Written Student Comments

3450:208 Introduction to Discrete Mathematics
Prof. Timothy S. Norfolk, Ph.D.
3450:208:001 Fall 2004

- “Awesome teacher. Sadistic sense of humor and very intellectual. Always has something clever to say - witty. Highly recommend him as a teacher.”

- “Dr. Norfolk is a great teacher, and definitely my favorite as of yet of the University of Akron. We need more professors like him.”

- “Overall, Dr Norfolk is an excellent teacher. He encourages learning while still making class fun. Although the subject matter was difficult for me, he made it interesting and encouraged me to be my best. He grades tough, but not unfairly. He is very interesting to listen to : )”

- “Give more examples on the board that relate to the homeworks. For example : pg. 178 problem # 2 says · · ·”

- “Dr. Norfolk is one of the smartest people I have encountered at this university.”

- “I really enjoyed this class and I know I will use everything I have learned from it if I haven’t already.”

- “Great guy, lots of life experience. Expects a lot but not unreasonable. Overall Great teacher.
Dr. Norfolk is a good teacher. Does have a truth value, Therefore not a paradox.”

- “I will not pay you a compliment on your grading of my spelling of complement, but otherwise you are the best math teacher I’ve ever had.”

- “Your accent kept me interested, that’s hard to do in most math classes. You seem to be very intelligent, but I have a hard time learning from you, it’s probably the subject matter.

Why do education majors have to take this??!!!

Also, I like that you show us respect w/ calling us Mr. or Miss. and you usually remember us too, so overall good job.”

- “British teachers are ok. Cheerio.

Moo Moo Moo, I’m checking to see if this is going to be on your web page Dr. Norfolk. I like cheese. Meow!

Seriously, though, you are a great teacher.”
• “This was a very hard class. I do not think it is necessary for a middle school math teacher!”

• “Dr. Norfolk is the best instructor I’ve had at the U of A.”

• “Very clear speaker and teacher.”

• “Because we have so much to covered (sic) in this course, sometime (sic) I think you are moving a bit too fast (I know that we can always stop you but there are some students who will just sit there).

I have learned a lot from this course, and you are one of the best math professor (sic), actually the best one I have had so far (I took 6 in the past).

Keep encourage (sic) teacher to care about their students! You got me everytime you tel (sic) story about it.”

• “Dr. Norfolk is an intelligent individual & knows the subject. There is not enough support for struggling students. Course is geared to challenge those who already know the subject or find it easy. Class covered too much material and went too fast. Also other Discrete class will finish only 6.4 and we plan to finish 10. I would have done better at a slower pace. Hinde (sic) sight is 20/20.”

• “Dr. Norfolk is a very good, thorough teacher. I found him to be very helpful during office hours. This was certainly the hardest math class that I have taken, but I think Dr. Norfolk does his best to present the material in the most easily understood format.

I would certainly recommend him to other students.”

• “In the time I have been at this University, I have had teachers that seem to get confused (sic) by the material and those that had no idea how to teach it. But Dr. Norfolk had a complete and uncommon way of communicating his knowledge to students.”

• “Dr. Norfolk rates as one of the best teachers I have ever had. His coursework is very challenging but worth the extra effort. Dr. Norfolk was the best at being able to apply math to real life out of all my previous math teachers.”

(Name deleted)

• “What a good poker player!!”

• “He did a good job teaching · · · but the subject just isn’t that interesting. He is very ‘nit-picky’ though. but (sic) I suppose in math that’s not a bad thing.”

• “I don’t understand why education majors have to take this class that is focused on computer science!”

• “Need fewer chapters on the test.”
• “Good class. Slow down a little Bit (sic) so people can prosess (sic) the material.”  
(Name deleted)

• “Enjoy the teacher. Dread the course.”

• “Great teacher. Would connect his teachings to real-life instances and make it interesting.”

• “I really enjoyed taking this class because of Dr. Norfolk. He is brilliant.”

• “Made subjects clear! I liked how you tied everything to real world applications.”

• “Australia is number one! Great job, better than (Name deleted).”

