

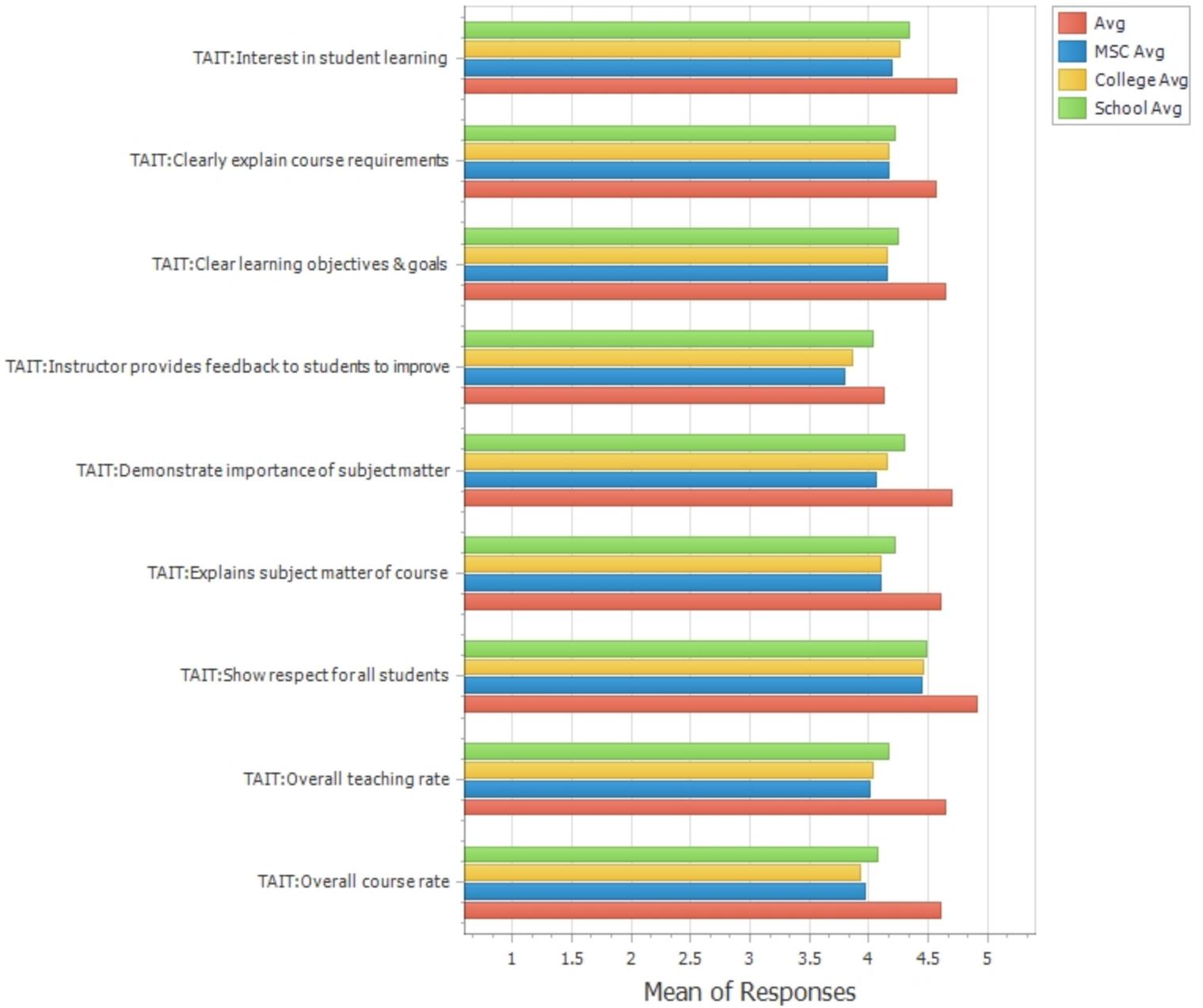
There were: 32 possible respondents.

