in basement (ones with backs)
- Socs office to return to basement
- Even more open space and seats around
- Powerpoints on the tables (and even more charging locations in general)
- Basement is too sunny and warm in the afternoon - the white desks are reflective of heat and have glare
- Having an even amount of computers (better for pair work)
- A space for postgraduates only
- The whiteboards in the labs being usable
- A water fountain or bubbler
- Labs to return to the K17 - J17 bridge
- Student Lockers
- (Velociraptors!)

First Year Courses

COMP1000 - Introduction to the Worldwide Web, Spreadsheets and Databases

| Positive | Sample: 1 (of 98) |

General Comments

Students liked how the labs allowed for practise of what was covered in the lectures. The lecturer and the course received high ratings.

COMP1911 - Computing 1A

| Mixed | Sample: 3 (of 303) |

General Comments

Students tended to rate this course average in all areas, although most would not recommend this course to a friend. Students were dissatisfied with the level of tutoring received, although they felt the lecturer was organised.

| Positive | | | *Sample: 42 (of 505)* |

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	4.48	5
Do you feel this course is useful?	4.48	5
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	3.98	4
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	4.38	5
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	4.60	5
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3.67	4
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	4.24	4
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	4	4
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	4.38	5

General Comments

The majority of students were very pleased with the lecturer and the style of the course. The use of OpenLearning in this course was felt to be effective and useful. Students especially liked how easy it was to get help from others on the site.

A number of students did comment that the workload of this course was very high, and a few noted they disliked the blogging requirements for this course. A small number of students felt the lecturers should be more condensed, but others felt the lectures to be very effective.

COMP1927 - Computing 2

Mixed	*Sample: 1 (of 96)*

General Comments

The feedback for this course was mixed, with the feeling that the lecturer is somewhat disorganised. It was felt that lab instructions could be vague, with limited feedback. It was however felt that this course was relevant.

ENGG1000 - Engineering Design

Negative	*Sample: 2 (of 130 in Comp Stream)*

General Comments

The feedback for this course was very negative. Students felt that the quality of teaching in the course was poor, and would not recommend it. Specific complaints were raised regarding the flawed peer marking process, and the extremely disorganised nature of the course.

| Positive | *Sample: 16 (of 678)* |

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	3.38	4
Do you feel this course is useful?	3.5	4
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	3.63	4
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	3.44	4
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	3.31	4
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3	3
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	4.06	4.5
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	2.81	2.5
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	2.93	3

General Comments

Some complaints were raised about the cancellation of the second lecture stream in this subject. Students also felt that the workload for this course was quite high, and insufficient help was available. However the course did receive high ratings, and students seemed to think the content was useful.

Second Year Courses

COMP2111 - System Modelling and Design

| Negative | *Sample: 7 (of 56)* |

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	2.5	2
Do you feel this course is useful?	2.7	3
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	2.1	2
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	2	2
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	2	2
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3.3	3
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	3.4	3
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	2.1	2
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	1.4	1

The workload of the course was considered reasonable.

General Comments

The course was received mostly negatively. The lecturer seemed to know the content well, but the content was technical and hard to follow on at the pace of the lecturer.

General comments include:
- Praise for moving away from Event B
- More examples from the lecturer
- The tutor being more confident
- Not enough feedback about how students are currently going - more exam style questions as practice

Mixed

Sample: 22 (of 250)

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	3.5	4
Do you feel this course is useful?	3	3
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	3.1	3
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	3.3	3
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	3.2	3
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3	3
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	3.5	4
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	2.7	3
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	2.8	2.5

The workload for this course was considered reasonable

General Comments

The course received mixed feedback. The positive feedbacks praised lecturing quality:

- The lecturer managed to take mundane content to a level that engages and excites students
- The lecturer was easy to approach to ask questions during lectures

However, negative feedback was received mainly in regards to course content:

- Some felt that the course was more in the tune of electrical engineering rather than computer science, and could not see it's applications. Some have also indicated it should not be core.
- The course content got cryptic as the course went on. Some felt this could be addressed through tutorials, or lab demonstrators giving a mini-tutorial when administering the lab began rather than just standing and being ready to assist
- A few felt the amount of "are you with me" was a bit too much.

Negative			*Sample: 33 (of 251)*

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	2.8	3
Do you feel this course is useful?	3.2	3
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	3.1	3
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	1.5	1
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	1.5	1
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3.7	4
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	2.2	2
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	3.8	4
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	2.3	2

The workload of the course was considered reasonable.

General Comments

Students did not appreciate how the course was currently being administered. Some students have indicated they feel the subject content had potential, but was not fully realised under the current lecturer.