• “I wonder if all comments become public domain.”
• “I had an enjoyable time learning and taking down notes.”

• “Answered questions in class, graded very promptly. Example tests were helpful to study from. Great teaching format, organization, etc. Your website was very informative. It was a great pleasure to have you as my math professor. I hope to have more opportunities to learn from you.”

• “This class was an enigma when I came in. I took it because it was required. After taking the class with Dr. Norfolk (an excellent instructor), I would take it again voluntarily. I will seek to take other courses he teaches. The material presented was understandable and the class not at all puzzling to me leaving (as it was in Sept.).”

• “I really (sic) like this teacher to teach computer science courses.”

• “Dr. Norfolk is a good instructor. Very timely on returning work. Overall, very good!!”

• “The teacher was excellent! Had a better understanding of the material.”

• “It helps a lot when he takes out class time to answer homework and test problems that we don’t understand.”

• “Dr. Norfolk’s ability as a poker player is surpassed only by his great skill as a teacher.”

• “Good job teaching this class; you have got to be one of the smartest people I have EVER met. Thanks.”

• “It was great getting papers and tests back so fast.”

• “Might be a good idea to give quizzes during course so that students don’t have so much to be ready for on tests and this also would give you more grades to grade from. Also, might want to slow down a little. The examples are no good if no one is following you.”

• “I feel that I’m in a unique position as a High School Senior taking this class. Because of little background math knowledge and forgetting (sic) most of College Algebra, this class was harder to me than other students in my opinion. It might be a good idea to have a harder prerequisites (sic) than just College Algebra. Dr. Norfolk, you’re a great teacher, making jokes to loosen up the environment. It might be a good idea to show some more detail on solutions.”

• “My grade in this course isn’t very good in comparison with other courses – but that is mostly my own fault.”
• “This class has helped me to better understand the basis of my other classes and thus the logic behind it.”

• “Replace chalk board w/ dry erase board. The left side of the board is not porus (sic) enough to show white chalk.”

• “Instructor did excellent job of not only teaching the material but also made it interesting.”

• “This was the most indepth (sic) and hardest mathematics class, I’ve ever taken. For an education major it is about impossible to pass because everything is taught in a computer science direction. I was completely lost in the class. There was too much material that Dr. Norfolk expected us to know before this class. Impossible class and I only pray I get a ‘C’.”

• “I believe the amount of time given for this class was not long enough to allow Dr. Norfolk to cover the material concisely. I did not understand 95% of what was being taught, due to time constraints and lack of complete teaching of the material.”

• “Excellent and challenging course, and an excellent and challenging professor.”

• “Need a different room. Hard to see chalkboard from various positions even in the front.”

• “Enjoyed the confusion, and mis-spelling ‘colour’. Thanks.”

• “I really enjoyed taking this class, it was fun.”

• “Do more examples in class before homework is due instead of when it is due. Not collecting homework assignments because you went over them in class could have an affect (sic) on overall homework grade if some students understood that section better than other sections.”

• “Think it would be nice to have quizzes so you can keep all the information fresh in your head.”

• “Give this guy a raise! He is the best instructor I’ve had in college. Challenging but teaches very well.”
“Very good instructor!”

“Good teacher & would take other classes taught by him.”

“This survey has yet to apply well to any class that I have taken.”

“Dr. Norfolk is the best teacher that I ever had here on the University of Akron. He know how to explain to students so everyone can understand (sic). University need more profesors (sic) like him. My english is not very good but in this class I did not have any problem understanding the subject. I just want to say Thank You Dr. Norfolk.”

“I think he was good. I should have prepared better for this class and calculus. I’m better at math now. I had a hard time understanding him for some reason but am much better at that now. This is helpful for many fundamental computer science concepts. This class was difficult because it’s very global in nature. Theoretical and practical. Word problems, proofs and communication. A lot of search for meanings. I had to bring Aristolean (sic) logic and symbolic logic together to do this course.”

“I’m not exactly sure why this course is required for Education majors. Dr. Norfolk was an excellent teacher, and I learned a lot, but I just don’t see how this course has anything to do with helping me become a better language arts and math teacher at the Middle School level.”

