



**Graduate Course Evaluation for Julian McAuley
Department of Computer Science and Engineering**

CSE 258 - Recommender Sys&Web Mining
Section ID 915255
Section Number A00
Fall 2017

Number of Evaluations Submitted: 201
Number of Students Enrolled: 319

1. The Instructor displayed proficient command of the material.

138 (69.3%): Strongly Agree
59 (29.6%): Agree
0 (0.0%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
1 (0.5%): Disagree
1 (0.5%): Strongly Disagree
0 (0.0%): Not Applicable
2: [No Response]

2. The Instructor was well-prepared for class.

135 (68.2%): Strongly Agree
57 (28.8%): Agree
3 (1.5%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
2 (1.0%): Disagree
1 (0.5%): Strongly Disagree
3: [No Response]

3. The Instructor's voice was clear and audible.

116 (58.3%): Strongly Agree
53 (26.6%): Agree
15 (7.5%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
12 (6.0%): Disagree
3 (1.5%): Strongly Disagree
0 (0.0%): Not Applicable
2: [No Response]

4. The Instructor was accessible to students outside of class (office hours, e-mail, etc.).

122 (61.3%): Strongly Agree
63 (31.7%): Agree
13 (6.5%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
0 (0.0%): Disagree
1 (0.5%): Strongly Disagree
2: [No Response]

5. The Instructor was approachable, courteous and showed interest and concern for students' learning and understanding.

129 (64.8%): Strongly Agree
57 (28.6%): Agree
7 (3.5%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
2 (1.0%): Disagree
2 (1.0%): Strongly Disagree
2 (1.0%): Not Applicable
2: [No Response]

6. The Instructor presented material in an intellectually stimulating way that gave students deeper insight into the material.

111 (55.8%): Strongly Agree
59 (29.6%): Agree
20 (10.1%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
8 (4.0%): Disagree
1 (0.5%): Strongly Disagree
0 (0.0%): Not Applicable
2: [No Response]

7. The Instructor promoted and encouraged questions and discussion.

108 (54.3%): Strongly Agree
63 (31.7%): Agree
22 (11.1%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
5 (2.5%): Disagree
1 (0.5%): Strongly Disagree
2: [No Response]

8. The Instructor organized class activities in a way that promoted learning.

107 (53.8%): Strongly Agree
60 (30.2%): Agree
22 (11.1%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
6 (3.0%): Disagree
4 (2.0%): Strongly Disagree
2: [No Response]

9. The Instructor provided feedback (written/oral) in a way that promoted learning.

106 (53.3%): Strongly Agree
68 (34.2%): Agree
18 (9.0%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
5 (2.5%): Disagree
2 (1.0%): Strongly Disagree
2: [No Response]

10. The Instructor is actively helpful when students have difficulty with course material.

114 (57.9%): Strongly Agree
57 (28.9%): Agree
16 (8.1%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
4 (2.0%): Disagree
1 (0.5%): Strongly Disagree
5 (2.5%): Not Applicable
4: [No Response]

11. The Instructor interacted well with students and treated them with respect and courtesy.

124 (62.9%): Strongly Agree
62 (31.5%): Agree
6 (3.0%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
1 (0.5%): Disagree
2 (1.0%): Strongly Disagree
2 (1.0%): Not Applicable
4: [No Response]

12. The Instructor was clear about course expectations.

131 (66.2%): Strongly Agree
61 (30.8%): Agree
3 (1.5%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
2 (1.0%): Disagree
1 (0.5%): Strongly Disagree
3: [No Response]

13. The Instructor was clear about standards for evaluation.

129 (65.2%): Strongly Agree
58 (29.3%): Agree
6 (3.0%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
1 (0.5%): Disagree
4 (2.0%): Strongly Disagree
0 (0.0%): Not Applicable
3: [No Response]

14. I would recommend this instructor overall.

116 (58.6%): Strongly Agree
71 (35.9%): Agree
6 (3.0%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
4 (2.0%): Disagree
1 (0.5%): Strongly Disagree
3: [No Response]

15. What is your overall rating of the Instructor?

128 (64.6%): Excellent
59 (29.8%): Above Average
7 (3.5%): Average
2 (1.0%): Below Average
2 (1.0%): Poor
3: [No Response]

16. General comments about the Instructor's performance

Please keep your comments constructive and professional, abiding by the Principles of Community

- A Good instructor with well-prepared slides
- Amazing.
- calm, critical thinking.
- Fantastic; so much so that concepts seemed simple until it was time to put implement those concepts
- good and meaningful class
- Good professor and a good course
- Good.
- Good. Explain concepts well and make them easy to understand.
- Great

