

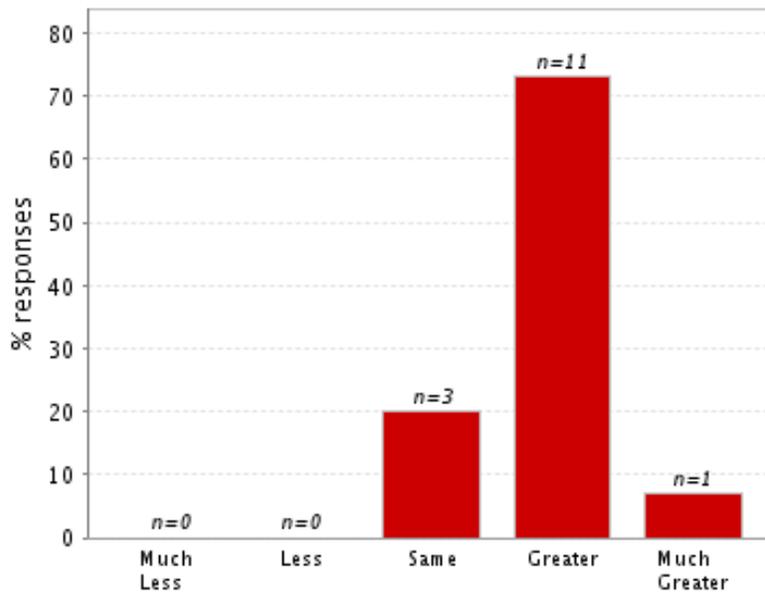
**Overview of Evaluations for Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin**

**PSYC 458 01 Decision Neuroscience Fall 2013**

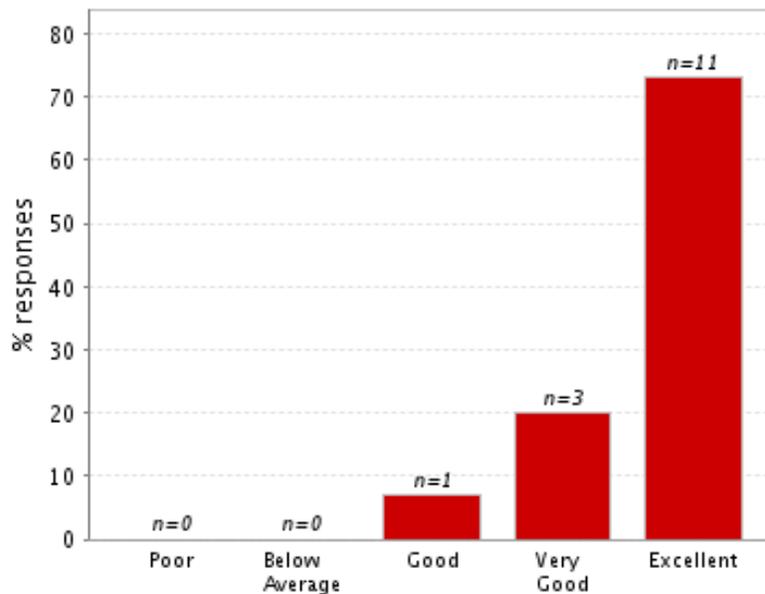
Total number of students: 18

Evaluations completed: 15 (Number of declines 1; Number of non-respondents: 2)

Overall, how would you rate the workload of this course in comparison to other Yale courses you have taken?



What is your overall assessment of this course?



**Question 1**

Looking back on Psychology 458 01, what is your overall assessment of the course? What are its strengths and weaknesses, and in what ways might it be improved?

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**Response 1**

Decision Neuroscience was one of my favorite classes at Yale. While challenging and informative, Professor Samanez-Larkin creates a laid-back but focused atmosphere for optimal learning.

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**Response 2**

I can't speak highly enough of this course. If you can get in, you have to take it. It's tough for sure. You're going to spend 4-5 hours over the weekend reading these neuroscience papers, but it gets easier and reduced workload as the semester goes on. And its worth it to do the readings, because you learn so much. Professor S-L is cool and fun, always keeps class interesting by inserting stories from the field. But he always stays on point and helps you understand all the material. There are so few neuroscience classes for undergrads, so if you can get into this, you should take it. One of the best classes I've had at Yale.