General comments include:
- The lecturer does not explain concepts in an effective manner.
- The course feels like learning Java rather than learning design.
- The lecturer offering exam tips as an incentive to attend lectures - whereas students feel good teaching should instead be the focus.
- The lecture slides are taken directly from the website, and used ineffectively. Students have indicated the lecturer seems to read off slides with no further value - but rather, remarks such as "I would draw it to you but I don't have a whiteboard" (with a whiteboard nearby) or going on unnecessary rants about design which have no value to the course. Students prefer a more hands-on approach (which was offered in the alternative lecture stream when the lecturer designed/coded with the class).
- The pace of lectures being slow, and the tutorial was enough to cover it fully.
- The assignment specification being vague - with lecturer emails contradicting the specification when clarification was asked for.
- The laboratory exercises worded poorly and was not designed well and (as well as the assignment) restricts design rather than promoting it.

Positive	*Sample: 8 (of 42)*

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	4.6	5
Do you feel this course is useful?	4	4
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	4.3	4
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	4.8	5
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	4.6	5
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3	3
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	4.9	5
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	4.5	4.5
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	4.1	4

The workload for this course was considered reasonable.

General Comments

The lecturer was heavily praised, along with the new style and content of the course. One commented it was easier learning COMP2111 content in this course rather than COMP2111 itself. However, the three hour lecture block was considered too long and hard to concentrate for the full duration.

Third Year Courses

COMP3121/3821/9101/9801 - Algorithms and Programming Techniques

| Positive | Sample: 9 (of 130) |

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	4.1	4
Do you feel this course is useful?	4.1	4
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	3.7	4
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	3.4	3
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	3.4	4
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	4.1	4
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	3.5	4
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	3	3
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	4	5

The workload of the course was considered reasonable.

General Comments

The most common complaint amongst students was that the extended section for the course needed tutorials and that there needed to be an easier/more effective way of contacting course staff (The lecturer and tutors were not making themselves available enough). The students also noted that the lecturer was entertaining and managed to keep the lectures informative and interesting.

Some made positive remarks about Aleks' jokes.

COMP3131/9102 - Programming Languages and Compilers

Positive	*Sample: 2 (of 49)*

General Comments

Students felt that although the course is interesting and has an appropriate workload, the tutorials are exceedingly boring and poorly taught.

COMP3141 - Software System Design and Implementation

Positive	*Sample: 4 (of 77)*

General Comments

Students commented that the course content and lecturer are very good but that they would like to see tutorials for the course as they feel that the course is important and should receive more attention. There were also some minor complaints about the lecturer giving vague answers on the forums.

COMP3153/9153 - Algorithmic Verification

Mixed	*Sample: 1 (of 14)*

General Comments

The student that filled out the survey felt that the course should require a textbook because they felt that the mathematical concepts could not be adequately explained in the lecture notes and that the introductory text recommended by the lecturer is unavailable at the UNSW Library or anywhere else in Australia.

Negative		*Sample: 7 (of 26)*

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	3.5	4
Do you feel this course is useful?	3.5	4
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	2.1	2
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	2	2
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	1.5	2
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3.7	4
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	2.7	3
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	1.7	1
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	2.2	3

The workload of the course was considered reasonable.

General Comments

Students felt that the projects from the course were disorganized and unclear and that peer-marking projects was a bad idea. They also felt that the lecturer was not explaining concepts at an understandable level. There were also a number of responses advocating for frequent practice questions so that they can familiarize themselves with the material.

| Positive | Sample: 9 (of 130) |

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	4.2	4
Do you feel this course is useful?	4.55	5
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	4.1	4
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	4.3	5
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	4.5	5
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	4	4
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	4.5	5
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	4.2	5
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	4.6	5

The workload of the course was considered reasonable.

General Comments

The general consensus is that Operating Systems is taught very well. Students were appreciative of the bountiful support from lectures, tutorials, notes and piazza.

someone proposed to marry Kevin

		Average	Median

Negative   *Sample: 6 (of 98)*

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	2.5	3
Do you feel this course is useful?	4	4.5
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	2.8	3
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	3.2	2.5
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	2.3	2
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	2.3	2
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	3.3	3
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	1.6	1.5
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	2	2

The workload of the course was considered reasonable.

General Comments

Students felt as though the tutors could be more engaging during classes. Other than that, there were no remarkable comments from students.

| Positive | Sample: 5 (of 120) |

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	3.4	4
Do you feel this course is useful?	4.4	4
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	3.6	4
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	4.2	4
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	4.2	4
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3.8	4
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	4.4	4
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	3.2	4
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	2.8	2

The workload of the course was considered reasonable.