“Great job teaching. Best math class I’ve had.”

“Great teacher – Hard course!.
I think that their (sic) is just too much material to cover in only 15 weeks.
Instructor was often rushing to get all the material in.
It was hard to learn that way when all the material is being taught so fast – no time for info to sink in.
Teacher did great, however.”

“Sample test on website was very useful.”

“Hard course, but great instructor.”

“Excellent teacher. Clear, well planned intelligently carried out lecture. Compared to all my other teachers, this teacher was excellent. He should teach some of the other teachers here how to perform a lecture.”

“I really enjoyed this class. Dr. Norfolk is one of the few math profes-
sors who seems to sincerely care about his students and their acquisition of the course content. I only wish I could have had Dr. Norfolk for more of the math courses I have taken.”
• “It would be nice if there was a class geared more towards the elementary education majors.”

• “I think it would have been better if you had not spent so much time at the beginning of the semester on things that you weren’t going to test. The end of the semester seemed very, very rushed.

Another of my opinions is that it would be more effective if computer majors had a separate course.

Know-it-alls in computer classes chose to talk all during class, while the rest of us struggled to understand.”

• “I came into this class totally blind to anything related to computers. I am a secondary education major, and not a computer science major. I found this class extremely difficult to understand because of these reasons. I enjoyed the Dr. as a professor, but I felt that this class should not have been necessary for my major. I was surrounded by programming majors: ‘computer geeks’. I had troubles just understanding the symbols (for example) that the professor tossed around, but were above my level of knowledge about computers.”

• “He should comment more about the outline and the notation in the text a little more.

He did a very good job clarifying what was in the lecture or class.”

• “At times he gets so carried away, he forgets that he is supposed to be teaching not just rambling on about things we don’t understand. Make it simple!”

• “I would comment that it was difficult to study for the test because there was a lot of material covered and it is hard material because we have never done this kind of math before (mainly). It would have been helpful if there was a review day or review sheet so we wouldn’t feel overwhelmed when it came to studying. You are very knowledgeable on your material & are a very intelligent man but this stuff is new to us which makes it hard. But thanks for all the homework.”

• “One thing that as a student I would have liked to seen (sic) was when you returned the exams, the mistakes or errors were corrected.”

• “Thanks for the time and effort you’ve put into the class. Your teaching style helps to make the class more interesting.”

• “The book is useless! Slow down some – we are not Ph.D’s · · · yet you fly through examples like a bat out of hell!”

• “Taught very well. Made it fun.”

• “I enjoyed the class and thought it was well taught and informative.”
- “When asked to explain problems, sometimes the explanation was too fast and not understandable.”
- “Dr. Norfolk was an excellent teacher, entertaining, informative and helpful. I enjoyed his class, and took with me much information. I would love to have him again.”
- “His lecture ability is outstanding. He does an excellent job incorporating both computer science and advanced math.”
- “Enjoyed the class very much. Don’t change anything about the class.”
- “All around good teaching style. He made a lecture class of about 70 people feel like a class of size 20 or so. Just made the class feel as if it was given more personal attention.”
- “Hard to keep up with sometimes in class.”
- “Good.”
- “Very good, very thorough class. Goes from the book, but goes beyond in helping with understanding the material. No surprises in the course, everything is explained ahead of time; very fair teacher, very excellent teacher. Nice accent too.”
- “Very in depth when teaching; explained everything thoroughly. Needs to accept late homework, which was my only concern. Overall, excellent professor. One of the best I’ve had.”
- “I know your secret 008 · · ·.”
- “I appreciate your effective teaching and interest in students. Your class was fun & informative. Thanks a lot.”
- “Great teacher · · · No really!”
- “I really liked this class. I appreciate your insights into how math relates to computer science. I think that if the C.S. and education majors had separate classes, it would help the C.S. students to dwell deeper into computer-related math.”
- “You are very knowledgeable in your subject matter and is interesting to listen to you. Sometimes I wonder if a professor really knows what he is doing, but I have no doubt that you know the material. Thanks for returning test/homework the next day – it helps me learn from my mistakes in a timely manner.”
- “Very good presentation of material overall, as well as good explanations of real-life applications.”
- “Shortar (sic) test, but more of them.”
- “The way this course is designed and taught is quite effective. It is unfortunate that more instructors don’t (sic) teach this way. As far as I am concerned this is the way to teach. Thank you for your teaching excellence and dedication to your craft. Have a great holiday!”
• “Norfolk no matter how much I have messed up in this class, I can truly say that it was all my fault. You are a great teacher and I hope you don’t retire for a while.
Test # 2 needs to be touched on a lot more (for future reference).”

