PRINCIPLES OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

St. Olaf College · CS 121

Dr. Matthew Wright · Spring 2017

Meeting Times: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; 10:45 – 11:40am

Location: Regents 203

Office Hours: Mon. 12:45–1:45, Wed. 9–10, Thurs. 10–11 & 1–2, Fri. 12:45–1:45, and other times by appointment in RMS 409

Professor's Email: wright5@stolaf.edu

Texts: *How to Think Like a Computer Scientist: Learning with Python, Interactive Edition*, http://interactivepython.org/runestone/static/thinkcspy/index.html

Introduction to Networking: How the Internet Works, by Charles R. Severance, http://www.net-intro.com

Web Site

The course web site is:

cs121.mlwright.org

You will refer to this web site frequently for homework assignments and course files.

Course Objectives

1. To understand key concepts and abstractions involved in programming, and to be able to write simple computer programs.
2. To better understand how computers and the Internet work.
3. To develop knowledge and skills that will allow the student to use computers to solve novel problems throughout life.

Supplemental Instruction

Supplemental Instruction (SI) sessions will be held for students in this course. SI sessions will be led by Eric Oseid, oseid@stolaf.edu. These sessions are optional, but attending them will help you deepen your understanding of programming, acquire effective learning strategies, and ultimately improve your grade. In many cases, regular attendance at SI sessions has increased a student's final grade by an entire letter grade or more. SI sessions will be held in RNS 203 at the following times:

Sundays 12:00–1:00pm
Tuesdays 3:00 – 4:00pm
Thursdays 7:00 – 8:00pm

Please attend at least one SI session during the first two weeks of the course!

Grading

Your final grade will be the average of the following components, all weighted equally:

Assignments   Quizzes   Midterm exam   Final project   Final exam

Assignments

Assignments consist of questions from the text and programming exercises. Assignments will be made at nearly every class, and will be due by the beginning of the next class.

Practice is *essential* for learning programming! Thus, it is imperative that you keep up with assignments in order to receive a good grade in the course.

Late work will *not* be accepted in general. However, your lowest two assignment grades will be dropped.

Quizzes

There will be a quiz in class on each Friday. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Exams

This course will have one midterm exam and one final exam. Plan to be present at each exam. Make-up exams will be given only in circumstances that are truly exceptional, and must be arranged in advance. *In particular, travel plans are not a valid excuse to miss an exam.*

> **Midterm Exam**: Friday, March 17, in class
> **Final Exam**: Thursday, May 18, 9:00 – 11:00am (cumulative)

Final Project

The final project will be an important part of this course. The project will involve working in teams of two or three students to apply your programming knowledge to solve a problem of interest to you. More information about the project will be distributed later in the semester.

Getting Help

- If you are having trouble, seek help! Your primary resource is Prof. Wright, who is happy to help you during class, after class, in office hours, by appointment, and by email (wright5@stolaf.edu).
- As mentioned above, Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a valuable resource for students in this course.
- In addition, the graders will offer homework help sessions. A schedule for these sessions will appear on the course web site.

Academic Integrity

Claiming someone else's work as your own will earn you a failing grade on the work in question. Don't do it. For more information, see the *Academic Integrity* section of *The Book*.

Disability and Access

Prof. Wright is committed to supporting the learning of all students. If you have already registered with Disability and Access (DAC) and have your letter of accommodations, please meet with the professor early in the course to discuss, plan, and implement your accommodations in the course. If you have or think you have a disability please contact the Disability and Access office at 507-786-3288 or wp.stolaf.edu/asc/dac.