

Project Title: **BCQ Spring 2024 (AY 2023-2024)**

Course Audience: **16**  
Responses Received: **6**  
Response Ratio: **37.50%**

Subject Details

Department

Computer Science

### Report Comments

This report contains both numeric analysis and content of comments of the course questionnaires from Spring 2024 for the course identified above.

As you review these results, I encourage you to keep in mind the following:

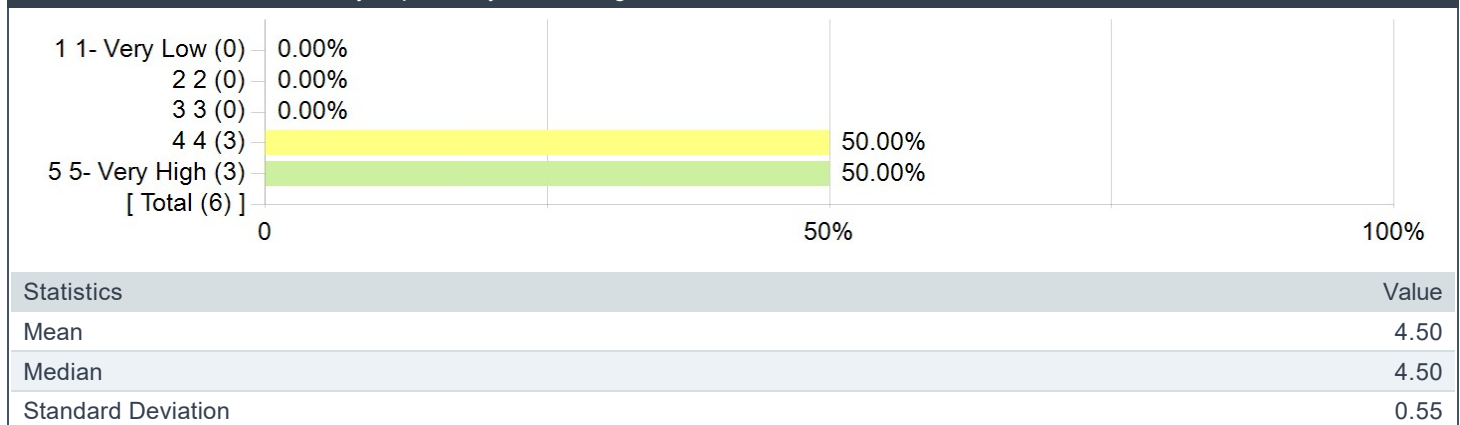
- Bowdoin Course Questionnaires are intended to provide you with useful feedback on your courses and to help you approach improvements or refinements in future courses. While student responses on these questionnaires can sometimes seem contradictory or different from your own experience of the course, I urge you to remain open to the issues and insights they might offer as you reflect on your own teaching.
- Your department chair/program director will also receive access to your reports and is encouraged to follow up with you to offer support and guidance in interpreting these results. Lab Instructors, please note that the faculty instructing the course also receive access to your reports.
- You should keep your reports in your files. For tenure-line faculty and continuing lecturers, course questionnaires are an important part of the evaluative process and will be included as part of the reappointment and promotion reviews, as well as any subsequent reviews. For visiting and adjunct faculty, these may be important to your candidacy for future positions. If you are looking for a streamlined way to reflect on your courses and BCQs, please consider the BCQ reflection guide found at the top of the BCQ Reports page, from which you may download, modify, and use it as you feel most appropriate.
- With regard to course questionnaires, you may want to review Section V.L. (Procedures for Administration and Use of the Course Questionnaires) and Section IV (Policies and Procedures Governing Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, Tenure, and Faculty Evaluation) of The Faculty Handbook.
- I encourage you to reach out to Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Inclusion Dharni Vasudevan ([dvasudev@bowdoin.edu](mailto:dvasudev@bowdoin.edu)) and/or Director of the Baldwin Center for Learning and Teaching Katie Byrnes ([kbyrnes@bowdoin.edu](mailto:kbyrnes@bowdoin.edu)) for consultation and advice. I am also available to any faculty member. Please feel free to reach out to either of us if you would like to discuss your reports.