• “You should get sloshed, then come to class.
The book sucks.
Teaching is good.
I like your accent.
Put another shrimp on the Barbie.”

• “There was a lot of information to learn. Go slower explain even the stupid computer science stuff. I don’t know why this course shouldn’t be offered to comp. science majors only.”

• “Hmm · · · let me wait until I see my grade. Lot of material that will be useful to CS majors, but I’m not sure is some in education has the background and/or interest in the area of study. That’s my two cents.”

• “I recommend Dr. Norfolk to all my friends because he is an excellent teacher that knows everything about his course and wants to help his students.”

• “Enjoyed the class – good instructor. Best I’ve had at the university. Sample tests are/were big help.”
• “He is a very good teacher, he is the best math teacher I have had at the university. His notes are very good, explains the material very good. Answers anyone’s questions. His tests are straight from the material he taught. The only thing I didn’t really like was Maple assignments, but at least now I can say I worked with Maple. overall excellent. Keep up the good work!”

• “Very interesting, informal, and enlightening lectures. Explained material in a very intuitive manner.”

• “I enjoyed this class and learned a lot of interesting things I never knew about the world and computers. I felt the instructor did a good job at making a math class as entertaining as possible.”

• “A good attitude in class & humor appreciated – seemed somewhat of a pain to help students in class & office. If a student doesn’t understand after an attempt or two, because its a bother to deal with them anyways.”

• “Dr. Norfolk has a very straight–forward, easy to understand approach to teaching. It made the class material easy to digest remember.”

• “Excellent instructor. No comment.”

• “It was a great pleasure being in your class, we had a lot of laughs and we learned a lot. Thanks.”

• “I enjoyed being in Dr. Norfolk’s class. He explained everything very clearly. I hope he’ll teach some computer class. I will recommend him to other students.”
• “Taught material loud and clear + fully, however a lot of times was too fast and too much info for such a short amount of time. Class was too crammed within time.”

• “I enjoyed this course a lot. It seems to move rather fast at times, but thats (sic) to be expected. The book was very helpful if I didn’t understand something, especially on homework.”

• “This is the most enthusiastic instructor I have had for a math course. Dr. Norfolk is very familiar with the information presented and willing to help if the material is not understood. I enjoy his teaching style and wish more instructors taught the same.”

• “Posess (sic) effective teaching technique, strong (sic) command over material. Great job.”

• “I can tell the instructor has been over the material thousands of times and it seems so easy to him that he sometimes moves at light speed.”

• “I was satisfied with the course itself, but do not see its relevance to a middle-level math teacher.”

• “I felt Dr. Norfolk did a very good job teaching this course. He was very open to answering questions or reviewing tougher material.”

• “Managed to make an incredibly dull course interesting. Excellent use of example problems on board to clarify material.”

• “Homework, lectures and exams all complemented each other in material.

There was a stint of three weeks where no homework was assigned, possible if assigned it may help the students (this pertains to Ch. 3).”

• “This has been one of the few instructors I would go out of my way to take further courses with. I really enjoyed his class and sense of humor. I don’t do the best, but love the class anyway ...”

• “Very helpful to everyone’s questions.

  Made class interesting.

  I enjoyed coming to class except for the fact that it was in Polsky.”

• “I think that you did a pretty good job with the material. Occasionally, it was hard to grasp the concepts from your original explanation, but your follow through was excellent.”

• “Clear and well–presented.”

• “Enjoyed class very much.”