- Great teacher
- He is good. But the class is too fast.
- He is so learned and he is good at expression.
- He taught content from his own research and covered a lot of useful topics within data mining. Though the lectures are not very related to assignments so people who skip the lectures would also do fine in this course.
- His flow of speech is too fast sometimes hard to follow. But it is useful lecture.
- I don't think there is anything in the field of recommender systems that Prof. McAuley does not know. I really loved his teaching style ! Every other sentence would be a real world application of the idea which is amazing.
- It's tough to cover the abundance of material at such a high level, but I think the instructor did a good job covering the material and teeing up potential other courses which could take a deep dive into specific niche areas (like social networks for example).
- Julian prepares really well with his courses, and I learned a lot of useful techniques in data mining. He was very gentle and a little bit shy. If he could tell some jokes during the course, then it would be really nice!
- Knows a lot, could be more enthusiastic about teaching concepts in class
- Love his relaxed way of teaching, he is clearly interested in teaching the topic, has structured the course very well paced and the homeworks and assignments are nicely designed to help everyone understand the material and learn from the same. His PPT slides are also quite good and easy to understand.
Overall an excellent professor and would recommend this course.
- McAuley presents the material in a very organized, albeit not that stimulating, fashion.
- One great subject taught by one great prof, I hope to work with him someday
- Overall it's OK. But I think homework is not that good. They don't actually help us understand lectures better. And the dataset is not that good.
- Prof. McAuley is very helpful. Always reply to questions and comments clearly and quickly. I also like how he always present the current research in the field and allow us to implement them ourselves.
- Professor Julian has a profound knowledge of his subject and an ability to explain sophisticated concepts in an easy and interesting way.
He is very passionate and enthusiastic about teaching and always helps students. He has an extensive experience in conducting research in this field and he can answer any questions related both to his class and to Machine Learning overall. He is one of the best teachers I have ever had as an undergraduate and a graduate student.

Professor Julian also has a great sense of humor :)

- Sometimes rushes over things but otherwise great. Learned a lot by applying stuff we study on actual data.
- The instructor explained the material in a very straightforward, layman's like way. One of the best instructors I have had in my 4 years of university.

- The instructor is very knowledgeable about the subject and the content is interesting, but more class interaction could help. I understand that this would be challenging for such a large class.
- The professor is awesome, except that I can't hear him clearly on the lecture. But I can hear him for the podcast so there is no problem.
- The professor is great.
- The professor is so great in his lecture.
- The professor is very nice and patient on during the instruction process.
- The professor presented the course material clearly, while being humorous at times, which is great. Live demonstration of coding in class makes the course much more interesting. Course podcast is very helpful.
- Very gentleman and a gentle course. Could be more focus on important machine learning courses instead of introducing many of them.
- worst professor ever

17. The course material was intellectually stimulating.

106 (54.1%): Strongly Agree
 72 (36.7%): Agree
 12 (6.1%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 5 (2.6%): Disagree
 1 (0.5%): Strongly Disagree
 0 (0.0%): Not Applicable
 5: [No Response]

18. The materials for the course (textbooks, handouts, etc.) were useful and well organized.

107 (54.3%): Strongly Agree
 71 (36.0%): Agree
 14 (7.1%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 2 (1.0%): Disagree
 1 (0.5%): Strongly Disagree
 2 (1.0%): Not Applicable
 4: [No Response]

19. Grading was constructive and assisted learning.

106 (53.8%): Strongly Agree
 71 (36.0%): Agree
 9 (4.6%): Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 4 (2.0%): Disagree
 6 (3.0%): Strongly Disagree
 1 (0.5%): Not Applicable
 4: [No Response]

20. What is your reason for taking this class?

59 (30.4%): Core Course Requirement
37 (19.1%): Subject Area Requirement
26 (13.4%): Elective
72 (37.1%): Interest
7: [No Response]

21. What were the particular strengths of this course?

- applicable
- Application-based learning, even a novice who doesn't have any background in ML can do well and learn a lot from the course.
Doesn't go too much deep into Maths (some may consider it as weakness, but hey you can only do so much in a course in a quarter). Overall it sets a good foundation and sets the stage for a peek into what it takes to be a data scientist and working on various models.
- Assignments, which are highly associated to class materials and good practice. Understand a lot more of concepts after doing them.
- Class assignments helped me learn a lot about the course.
- Content and structure, project at the end, no unnecessary exam but more learning the way it is structured
- Easy to follow yet exhaustive
- Explain very clearly
- good to learn machine learning
- Hand-on projects for machine learning
- Has a lot of practical aspects of machine learning. Really useful course since it provides hands on experience with good projects
- Having two really hand-on projects.
- help us learn python quickly
- I loved the homework and projects and learned a lot from doing them.
- I think I took the most away from this course through Assignments 1 and 2. I would encourage more emphasis on those assignments, particularly Assignment 2.
- Introducing a broad view of ML and data mining.
- It introduces a lot of different model for recommend system
- It teaches many useful contents.
- It's very suitable for beginners.
- Kaggle

