CSC324: Introduction to Computer Science

Syllabus: Welcome to CSC324! In this course, you’ll learn about programming paradigms that are quite different from the imperative approach you’ve seen in other courses in your careers. We’ll study Racket and Haskell, both of which are functional programming languages, although their approaches have some important differences. We’ll also learn Prolog, a logic programming language similar in spirit to SQL, the database query language. By contrasting these languages with more traditional imperative languages like Python and Java, we’ll gain greater insight into the important questions surrounding program language design.


Instructor: David Liu  [liudavid at cs dot toronto dot edu]

Office Hours: W3-5 (BA4261), F1-3 (BA3195) M2-3 (BA3289), or whenever I’m free, in my office BA4260

Prerequisites: CSC263

Textbook: There is no required text. Lecture Notes will be available on the course webpage. These are an excellent resource, but are not a substitute for going to lecture. Check the course webpage for additional resources.

Logistics: The course runs 12 weeks, from September 8 to November 28.

Lectures: WF11-12 in BA1170 (L0101) or R7-9 in BA1190 (L5101)

Labs: M11-12 (L0101), or R6-7 (L5101)

Note: in the first week, there will be a special introductory lecture instead of a lab.

Assessment: Term work will consist of (mostly) weekly exercises and labs, two major assignments, and two midterms. There will also be a final exam held in December.

Exercises and labs are meant to be “regular checkups” to help you keep up with the course; your lowest exercise mark will be dropped. For the labs, attendance at either 7 or 3 labs is required for full credit, depending on the marking scheme. Assignments span multiple topics and are more complex, and may be done in teams of two students. Remark requests must be submitted within one week of receiving feedback.

There are two possible grading schemes. Your final mark will be the greater of the two. However, if you score below 40% on the final exam, your final mark will be adjusted to below 50%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Scheme 1</th>
<th>Scheme 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 Exercises</td>
<td>Saturdays noon</td>
<td>7% (1% ea., 7/8)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Labs</td>
<td>Mon/Thu</td>
<td>7% (7/8)</td>
<td>3% (3/8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>Oct 11, noon</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>Oct 23/24 (50 min)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Nov 11, noon</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Dec 10, 9-12 (morning)</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>56%</td>
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Forum: I’ll be using https://piazza.com as the main mode of communicating with you (including any announcements). Please post all of your questions about the course material and assignments there so that everyone can benefit from your questions. I will monitor the forum regularly, but feel free to answer other students’ questions too! Helping someone else learn is one of the most effective ways of truly mastering a subject.

Email: Please email me only for personal issues (making appointments, remarking requests, extensions, missing class, etc.). For all questions related to the course material, either come see me in person, or post them to the forum so that everyone can benefit from your questions.

Integrity: I take academic honesty very seriously, and so should you! Even the best of intentions can get you into trouble if you aren’t careful. You should always feel free to seek help from your professor, TAs, and classmates when doing your assignments or understanding the course material in general. Collaboration is an important skill to have regardless of your intended career, which is why I encourage you to work on assignments and tutorial exercises in groups. However, as the instructor I need to be able to accurately determine how much you’ve learned in this course – and to do that, I need to see work that you yourself have honestly done! So collaborate, but please follow these guidelines to protect yourself from any accusations of wrong-doing.

(a) When posting about an assignment on the course forum, don’t reveal entire or even partial solutions.

(b) When discussing assignments with your friends in person (which is encouraged!), don’t bring in previously written notes, and don’t leave the meeting with any written notes. If you can go away, let what you talked about marinate in your head, and then write down a complete solution, you’ve learnt it. Otherwise it’s just memorization (and plagiarism).

(c) Never show your written work to anyone else. This is the hardest to avoid, but also the most likely to get both parties into trouble. Resist the temptation.

Petitions: The dates of all assessments in this course are posted on the Course Schedule. If you know you will be unable to complete an assignment or miss a midterm due to major illness or other circumstances completely outside of your control, please contact me immediately for special consideration. In the case of illness, medical documentation must be supplied on the standard University of Toronto form. A simple “note” from your doctor is unfortunately not acceptable.