• “I felt he was an excellent teacher with great teaching abilities and made it fun at the same time!”
• “Made understanding interesting and fun, love the humor + how it’s related to the material.
Great job.”

• “I was very pleased with the class, from the presentation of material to the effectiveness of the coursework. Teacher was fun to have.”

• “Course was well-organized, instructor had enthusiasm and took interest in presenting real world examples. Seemed at times course was moving so fast, couldn’t keep up but whenever questions arose they were answered easily.
Jolly good fellow.”

• “‘Math intensive’ material may need to be presented slower (ex. Probability (sic)/Boolean Algebra).”

• “The material was at time confusing and difficult. The instructor did a well job @ explaining and attempting to clarify (sic). All homework assignments were returned to students the following day that they were due, which is a rarity.”

• “Textbook covers a large portion of material that is covered in F.o.A.M. I don’t like to pay for redundancy.”

• “Great class.”
• “Dear Professor Norfolk,
I just wanted to say again how much I enjoyed your Discrete Math course. Although your main job is to teach, it doesn’t hurt to be entertaining as well. What are you teaching next semester – I only have one course in Computer Science available?”

• “Dr Norfolk,
Just wanted to let you know that I enjoyed your course. Although it seemed deceptively easy in the beginning, it proved to be quite challenging at the end.
I hope that you and your family have a merry Christmas. I’m sure I’ll see you again during my continuing quest for knowledge in mathematics (or until I win the lottery, which ever comes first, although the probabilities we discussed in class on the subject were somewhat discouraging.)”

• “The teaching was excellent, but I think that the students who aren’t computer science majors should be taken into consideration. I had a very difficult time understanding the programming and language part of the course. Maybe there should be a little more time and description given for those of us who are education majors who have never taken computer science courses.”

• “Great job. You’re the best math teacher I’ve had in a long time. Personal anecdotes were always welcome!”

• “I enjoyed having this instructor. He taught clearly and I know I understand the subject matter. The only criticism I could offer is that he gives more than enough examples for each concept. So, it can get slightly boring at the end of a section. But that’s so much better than the opposite problem, it’s hardly negative.”

• “His grading style is really bad, and he goes too fast through the material.”

• “This course is now required for math majors. Most of the material is computer based and should be changed to suit the full class. Not everyone in the class are computer majors. Some of the material therefore was confusing.”

• “You moved slowly for my tastes but I’m sure for most, it was a good pace. I found the class very easy. The material was just not hard.”

• “Should have explained probability better. I had no understanding of \( \binom{n}{r}, nP_r \) problems.”
• “I paid a lot of money for a text the class barely used and was difficult (sic) to understand. It didn’t follow the teaching technique the professor was using. The text was only used for homework questions which could have been copied by the professor and handed out in class.”

• “All is well.”

• “I enjoy the challenge of your class. I look forward to your lectures, because I actually have to think in your class. Don’t change anything!”

• “You do the best you possibly can with an extremely boring subject. You make it as interesting as poss.”

• “Dr. Norfolk is the most knowledgable (sic) math instructor I have had at this university. He is clear, concise, and always on time. I hope to have him for another course in the near future.”

• “More in depth on computer sciences ‘good stuff’. e.g.
  – encryption (RSA, DES, DSA)
  – hardware analysis/use by software
  – quantum computers & number theory.”

• “The text should have answers to more of the problems, like all even ones.
  Need better explanation of combinatorics section.
  Need a handbook on Maple, commonly used commands ect (sic), notation. Make one if you have too (sic).
  I had a 4.0 average before this class. If I didn’t get an A, it’s your fault!”

• “I hate discrete math!”

• “Go by the book more.”

• “The use of the book with the notes was most helpful. I know there’s a lot to talk about in one class, but I couldn’t take the notes and absorb the info. at the same time because you went a little too quick.”

• “Taught well & applicable jokes and humor references kept me interested.”

• “I believe that this course was unnecessary for my degree, and therefore was gay!”

• “My only comment is instead of putting examples to computer science, try to relate it to education students as well. I am an education major and when you talked about the material and related it to computer science, you lost me. Your joking around kept me focused a little more.”