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**Response 3**

Decision Neuroscience is an excellent, enjoyable seminar. You read about 5 scientific articles a week, which can seem daunting at first, but by the end of the semester you have covered a lot of the fundamental material that tries to answer the question of what goes on in the brain when we make choices. The workload for the course is very reasonable. You have to write a response paper to the article that you read for class (reading + writing = about 5 hours), and twice a semester help lead the class, which turned into people bringing candy and cookies for demos. I think this was a good way of keeping the class engaged. Good times. You also do a final paper. Professor Samanez-Larkin is the man, and really knows a lot about the field. He helps guide the class discussion and makes sure the key points are covered. Overall, I'd highly recommend the course.

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**Response 4**

Wonderful course that teaches you a great deal about brain anatomy, how to read and review papers, but also helps you think about the things you read about in every day life

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**Response 5**

Absolutely amazing course. The subject matter is (obviously) applicable to everyday life. Professor Samanez-Larkin is nothing short of a gem.

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**Response 6**

Great course! Perfect balance between being pushed to learn and not being overwhelmed by too much or too complex content. We started out reading more than a graduate seminar, but Prof SL adjusted the work demand though the course. Absolutely take it.

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**Response 7**

This was a great course. It's tends to be a fair amount of work because you end up investing a few hours each week to reading dense neuroscientific articles and writing a reading response. The class is very interesting. I would highly recommend it for psych seniors looking for a seminar!

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**Response 8**

I thought that it was a great senior seminar. The seminar covered a wide range of topics so that kept things interesting.

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**Response 9**

This class was amazing, one of the best I've had at Yale. Once the readings were cut down, the work load was very manageable and the grading was extremely fair. The only complaint I had is the due times for the weekly reaction paper, Sunday at noon is not very ideal.

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**Response 10**

Great course! The topics covered were varied and fascinating. I liked the structure of reading responses and breaking up the final paper. And I actually didn't mind the 12pm due date for reading responses--gave me a reason to get up in the morning!

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**Response 11**

This course was hard, but it was rewarding. The reading requirement was massive at first, and it would take hours to digest the articles we were given and formulate response papers. However, even if the articles were painful to read, they always became more interesting once we discussed them in class. I just wish there was some more variety in the syllabus; the constant readings and responses every single week became very draining by the first month in.

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**Response 12**

This is an excellent course - great reading, fascinating discussions, and a WONDERFUL professor! I learned SO much about the brain, and, because of Prof. S-L's teaching and the interesting content, this very quickly became my favorite class of the semester. Seriously, it's wonderful, and I wouldn't change a thing.

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**Response 13**

I really enjoyed the jumpstarts that we had to do for the class. It provided an opportunity to really understand more about some of the readings and it also made the class a lot more enjoyable in getting to see everyone's creativity through the demonstrations.

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**Question 2**

Please evaluate each instructor of Psychology 458 01 . What are the instructor's strengths and weaknesses, and in what ways might his or her teaching be improved?

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**Response 1**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Professor Samanez-Larkin is relateable, extremely knowledgeable and focuses class discussions/assignments around students' interests. Although this was his first college class, he "out taught" most of my more experienced professors.

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**Response 2**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Professor S-L is awesome. How many professors do you know that have skateboards in their office, tell you about when they had dreadlocks in college, and are freakin' geniuses in their field? Rumor has it he was breakdancing in the brain room on our last day of class...He was always prepared, knowledgeable, and is clearly doing the work that we discuss in class himself. Check him out on Google Scholar and you'll be amazed at how much he's done in such a short period of time. It was his first year teaching, and I'm sure he'll only get better.

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**Response 3**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Professor Samanez-Larkin is the man, and really knows a lot about the field. He helps guide the class discussion and makes sure the key points are covered.

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**Response 4**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

I think Prof. S-L is one of the best professors I had during my Yale career. He is not only extremely knowledgeable, but also extremely nice, funny, and helpful. He will help you understand the most difficult concepts with ease.

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**Response 5**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Best professor I have had in my four years at Yale. Bar none.

