COMPUTER SCIENCE FOR SCIENTISTS AND MATHEMATICIANS

St. Olaf College • CSCI 125

Prof. Matthew Wright • Fall 2020

Course Meetings

Tuesdays 11:45am – 1:10pm and Thursdays 12:45am – 2:05pm

We will meet online through Sept. 2.

On Sept. 3, we plan to start in-person classes in Regents 203. Due to social distancing requirements, only half of the class will be able to attend in person each day. Those not attending in person will attend virtually. The professor will announce an attendance schedule and other details before Sept. 3.

Contact the Professor

If you have any question or concern about the course, email Prof. Wright at **wright5@stolaf.edu** or join online office hours. Prof. Wright tries to respond quickly to email from students during the week, but responses may take a bit longer on the weekends. Online office hours are scheduled daily:

Mon. 11–12, Tues. 1:30–2:30, Wed. 10:30–11:30, Thurs. 10–11, Fri. 12:30–1:30

Please check your email or the course Moodle page for the Zoom link for office hours. If the hours above don't work for you, just send Prof. Wright an email to arrange a meeting at another time!

Web Site

The course web site is:

cs125.mlwright.org

Prof. Wright maintains the course schedule and assignments on this site. Many assignments will be completed on the textbook website (below). We will also use Moodle for assignment submissions and grades.

Text

We will use a free, interactive text titled *How to Think Like a Computer Scientist*, which is available at https://runestone.academy/runestone/books/published/thinkcspy/index.html. This text is hosted by Runestone Academy. You will need to create a Runestone Academy account and log in to complete assignments in the online text. The professor will provide further details in class.

Course Objectives

1. Demonstrate understanding of key concepts and abstractions involved in programming.
2. Practice using Python as a tool for analyzing data.
3. Develop knowledge and skills that will allow you to write computer programs to solve problems beyond this course.
4. Explore computer science as a human activity in which all can succeed.

Grading

Your final grade will be a weighted average of the following:

Reading Assignments:	15%
Homework:	40%
Quizzes:	30%
Final Project:	15%

Each of these items is explained below.

Reading Assignments

Thorough, active reading of the text will help you keep up with the material and get the most out of this course. The professor will assign readings from the online text, including comprehension questions that are embedded in the text. Answers to these questions will be due at the beginning of class. Reading assignments will *not* be accepted late, but your lowest *two* reading assignment grades will be dropped.

Homework

Homework will consist primarily of 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 homework in order to receive a good grade in the course.

You are encouraged to discuss homework problems with your classmates, but you must type your solutions yourself and hand in your own work.

Late work will *not* be accepted in general. However, your lowest homework grade will be dropped.

Quizzes

This course will not have in-class exams. Instead, we will have take-home quizzes approximately every other week. These will be individual assessments involving comprehension questions and short coding problems. These quizzes will be conducted under the St. Olaf Honor Code (see below). Specifically, you must not discuss each quiz with anyone except the professor until all students have completed the quiz.

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.

Each group will give a short presentation of their final project during the final exam time on Saturday, November 21, 2 – 4pm.

Getting Help

Prof. Wright is your primary resource for help in this course and is happy to talk with you. When you need help, or if you have any concerns about the course, please email Prof. Wright or visit his office hours.

The professor encourages you to discuss course topics and homework problems with your classmates, as long as you turn in your own work. However, you must *not* give or receive help on quizzes.

Furthermore, CS 125 is supported by Supplemental Instruction. This is a valuable resource, as described in the next section.

Supplemental Instruction

Supplemental Instruction (SI) sessions will be held for students in this course. SI 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. The schedule for SI sessions appears at https://wp.stolaf.edu/academic-support/si-leaders-and-session-schedule-2/. The professor strongly encourages each student to attend at least one SI session during the first two weeks of the course.

Community Standards

We all share the responsibility of acting to keep our St. Olaf community safe, especially in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Each student, faculty, and staff member has acknowledged the Community Pledge (wp.stolaf.edu/covid-19/community-pledge) and must remain committed to the community standards throughout the semester. The following items are especially important for our class:

- Do not come to class if you are sick. Stay home and contact the professor for alternate arrangements regarding class work.
- Face masks are required during in-person class sessions. Masks must be properly worn, covering both the nose and mouth, and must not have vents. A student who attends class without a mask will be asked to leave. If a student refuses to either wear a mask or leave, then class will be dismissed and the Dean of Students Office will be notified of this violation of community standards.
- We will practice social distancing during in-person class sessions.

If you have any questions or concerns about the community standards in this class, don't hesitate to talk with Prof. Wright.

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* (wp.stolaf.edu/thebook/academic/integrity).

The Honor Pledge applies to quizzes in this course. The Honor Pledge reads:

> *"I pledge my honor that on this examination I have neither given nor received assistance not explicitly approved by the professor and that I have seen no dishonest work."*

The Honor Pledge is violated when information could result in an unfair advantage for one or more students is given or received before, during, or after a test. On each quiz, students will be asked to either affirm the Honor Pledge or indicate awareness of violations by intentionally not signing the pledge.

Inclusivity and Access

Prof. Wright is committed facilitating a safe, caring, and inclusive learning community, respecting those of differing backgrounds and beliefs. As part of St. Olaf College, we aim to be respectful to everyone in this class, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. All students are capable of success in computer science, and Prof. Wright aims to create an environment in which all can succeed. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to talk with Prof. Wright.

If you have any concerns about access to course materials, or if English is not your first language and this causes you concern, please talk with Prof. Wright.

Health and Accommodations

Prof. Wright is committed to supporting all students. He recognizes that emotional, physical, or psychological experiences, both in and out of the classroom, have the potential to distract students from learning. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the professor—he is available to listen and to discuss what resources may be available to you.

If you have an accommodation letter from the Disability and Access (DAC) office, please meet with the professor early in the course to discuss, plan, and implement your accommodations in the course. Otherwise, if you have or think you have a disability please contact the Disability and Access office at 507-786-3288 or wp.stolaf.edu/academic-support/dac/.