Teaching Evaluations: Phillip Rogaway

All of my course homepages are available on the Web (not my university's LMS). I have also put online decades of student teaching evaluations, complete and without redactions. Numerical summaries (means, medians, class size, survey response rates) can be found off the link just given or in the table at the end of this pdf.

Summarizing the summary data: I had a median instructor-quality rating ("The instructor is a good teacher, overall") of 10 out of 10 in 22 of the 35 classes taught between 2001 and 2013. Then, when the university went to a 5-point system and adjusted the prompt ("Please indicate the overall teaching effectiveness of the instructor"), I had a median instructor-quality rating of 5 out of 5 in 19 of the 24 classes taught (2014–2024).

For my most recent term of teaching, Spring 2024, here are direct links: course ECS127.Spring2024: Cryptography (webpage, evaluations); and course ECS189.Spring2024: *Black Mirror* (webpage, evaluations). These two courses are of my own design. The first was a demanding technical class that I occasionally taught; the second was an experimental course that I dreamed up and taught once. (Others had the same idea: there have been courses on *Black Mirror* at several US universities.)

While the numbers are strong, I encourage anyone reviewing my teaching to read the student comments. Nobody knows what is going on in a classroom better than the students taking the class. So let me end this note with comments culled from their evaluations.

Sample student comments from Cryptography: ECS 127.Spring2024

▷ He speaks with an almost superhuman clarity of voice—he must have practiced that normal humans don't speak so clearly. ▷ Awe inspiring, poignant, delightfully engaging. ▷ I really love Professor Rogaway's teaching style and I am so glad I got to take one more class with him before he retires. ▷ In each of the three classes that I've taken with him, Professor Rogaway has been an outstanding and engaging lecturer, and this class was no different. It was really interesting hearing some of his anecdotes about the material covered, and his knowledge of the subject matter is likely impossible to beat. The organization made sense, and I think the more rigorous section of the class was presented at a digestible pace. ▷ Professor Rogaway's presentation of course material is unique to me since he seeks to establish understanding of the material instead of just regurgitating information. It feels a bit more like a conversation about the subject matter. ▷ You're kind and very passionate, which honestly rocks. I like your dedication to the class, insofar that you even hold three discussion sections. It really motivates me to want to learn from you. ▷ Awesome in every single way: obviously knowledgeable, friendly, helpful—the list goes on and on. Perhaps best: willingness and ability to discuss topics and help students in ways that don't directly relate to cryptography. ▷ Professor Rogaway has a charisma unlike any other instructor I've ever had. ▷ Grades seemed completely irrelevant to me when I was in his class because I felt like I was actually expanding my mind and understanding of a difficult concept. The learning in his class felt different, and I feel like I have become a much better student and person as a result of pushing myself to understand not just the material but the logic and thought processes behind cryptography. ▷ He also holds a genuine and unique sense of humor, and both has admiration for and is admired by his students. ▷ It really feels like you are learning from another person, rather than abstracted away from curriculum. I also like how he brings the course into a broader context, talking about the

history of how many of the schemes came about and by talking about the ethical responsibilities of cryptographers. ▷ How he cared so much for us as students. Through events like "Cat Day" and the class rock climbing trip, it felt to me like Professor Rogaway prioritized student mental health as much as he did our learning, which I truly appreciated. ▷ His passion and nerdy aura. I had trouble understanding what the hell he was teaching. But his eyes showed the love and passion for cryptography. ▷ Professor Rogaway's courses are always incredibly difficult, but he forces me to really use my brain and try to really understand what he's saying. ▷ It feels to me like he puts more into his teaching than most professors I've had, and I think that's a lot of it — it really does feel like he cares, not just about the material on the syllabus but about who we are and who we become. It all sounds a bit cliche, but I'm truly grateful for everything he put into these classes.

Sample student comments from *Black Mirror*: ECS 189.Spring2024

▷ Professor Rogaway is the most organized and welcoming professor I have ever had. He is so flexible and understanding that he fosters such a sense of safety and community. His class was so well organized which encouraged everyone to want to participate. ▷ Professor Rogaway is a gem to this university. This course should be a requirement for all Computer Science students. ▷ Love Professor Rogaway, sad that he's retiring. One of the few CS professors that actually have made an impact on many students. So much respect for him. ▷ Rogaway is one of the most inspiring and knowledgeable instructors I've met at UC Davis. His opinions on all things technology always hit the mark and are thought-provoking. ▷ Probably the only class I've taken where I looked forward to going to class. ▷ He inspires us to be curious about the world and be the change we want to see in it. He genuinely made my final quarter so amazing and I found myself being sad about this class ending even more so than graduating. You can tell he cares about his students a lot an all of us really respect him. ▷ I really love the fact that he cultivate an inclusive community in his class, made the students love the topic and also made us bond in class. First CS class I actually made friends. ▷ Prof. Rogaway is just an extraordinary individual. He's not just an absolute menace in his field of cryptography, but he is also such a kind, reflective, nuanced, and wise human being. He could have retired last year, but he chose to stay for another year — for us, his future students.

