

CS2104: Introduction to Problem Solving

Class:	(1) See web site
Instructor:	(1) Dr. Alexey V. Onufriev, 2160C Torgersen Hall Email: alexey@cs.vt.edu Office Hours: see class web site
Teaching Assistants:	See the web site
Textbooks (recommended):	<i>Problem Solving and Comprehension, Sixth Edition</i> by Arthur Whimbey and Jack Lochhead <i>The Art and Craft of Problem Solving</i> by Paul Zeitz
Other Sources:	<i>Effective Problem Solving, Second Edition</i> by Marvin Levine
Course Notes:	See the web site
Prerequisites:	ENGE 1024 MATH 1205 or MATH 1526

Honor Code. The Honor Code (and in particular, the Computer Science Departmental Honor Code) applies to this course and will be strictly enforced. All homework submissions that involve working problems **MUST** contain the following Pledge Statement:

**I have not received unauthorized aid on this assignment.
I understand the answers that I have submitted. The
answers submitted have not been directly copied from
another source, but instead are written in my own words.**

Assignments and Grading Policy. The course will be graded on the basis of approximately 800 to 1000 total assigned points. There will be in-class assignments and exercises, including quizzes. Approximately 1/3 of the

course grade will be based on in-class assignments including quizzes and the final exam. **The exam (worth about 240 points), as well as most of the tests, will be open book. You will have much more than the "bare minimum" time for this exam, which will be made up of only a few (5-6) problems.** Approximately 1/3 of the course grade will be based on weekly homework or programming assignments. And the remaining 1/3 or so will come from the group project assignments. About 30 to 60 points will come from active participation in in-class problem solving. The above breakdown is very approximate. There letter grading is very simple. There is no "curving" in this course: your points, on the 100 point scale, are $100 * (\text{total assigned points}) / (\text{maximum possible})$. 90 and above will bring you an "A", 85 and above "A-", 80 and above "B+", and so forth in the decrements of 5.

In addition, there may be a few special problems given for extra credit during the semester. The extra credit will help decide (improve) "marginal" cases.

Solutions to homework assignments will be submitted via CANVAS or equivalent, in PDF format only; due dates are posted on the main class website. Due dates and any other info on the main site supercedes any info on CANVAS. (See the course web site for a link to Scholar.) Note that presentation (i.e., readability and clarity) will count in grading.

No late assignments will be accepted unless you have an acceptable excuse (e.g. documented illness, see below). Network glitches, home power outages, etc. are NOT acceptable excuses for late submission unless this is a statewide or VT- wide event that lasted for longer than 6 hours around the deadline time or you can provide documentation from VT campus network service that the outage lasted for longer than 6 hours around the deadline time.

You have ONE school week (breaks excluded) to appeal your scores after each assignment was graded.

Attendance. Attendance is NOT mandatory, which gives students significant freedom to plan their professional life around the class. On some days students earn points for in-class work, quizzes, mandatory presentations, etc. Absence from class on these days will have no effect on the total number of points ONLY if the student was absent for a few legitimate reasons: documented illness, medical emergency, family emergency, car accident, serious flight delay, and other grave situations completely beyond studnet's control.

Job interviews, attending job fairs, sports events, etc. are not legitimate excuses. The same list of legitimate excuses applies to missed homework deadlines. No excuses apply to the final project submission except for grave, prolonged illness, documented.

Problem Solving as part of a group. Some assignments require groups of 3 or more students, some require pairs, some are individual, and some are optional pairs. When students turn in a joint assignment, all students in the group will normally receive the same grade. You may not switch partners in the middle of an assignment. In other words, you may not discuss solutions for any one assignment unless you are working on a group assignment. Then you are NOT allowed to discuss the assignment with members of other groups.

When students work in groups, it is important that all the students involved completely understand the answers that they submit. The instructor reserves the right to require any student to present the answers to their homework assignment verbally to insure that each student does in fact meet the minimum requirement of understanding the solutions they submitted, and may reduce credit given for the assignment if the verbal answer is not compatible with understanding of the written answer. All joint submissions **MUST** contain a statement that clearly indicates, for **EACH** problem, the contribution of **EACH** student to the problem. Some possible contributions for a problem might include one or more of the following: Cracked the problem, wrote up the solution, found flaws/improved earlier versions of the solution.

You have ONE school week to appeal possible missing points from an in-class group problem solving exercise. Group leaders are responsible for reporting the points for the entire group. It is, however, responsibility of each student to make sure that his/her points are entered correctly.

Special Accommodations. If any student needs special accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor during the first week of class.

Electronic Information. Information such as copies of the syllabus and assignments, assignment solutions, and class grades, will be made available through the class web site. Notice of homework deadlines, test dates, etc.,

will be posted at the course web site. The course instructor accepts no responsibility or obligation for making such announcements in class. The course web site is the official source for all course notifications.