I can count on one hand the classes at TAMU that I feel were valuable to me as an engineer leaving the University and heading to industry, this is one of them. The coverage of a broad range of issues that have an effect on engineers’ jobs gave me some insight into what I’d be dealing with in the “real world,” especially the cultural issues that change with geographical location.

I enjoyed the outside presenters who came in to share their experiences and knowledge with the class and the unique insight and advice each of them could offer.

Additionally, the motivated and welcoming attitude of the lecturer made this class one that I looked forward to coming to and wanted to actively participate in. It’s unfortunate that there are not more lecturers in the mechanical engineering program with your drive to teach students. Thank You!

-I enjoyed how at the beginning of the semester you told us that this class was going to be developed by us. And it was indeed. Many of the lectures were based on questions from the 1 minute paper. I liked how you read the question out loud for others to hear and comment.

I felt there weren’t many situations in which the whole group discussed or debated. I think that for future semesters it would be helpful to have a “class debate” on an interesting topic. Half the class could prepare
arguments against and the other half for the issue. This can bring interesting discussions and further develop the communication of the students. This is just a suggestion.

Thanks a lot for the class. I have learned many things that will be useful in my future career.

The truth is that the survey was hard to fill out because it felt like it was either a good or bad thing. I am grateful for the people in my group because they are an exceptional group of people. I am very glad I met all of them and established friendships with them during this course. We had many long hours in the MEEN lab discussing topics for our presentations and our essays, had many laughs and learned about each other’s interests. I felt this class was a way to relax and get to know other engineers on a more personal level and not just the cold hard facts in books. It is true that practical knowledge is key to innovation, but without human interaction there cannot be innovation. This class (to me) was about discovering what the engineers of today are interested in. Where the fields that exist today are headed and how humans are approaching the upcoming problems. It was nice to see fellow engineers concerned about the same things as me, such as the move of the modern world to a Chinese dependent economy, how technologies are advancing at a rate that the world’s resources cannot handle. It was also amazing to engage in conversations with them about class topics outside of class. I know myself and my group talk quite a bit about class outside the classroom. If I had to make any recommendations to the teacher it would be to remove perhaps two essays and instead implement two debates in class. Say group debates on controversial topics. It is always fun to see friendly competition and discussions. This could perhaps make this class even more interactive than it already is, and break the student-teacher boundary that exists. Thank you for the wonderful class.

I greatly enjoyed this class because I felt like I learned a great deal of information about the working world and what to expect from people in different cultures etc.. I feel like every engineer should be required to take a class like this so that we are more keenly aware of what to expect when we graduate.

Thank you for facilitating this course Dr. San Andres. I truly did enjoy it. It was a nice break from the theory and number crunching we are all used to and it gave me a new perspective on the profession of engineering. I think it has made me a better-rounded engineer and I will be aware of different aspects of the industry in the future thanks in part to this class. God Bless!!

I thoroughly enjoyed this course as I felt that it provided a refreshing break from the monotony of developing technical expertise in all our other classes. The ability to tie that knowledge into real world applications, including professional, social, and cultural settings, was quite interesting. I have a passion for this myself being a Spanish minor and having traveled abroad extensively (particularly to Spanish-speaking countries to further my language), so I enjoyed seeing the charts and data you presented about various cultures. Also, I felt that the student presentations were quite interesting. It is always cool to see people present on what they are interested in and what is going on in the world today. Lastly, the external presentations were interesting. I think it would be great to get recent grads back to talk to the class (I will be willing to come in the future) to give some advice to those seeking jobs, or just general career advice for early career engineers. I hope you continue teaching the course in the future.

Thank you for the effort you put into this class and your passion for educating undergrads. I know you are very busy at the turbo machinery lab but I have enjoyed taking both MEEN 363 and MEEN 489 with you. All of the classes that I have enjoyed the most and done best in at A&M are those in which the professor was excited about the material. I can tell you are excited about dynamics, globalization and spinning Woody around.

(FA 2011) Student Comments – About ME 489 Practices of Modern Engineering
I hope your class is offered for future students. It is a nice change of pace from other engineering classes. A&M seems to do a good job of covering technical material but we are not exposed to many soft skill classes. I think your coverage of different cultures values is invaluable to our future careers. We have to first acknowledge that other countries operate differently than the US before we can begin to understand them.

I know our class underperformed in the area of class discussion this semester. I’m sorry we let you down here especially since last semester’s class was very effective in this department. I’m not sure how to encourage students to participate more. You created a very open and laidback classroom atmosphere that begged for discussion. Maybe in the future one of the group presentations could be facilitating a discussion over some topic. Maybe pick a controversial topic and present facts from both sides. Then the floor could be opened to discussion.