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**Response 6**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Fabulous Professor. He did a great job initiating and maintaining great student discussions while teaching and providing his opinion. Very reasonable, personable, and smart.

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**Response 7**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Dr. S-L is awesome! He's really invested in his students and makes his class very discussion based, so he can hear everyone's opinion. I really enjoyed having him as a professor.

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**Response 8**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Professor Samanez-Larkin was a great professor. He knows so much about the field and you can tell that he cares a lot about it.

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**Response 9**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Professor Samanez Larkin was AMAZING! He was extremely personable and approachable, which made asking questions easy. Class was always very interesting and informative because Professor Samanez Larkin was engaging and enthusiastic about the subject matter.

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**Response 10**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Very engaging and down-to-earth. He obviously cares a lot about the topic, which makes class much more interesting. My only critique would be that some weeks were a little too technical--most of the details about equation modeling and some imaging techniques probably went over most people's heads.

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**Response 11**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Professor SL was awesome, and I really liked how he would bring more context to each scientific paper with background on the authors and their specialties. I liked the jumpstart idea and I was glad that other students were able to explain and summarize the papers in terms that I could understand. I also loved the discussion we had about free will; I would take a whole other course with Professor SL just on that topic.

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**Response 12**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Professor Samanez-Larkin was amazing (and not just for a first-time professor, but in comparison to others I've had who've been here for decades). He structured the course very well, really encouraged class discussion from the beginning, and was very clear in his explanation of some of the more challenging papers and concepts. The class was tons of fun, but I also genuinely learned A LOT - that's a difficult balance to strike, and I think Prof. S-L hit the nail on the head. Honestly,

all of our quips about "improvement" were about lowering the workload each week, rather than actually changing anything about his teaching style - which I loved - or the class - which I loved, too. It was great! Thank you, Prof. SL!!

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**Response 13**

Gregory Russell Samanez-Larkin

Professor Samanez-Larkin was a terrific professor. He was able to balance well between the technical details and broader themes of the course. I especially enjoyed having a visiting professor to have a discussion with us the applications of neuroscience in academic and corporate worlds.

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**Question 4**

How would you summarize Psychology 458 01 for a fellow student? Would you recommend Psychology 458 01 to another student? Why or why not?

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**Response 1**

I recommend this class to anyone interested in the brain/how it works.

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**Response 2**

Absolutely. If you are motivated and devoted, and interested in neuroscience, you should take this class.

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**Response 3**

Decision Neuroscience is an excellent, enjoyable seminar. You read about 5 scientific articles a week, which can seem daunting at first, but by the end of the semester you have covered a lot of the fundamental material that tries to answer the question of what goes on in the brain when we make choices. The workload for the course is very reasonable. You have to write a response paper to the article that you read for class (reading + writing = about 5 hours), and twice a semester help lead the class, which turned into people bringing candy and cookies for demos. I think this was a good way of keeping the class engaged. Good times. You also do a final paper. Professor Samanez-Larkin is the man, and really knows a lot about the field. He helps guide the class discussion and makes sure the key points are covered. Overall, I'd highly recommend the course.

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**Response 4**

Definitely if you have done some prior research, so the course load does not overwhelm you. Prior background is necessary so you can actually critically contribute to the discussion in class.

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**Response 5**

100% take this class. I found myself actually thinking about my decisions day in and day out. Fascinating material. Great professor. What every Yale course should be.

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**Response 6**

I would definitely recommend this class. You learn a lot about different aspects of decision making like valuation, temporal discounting, and risk.

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**Response 7**

I would definitely recommend this course. I really enjoyed it and feel like I learned a lot through taking it.

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**Response 8**

It was a great senior seminar but it was also a ton of work, so be prepared!! Class was always extremely interesting though.

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**Response 9**

I would definitely recommend this class to a fellow student. Professor Samanez Larkin is the best, he's a very fair grader and super open/approachable. The class is extremely interesting, and if you take it you will learn a lot and enjoy the semester.

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**Response 10**

Fantastic neuro psych senior seminar. Very interesting topics. Weekly reading responses meant you always had some work to do, but it also made sure we were all engaged in the material and ready to discuss in class. Some of the best scientific discussions I've had were in the class.

