CSC101 Fall 2011 Section 1

Syllabus CSC101: Computing Concepts

The University of Rhode Island

Fall Semester 2011 - Section 1

Instructor: Dr. Vic Fay-Wolfe (wolfe@cs.uri.edu)

Teaching Assistant: Emma Thompson (csc101s1@gmail.com)

Course Website: http://sakai.uri.edu username= Ecampus username; password = URI email password

Contacting the Teaching Staff:

- For questions on assignments and course material: -- Post on the course discussion board.
- For detailed questions on assignments and course material: -- Attend in-person help hours that are listed on the course website.
- For questions concerning grading: -- Send email to csc101s1@gmail.com
- For all other matters: -- Send email to the instructor wolfe@cs.uri.edu

Goals

- Computer Concepts. This course will start from the on-switch and cover the basics of how computer hardware, software, and the Internet work; as well as the concepts behind using computers and the Internet.
- Information Gathering with the Computer. You will use the computer to gather information from sources such as the Internet and on-line libraries. This information may be of various media including text, numbers, graphics, pictures, sound, video, and other computer programs.
- Problem Solving with the Computer. You will use computer applications such as spreadsheets to solve problems and support your ideas and arguments.
- Communicating with Computers. Once you have developed an idea, the computer can be a powerful tool for communicating it. You will use the computer to create effective documents and presentations.
- Fun with Computers. We will look at topics such as image manipulation, video editing, surfing the Internet for information on fun topics, and joining international electronic discussion groups on just about any passion you might have!
- Introduce Computer Science. We will look at the discipline of computer science, including: programming, algorithms and data structures.

Prerequisites

None. You don't need any prior computer experience. If you have computer experience, there will be some review, but we will soon get to new and interesting material.

Class Format

This class is an hybrid online/in-person course. The online portion of the course involves the use of a discussion board, video lectures, assignments, and quizzes that can be accessed from the course website. The in-person part is a mandatory lab meeting (Mondays at 2pm) and optional in-person help hours where you can work with the CSC101 teaching staff for in-person assistance. We strongly recommend that you take advantage of the in-person help hours when you need assistance.

Tentative Course Topics (Subject to Change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 0</th>
<th>• Introduction to Computer Science</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>• Data in the Computer</td>
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<td>• Binary Data</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>• Computer Hardware</td>
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<td>• History Part 1</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>• Operating Systems</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>• Computer Networking</td>
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Week 5
- The Internet
- Excel

Week 6
- Video Editing

Week 7
- Image Manipulation in GIMP

Week 8 and 9
- HTML Web Page Design

Week 10
- JavaScript and Other Web Page Design Techniques

Week 11
- Introduction to Computer Programming

Week 12
- Final Project

Text and Supplies

- The work in this course can be done on a Macintosh or Windows computer with an Internet connection. You must be able to download and install software. It is not required that you own a computer - it is possible to do all work in the URI labs.
- There is no typical textbook for the course. CSC101 uses on-line readings and tutorials developed specifically for this course. See the CSC101 website contents for a list of the on-line readings and tutorials.
- A microphone to record a final project presentation.

Course Work

- Lectures. You will be assigned to watch on-line lectures each week. These lectures can be streamed from the course website. Lectures will typically be posted on Fridays with the expectation that you will view them in the coming week.
- Readings. Reading from the on-line text and tutorials will be assigned each week. Check the course website for specifics on weekly readings. Readings will be referred to and discussed throughout course lectures and in the on-line forum. Readings will typically be posted on Fridays with the expectation that you will read them in the coming week.
- Quizzes. There will be a quiz released each Friday during the semester on the readings and lectures assigned for that week. It will typically be active from 6am on Friday morning until 12am (midnight) on Friday night. Quizzes must be taken on Friday. No makeup quizzes will be given. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped.
- Homework Assignments. There will be 10-12 homework assignments that require you to exercise a particular computer skill (e.g. drawing, web page creation, video editing, etc). Assignments will typically be posted on Friday and due by midnight the following Friday.
- Final Project. You will work with your instructor to choose a final project topic. You will use technology to present your findings in both web and multi-media forms. The project is described on the course website.
- Class Participation. Attendance is not mandatory for this course, however there will be an instructor and/or TA present at the scheduled course help hours for assistance. All students are expected to check the course website frequently, take quizzes and complete assignments in a timely manner, and participate in the online discussion board.
- Discussion Board: You are expected to read the discussion board several times per week. You may post questions and help answer other’s questions. Helpful responses to questions will positively affect your class participation grade.

Course Grading

Grades will be determined based upon the following weights:

- Homework assignments and lab grades: 50%
- Quizzes: 20%
- Final Project: 20%
- Participation (discussion boards and general conduct and understanding): 10%

Policies

Assignments are to be the result of your individual efforts, unless you are told otherwise. It is easy to copy material on the computer; such copying constitutes plagiarism and will be punished accordingly. This also applies to quizzes, do not copy and paste answers from the Internet as answers to your quiz questions; quiz answers should demonstrate your understanding of the course material. If you need help with an assignment, or are not sure if something is acceptable, discuss it with a CSC101 staff member.
Assignments must be received by the specified staff member, in the specified format, by midnight of the due date unless otherwise specified. An assignment one day late is penalized 5%, two days 10%, three days 15%. If you need an extension on the assignment due date, you need to request it from a CSC101 staff member well in advance of the due date. **No assignment will be accepted more than three days late without a valid excuse. A computer malfunction is not a valid excuse.** To avoid problems with computer malfunctions, start early, save work regularly, and maintain backup copies in several places.

The late penalty policy applies to homework assignments only, not the final project. The final project must be submitted on or before the due date; **late final projects will not be accepted.**

Do not print copies of the tutorials or readings on University printers. Printing on non-URI personal printers is allowed. If you feel that you need a printed copy and don't have access to a personal printer, talk to your instructor.

Questions on grading should be made in writing (email is acceptable) to the TA within one week of receiving the grade. If the question cannot be resolved with the TA, the question should be made in writing to the instructor. Several times during the semester, recorded grades will be disseminated to students. Students have one week from the time of dissemination to challenge the new recorded scores that they receive. After the week, these grades become "frozen" and cannot be challenged.

**Tips for Success**

- Contact your instructor or a TA in person or via email to talk about anything. It is better than frustration!
- Do all assigned reading and watch video lectures before starting assignments and before taking quizzes.
- Start assignments as soon as you receive them; do not wait until the last minute.
- Save work regularly, maintain backup copies of files in several places.
- Use the course discussion board to post questions and look for answers to questions.
- Check the course website regularly (at the very least, you must check every Monday for updates and to take the quizzes).
- Attend CSC101 Staff help hours (listed on the course web page) if you have questions. Make sure that you come to those hours with enough time to get assistance (coming in the last few minutes of a scheduled help hour will not be sufficient - TAs are students with schedules too...).