CSE Student Representative Report 2013s2

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Student Representatives

	Representatives
First Year	Oliver Tan Lucas Pickup
Second Year	Andrew Semler
Third Year	Beth Crane Brad Lorge
Fourth+ Year	Bec Wiley Nat Wong
Postgraduate	Sean Harris

Course Reviews

First Year Courses

COMP1917 - Computing 1

Overall Feedback: Neutral

Sample Size: 5 (of 201)

Respondents found the course to be interesting and useful for industry. Respondents also considered the course organised. However, there has been mention that the course difficulty is disproportional to previous offerings, and that a more in-depth approach to computing is appreciated, rather than in-breadth.

COMP1921 - Computing 1B

Overall Feedback: Positive

Sample Size: 3 (of 185)

Respondents found the course to be interesting and useful for industry. The course content was found to be at a good level of difficulty. Respondents would likely recommend this course to a friend.

COMP1927 - Computing 2

Overall Feedback: Neutral

Sample Size: 9 (of 262)

Respondents considered the course to be useful and relevant to industry. However, respondents felt the course was unengaging at times, and were neutral towards recommending this course to friends. The course difficulty was suited to most respondents.

Comments and Suggestions

- There is little opportunity to learn more than the course content. Perhaps more optional challenges during the course.
- More in-depth explanations in lectures, and more material on the lecture notes.
- The first assignment's restriction to CSE labs within a short time period (especially when booked out) made it particularly difficult for people with limited ability, or for people from long distances. Perhaps consider a different assignment, more time, or some other way of doing this assignment at home.

BINF1001 - Bioinformatics 1

Overall Feedback: Positive

Sample Size: 2 (of 20)

Respondents rated the lab work and assignments positively, with the difficulty of the course being maintainable. The smaller class sizes and lectures worked well with students, being more casual and less intimidating. Respondents were likely to recommend the course to their friends. Some of the lecturers were very enthusiastic in their teachings, which lifted the spirits of the course.

Comments and Suggestions

- Lecture slides be available for all weeks
- One lecturer in particularly seemed to not have known his slide for presentation in one of the lectures.

SENG1031 - Software Engineering Workshop 1

Overall Feedback: Neutral

Sample Size: 3 (of 63)

Respondents found the course relevant to industry, and is satisfied with the level of organisation and tutoring received from the course. However, they feel as though the content was not made as interesting as it could be, and thought the assignment for the course was rather bland.

Comments and Suggestions

- Less emphasis on documentation and project planning, and more on something that could be made useful on a portfolio or resume
- Perhaps a way to emphasise entrepreneurship

Second Year Courses

COMP2041/COMP9041 - Software Construction

Overall Feedback: Positive

Sample Size: 13 (of 297)

This course was rated very positively with everyone finding the course useful. Respondents all reported varying levels of difficulty with the course, potentially showing previous experience with course content, however they all rated the lecturer's explanation powers extremely highly.

Comments and Suggestions

- There is too large of a focus on Perl considering the course name (and we are still on it at ~Week 10, well outside the Week 3-6 as mentioned in the course outline).
- Assistant tutoring (where students from this course volunteer to help tutor classes in first year computing courses) could have help for students who want to improve their communication skills prior to tutoring.
- Assistant Tutoring is poorly assessed and badly integrated into the course marking

SENG2021 - Software Engineering Workshop 2B

Overall Feedback: Positive

Sample Size: 1 (of 56)

The one respondent found this course to be good in every aspect. Not many conclusions can be drawn given the lack of respondents.

Third Year Courses

COMP3151 - Foundations of Concurrency

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 3 (of 21)*

Respondents rated the course quite highly across all areas; In particular students rated the tutoring support and organisation of the lecturer as above average.

The main concern raised was the difficulty of the course, and of the assignments.

COMP3171/COMP9171 - Object-Oriented Programming

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 4 (of 76)*

Students found the course content interesting, and felt that it was very useful to industry/future careers.