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**Response 11**

As far as senior seminars go, I think this is one of the best you'll ever find, but it was a ton of work. Prepare yourself for multiple scholarly neuroscience articles EVERY SINGLE WEEK. You'll get really good at know what parts of the articles are important to focus on and what other parts to read less intensely because the authors are just being esoteric. By the time you get to the end of the semester you'll actually be impressed with yourself and how much you've learned over the course of a few months.

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**Response 12**

Definitely, absolutely, of course take this class. The reading is challenging but fascinating, and you will learn so much about the brain. Most importantly, though, GSL is AWESOME and as fascinating as the readings are, he's really what makes this class great. Take it if you can get in - you'll love it!

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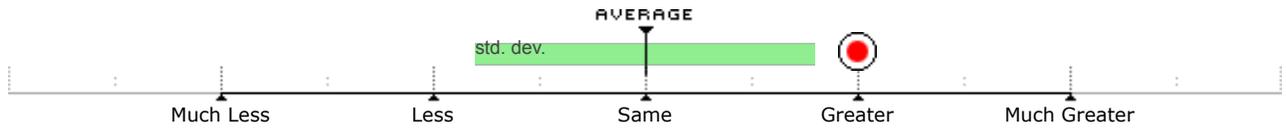
**Response 13**

Take this course, especially if taught by professor Samanez-Larkin! The material was dense at times, but professor SL really made it understandable and connected what we were learning in class to real-life applications.

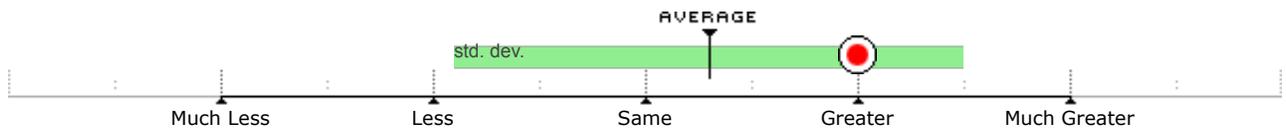
**Question 5**

Overall, how would you rate the workload of this course in comparison to other Yale courses you have taken?

