Front Door

Introduction

Welcome to the Spring 2013 session of Grinnell College’s CSC 295.04, a special topics course in *Women and Computing*. In this course, we will read and discuss a wide variety of articles about the practices of computer science and the effects of those practices on the decisions of women (and, often, other underrepresented groups) to participate or not to engage with the discipline. You can read the official blurb for more details.


This course also serves as this semester’s “CS table”, an informal gathering of folks on campus interested in issues related to computer science. Expect to have people participate who are not officially registered for the course. (Those folks do not have to lead discussion, but they are likely to contribute to discussions.)

Basics

**Meets:** Fri 12:05-1:05 p.m., JRC 224A (the first PDR at the top of the stairs in the Marketplace). *If you are not on a meal plan, or on a minimal meal plan, sign in at the front and the cost of your meal will be covered.*

**Instructor:** [Samuel A. Rebelsky](mailto:srebelsky@cs.grinnell.edu) Science 3824. 269-4410 (office). 236-7445 (home). Office hours: TBD. I tend to follow an open door policy: Feel free to stop by when my door is open or to make an appointment for another time. I have children, so please do not call my house before 7 a.m. or after 10 p.m.

Grading

This is a one-credit course, graded as S/D/F only. Since the focus of the course is on discussion of a variety of papers and works, your grade will depend on your contributions. Each week, a team of two or three students will lead discussion. Everyone else is expected to read the paper in advance and to contribute to the discussion.

To earn an S, you must

- satisfactorily serve on the leadership team for at least two discussions,
- meet with the instructor prior to leading discussions as described elsewhere, and
- participate in at least twelve of the thirteen class meetings.
You will earn a D if you fail to follow through on any of the above requirements.

You will earn an F if you fail to follow through on all of the above requirements.

**Leading a Discussion**

Each student will need to co-lead two discussions this semester, one in the first half of the semester and one in the second half of the semester.

The last time we ran this reading group, we found it most successful to allow the students leading discussion to choose the readings for the sessions they led. We will continue that practice this time. I’ve provided a list of readings from the previous offering as a starting point.

Students should do their best to identify readings more than a week in advance (preferably by the Thursday of the prior week) so that I can photocopy them and distribute them to the class.

Since registered students should have had prior experience in discussion based courses, students should know a bit about leading discussions. In particular, when you are leading a discussion, you should

- be ready to act as our “expert-for-a-day” on the discussion topic;
- plan to give a brief overview of key issues introduced in the paper (about five minutes); and
- develop several open-ended questions to start a discussion with the group.

Thus, to prepare for leading a discussion, you should do the following.

- Choose readings and inform the instructor of your choices at least a week in advance.
- Read the recommended readings.
- Dig a bit deeper to try to address any points where you are confused or have questions (factual or otherwise).
- Meet with your partner(s) to sketch out your overview and brainstorm discussion questions.
- Meet with the instructor before the Friday you are presenting to get feedback on your plans. Email me to schedule your meeting.

In past sessions of CS Table, students have found interesting ways to vary discussions. I welcome such variation.

**Textbook**

There is no textbook for this course. I will be distributing readings each week. You can see some readings in the course schedule and the list of readings from the prior offering.