

CMSC 454 Experience

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This (2018) spring the class was offered as a 644/498. 8 students took 644 and in the end 5 completed the 498 (1 dropped after the exam since he did not do well). Of the 5, I checked and the grades were A+, A, A, A, B. The one who dropped might have scraped through with a B-. I also studied the comments but only 2 UGs did the survey and liked the class very much but that is not enough data. I was expecting at least 15-20 UG to sign up, but most don't seem to take 498s.

I taught it as a regular 400-level class with one midterm and one final and some HWs. Mixing the two populations is not ideal, because the 644 students do not really have time for HWs etc. They would like to attend the class, and not have to spend any more time than that, but if they want to learn the material that is not enough. The main feedback from the 644 students was to post solutions as well (I discussed the harder questions from the HW in class if several got it wrong). Everyone thought the book was excellent.