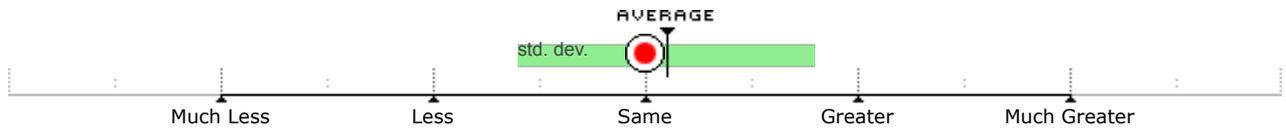
**Response 1**



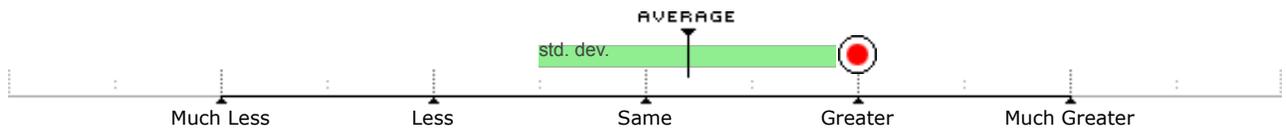
**Response 2**



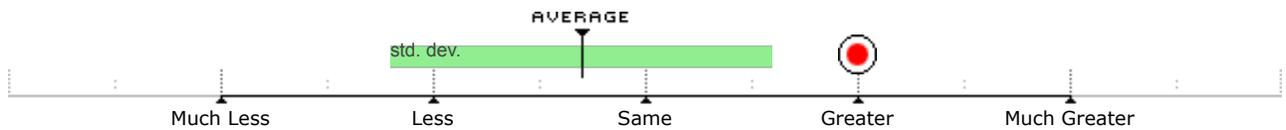
**Response 3**



**Response 4**

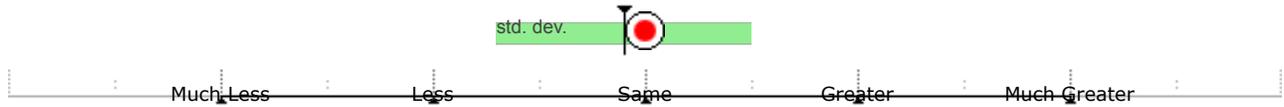
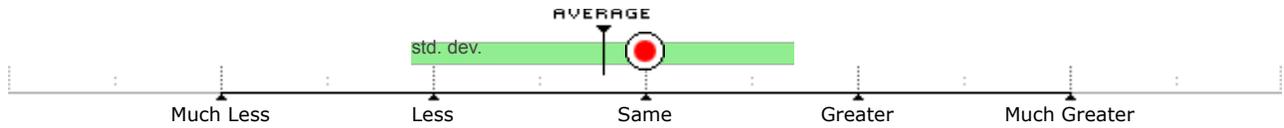
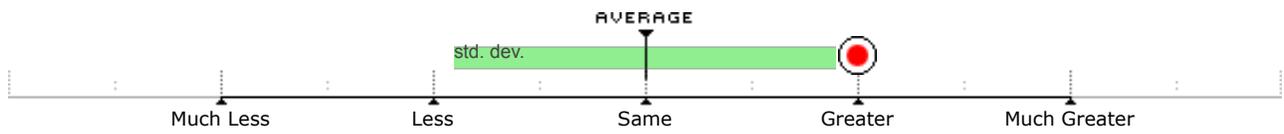
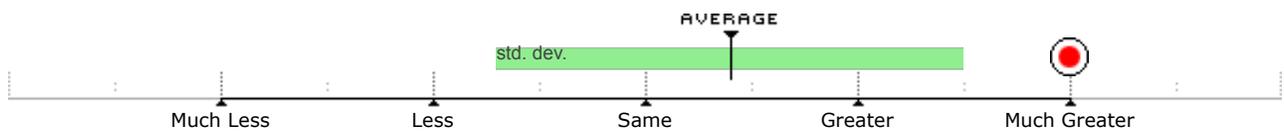
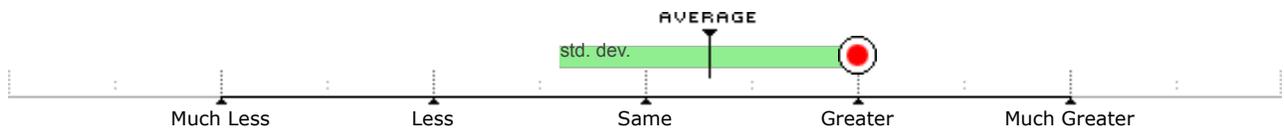
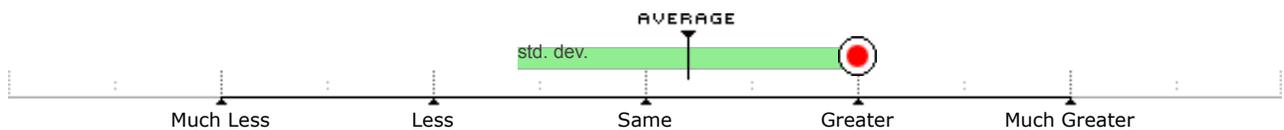
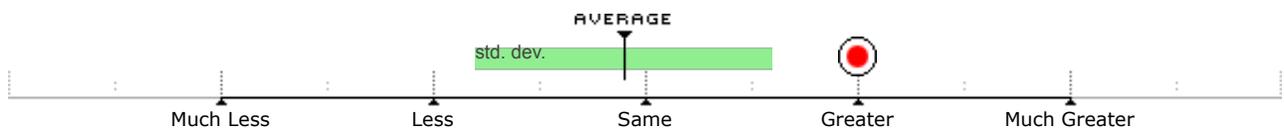


