

CSC105: Algorithmic and Social Overview of Computer Science (Spring 2007)

Instructor: Marge Coahran

Science 1410A

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Office hours (*tentative*): MWF 2:30-4:00 pm, or by appointment.

You are always welcome to stop by during office hours: no appointment is necessary. I also welcome email. I will try to respond to email promptly, but this may mean an hour or two, not a minute or two.

Course website: <http://www.cs.grinnell.edu/~coahranm/csc105/s2007>

Laboratory exercises, recommended readings, and general announcements will be posted on the course website. Please check it regularly.

Class meetings: MWF 1:00–2:05 pm, Science 2417

Class meetings will include lectures, laboratory activities, and student presentations.

The MathLAN:

MathLAN is the name of the computer network used by the math and computer science departments. You will receive an account on the network for use in this course. We also informally use the name “MathLAN” to describe this classroom. You may use the room during any of its “open” hours, which are posted outside the door. Once the semester gets rolling, there will be tutors available in this room during certain evening hours (which will also be posted on the door).

Textbook:

There is no required text, and I do not plan to assign required readings, but I will regularly post suggested readings from the text listed below. I hope that many of you read them and find them helpful. The book is available as a “recommended” text at the bookstore, and it will soon be on 2-hour reserve at Burling Library. From time to time, I may also suggest readings from other sources.

J. Glenn Brookshear, *Computer Science: An Overview, 9th Ed.*, Addison-Wesley, 2007.

Course Objectives:

- to develop an understanding of how computers work
- to explore algorithms and problem-solving techniques
- to examine ways in which computers affect our lives

Course work and grading distribution:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Date</i>
Assignments (8-10)	40%	approximately weekly, except presentation weeks
Paper I		
in-class presentation	10%	Mon, March 5 - Wed, March 7
final draft	20%	Mon, March 12
Paper II		
in-class presentation	10%	Mon, May 7 - Wed, May 9
final draft	20%	Fri, May 11

Laboratory activities:

Friday class sessions will be devoted to laboratory exercises that give you first-hand experience with various topics in computing. Each laboratory will require written responses or other deliverables, which you will submit as part of the weekly homework assignment.

Assignments:

As mentioned above, homework assignments will usually include material from the laboratory exercises. They will frequently also include questions related to material covered in lecture.

You are encouraged to work collaboratively on laboratory exercises, but you must work independently on homework assignments. This means that you may freely discuss the questions posed in the laboratories, but

you should write your responses to the questions individually. (I believe you will learn more by doing so.)

Papers and presentations:

You will write two 5-7 page papers, and give a 10 minute in-class presentation of each paper. You will also submit a topic proposal and a bibliography prior to the due date of each final paper. *Optionally*, you may submit a draft of the paper for my comments prior to submitting the final paper. I will give more details in a separate handout.

When working on your papers, you may seek help from others. For example, you may want to ask a librarian for help researching your topic, you may want to ask a friend to proofread your paper, or you may want to give a practice presentation to a classmate. None of this is required, but it is allowed. However, you must acknowledge any help you receive in an "Acknowledgements" section of the paper.

Further, you must carefully cite your sources, even in draft versions of your papers. It is an excellent practice to record the necessary citation information when taking notes. This is really the only way to ensure that your citations are correct since it can be extremely difficult to remember where you learned specific pieces of information if you have not done so. (You may use the citation style that is common in your major or that you learned in tutorial. If you are not already familiar with a particular style, I can suggest one.)

Schedule of course topics:

**Please note that this is a rough schedule, and as such it is subject to change.*

Week	Lecture	Laboratory
1	Course introduction	Intro to Linux
2	History of computing	Spreadsheets
3	Electronic circuits (<i>How do computers store 1's and 0's?</i>)	Binary numbers
4	Data representation (<i>How do 1's and 0's represent other data?</i>)	Image processing
5	html (<i>What is a web page, really?</i>)	html
6	Algorithm analysis (<i>How fast are they? How fast is fast enough?</i>)	make your own web page
7	<i>Class presentations</i>	to be announced
8	Algorithms for searching and sorting	Searching and sorting
9-10	Computer architecture (<i>What is inside? How does it work?</i>)	Computer programming I
11	Operating systems and Networks	Computer programming II
12	The Internet and the World Wide Web	Computer programming III
13	Social issues in computing	to be announced
14	<i>Class presentations</i>	to be announced

Late assignment submission and grace days:

A *grace day* is an automatic extension until the next class period. Every student will be granted two grace days that can be used for any assignment (except in-class presentations) for any reason. Please use them wisely: you may need them more later than you do now! I would appreciate hearing in advance by email if you intend to use a grace day on a particular assignment since that makes my bookkeeping task easier. However, any assignment submitted late will automatically use a grace day, if one exists. Aside from this grace day policy, I will not accept late assignments.

Class attendance: I expect you to come to every class prepared to participate. If you cannot attend a class session, you are responsible to get any class notes from a classmate, and you are responsible to complete missed laboratory exercises on your own time.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: If you have a disability, including a non-visible disability, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will also need to provide documentation of your disability to the Dean for Student Academic Support and Advising, Joyce Stern, located on the 3rd floor of the Rosenfield Center (x3702).

Collaboration and academic honesty:

My expectations regarding collaboration and independent work are described above, under "Assignments" and "Papers and presentations." These expectations define academic honesty for this course. Grinnell College policy requires me to report any suspicion of academic dishonesty to the Committee on Academic Standing.