	Question Text	N	Avg	SD	MSC Fall17	College Fall17	Univ Fall17
1	On average, how many hours per week have you spent on this class, including attending classes, doing readings, reviewing notes, writing papers and any other course related work? (TAIT)	23	10.91	4.03	8.95	8.08	9.57
2	Does the faculty member display an interest in students' learning? (TAIT)	23	4.74	0.45	4.12	4.28	4.39
3	Does the faculty member provide a clear explanation of the course requirements? (TAIT)	23	4.57	0.73	4.18	4.24	4.28
4	Does the faculty member provide a clear explanation of the learning objectives or goals of the course? (TAIT)	23	4.65	0.57	4.17	4.24	4.31
5	Does the faculty member provide feedback that helped students improve their performance? (TAIT)	23	4.13	0.92	3.79	3.92	4.10
6	Does the faculty member demonstrate the importance and significance of the subject matter? (TAIT)	23	4.7	0.56	4.05	4.20	4.37
7	Does the faculty member explain the subject matter of the course (e.g. concepts, skills, techniques, etc.)? (TAIT)	23	4.61	0.72	4.05	4.10	4.26
8	Does the faculty member show respect for all students? (TAIT)	23	4.91	0.29	4.44	4.49	4.57
9	Overall how would you rate this faculty's teaching? (TAIT)	23	4.65	0.57	3.99	4.08	4.24
10	How would you rate the overall quality of the course? (TAIT)	23	4.61	0.58	3.97	3.94	4.16

Instructor	Text Responses
	Question: Comments
TAIT	This was a hard course. I spent a lot of time in this course. I have a few courses like this, but unlike many of the other courses that have fallen into the same category of 'hard course I spent a lot of time in,' I would say overall I enjoyed my time in this course, and I do feel like I've learned a lot from the lectures and homework given. I may not have gotten an A in the course, but I did enjoy my time in it during this semester, and would recommend any courses that Michael Tait teaches in the future. Advice I would give future students however, is to go to office hours. Tait is very diligent in helping students understand concepts that may have been overwhelming during lecture, and is very patient with questions. I appreciated this patience very much, especially during stressful weeks. I never felt belittled by anything he said, ever. Thank you!
TAIT	Michael was a fantastic instructor. I was expecting this course to be easy and uninteresting, but he made it challenging and exciting, both through his teaching style and choice of syllabus.
TAIT	I really enjoyed the material in the course. Something I think the instructor does very well is provide guidance to students at office hours - he breaks the material down in a way that is digestible and understandable. It is clear the instructor cares about the students' learning and works to ensure that.
TAIT	Professor Tait was a great professor and made the course very enjoyable. He made his expectations on the course very clear, and was definitely invested in students learning the material not stressing out for nothing.
TAIT	Only frustration I have with this course is that occasionally, I would lose points on exams but receive little feedback about why I lost them. It wasn't a super frequent problem but more feedback in that regard would be nice.
TAIT	He jumped around between so many different topics that it was hard to connect the material. While it did help in terms of the exams, giving us a new opportunity each time. At the same time, having done this, the material was rushed through.
TAIT	Really great instructor, passionate about the material and conducts a lecture well. He made the homework problems pretty difficult, but with a curve so that passionate students can challenge themselves but not at the expense of others. He also made sure to cover the applications of the material to computer science since he knew a lot of the students in the class were computer science majors. He mentioned a lot how his goal in teaching the class was for us to learn a lot of combinatorics and he achieved that.
TAIT	Mike told us from day one that we were going to struggle, and that that would be ok. I did struggle throughout most of the class-- each homework was difficult and time consuming, but at the same time I felt like I was often proving meaningful results. The grading was fair and Mike was extremely accommodating with his office hours. I knew that I could always ask to meet and that he would make time for me, which I greatly appreciated. The exams were difficult, but fair. I never thought that any of the problems were completely out of reach, even though I didn't solve every one of them. I was very glad that Mike was always transparent about the grade distributions and cutoffs for exams-- in many classes you don't know that your low grade is actually pretty good. My favorite part of the course was just the sheer breadth of topics to which we were able to apply our knowledge. Getting to finally apply probability and linear algebra has made these subjects so much more interesting to me. It's like I finally got to see the value of all the classes I thought would be dead ends. The class is hard, but Mike told us to trust the system, so I did, and I learned a ton. Thank you, Mike. This class was seriously awesome. I sincerely hope I learn as much in future classes as I did in yours.
TAIT	Having nicely typed up lecture notes was very very useful for reviewing and studying. A little put off by four exams instead of the usual two or three, but since we drop one anyway I can't really complain. Grading quite fair, both on homeworks and on exams. Overall quite satisfied.
TAIT	Great course- material, explanation, energy... all are good... perhaps in the future it would be interesting to see a little more of the applications of theorems in problem solving
TAIT	Great professor, taught course very well and always knew how to help students toward answers.
TAIT	I found the first half of the course much more manageable compared to the second half. I'm not sure if this is because I was simply better at the topics in the first half, or if the second half was actually just much harder. Regardless, I enjoyed this course. This course should have a 12 unit rating. Some of the homework assignments were a bit too long/difficult for the 9 unit load, but overall they were usually reasonable.