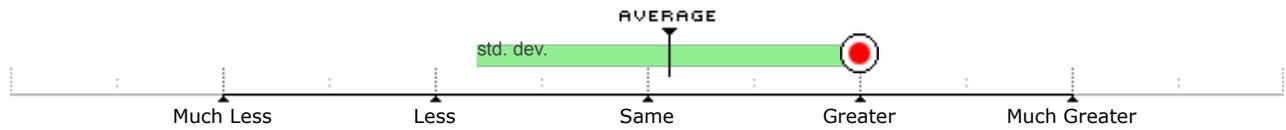
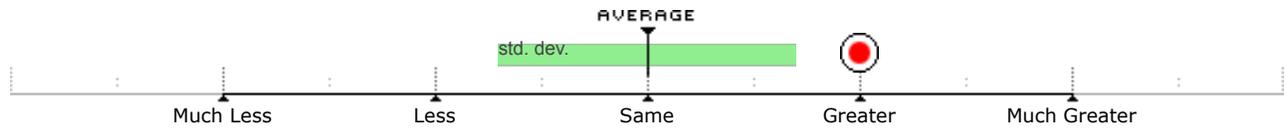
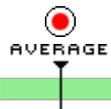
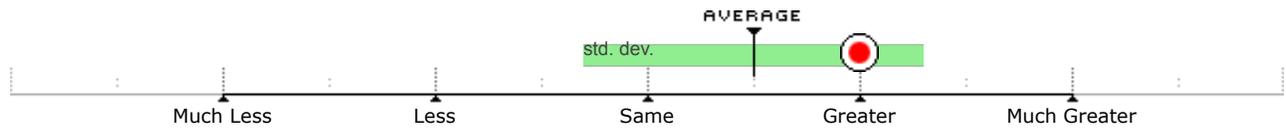
**Response 5**



**Response 6**

AVERAGE

**Response 7****Response 8****Response 9****Response 10****Response 11****Response 12**

**Response 13****Response 14****Response 15**

Answer selected by student



Student's mean (average) answer for this question across all classes evaluated

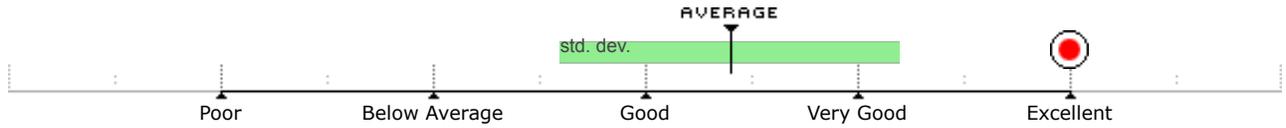


Standard deviation of a student's answers: a narrow bar indicates that a student's answers to this question tend to cluster around the mean, while a wider bar indicates more variability.

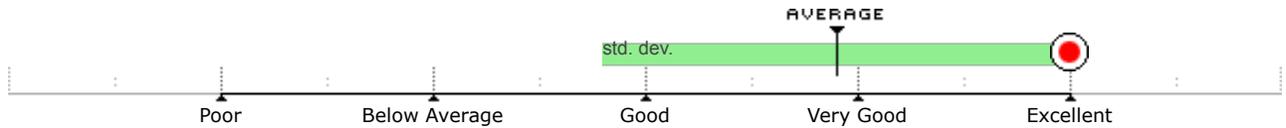
**Question 6**

What is your overall assessment of this course?