Jennifer Scanlon  
Senior Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs  
207-725-3578  
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Creation Date: **Thursday, May 30, 2024**

## Frequency Analysis

1. Please rate the level of effort you put into your learning in this course.



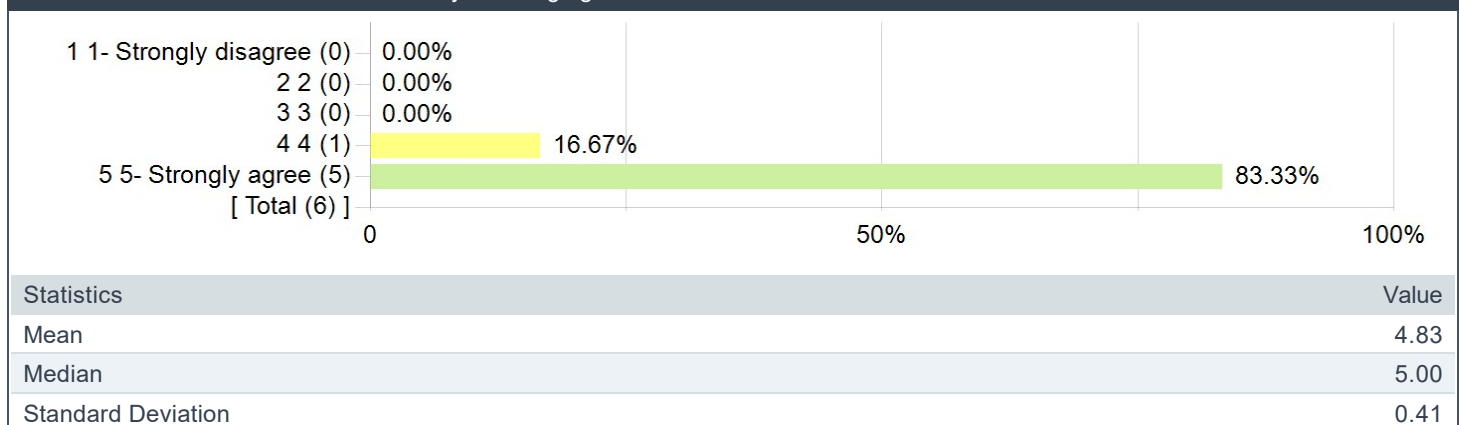
2. Please comment on your own level of effort.

Students (FO)
Some of the material was fairly difficult, and took me some time to understand
I read all the papers and engaged with the content to the best of my abilities in class.
One of my most important classes this semester, so had to put in a lot of effort.
I was prepared for every single class.

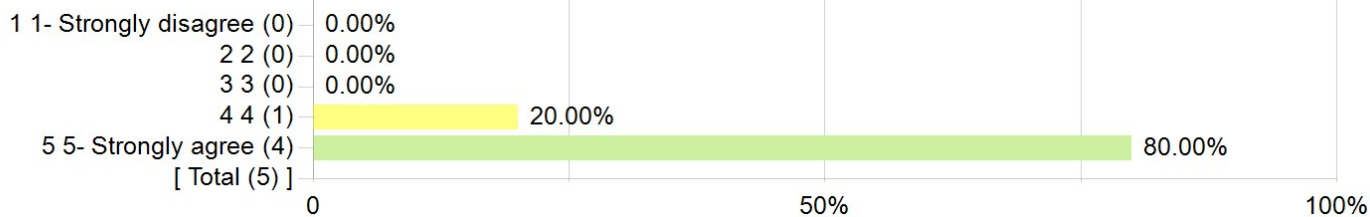
3. Please describe what motivated you to take this course (to fulfill major, minor, distribution requirement, or time slot; because of the professor; because of your interest in the topic).

