

## Informatics Student Course Feedback 2017/18

<http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/surveys/2017-18>

This report contains feedback from students about a course taught in the School of Informatics during the 2017/18 academic year, in response to the following questions:

- What would you say to students interested in taking this course?
- What did you find most valuable about the course?
- What improvements, if any, would you make to the course?
- Please add any other comments you have about workshops and tutors

Each course organiser receives this report as well as statistics on multiple-choice responses. All these reports, together with student feedback about individual members of teaching staff, are collected and sent to the Director of Learning and Teaching.

Please note that these are personal responses from individual students: some courses only have a few responses and a small sample can be unrepresentative.

Stereotyping and bias, especially unconscious bias, is a serious concern in any survey gathering personal responses. All students received the rubric below before completing the surveys, and you can read a brief introduction to issues of unconscious bias on the university web pages at <http://edin.ac/2iypZBv>

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### **Rubric given to all students taking the end-of-course feedback survey**

We value your opinions on the courses you take here at the University, as they allow us to shape future delivery and development. We welcome constructive comments about your courses, whether positive or negative, and ask you to give details about any issues in order to help the course organiser to understand and address them.

We encourage you to be aware of the potential for bias in the completion of these questionnaires, so we have developed resources which may be helpful to you:

- Equality, Diversity and Unconscious Bias (<http://edin.ac/2iypZBv>)

You also have a responsibility to provide feedback in a manner which does not breach the University's Dignity and Respect Policy:

- University of Edinburgh Dignity and Respect Policy (<http://edin.ac/1Cq0VZY>)

The results of the questionnaires will never be analysed in a way that seeks to identify individual students from their responses. However, should you wish to remain anonymous, please do not identify yourself in your answers to the survey questionnaire implicitly or explicitly.

## Comments Report

What advice would you give to a student taking this course in future?

- Check Piazza for last minute changes to the assignments.
- Choose this course if you want to learn about information retrieval and text classification with practical tasks.
- Do it, try it.
- If you want to know how search engines work and how information retrieval works, take this course. It will not disappoint.
- it is worth to learn and follow the tutor step by step

## Comments Report

What did you find most valuable about the course?

- An introduction of information retrieval and text classification. I found the practical assignments interesting and informative.
- Information Retrieval system
- Learning about different metrics used to evaluate IR systems was useful.
- Practical hands-on experience. The course content and coursework were very well connected and improved understanding.
- Practical knowledge of text processing technique
- the coursework in the lab is very helpful for me to understand the content of lecture
- I think this course was really well taught, especially considering that this was the first time he was teaching it. I found the lectures really clear and easy to follow. And the professor was good at answering questions in class and on Piazza.

## Comments Report

What improvements, if any, would you make to the course?

- Assignments should be announced sooner. Course could use some [recommended] prerequisites (nlp, maths, ml) and teach more advanced materials.
- Better and more timely coursework definition. Coursework should be specified concretely and unambiguously. I am not a fan of how coursework 3 spans into semester 2 but I can't think of a way to avoid it. People will probably complain about it in the feedback but I think it's unavoidable if you want the third coursework to be something larger. Definitely warn students about it next year, especially the exchange students.
- The assignments were very poorly managed. The specification for assignment 2 was released very late and the deadlines for assignments 2 and 3 were well beyond the end of teaching. An important part of assignment 2 was changed shortly before the submission deadline (formula to use for nDCG). Assigning a group project to be done during the exam period and the Christmas break is disruptive and difficult, especially for visiting students who will not be returning.
- The lectures were not recorded, and ran at non-standard times (2-4.15). It would be better to use standard slots like 2:10-4:00.
- It will be better if the time of lab could be more longer, or add some tutorials for this course.
- Sometimes the labs/course work were a bit disorganized. The course work would be mentioned and then not actually assigned until much later than planned. Also, for the first assignment it was partially released and then the final parameters were released after having already done significant work on it leading to needing to rework a lot of it. And labs were good, but the TAs were only told what the lab was right before the lab time so they were not well prepared for it.

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## Comments Report

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Please add any other comments you have about workshops and tutors

- No student comments