The content was considered average-to-above-average difficulty. Undergraduates and postgraduates were split between their rating of the lecturer's effectiveness at explaining courses; undergraduates rated it as *neutral (3)*, whereas postgraduates rated it as *very good (5)*.

Students were pleased with the high levels of organisation in the course, and most would recommend it to a friend.

COMP3222 - Digital Circuits and Systems

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 4 (of 32)*

Students found the course content interesting, and felt that it was very useful to industry/future careers.

The content was considered at about average difficulty.

The lecturer was quite highly praised, both for effectively explaining concepts and for high levels of organisation. Most student would recommend this course to a friend.

The biggest concern raised was that the mid-semester exam was proportionally too difficult to the rest of the course.

COMP3311 - Database Systems

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 7 (of 199)*

Students were varied in their view of how interesting the course content was, but on average rated it as neutral. All students rated the relevance and usefulness of the course highly.

Students were split in their rating of the course difficulty, varying from *very easy (1)* to *difficult (4)* - the mean rating was *neutral (3)*.

Most students rated the lecturer as average-to-high in terms of effectiveness at explaining concepts and organisation. Students felt the level of tutoring they received was okay, but nothing special.

The main concerns raised were about the dry nature of the content. One student felt that the notes and lectures did not match up, making it difficult to study.

COMP3331 - Computer Networks and Applications

Overall Feedback: Neutral *Sample Size: 2 (of 115)*

Students felt the course content was only averagely interesting, and were split in their opinions of how useful/relevant it was.

Students found the content difficult, and whilst the lecturer was organised and okay at explaining concepts, found the lack of supervised labs difficult.

The biggest concern was that students were told to ask other students for help in the labs, leading to incorrect answers, or difficulty for those without friends in their class.

COMP3421 - Computer Graphics

Overall Feedback: Neutral *Sample Size: 11 (of 106)*

Most students found the course content very interesting and somewhat useful for their future career. Although they would recommend this course to friends, many did not feel that the lecturer (Malcolm Ryan) was effective in explaining concepts and felt that he was poorly organised. It can be noted that the lecturer is teaching this course for the first time. Despite the unsatisfactory teachings, many would still enrol in another course with this lecturer. One respondent found it difficult as he had already forgotten most of the math concepts and did not find the tutors very effective.

COMP3511 - Human Computer Interaction

Overall Feedback: Neutral *Sample Size: 2 (of 58)*

One respondent dropped the course before the census date but did not explain why. It seemed he/she felt that the lecturer was not good in explaining concepts and that the course was too easy. The other respondent was extremely satisfied with the tutors of the course and how organised the lecturer was, but would not recommend it to friends as the content would not be useful in his/her career.

Fourth+ Year Courses

COMP4121 - Advanced and Parallel Algorithms

Overall Feedback: Positive

Sample Size: 4 (of 29)

All students found the course content very interesting and useful to their relevant career/industry. They regarded the lecturer (Alex Ignjatovic) very highly and felt that he was organised and explained concepts effectively despite the content being challenging.

Students were likely to recommend this course and would take another course if it was taught by the same lecturer.

One student suggested having a few small quizzes (worth only a couple percent) spread out over the semester to help students learn/solidify the presented material before the final exam.

COMP4161 - Advance Software Verification

Overall Feedback: Positive

Sample Size: 3 (of 12)

All students found the course content very interesting and useful to their relevant career/industry.

Students were likely to recommend this course and would take another course if it was taught by the same lecturer.

Most students find the content very difficult, and found the assignments to be extremely difficult to get through.

COMP4181/9181 - Language-based Software Verification

Overall Feedback: Neutral

Sample Size: 2 (of 17)

There was a mix of students who felt the course was interesting and relevant, and the difficulty of the course.

Suggestion: Course needs prerequisites, there's lot of repeated content from COMP3161 and COMP3141. This is a stage 4 course, but it doesn't feel like one.

COMP4418 - Knowledge Representation and Reasoning

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 1 (of 8)*

The respondent felt the course interesting and relevant to their career.

The respondent felt there was a noticeable difference between what has been taught in the course and what the assignments are asking them to do.