Comments
interest in the topic, contribution to major, visiting professor
Professor Weimer was a driving factor. Once I looked him up, I thought "I have to take a course with him." Great chance to learn about some of the most important research in CS from someone who who understands academia and the CS/Psych crossover better than anyone.
major
For a major requirement

4. I found the course content intellectually challenging.



5. The course content fostered my growth as a student.



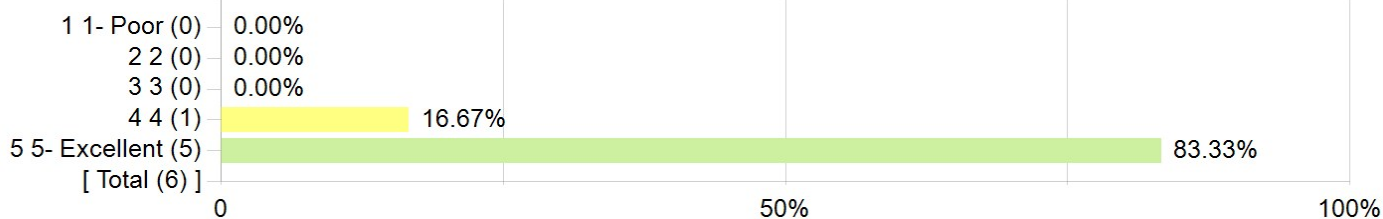
Statistics	Value
Mean	4.80
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.45

6. The course objectives were clear.



Statistics	Value
Mean	4.67
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.82

7. Thinking about the answers you provided above, and other factors, what is your overall assessment of the course content?



Statistics	Value
Mean	4.83
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.41

## 8. Please comment on your overall assessment of the course content.

### Comments

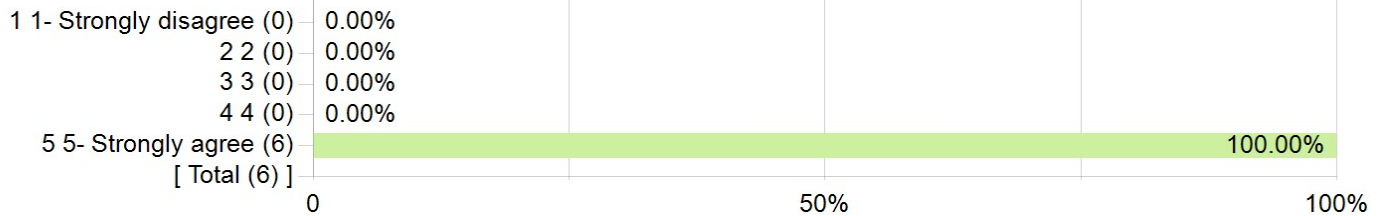
For the most part, I enjoyed reading the papers presented, even if it was challenging. Super fascinating topic, and I wish we had someone at Bowdoin to teach a similar course. However, even though I enjoyed hearing Professor Weimer's insight and unique perspectives on the methodology and research process, I felt that the excessive focus on this aspect took away from actually discussing the content of the papers and its implications, which is a pity.

Fascinating papers that Professor Weimer knew front and back. Learned a ton.

Course taught me how to read and discuss a scientific paper which is a very valuable skill.

I thought this was a great course. I felt that I grew so much as a student. I felt that the student led nature of the course really motivated me to be as prepared as possible and do lots of work outside of class to that I could be contribute and utilize class time for best discussion.

## 9. The instructor was prepared for class.



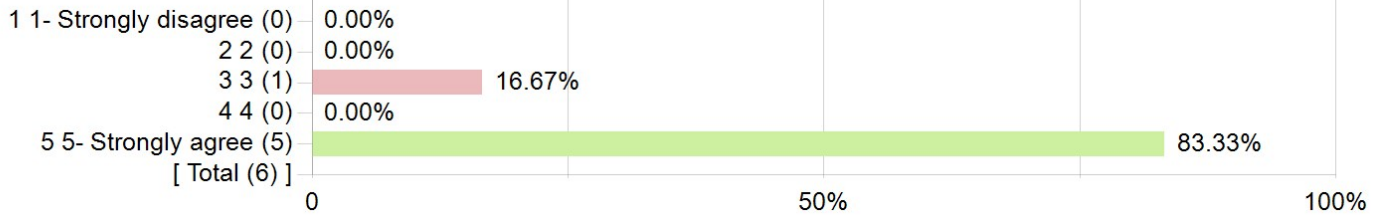
Statistics	Value
Mean	5.00
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.00

