

## Course Overview and General Information

### 1 Basic Information

Your primary source for class information, homeworks, labs, and handouts is the class web site,

<http://classes.engineering.wustl.edu/cse241>

Please check this site regularly for course announcements.

Class discussion forums will be hosted on Piazza, at

<http://piazza.com/wustl/fall2015/cse241/home>

Please use these forums to ask questions and discuss assignments and class material.

- **Where and When:** Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00-2:30 PM in Louderman Hall Room 458.
- **Prerequisites:** CSE 131. CSE 240 or other basic discrete math background is *strongly recommended*.
- **Your Instructor:** Dr. Jeremy Buhler. You may email me at [jbuhler@wustl.edu](mailto:jbuhler@wustl.edu) for confidential course-related communications, but please use Piazza for course assistance.
- **Office Hours:** See the course website.
- **Textbook:** Cormen, Leiserson, Rivest, and Stein's *Introduction to Algorithms*, 3rd Edition. (The 2nd Edition is also fine.) You may also want a reference book for the language you'll be using for the labs (Java or C++).

### 2 Assignments

There will be four labs and five homework assignments. Assignments will be distributed in PDF form from the course web page. Homeworks will be turned in electronically as PDFs via Blackboard. Labs will be turned in through your Subversion code repository, much like in CSE 131.

#### 2.1 Submission Policies

All assignments (homeworks and labs) must be turned in **by the beginning of class on the due date**. For labs, your code repositories are automatically snapshotted for turn-in at this time. For homeworks, Blackboard marks your assignments with the turn-in date and time.

Leave yourself adequate time to get assignments properly turned in. Do not assume that Blackboard or the SVN server or your wireless connection will be working two minutes before the deadline!

Late homeworks **will not** be accepted, as I plan to hand out solutions on the day that they are due. Late labs will be accepted with a penalty equivalent to **one letter grade (10%) per day**, for a maximum of three days. If you turn in all your labs (including Lab 0) on time, and the grade given to each lab you

turn in is  $> 0$ , then you will be given the opportunity to redo one lab at the end of the semester. The redone lab's grade will replace the original grade, with a "resubmission penalty" equal to about one letter grade.

If you feel that your assignment was graded incorrectly, please take the matter up first with the TA who graded it. If you are not satisfied, contact the head TA next, and then talk to me.

For all disputes related to grading of an assignment (including but not limited to failure to record a grade, missing work, or incorrect assignment of points), you must bring the issue to our attention within **two weeks** after you receive the assignment grade in Blackboard. Disputes raised after that date will not be heard.

## 2.2 Homeworks

Homeworks will be written assignments designed to help you practice and increase your understanding of the material presented in class. My preferred format for homeworks is five problems, of which you need complete only four to get full credit.

*Homeworks must be composed electronically* using the typesetting system or word processor of your choice and must be submitted to Blackboard as PDFs. Figures may be hand-drawn but must then be scanned and added to the electronic homework document. Please see the E-homework guide on the course website for advice on how to typeset your homework efficiently!

Please write your solutions clearly and concisely – if we can't tell whether your answers are correct, we'll probably mark them wrong.

## 2.3 Labs

Labs will be programming assignments that help you gain practical experience with the methods presented in class as well as overall programming experience. They may be done in either Java or C++. We will provide supporting code for each lab so that you can concentrate on the important stuff instead of spending your time writing parsers.

Each student will have a Subversion repository for labs. The supporting code for each lab will be distributed to this repository, and you will modify this code and check in your solutions there to be graded. Individual labs will include specific instructions on what to turn in, but in general, we will ask for your code, a brief document describing how it works, and several test cases of your own design (along with their output), as well as the results of any explorations done using your code.

As a convenience to help you debug, we will use an *auto-grader* that can run your lab on some test inputs and tell you if it fails. *Passing these tests is not sufficient to guarantee that your lab is correct*, but the tests do provide some exercise for your code on non-trivial inputs. Use them as a debugging aid and a sanity check, but feel free to find other ways to check your code.

Please read the separate documentation about Subversion repositories, Eclipse, and the auto-grader on the course website's labs page.

*Your code must be well-documented and must use good programming style.* Style and documentation are an important part of the CSE curriculum and will count toward your grade on the labs, regardless of correctness.

## 3 Exams and Overall Grading

There will be three 80-minute in-class exams held during the semester (the last exam might be given during finals, depending on schedule constraints, but it is not intended to be cumulative). Each exam may cover

anything discussed so far, but more weight will be given to material presented since the previous exam. There will be no cumulative final.

Your grade in the course will be weighted roughly as follows:

1. homework: 20%
2. labs: 20%
3. each exam: 20%

Homeworks and labs may not all be weighted the same; in particular, Homework 0 and Lab 0, which are just tests of your ability to use the course infrastructure, will be weighted less than other assignments. There is a non-zero (but also non-one) chance that I will drop the lowest homework grade.

Curving of grades may be performed at the instructor's discretion to correct for unusually difficult assignments, as determined by the observed grade distribution. Such curving is rare in practice.

## 4 Getting Help

The TAs and I will hold regular office hours, at times and places to be announced. If you want to talk to the instructor outside regular office hours, please email to request an appointment.

We will use the Piazza platform for online discussions and answering questions. **Please post any and all course-related questions to Piazza**, rather than emailing the instructor or TAs directly. We may not respond to questions sent directly to our email, or we may ask you to repost your question on Piazza before we respond.

For confidential logistical matters *only* (e.g. disability accommodations, travel or illness accommodations, questions about your grade, accusations of cheating), please email the instructor directly.

## 5 Policy on Collaborations and Academic Integrity

Please see the separate collaboration policy document on the course web site.