Table 1: UCD Student Evaluations of Teaching / Phillip Rogaway / 2007–2024

Year	Term	Course: Title	URL	URL	Mean	Medn	Resp
2024	Spring	ECS 127: Cryptography	home	evals	4.5/5	5/5	71%
2024	Spring	ECS 189L: Topics in CS: Black Mirror	home	evals	4.8/5	5/5	63%
2023	Spring	ECS 120: Theory of Computation	home	evals	4.2/5	5/5	83%
2023	Spring	ECS 188-1: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.8/5	5/5	63%
2023	Spring	ECS 188-2: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.5/5	5/5	54%
2022	Winter	ECS 20: Discrete Math	home	evals	3.8/5	4/5	70%
2021	Fall	ECS 20: Discrete Math	home	evals	3.4/5	4/5	78%
2019	Fall	ECS 188-1: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.3/5	5/5	91%
2019	Fall	ECS 188-2: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.3/5	4/5	81%
2019	Spring	ECS 188-1: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.7/5	5/5	85%
2019	Spring	ECS 188-2: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.5/5	5/5	65%
2019	Winter	ECS 127: Cryptography	home	evals	4.3/5	5/5	72%
2017	Fall	ECS 188-1: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.6/5	5/5	100%
2017	Fall	ECS 188-2: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.7/5	5/5	96%
2017	Fall	ECS 188-3: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.6/5	5/5	92%
2017	Winter	ECS 188-1: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.8/5	5/5	100%
2017	Winter	ECS 188-2: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.4/5	5/5	96%
2016	Spring	ECS 127: Cryptography	home	evals	4.3/5	5/5	54%
2016	Winter	ECS 188: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.7/5	5/5	47%
2015	Spring	ECS 120: Theory of Computation	home	evals	4.1/5	4/5	69%
2015	Winter	ECS 188-1: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	4.7/5	5/5	93%
2015	Winter	ECS 188-2: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	3.9/5	4/5	32%
2014	Spring	ECS 120: Theory of Computation	home	evals	4.3/5	5/5	54%
2014	Winter	ECS 227: Modern Cryptography (Graduate)	home	evals	4.9/5	5/5	69%
2013	Fall	ECS 20: Discrete Math	home	evals	8.6/10	9/10	60%
2013	Winter	ECS 188-1: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	8.8/10	9/10	96%
2013	Winter	ECS 188-2: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	9.2/10	10/10	100%
2013	Spring	ECS 120: Theory of Computation	home	evals	9.2/10	10/10	72%
2012	Fall	ECS 120: Theory of Computation	home	evals	9.0/10	10/10	69%
2012	Winter	ECS 227: Modern Cryptography (Graduate)	home	evals	9.5/10	9.5/10	55%
2012	Winter	ECS 120: Theory of Computation	home	evals	9.3/10	10/10	68%
2011	Fall	ECS 188: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	9.3/10	10/10	95%
2011	Spring	ECS 189A: Cryptography	home	evals	9.1/10	10/10	84%
2010	Spring	ECS 188: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	9.3/10	10/10	100%
2010	Spring	ECS 227: Modern Cryptography (Graduate)	home	evals	9.9/10	10/10	73%
2010	Spring	ECS 120: Theory of Computation	home	evals	9.0/10	9/10	70%
2009	Fall	ECS 188: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	9.4/10	10/10	92%
2009	Spring	ECS 188-1: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	9.4/10	10/10	96%
2009	Spring	ECS 188-2: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	9.0/10	9/10	96%
2009	Winter	ECS 227: Modern Cryptography (Graduate)	home	evals	9.5/10	10/10	75%
2008	Fall	ECS 20: Discrete Math	home	evals	8.0/10	8/10	68%
2008	Spring	ECS 188: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	9.6/10	10/10	82%
2007	Fall	ECS 188-1: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	9.3/10	10/10	100%
2007	Fall	ECS 188-2: Ethics in an Age of Technology	home	evals	9.1/10	9/10	75%
2007	Spring	ECS 120: Theory of Computation	home	evals	9.0/10	10/10	56%
2007	Spring	ECS 227: Modern Cryptography (Graduate)	home	evals	9.3/10	10/10	100%