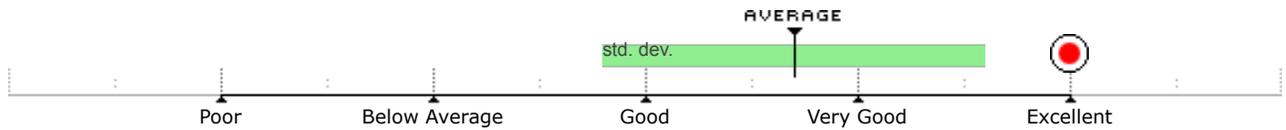
**Response 1**



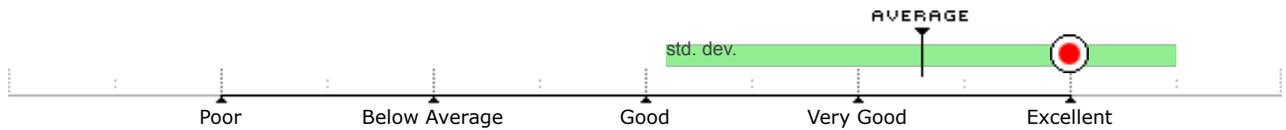
**Response 2**



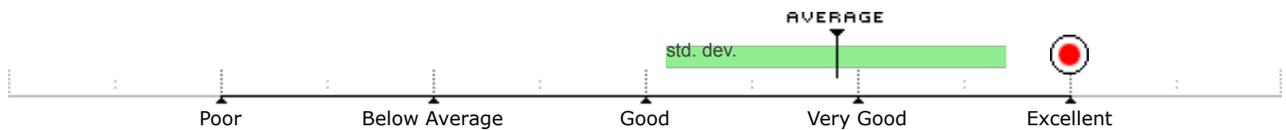
**Response 3**



**Response 4**

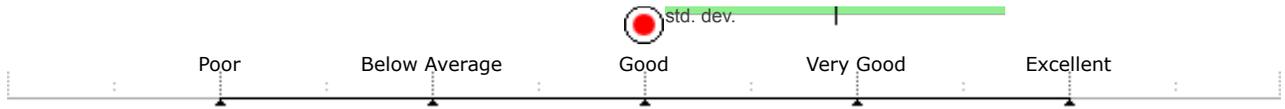


**Response 5**

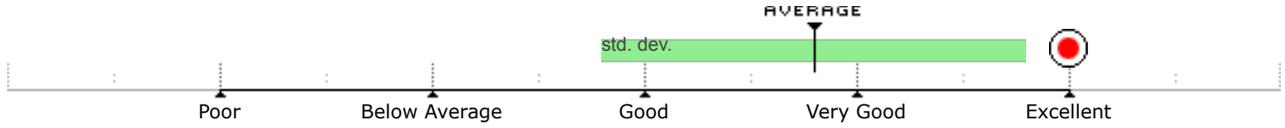


**Response 6**

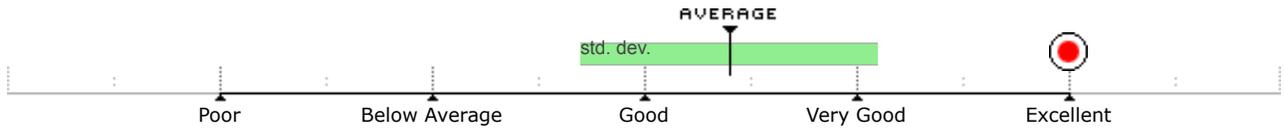




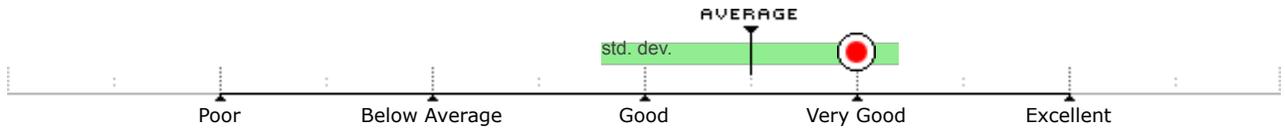
**Response 7**



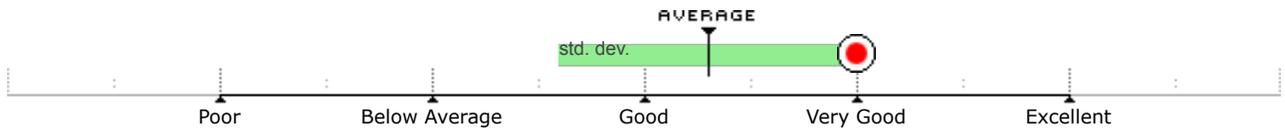
**Response 8**



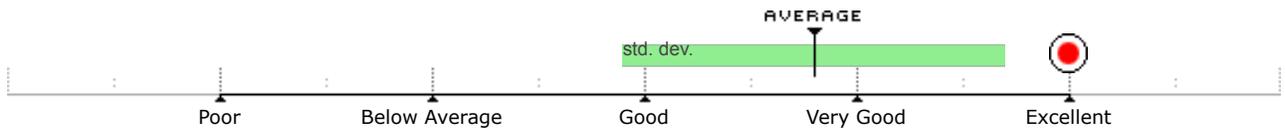
**Response 9**



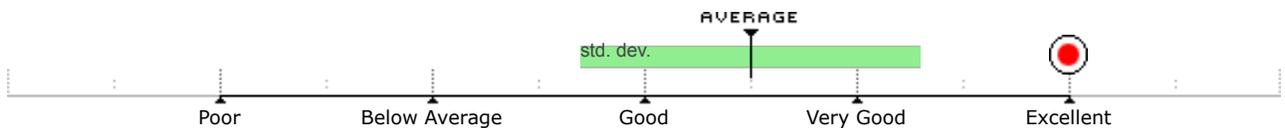
**Response 10**

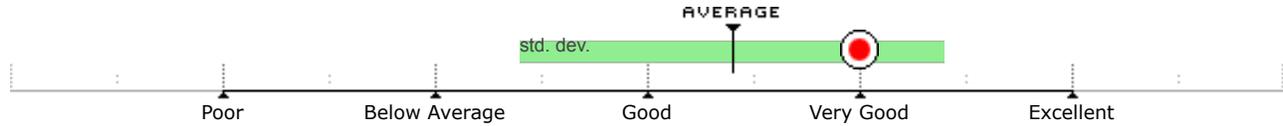
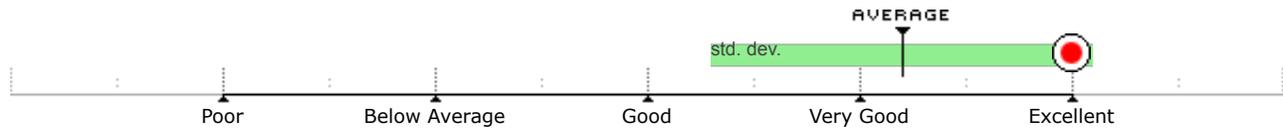


**Response 11**



**Response 12**



**Response 13****Response 14****Response 15**

 Answer selected by student

 Student's mean (average) answer for this question across all classes evaluated

 Standard deviation of a student's answers: a narrow bar indicates that a student's answers to this question tend to cluster around the mean, while a wider bar indicates more variability.

**Question 9**

Does the course have a reasonable balance between technical detail (necessary for understanding) and broad themes and applications? 1) Too technical/detailed 2) A little technical/detailed 3) Just right 4) A little broad/applied 5) Too broad/applied

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**Response 1**

3

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**Response 2**

3 - Just right. I appreciated learning the technical info, but never thought it was overbearing or irrelevant.

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**Response 3**

Yes, the course does a good job of looking at decision neuroscience from multiple levels (cells to society).

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**Response 4**

I think more technical detail was necessary as some of the specifics are not taught in standard courses (e.g. how you look at fMRI's and localize things, reviewing methods etc.) and it helps to understand the subject matter!

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**Response 5**

