COMP-202
Unit 0: Course Details

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Focus of the Course

• Introduction to computer programming
  – Basics of problem solving
  – Essentials of program design and implementation
• Coursework will be done in a programming language called Java
  – Concepts taught in the course apply to other programming languages as well
• Aimed at students with little or no background in programming and/or knowledge of computer science

Prerequisites

• Prerequisite: A CEGEP-level math course or equivalent
• For those who graduated from high school outside Quebec and thus never attended CEGEP: any upper-level math course
• In any case, the ability to think logically and rigorously is more important than calculus, algebra or trigonometry
Non-Focus of the Course

- This course is not about:
  - How to use, set-up, or configure a computer
  - How to surf the Web or send e-mail
  - How to chat with friends using the Internet
  - How / where to download music and movies from the Internet
  - How to write essays with a word processor
  - How to make presentations with presentation software
  - How to design Web pages
  - How to repair your computer if it breaks down

- Instruction will be provided on how to use the software packages necessary to complete coursework

Course Outline

- Week 1: Introduction
- Weeks 2 - 4: Basics of programming
  - Week 2: Variables, simple calculations, basic input and output
  - Week 3: Branching structures
  - Week 4: Loops
- Weeks 5 - 7: Object-oriented programming
  - Week 5: Using objects
  - Week 6 - 7: Defining your own classes of objects
- Weeks 8 - 9: Arrays
- Weeks 10 - 13: Advanced topics

Placement Quiz

- If you think you are overqualified for COMP-202, take the placement quiz
- If your total for the 4 questions is 9 or above, attempt the programming problem and submit your solution (along with the rest of the questionnaire) to your instructor
- Your instructor will tell you whether you should be in COMP-202 or COMP-250 (the next course)

Textbook

- Additional information (authors, publishers, year of publication, ISBN) is on the course outline
- Available from McGill bookstore
- The 5th edition of this textbook is perfectly adequate
  - You might be able to buy a used copy from a student who took the course in previous years
- Other reference: Sun Microsystems' Java Tutorial
  - [http://java.sun.com/docs/books/tutorial/](http://java.sun.com/docs/books/tutorial/)
Course Structure

- Lectures
  - 3 hours per week, every week, "mandatory"
  - All material taught in lectures is examinable unless otherwise stated

- Tutorials
  - 2 hours, take place most weeks, optional
  - Different material covered each week
  - Several sessions of each, offered at different times; go at most convenient time for you
  - Tutorials start next week; details to be announced

- TA office hours
  - Approximately 1 TA office hour per week per 20 students
  - TA office hours start next week; details to be announced

Tutorials

- Purpose:
  - To enable you to familiarize yourself with software needed to complete coursework
  - To reinforce material taught in lectures through examples and hands-on exercises

- Given by TAs
- Take place in a computer lab
- Smaller groups, therefore more individualized attention

Tutorial Topics

- Tutorial 1:
  - SOCS accounts, login / logout
  - GNU/Linux desktop environment
  - myCourses
  - RText / JDK

- Tutorials 2 - 4: Basics of programming
- Tutorials 6 - 8: Advanced topics
- Tutorials 5 and 9: Preparation for the midterm and final examination

Grading Scheme

- 5 assignments: 30%
  - Assignments 1 through 4 have the same weight (5%)
  - Assignments 5 is worth more (10%)
  - All assignments count toward your final grade
  - One of the best ways to learn the material
  - Lateness penalty (5% per day or fraction of day, up to two days)
  - MUST be done INDIVIDUALLY

- 1 midterm examination: 20%
  - To be held outside lecture hours; closed-book, written

- 1 final examination: 50%
  - Held during final exam session; closed-book, written
Plagiarism: Policy

- Assignments **MUST** be done **INDIVIDUALLY**
  - Do **NOT** work in groups
  - Do **NOT** copy work someone else did
  - Do **NOT** allow anyone to copy your work
- Assignments **MUST** be **ENTIRELY YOUR OWN WORK**
  - Do **NOT** submit code / programs you did not write yourself
- Countermeasures
  - Random verifications by TAs during grading
  - Use of software similarity detection tools to compare assignment submissions
  - Students might be asked to explain their code to instructors at any time

SOCS Computer Labs

- If you are officially registered in the course, you can create an account to use the computers on the 3rd floor of Trottier building
- Computer availability:
  - Computers in open areas: physically accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
  - Computers in side rooms: physically accessible on weekdays 10:00 - 20:00, weekends 12:00 - 20:00
- Consultant on duty: weekdays 10:00 - 20:00, weekends 12:00 - 20:00
- Computers run GNU/Linux (Unix-like OS), not MS Windows
  - Unix tutorials are offered by SOCS Systems staff

Trottier Building

- Building opening hours
  - Monday - Thursday, 7:00 - 21:00
  - Friday, 7:00 - 18:00
- Outside opening hours, use your McGill ID card to unlock the door
  - If your McGill ID card cannot unlock the door, and you are officially registered in the course, send e-mail to help@cs.mcgill.ca and ask to be added on the building access list

Required Software

- You are encouraged to use your personal computer or laptop to complete course work
- Software used in this course
  - **Required:** Java Development Kit (JDK)
  - **Optional:** RText, Eclipse (later in the course)
- See course outline for details on how to obtain the above software packages
- All programs you submit for assignments must compile and run using JDK 6.0 or later
  - JDK is backward compatible; programs that compile and run under previous versions also compile and run under JDK 6.0
Course Communication

• Course home page:
  – Select appropriate semester
  – Instructor coordinates, course outline, TA contact information and office hours schedule, tutorial schedule, lecture notes, assignment specifications, and other course material

• myCourses (WebCT Vista):
  – http://www.mcgill.ca/mycourses
  – Discussions, announcements, assignment submission and grading, marks
  – You are responsible for making sure that your marks are correct, and reporting errors to your instructor