- learn basic knowledge about ml
- Material was diverse and very easy to grasp.
- podcasting, instructor, course layout.
- Practice of homework and assignment is really useful in real world.
- The assignments were well-designed. They covered the concepts taught in class quite well.
- The course covers basic concepts of data mining and recommender system, and contains a lot of programming, which makes it a really good course for beginners.
- The course provides an extensive knowledge of must-know topics in Machine Learning and a detailed overview of the state-of-the-art techniques and methods in Recommender Systems. It shows a great balance of theory and practice: detailed and thorough descriptions of methods and techniques are accompanied with interesting practical assignments. The course is very well organized. All the information and material required to complete it successfully is provided during the lectures. Each lecture is podcasted and has a presentation with notes. The course also gives students a chance to use the obtained skills and show some creativity in building their own models for specific prediction tasks. I found these projects to be extremely useful for sharpening my understanding of the field.

To sum up, the course is fantastic.

- The course teaches how to apply machine learning algorithms on various applications. It's a hand-on course. I gain more proficiency in working/choosing appropriate algos for a task.
- The homework and assignments grant a pretty good understanding of the basics of machine learning and recommendation systems.
- The instructor is very knowledgeable about the subject and the content is interesting. The course material is well organized and directs to resources with a deeper discussion of the topics. The class and the evaluation activities promote learning and incentivize students to explore.
- The knowledge I learned through this course are very useful.
- The podcast is pretty good. Though the hand writings tend not to be recognized easily, with the help of the podcast, it's much better.
- useful when working
- Very Practical. Amazing exposure
- Very useful material.
- Very useful project when doing the homework and assignment. Get some basic knowledge of general machine learning algorithms, especially for recommending system.
- We learnt how to apply the different models of recommendations, depending on the different circumstances.

22. What suggestions do you have for making this course more effective?

- 1) Please modify the design so that the students get more feedback. For example we do not know how we could improve what we did for assignment 2 neither do we know if we went horribly wrong or not.

2) Please include decision Tree algorithms in the coursework

3) Please add make the course more complex

- A little more in class programming will help.
- Add a final to connect the latter half materials of the course. Keep a medium scale so we could get more feedback from our work.
- class is kind of too large
- Class size and lecture time.
Going to big lecture in the evening after a long day is not the most effective class setting of the day. Prefer afternoon or morning class.
- Dig deep into some important or state of art machine learning algorithms.
- Give more difficult assignments (not giving out all the code needed).
- I feel like I did not make a good connection between the theory in lecture and the practical scenarios in homeworks. It was tough to deduce/learn how to improve upon the implementations in homeworks.
- I feel that this course is much better for the projects/HW rather than the theory in lectures and midterm.
- I know this is not your fault, but the students are usually very rowdy during the lecture. I wish you had quieted them down or something.
Also, the instructor kind of 'skims over' the mathematical stuff.
I would have preferred if he had gone over them in details.
- improve handwriting! They are really hard to recognize!
- Improving the legibility of the annotations on the PDF, doing Temporal analysis on the penultimate week instead of case studies (in fact, if it was done earlier, it would have really helped in my assignment 2).
- Key formulas on the slides only partially given, yet absolutely required for homework/assignments.
- Make the assignments better, current ones aren't as challenging
- Modify the assignment 1 to make it grade on report instead of Kaggle ranking.
- More detailed. Can split this into two courses and go deeper into each topic
- More details about machine learning theories
- more HW geared toward building up to assignment 2.
- More HWs/Projects?
- Most people get discouraged because of these things:
 - 1) People who haven't worked on Python should be let known that it is going to be big challenge for them
 - 2) The course/assignments are too abstract. It is an advantage for a few and disadvantage for a few.
- Please continue to give assignments based on the other interesting techniques taught beyond week 6. I feel the course needs to have prerequisite of CSE 250 B or ECE 271 B so that time is

not wasted on PCA,SVM,Log Reg, Lin Reg. We can dive into more interesting applications directly in second half like time series data, bandits etc

