

Form A: Course Evaluation - Student Comments

Faculty	: Engineering	Session	: 2009 Teaching Period 2
School	: School of Computer Science	Enrolled	: 20
Course	: COMP9242-Advanced Operating Systems	Repondents	: 8
Survey Description	: Evaluate the Course COMP9242	Survey Type	: ONLINE (12 Oct 2009 - 30 Oct 2009)
Survey Alternative	: Evaluate the Course COMP9242	Administration Date	: 21 Nov 2009

The best features of this course were

- Learnt lots. Challenging. Very hands-on.
- Open-ended tasks, self-directed learning "done right". The work was challenging, the lectures stimulating, and there was a great sense of achievement at the conclusion of the course.
- aaron and nick were incredibly helpful, both in consultations and on the forum. having consultation times every day was excellent. often aaron and nick would hang around long after the consultation was officially over, presumably unpaid.
- the variety of material, the depth of understanding gained from the assignment.
- The (crazy) project. Interesting lecture topics. Guest lectures from people who work and are actively involved in operating systems.
- writing an operating system

This course could be improved by

- More thorough documentation. A bit more direction in relevant functions and files for a milestone would be useful.
- Personally, I thought the course was perfect.

However, I got the impression that some other students were not getting as much out of the course as they could be, as they did not devote enough time to it.

- it would be good if you had assigned groups for us, based on who finished milestone 0 first.

it would be helpful if you told people what their demo mark was during the demo, and entered marks into classrun more quickly. sometimes we would wonder whether a marker had forgotten that they had marked us, or changed their mind about a mark, or ????. marking was a mysterious process!

the caching lecture should come sooner, we were lucky because a previous-student told us about caching problems and L4_CacheFlushAll and L4_UncachedMemory, otherwise we would not have been able to complete m2/m3 on time

the final milestone on documentation should come sooner. maybe switch m8 and m9 around, or just allow m8 and m9 to be submitted together. we discovered a lot of bugs during the documentation writing, so writing the documentation could have been really useful to us. however, since it was too late to submit any code, writing the documentation ended up just feeling really painful instead

the three hour lectures on a friday afternoon right after the demo time are obviously ridiculous. often people had been up all night and had trouble staying awake. the lecturer (whoever it was that week) would always be grumpy that people turned up late, but the grumpiness was absurd, the lecture time should be moved instead! or have milestones due on a different day to the lectures, e.g. make milestones due on thursdays.

three hour lectures in general are also bad. if you actually want people to learn anything then it would be better to have 2 or 3 separate lectures a week rather than a giant 3 hour block.

all of this sounds very grumpy. actually, i loved this course. but there were a few very silly things about it, that stood out harshly against all the other great things

- better aligning the lectures with the assignment milestones.
- more prompt updated of the milestone marks
- Very little, perhaps if less lecture content was overlapped with comp3891.