TAIT	Homework was very helpful, yet was not always reflective of the lectures. More intense lectures would prepare for this.
TAIT	<p>Mike did an excellent job of teaching this course. Somehow, this was both one of the most challenging courses that I've taken and one of the courses in which I've done the best, which has got to say something. Homeworks were difficult but fair, and Mike was frequently available for his very helpful office hours. Exams were, in my opinion, of approximately the correct level of difficulty, perhaps a bit on the easy side. Lectures were well presented and had a good sense of direction/cohesion, and Mike's enthusiasm was evident, shining through in his instruction. The class notes are also of excellent quality, and serve as a useful reference. There were a few times during lecture where it would have paid off to have been more familiar with the notes: things like "hmm; my notes say [something], but I don't actually think that that's correct". (Specifically: the proof of van der Waerden's theorem, and one other occurrence regarding the direction of an inequality, whose context I can't remember.) But these occurrences were rare. I would also suggest that you consider being slightly <u>_less_</u> helpful in your office hours. I often got the feeling that students simply asking "how should we do problem X?" would hear either a full solution or nearly that. Perhaps it might be valuable to give less direction so that students can figure out more of it on their own. (I did get the impression that this improved over the course of the semester.) All in all, I'm very impressed. Given that this is your first time teaching at CMU, I can't wait to see what you do next.</p>
TAIT	This is a difficult class. I am not sure if it is due to the curriculum or Michael Tait's teaching style. If it is the latter, one suggestion I might give to him would be to slow down a bit in lecture, maybe check up on the students to see if they are understanding everything that he is writing.
TAIT	<p>This was perhaps the best math course I have ever taken at CMU. I like how we didn't just cover the basic easy combinatorics stuff like combinatorial identities and basic enumerative combinatorics. Although this course was much more challenging than a typical 21-301, it was well worth getting to learn about extremal combinatorics, spectral graph theory, and the probabilistic method. The historical context for the results and their relevance to current research was especially useful for getting an idea for the motivation and history behind theorems. Furthermore, this course set me up to be able to better understand current papers in the field, which use a lot of the same stuff we learn in class. I feel like this course better prepared me to do original work in mathematics as well. My only complaint, is we could've spent a day maybe to review the graph theory elements. The stuff about cycles, girth, chromatic number, etc made up only a small component of the prerequisite 228 course, and having to relearn that made things just a bit harder. Also, I know the grader is busy and our work is very proof heavy but having grades returned consistently after a week would have also been nice.</p>

Question Averages



Distribution of Scores