I was fortunate to have a basic psych/neuro foundation coming into the course, which helped immensely. I could see it being a little bit challenging at times for truly non-psychology students, but Professor Samanez-Larkin made sure to emphasize the importance of broader themes rather than nitty-gritty details. I'd say a 3 for psych majors. 2 for non-psych majors.

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**Response 6**

3. Great balance. Sometimes we would stray into the technical or into the philosophical, but I didn't feel lost when we swayed either way.

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**Response 7**

I would have liked to discuss a little more of the applications of this research for other fields. So, I guess I would say maybe 2? I think it should be technical though, just maybe with just a little more integration of the broader themes.

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**Response 8**

2) A little technical/detailed

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**Response 9**

2

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**Response 10**

3

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**Response 11**

I would say it is a little technical/detailed. Some techniques were probably over many people's heads, but I did appreciate the exposure to many kinds of studies, which will be important to my academic future in neuroscience.

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**Response 12**

2) A little technical/detailed in the readings (that is the result of the writing styles of the scholarly articles), but 3) just right during class discussion. Students should get a crash course in how to read scholarly articles efficiently at the beginning of the semester.

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**Response 13**

I think the course was just right in terms of balance of technical detail and broad themes - of course, there were some papers that were a bit technical, but by the end of the course, I think the experience of having read them added to my understanding of other issues and broader themes. I'd keep the technical detail - honestly, a lot of it is material that students have seen before but could use a review of, and it does help with understanding the material and writing the final paper.

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**Response 14**

Just about right.

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