- Please improve your handwriting.
- Please make the HWs clearer in terms of what we need to do, so the results are deterministic. We still do two projects, so in those we get to experiment; but my learning from HWs was somewhat deteriorated due to lack of determinism in expectations and grading. Also get TAs to communicate and agree on what to post on Piazza; it seemed at times they were making up stuff as they went along. I can't even fathom how bifurcated the rubric for this class must have been.
- practice by oneself
- Providing more examples of interesting datasets for the last assignment, and maybe suggest finding a teammate at the start of the quarter.
- The atmosphere should be more active.
- The first couple of assignments could be structured better. The step by step learning present in the last assignment seemed missing in the first couple of assignments.
- The instructor is very knowledgeable about the subject and the content is interesting, but more class interaction could help.
- The workload is a bit light and I think there are too many students in this course, which makes it not so efficient. A smaller course might be better.

23. I would recommend this course overall.

118 (60.5%):	Strongly Agree
66 (33.8%):	Agree
7 (3.6%):	Neither Agree Nor Disagree
3 (1.5%):	Disagree
1 (0.5%):	Strongly Disagree
6:	[No Response]

24. What is your overall rating of this course?

124 (63.9%):	Excellent
59 (30.4%):	Above Average
9 (4.6%):	Average
1 (0.5%):	Below Average
1 (0.5%):	Poor
7:	[No Response]

25. What are the most important concepts that you learned in this class that you expect will be useful in the long term?

- Application knowledge. I think almost everything that has been thought in this course has real world application and I can see myself using this knowledge in the Industry.

- General ideas of machine learning and recommender systems models
- Got stronger in Python, regression techniques, learning about different predictors, etc
- Having a good teammate is always more important than people think
- How to formulate intuitive optimisation functions for learning but make them effective
- I learned about the state-of-the-art methods in Recommender Systems and their many interesting applications. I found links to papers and additional material in the lectures to be extremely helpful for my research as a PhD student.
- Implementing recommender systems
- knowledge
- latent factor model, SVM, collaborative filtering, text mining
- latent factor models
- Learning to build a real working (although rudimentary) recommender system.
- Machine learning !
- Machine Learning methods
- One Class Classification, Latent Factor Model
- Practical machine learning experience
- Python
- Python tricks and various models for recommended systems
- Recommendation systems
- Recommend System
- Recommender system
- Recommender System algos
- Recommender systems, python, Tensorflow
- Regression, Collaborative Filtering, Latent Factor Model, LDA
- search things do not ask
- Supervised learning, latent-factor models
- Text analytics and Recommender Systems
- The broad topics in machine learning and recommender systems. echniques and approaches
- The ML methods introduced in class.
- This course helped me learn python, pandas and several best practices for coding. It helped me tune my understanding of the basics of machine learning.
- Trade-off of model between accuracy and generalization

- Understanding to the data is more important to complex model.
- Various ways to improve the model's performance
- What a recommender system is essentially and ways to create one using non-obvious approaches

26. Do you have any other comments to add to your evaluation?

Please keep your comments constructive and professional, abiding by the Principles of Community

- First of all, I recommend that the professor should divide the student into different groups according to their rank in assignment 1 or exam. The students with high ranks group together, leaving students who are poor at course group together.
Secondly, for the middle exam, my suggestion is to make the cancel the exam and set another assignment. The problem in the exam is quite misunderstanding, there are too many problems in the exam and the grading too easy. For example, a problem says @5, I don't know what it means, which first 5 samples has taken? I write down every question as elaborate as possible, however the time is limiting, i still have 2 problem not solved. I obtained a score which is slightly lower than mean score. However, my friends just write one sentence which is none of the business of problem, she get nearly full marks problems. I feel unfair and also jealous.
- I would recommend this course to someone after having taken 250B. I came in with no prerequisites and I think a good bit of the material was over my head. The instructor provided resources for undertaking that on my own, but with my other classes and time constraints I was unable to fully immerse myself in the material and retain it all.
- It was one of the best and most useful classes I have ever taken. The class is very well organized and provides brief and detailed description of the field. I really enjoyed both assignments, during of which I learned many new things.
Professor Julian is both an amazing lecturer and a researcher.
- N/A. Great course.
- This may not be related with the instructor:
A lot of times, the class atmosphere was not very conducive to learning. Some of the classmates were noisy, not being attentive, or simply doing something else on their laptop, which can be very distracting. This does not happen with other classes of similar size or class that shares some common classmates.

Please note that any responses or comments submitted by evaluators do not necessarily reflect the opinions of instructors, Computer Science and Engineering, Academic Affairs, or UC San Diego. Responses and comments are made available without auditing or editing, and they may not be modified or deleted, to ensure that each evaluator has an opportunity to express his or her opinion.