• “Assign homework for everything we learn. I remember where we didn’t learn out of the book (just lecture). Doing homework throughout the chapter(s) makes it easier on tests.”
• “You are very knowledgable and the use of humor is greatly appreciated. Thanks for you great effort in make (sic) things clear & understandable.”

• “The Maple needs more instruction to help out the student figure out whats (sic) going on.”

• “The Maple assignments were a waste of time. Liked the humor in the classroom. Excellent teacher – would take other courses taught by him.”

• “I found this course very interesting and have learned a lot. If I would change something, it would be the speed that we were presented the material, for it was, at times, rather fast, and the material would have been worth going into more detail. I understand though that this is more in the hands of whoever constructs this course and not the instructor himself.”

• “Too much talking between students during lectures. Otherwise, an excellent experience.”

• “This was a very helpful class. The lectures broke down the material in the book into manageable (sic) concepts. The book tended to be a bit difficult to understand on its own. The teaching style kept the class entertaining.”

• “I thought that the concepts were explained well. Also, the examples that we (sic) given for problems were very helpful.”
• “I feel the class was conducted in a very organized manner and that the instructor had complete knowledge of the material.”

• “Good teacher for 1st test. Changed material way asked questions on test 2. Nice guy, very respectable, interesting lecture, had test-related questions after 1st test.”

• “Thanks.”

• “You were very willing to help out during office hours and other such times, however I wish your test review sheets had problems on them rather than just saying what is going to be covered.”

• “Well taught class.”

• “Fun class, must slow down though. Maby (sic) cut some stuff out and teach it a bit slower. Good overall though.”

• “The addition of one more test would be beneficial.”

• “This course was very insightful and well taught.”

• “Dr. Norfolk presented it in a very reasonable way. Consider I have never had this type of Math before. I recommend if time allowing put in another test or maybe some type of question (test/quiz). On some tests, there was a lot of information to learn and if it was spread out a little more, I think grades could improve.”

• “You are the best professor I have ever had. You rate a 10 out of 10 on everything from grading to teaching. I would certainly and definitely recommend you to other students. Your are also very caring and understanding to students as well as very smart. I have learned a lot from you. Thank you.

P.S. What other classes do you teach? I would love to have you again as a professor.”

• “You have a very good knowledge of the subject and present it well, but you shouldn’t always assume that because a concept comes easy to you and some students, its (sic) easy to others.”

• “I think the course was done very well overall. On some of the more complicated concepts more time could be spent.”

• “I think you are trying to cram too much info. into to (sic) little time. It would make the course much better if class time was longer, so more time could be spent on each section. I found it very difficult to keep up.”

• “I thought the highlight of the course was the way in which Dr. Norfolk conducted his classes. He was always there with a smile cracking a joke about something and the whole environment was quite jovial. This
made the learning process an enjoyable one. The teaching material and course content were excellent and Dr. Norfolk was one of the best teachers I have seen. I would strongly recommend him to my friends. The text book is good too.”
• “You were honestly my best professor this semester. You explain things so well and really make me want to come to class. Thank you.”

• “I really enjoyed being in Dr. Norfolk’s class, he really made it fun and interesting. It was a very good learning environment.”

• “I tried to contact you several times out of class, but was unsuccessful. I would like to have better availability outside of class.”

• “Dr. Norfolk is one of the best instructors I have ever had. He always took time to answer questions whether they were related to the course or not. If he had a daughter my age I would try to marry her if for no other reason than to be his son-in-law.”

• “Good course. Good instructor. I should have taken a course like this years ago.”

• “Thank you for making a boring subject somewhat lively. I’d hope to be in another class in which you were the instructor.”

• “Keep up the jokes, lightens up the room and makes people want to come to class just to hear what you’ll say next.”

• “Does great job. Best math teacher I’ve had in years!”

• “I liked the course overall. Tests weren’t too challenging (so far). I would have liked to see more work done with Maple. Maybe a more step-by-step instruction on Maple assignments.”

• “I had a great semester. The course was something I would like to know for the rest of my life. Very applicable.”