## 10. The instructor was able to communicate ideas, theories, skills, and/or concepts effectively.



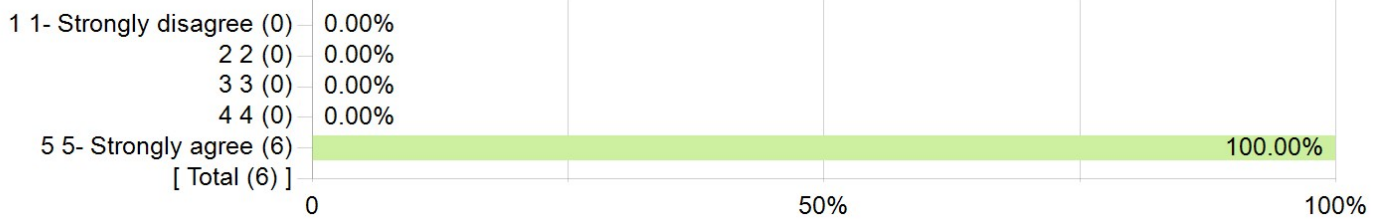
Statistics	Value
Mean	5.00
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.00

11. The instructor's teaching methods facilitated my learning.



Statistics	Value
Mean	4.67
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.82

12. The instructor encourages, as appropriate, critical and independent thinking.

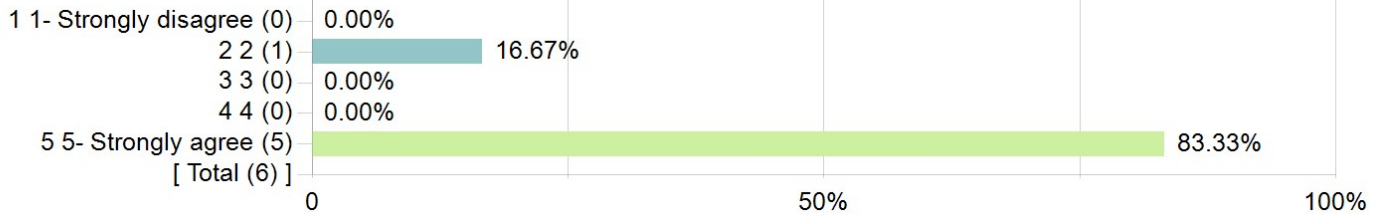


Statistics	Value
Mean	5.00
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.00

13. Please comment on the teaching effectiveness of the instructor.

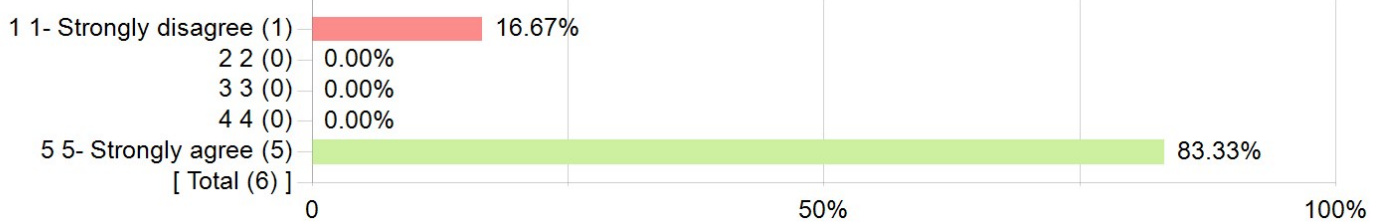
Comments
Professor Weimer is a highly engaging presenter. The freeform format was interesting, although I would have preferred slightly more structure so that important concepts could be emphasized. I also felt that the seminar format wasn't fully utilized, as it often felt like a one-on-one conversation with Professor Weimer (not inherently a bad thing) and we did not get to engage with our classmates much.
I can't tell you how impressed I was by Professor Weimer's immediate ability to outline an answer, explain it coherently, and be funny and thought-provoking along the way.
Professor Weimer might be the smartest person I have ever met and he was able to explain ideas and papers shockingly well and was always prepared to speak in great detail on any topic that discussions would go to. Very effective instructor.
Professor Weimer is great! His passion is contagious and he is a great lecturer. I wish I could take another seminar with him.