COMP4920 - Management and Ethics

Overall Feedback: Negative *Sample Size: 9 (of 138)*

There was a range of views between the respondents. However most students found the course interesting.

Most respondents would not take another course taught by the same lecturer and found the lecturer poor at explaining the concepts taught in the course. They did feel the lecturer was fairly well prepared.

Most respondents would not recommend this course to a friend.

Some of the student responses were:

- “Course work is irrelevant. Essays aren't a good way to learn essays. There's the potential for making students understand why project management is important, but it's missed.“
- “Lectures are a waste of time for students in the COMP stream”
- “The course focuses too much on the overly simplistic dichotomy between its overly specific definitions of the agile and waterfall ideologies in project management and the ideas of consequentialism and deontology in ethics. The result is a bizarre mountain of theory that has little relation on real world project management or the actual study of ethical reasoning. This is particularly significant when examining the link between the course and its attempts to bring in real world examples, such as in the presentation from Atlassian or its heavy-handed treatment of Kant.”

COMP6714 - Information Retrieval and Web Search

Overall Feedback: Neutral *Sample Size: 1 (of 29)*

They found it interesting and felt the course was very useful. The content was not too difficult and not too easy but the lecturer (Dr Wei Wang) was not very good at explaining concepts throughout the course. The lecturer was thought of in negative terms - he appeared unorganised and would not enrol in future courses taught by him and therefore will not recommend this course to friends. Despite the negative comments regarding the lecturer, the course itself was enjoyable.

Postgraduate Courses

COMP9021 - Principles of Programming

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 3 (of 81)*

Students thought the content was interesting, well explained and of average difficulty.

COMP9024 - Data Structures and Algorithms

Overall Feedback: Neutral *Sample Size: 2 (of 68)*

Students rated the course content as very interesting, useful and well explained. They also felt it was reasonably challenging.

Concerns were raised over the organisation of the lecturer and the lack of solutions available for course material. Students felt that the lecturer has great enthusiasm and teaching skills, but posts content late, with broken links and missing submission tools.

COMP9242 - Advanced Operating Systems

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 4 (of 19)*

Students rated this course extremely highly. They felt that the course was very challenging and demanding, but also well taught, administered and organised.

Students would recommend this course to their friends.

COMP9318 - Data Warehousing and Data Mining

Overall Feedback: Neutral *Sample Size: 3 (of 80)*

Students found the course interesting, useful and challenging. The lecturer received mixed reviews in terms of organising and explaining skills.

COMP9321 - Web Applications Engineering

Overall Feedback: Negative *Sample Size: 4 (of 27)*

Students rated the course content as average across interest levels, difficulty and usefulness. Some felt that the lecture and assignment content were very distinct.

Students rated the lecturer very poorly for both quality of explanations and organisation of the class. They also mentioned that adding lab classes might help.

COMP9323 - e-Enterprise Project

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 2 (of 43)*

Students rated the course as interesting and useful.

The lecturer was rated average in both explanations and organisation.

COMP9431 - Robotic Software Architecture

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 1 (of 18)*

Students rated the course as extremely interesting and very useful. They also thought that the course was quite challenging.

The level of tutoring was good, but the lecturer was said to be unorganised. Students would recommend this course to their friends.

COMP9444 - Neural Networks

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 2 (of 26)*

Students rated the course content as very interesting, but potentially less useful.

