Observed Instructor: Umut Mete Sake
Observed Course: CSCI 128: Computer Science for STEM
Observed by: Alexandra Bejarano
Date of Observation: October 18, 2023
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Class Summary: *Provide a short description of what happened during the class to provide context for your observations. Use language that is not judgmental. Report what you could see and hear.*
Shortly after course start time, the instructor gave course announcements and then conducted a lecture on software design and an exam review session for about 24 minutes. During that session, the instructor went through lecture slides discussing various code examples, real-world scenarios, and relevant topics for an upcoming exam. Throughout, all students had a laptop open and in front of them, and some students talked during lecture with each other but seemingly about course assignments and questions asked. The remaining course time was for students to work on assignments and receive help from both the instructor and teaching assistants.

For each dimension of effective teaching, **what were your key takeaways/"noticings" from the observation in this area?** *Review the example behaviors on the tool and your notes from the observation. Consider strengths and areas for growth.*

Intentionally Designed
The instructor had prepared slides to help guide course topics and time. Slides included a couple general announcements about the course to serve as helpful reminders to students as well as indication that part of the course time would be used for exam review. The slides were concise and direct in that there was no clutter to distract from the topics at hand. Aside from the title slide indicating the intended discussion topic of the lecture, it was a bit unclear what the intended learning outcomes were (aside from just learning about software design) which could be included in the slides to help students know more about what to expect from the lecture. Course pacing was appropriate as the instructor seemed to keep course time in mind and attempted to not spend too much time on a single slide or example while still providing time for students to give feedback and ask/answer questions. There was one example that seemed intended to be more interactive for students to come up with solutions to a problem, but in the interest of time, the instructor had to only talk through potential solutions. One way to help further keep course pacing as intended is to make more use of the slides (e.g. potentially breaking down examples in the slides to further guide what is to be discussed about that particular example, like highlighting particular lines of code in the slides themselves). There was plenty of time for student activities (work on course assignments) both during and after the lecture. However, it was unclear if the time during the lecture was intended for students to be working on and talking among themselves about course assignments, especially as only a handful of students were talking during which may be distracting to others. It may help to clarify to students what is expected of them during the different course activities.

Focused on Learning
The instructor made use of a mic so it was easy to hear everything the instructor said even from the back of the room.

Slides were easy to see and follow especially as the instructor would walk around the room stage to physically point out things of interest in the slides themselves. However, there were some images that may be difficult to see due to size (e.g. there was one slide with 3 small diagrams) so some images may need to be adjusted to ensure visibility. Additionally, if not already, it may be helpful to have slides accessible to students outside of class so that they may later refer to particular slides or examples if needed.

The instructor made use of the whiteboards during lecture which for the most part it was easy to see and read writing from the back of the room. To further emphasize what was being written, the instructor read aloud what they were writing as they wrote. However, sometimes the marker used was too light to see so it may help to test markers prior to course time to ensure visibility.

Overall, the instructor clearly communicated course content by (1) making connections between course content and real-world scenarios, (2) referring back to previous student questions and further addressing them, (3) providing plenty of examples to explain course content such as any definitions given, (4) verbally breaking down what is shown on slides, and (5) making use of whiteboards to write out additional examples brought up. Also, when a certain topic was brought up that would not be discussed thoroughly in the course, the instructor made sure to reference students to a followup course that would provide students with more information regarding that topic.

Supportive of Students

The instructor interacted with students before course start time. The instructor also indicated that they usually stay a bit after course time to offer students more opportunities to interact with them.

The instructor tried to get students excited about course content at the beginning of class especially as there was an upcoming exam. The instructor also offered multiple opportunities for students to ask questions and engage with lecture content, pausing in between lecture content to give students time to respond. The instructor kindly accepted student responses and built on responses to further discuss the example at hand when necessary. However, only a couple students directly engaged in responding to instructor questions. To help increase engagement, it may help to break down examples and ask multiple specific questions about particular content rather than one general question. And in cases where no students respond, that may be an indication that they do not understand so it could help to ask students clarification questions on whether they understand the content or question presented. Then the instructor could use that to clarify content or ask questions/engagement in a different way. Additionally, it seemed that all students who did engage were closer to the front of the room, it could help to direct questions to different sections of the room to distribute engagement and ensure the students in the back feel accounted for.

After lecture was over and work time for course assignments started, the instructor approached students who had questions and/or needed help. During this time, the instructor directly looked over students' work before providing feedback and even suggesting additional tips that could further help the students. The instructor once again made good use of the whiteboards to assist students.