14. The assignments and exams adequately assessed my learning.



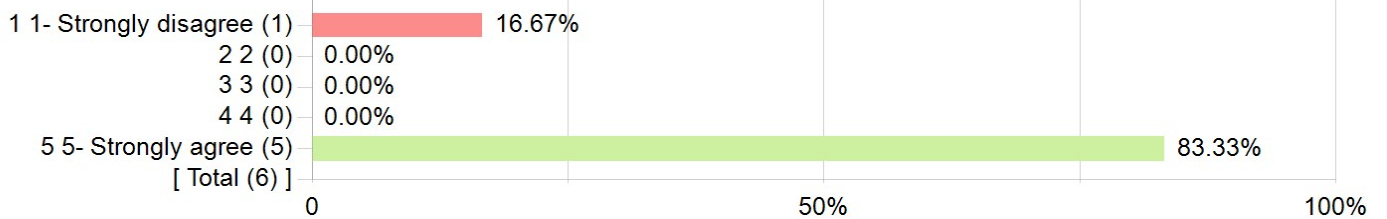
Statistics	Value
Mean	4.50
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	1.22

15. The instructor's feedback on assignments and exams was helpful to me.



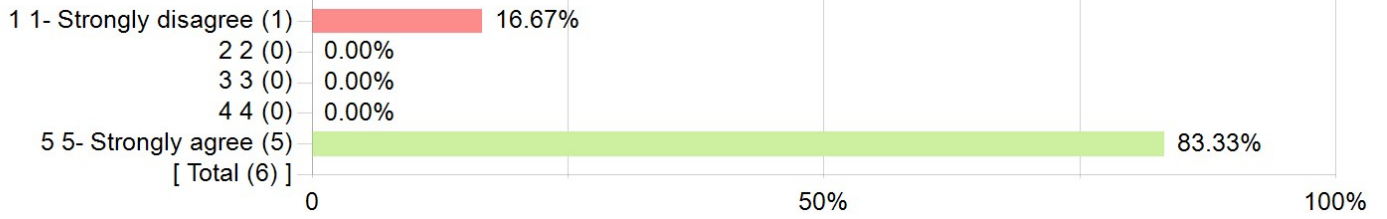
Statistics	Value
Mean	4.33
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	1.63

16. The instructor returned assignments and exams with enough time to benefit my learning.



Statistics	Value
Mean	4.33
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	1.63

17. The instructor's standards for grading were clearly communicated.



Statistics	Value
Mean	4.33
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	1.63

18. Please comment on the assignments, feedback, and grading.

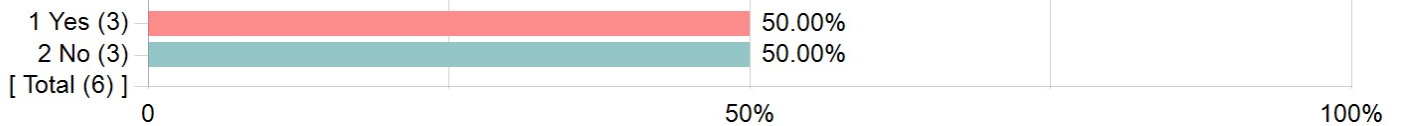
Comments

I understand why Professor Weimer chooses to grade almost entirely on participation, but whether you get called on in class is random, and some people simply did not get called on, and people are better prepared for some papers than they are others, which should have been accounted for. The feedback in this class was purely verbal and on the spot, and even then it was limited. It is really difficult to tell what sort of progress you are making in the class.

The assignments were reading papers and I believe all the presentations adequately assessed our level of understanding and effort.

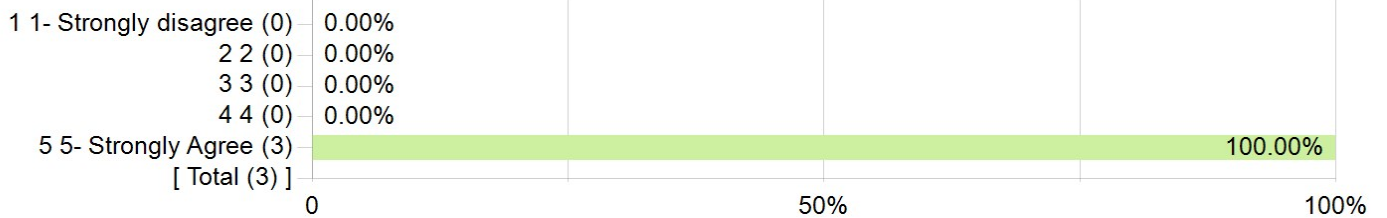
I really enjoyed the way this course had its grading formatted. It really made me engaged each class knowing that majority of this course was participation based. I feel that it accurate assessed me as a student and helped me grow my discussion skills immensely.