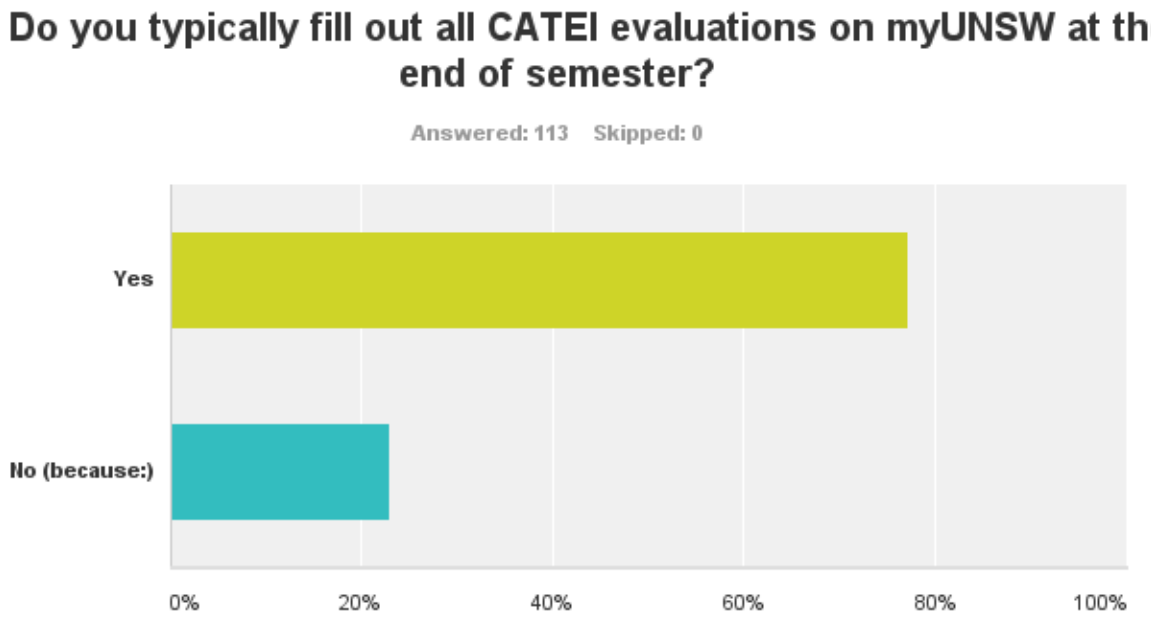
They also said the lecturer was organised and explained content well. Students would recommend this course to their friends.

COMP9517 - Computer Vision

Overall Feedback: Positive *Sample Size: 2 (of 20)*

Students rated the course content as interesting, useful and fairly challenging. They said the lecturer's explanations and organisation were alright, but that the course could do with more tutorial time.

CATEI Participation

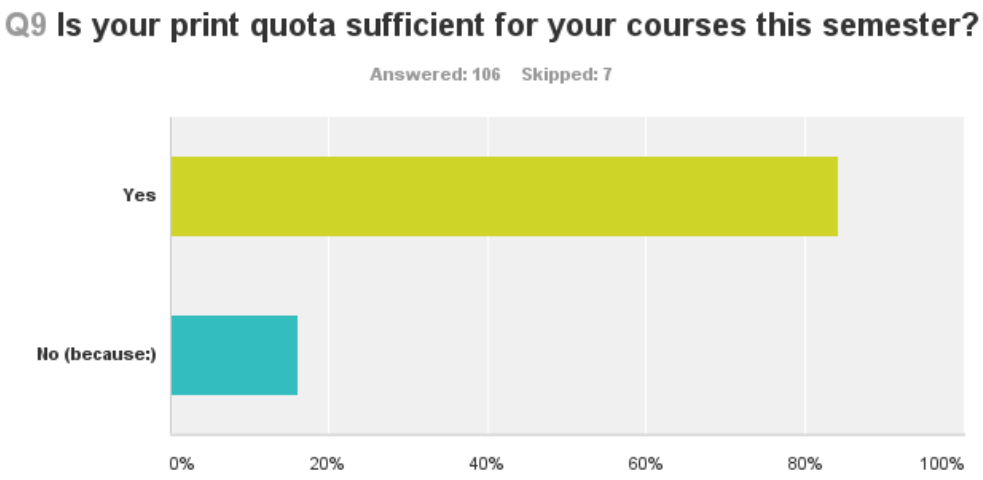


Common reasons for not filling out the CATEI include:

- Not knowing what it is.
- The effort to impact ratio was too poor - no perceived difference was made.
- The survey was not course-specific - but rather too general.
- Survey requires in depth responses which students don't have time for to only make one or two comments.
- Only filling it out if there was positive or negative feedback to give.
- People were not able to do it as it was during the stressful time of exams and assignments being due.