I enjoyed the group presentations. Somehow my group took both of my suggestions that involved aircraft. I enjoyed the opportunity to go on-line and learn more about these aircraft and their capabilities. I gladly spent extra time than was required for the presentation to gain a better understanding for myself. This is probably the most fun I have had learning in college. I understand that the technical classes must be taken to build a foundation in engineering though before you get into the fun stuff.

I’m not sure I will be around in Texas to come back to your class. I will be working for Boeing in the Seattle area. They don’t build planes down here so it looks like I’ll be transitioning to the Northwest. If I am ever in College Station for some reason I would be glad to visit your class.

Thanks!

I took this class with the hopes of learning how to better interact with engineers of different cultures which I have definitely accomplished. I’ve traveled quite a bit through Europe, and unfortunately there is often a negative stereotype of Americans being ethnocentric and lacking in global cultural knowledge. This class definitely assists getting out of that stereotype and it has definitely made me more aware of the global market place. To sum it up simply, I’m very glad I took this course and feel like it broadened my perspective.

I’ve really liked this class, not only do I enjoy the type of topics covered with the Software of the Mind book, but the class helped me realize and evaluate the different opportunities available after graduation. Also the class has encouraged me to continually learn, and pointed me toward some books that I’m interested in reading.

I’ve really enjoyed this class, and appreciate everything you put into it.
The discussions on cultural differences and the student presentations were my favorite though.

I found this course very interesting, both in subject matter and format. It helped me to determine what I wanted to do after graduation, namely graduate school. I enjoyed the smaller class size because I allowed me to interact more directly with the instructor. However, for some unknown reason, discussion wasn’t sparked in the classroom. There were several people in the class who never even spoke up to ask a question. I’m not sure what to recommend for the future so that this doesn’t happen again, but that was my largest lament about this class.

I really enjoyed the class, and not just because it was a lighter course load. I found several of your lectures and those of our classmates interesting and relevant. And in some cases, alarming. I honestly prefer English and It would be unfortunate if I was forced to learn Chinese.

Great class, very informative. Great class for students who haven’t had a chance to intern or co-op with a company as it lets them see what is out beyond being a student.
This has been one of the most enjoyable classes I’ve taken at A&M! Thanks!

Group essays are sometimes hard to write because everyone writes differently and have their own opinions. Therefore, I would say make the essays an individual assignment or instead of writing an essay just have the students read the articles and devote class time to discuss the articles.

I have thoroughly enjoyed this course. It was highly stimulating, relevant, and enlightening. I see much value in the presentations given by the instructor, students, and guest lecturers. I will undoubtedly apply much of the material learned in this course to my life, and I’ve taken special note of the book recommendations. I think a large reason why I enjoyed the class so much was the attitude and dedication of the instructor. Dr. San Andres is truly an encouraging and inspirational educator.

This is a very useful and interesting class. I should have been more involved throughout the semester. I really enjoyed having the opportunity to practice my presentation skills. I feel that I have come a long way since the beginning of the semester.

Thanks for a great semester Dr. San Andres. This was a great class and I learned a lot. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. If you need any young engineer lecturers in the future, don’t hesitate to email me.

I enjoyed the class, had no problems with my team and learned a lot of neat things that I would otherwise know. I have found myself thinking about topics from class (mostly the cultural ones that caught my interest) and realizing how important these differences are to know. This class helps minimize ethnocentrism and opened my eyes to things I hadn’t really thought about for. I can’t tell you how glad I am that I got forced into this class so I could drop Statistics. Best decision of the year!
I think you’re a great speaker with valuable points of view and I appreciate the work you put into your presentations.

I think the group presentations were very helpful. I definitely felt like my team work and speaking ability improved from the first presentation to the second presentation. As far as the lectures go I found them interesting, but I would have liked to see a little more discussion of current events in engineering. We did discuss current global events as far as culture and non-technical skills, which I found very helpful, but I think it would have been interesting to hear more about modern science and technical engineering material as well (like your discussion of quantum mechanics). I appreciated the opportunity to take this class and I feel it has helped me prepare for my career in engineering as much as any other class I have taken in the past.

I really enjoyed this class and have no complaints. I must say that you came to class very prepared every day and really seemed to care if we enjoyed lecture or not. I appreciated that very much.

I would recommend this class to any engineering student looking to learn more about the benefits of their engineering degree and how valuable education is.

I really enjoyed the class because it allowed me to see the various aspects of mechanical engineering that I wouldn’t have gotten to see otherwise. Also, the lectures on Software of the Mind were really informative and intriguing. One thing that I would improve though, would be the maximum number of absences we are allowed, I think it should be reduced from 8 to 3 in order to improve attendance. Other than that, it is a fantastic class and the professor/student ambiance is great, more professors should hold relaxed classes like yours.