19. Did you communicate with the instructor outside of class about your learning? (Scheduled office hours/meetings by appointment/email/other)



Statistics	Value
Mean	1.50
Median	1.50
Standard Deviation	0.55

20. These communications outside of class were helpful to my learning.



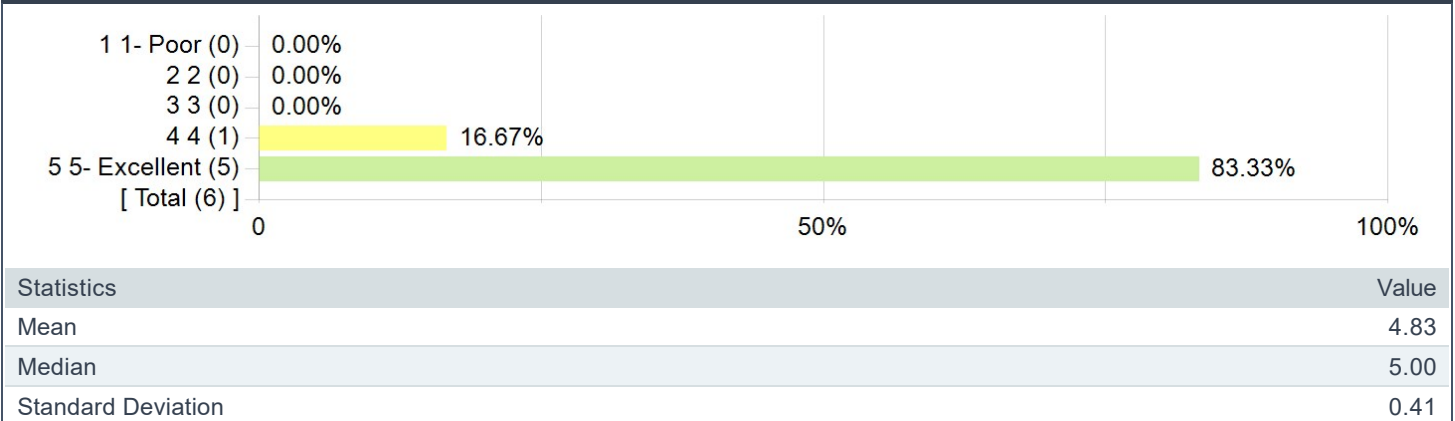
Statistics	Value
Mean	5.00
Median	5.00
Standard Deviation	0.00

## 21. Please elaborate.

### Comments

We didn't really talk about class material per se, but we had many interesting conversations on peripheral topics like the nature of science, academia, graduate school, etc, all of which were incredibly insightful

22. Considering your answers above (course content, teaching effectiveness; assignments, feedback, and grading; and communication), how would you rate the overall quality of the instruction in this course?



## 23. Please comment on your overall assessment of the course.

### Comments

I liked the course a lot, and do not regret taking it. However, there is a great deal of unfulfilled potential in an experimental class like this.

I learned a ton about random concepts, CS/Psych, and how we as humans and developers function. Professor Weimer is a joy to be around. He is brilliant, funny, and a great educator. What a great course and what a privilege to have learned from him.

I think there should be more courses like this, I learned so much about a industry SWE and research in CS and SWE, which I never thought/knew how important such knowledge is.

This course offers much value to Bowdoin CS department through exposure to critical reading/analysis skills, and exposure to research pathways in CS. I would consider both of these items to be highly valuable (in both research and industrial context) and highly novel (other CS courses at Bowdoin do not train these skills). I would strongly recommend supporting similar CS seminar courses at Bowdoin.

## 24. What worked best about the course? What suggestions, if any, would you offer?

### Comments

I liked that it was sort of a "low stakes" class, where there wasn't really an expectation of practicing a certain skill, and it allowed us to do deep dives into topics we wanted to. I would suggest some sort of structured feedback mechanism beyond the final grade, which is really my biggest issue with the class.

It was perfect. I would not change a thing. I learned a great deal and went into every class focused on having a conversation, not trying to impress or get a good grade. That is a testament to Professor Weimer and the learning environment he creates.

Everything was perfect about this course!