Quota

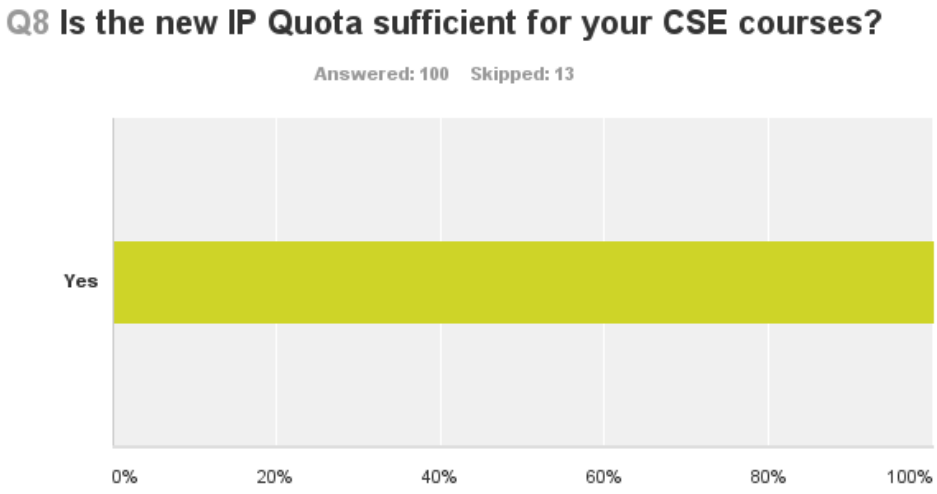
Print Quota



Responses for why it is too low include:

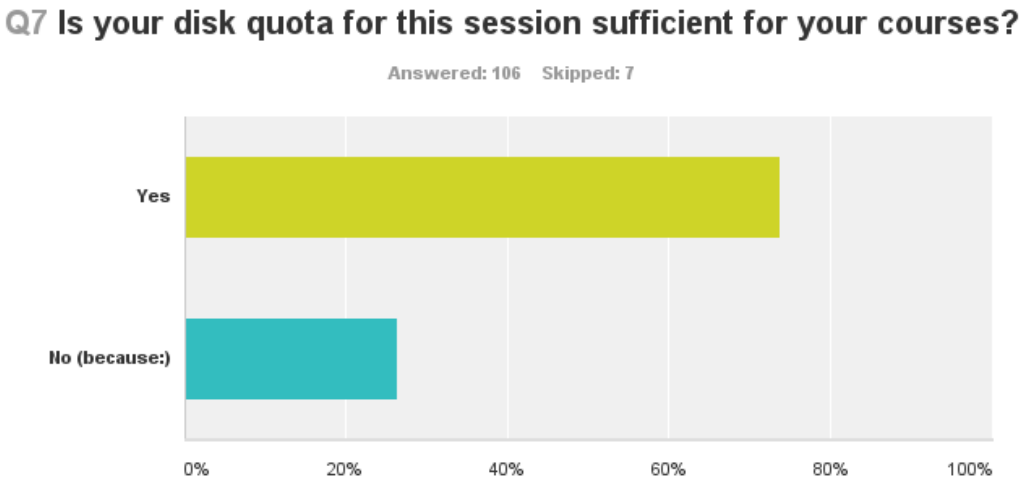
- There was not enough for lecture notes, especially for some courses.
- Some printers did not work.