General Comments

There were no remarkable comments from students

| Mixed | *Sample: 12 (of 165)* |

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	3.5	4
Do you feel this course is useful?	3.2	3.5
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	3.1	3
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	3	3
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	3	3.5
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3.2	3.5
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	3.3	3
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	2.5	2
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	2.8	3

The workload of the course was considered reasonable.

General Comments

Students feel that there isn't enough practical content in the course and that teaching Prolog in this fashion makes things more difficult than they should be. The lecturer was praised for being engaging and entertaining but some students believe that the lecture content is not relevant to assignments.

Mixed	*Sample: 1 (of 54)*

General Comments

The student that filled out the survey felt that the course was geared towards students who are doing a double degree in SENG and Commerce because of the heavy focus on business topics such as the stock exchange.

Fourth Year Courses

COMP4128 - Programming Challenges

Positive	*Sample: 1 (of 24)*

General Comments

Good overall comments, though did say it was a hard course, but it was taught correctly and was fun.

COMP4431 - Game Design

Positive	*Sample: 1 (of 43)*

General Comments

The general comment indicated the course was fun and engaging.

COMP4601 - Design Project B

Mixed	*Sample: 2 (of 16)*

General Comments

Course is okay mixed responses on whether they ability to choose their own project is good, one person liked this, another said it caused a delay. Also there were comments about a steep learning curve for the software.

Postgraduate Courses

COMP9021 - Principles of Programing

Mixed	*Sample: 2 (of 100)*

General Comments

There were two somewhat conflicting responses to the survey for this course. One student thought the course was taught very effectively and all content was useful, whilst another respondent felt that some of the theory work wasn't very useful. Both responses concurred that the course would be very difficult for non-programmers.

COMP9024 - Data Structures and Algorithms

Negative	*Sample: 3 (of 36)*

General Comments

Whilst students felt that this course was relevant, the general feeling was that it was taught poorly. Students were highly dissatisfied with the level of tutoring received, and felt that the lecturer did not successfully explain concepts.

| Positive | | Sample: 4 (of 26) |

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	3.5	3.5
Do you feel this course is useful?	4	4.5
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	3	3
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	3.5	3.5
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	3.5	4
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3	3
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	3.75	4
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	3	3
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	3.75	4.5

The workload of the course was considered to be too much.

General Comments

Students felt that the workload for this course is very high. They did however agree that the content of this course was useful and interesting. Students raised concerns that there was a large gap in skill and knowledge between the assessments and the rest of the course. They also raised concerns about the lack of tutorials.

COMP9311 - Database Systems

Mixed	*Sample: 2 (of 72)*

General Comments

Whilst students were happy with the course content and found it interesting, concerns were raised about the quality of tutoring with some students complaining that their tutors didn't interact with the class at all, and had some language difficulties. Responses to the other questions was conflicting between the two respondents, one rating the lecturer very highly and the other rating the lecturer terribly.

COMP9318 - Data Warehousing and Data Mining

Negative	*Sample: 2 (of 57)*

General Comments

Students were unhappy with this course, with survey respondents raising the issue of the lack of tutors. Students felt that course content wasn't explained well (in part because of lack of tutes), and that the lecturer is disorganised.

COMP9319 - Web Data Compression and Search

Positive	*Sample: 1 (of 50)*

General Comments

Students were generally happy, but would have preferred a tutorial session to an extra lecture block during the tutorial slot.

COMP9322 - Service-Oriented Architectures

Positive	*Sample: 2 (of 34)*

General Comments

Students were happy with the lecturer, but felt that more examples could be provided to make the prescribed work clearer. One student disagreed with the weighting of the first assessment.

COMP9332 - Network Routing and Switching

Positive	Sample: 2 (of 40)

General Comments

Students were generally happy with the course and lecturer, but had some issues with the lecturer getting confused when responding to questions.

COMP9334 - Systems Capacity Planning

Positive	Sample: 3 (of 81)

General Comments

Students were generally happy with the course, but would have liked some more examples. Some students had issues with the mathematical knowledge required for the course.

| Positive | | *Sample: 6 (of 66)* |

Qualitative Responses

	Average	Median
Is the course interesting?	4.3	4.5
Do you feel this course is useful?	4.7	5
Do you find the content of appropriate difficulty?	3.8	4
Is the lecturer effective at explaining concepts in this course?	3.7	4
Would you enrol in another course with this lecturer?	2.8	2.5
Would you enrol in this course with the same content?	3.3	3.5
Would you say your lecturer is organised?	3	3
Are you satisfied with the level of tutoring you've received?	2.8	3
Would you recommend this course to a friend?	3.5	3.5

The workload of the course was considered reasonable.

General Comments

Students are happy with the content and the level of workload needed thus far. However, students would prefer more clear notice in regards to lecture cancellations - preferably through emails, rather than IRC and/or the course front page.