IP Quota



Unlimited IP Quota = Happy Students

Disk Quota

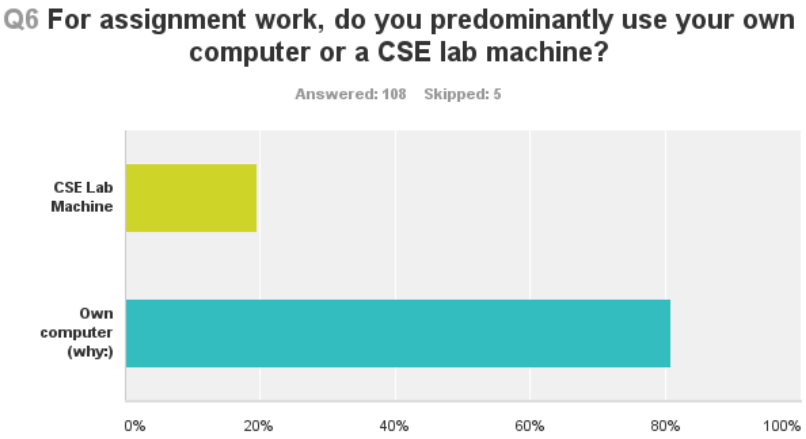


Responses for why it is too low include:

- Very easy to get out of quota.
- The browser uses too much data, which in turn makes it not enough for coursework.
- Software for courses can get too big - even bigger than the quota.
- Mailbox can get too big.
- Video streams cannot be downloaded and watched.
- Research student thinks it is not enough for his work.
- Seemed to be a prevalent problem during the COMP1927 Assignment.

Laboratory Use

Use of Home Computers



Most respondents preferred to use their home computer. Reasons cited include:

- Convenience when using home computer, in regards to time work can be done, work saved and distance
- Ability to install what the user wants - some software on the CSE Lab machines are outdated.
- CSE Labs are commonly full during the day, and can get quite noisy
- CSE keyboards seem unhygienic, and the environment is too dim.

CSE Laboratory Suggestions

Suggestions and comments include:

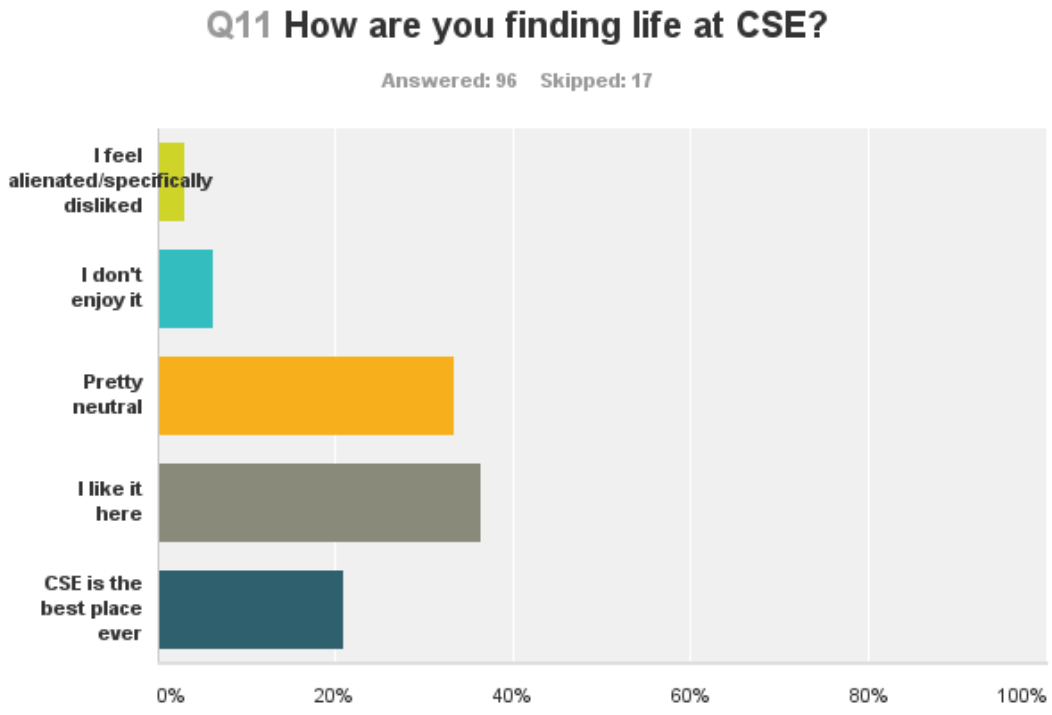
- Cleaner equipment (wipes, hand sanitizer or limiting food, especially in postgrad labs)
- Ability to check workstation availability over the internet, or a lab timetable
- More powerpoints - or introduce “laptop-only” labs
- More ergonomic chairs
- Ways to sync lab data, through Google Drive, Dropbox, etc…
- Allow students to install software
- More availability overnight
- Introduce “Quiet” study labs
- More workstations as labs get busy during the day
- More machines that are like those in sanhu and erhu - some are lacking in performance
- Bring back gfriends

Research, Thesis or Summer Project Student Feedback

There were 22 respondents who were doing a project this semester, from either research thesis or special project. From this, five have have raised issues:

- There have been too many PhD reviews (one every 2 months)
- Last semester lacked supervision or support.
- A background in statistics was needed.

CSE Life



Comments

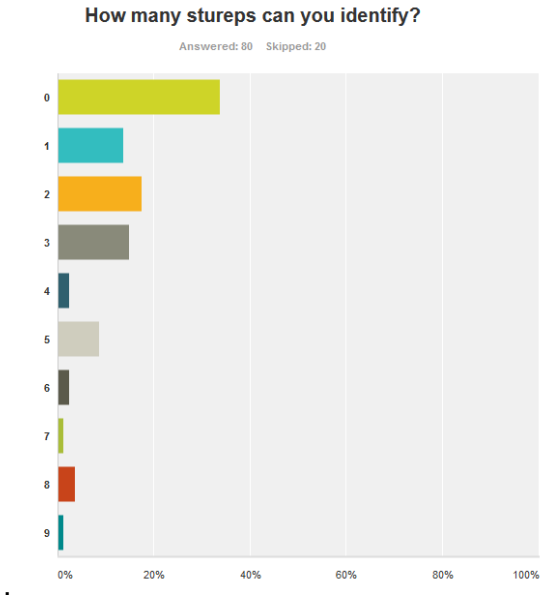
- Staff are friendly, and there are lots of events
- Community is friendly
- CSE DO Jobs is great - but needs to be advertised more
- Great infrastructure
- Affiliation with NICTA appreciated

Suggestions

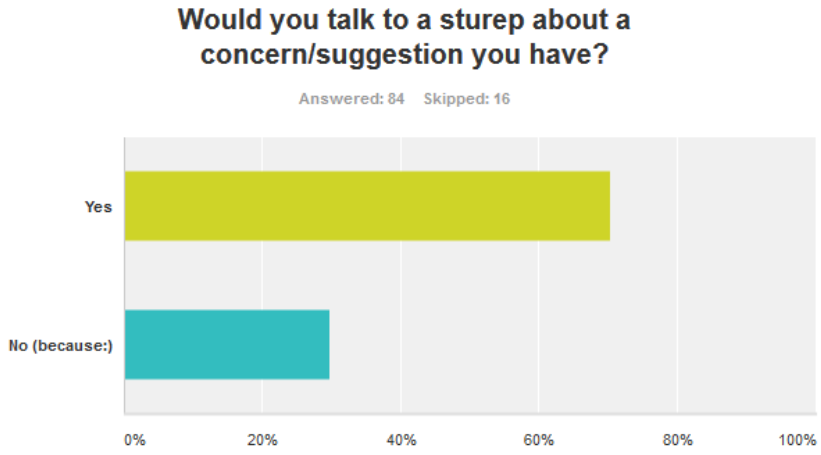
- Some tutorial classes need to return, such as algorithms, or there would not be feedback about assignments or questions
- Some 3rd/4th year courses should run in both semesters, or in the summer
- More study areas
- Research students need to be more introduced to the community
- Bring back the basement
- Improve the SENG workshops organisation
- Improve the CSE Forums

Sturep Feedback

Finding Stureps



Talking to Stureps



Of those who said no, reasons include:

- Not having any major issues to talk about
- Preferring to take it to staff immediately
- Not knowing any except for the one that sends out the email

Suggestions to Stureps

- Stureps could be more visible
- Research community seem to be unsure of what the StuReps are
- The website could be easier to use/find content