

Front Door

Welcome to the Spring 2007 session of Grinnell College's CSC 302, *Programming Language Concepts*. The course is described fairly well in the official blurb. My take on this course is that we'll be expanding your knowledge of the programming language paradigms while investigating design issues in programming languages. While we will touch on (and use) a number of languages, most of the emphasis will be on higher-level issues.

I've taught courses in programming languages for a number of years. Last year, I began to make some significant changes to the course. Last year, I placed significant emphasis on readings from the primary literature (rather than from textbooks) and incorporated some in-depth exploration of two languages Grinnell CS majors should know well - Scheme and Java. This year, I'm doing a bit more of the same, but I'm also incorporating some exploration of other languages. Expect the syllabus to change regularly as I figure out what I want to emphasize and deemphasize.

You may also find it useful to read the class faq.

Meets: MWF 9:00-9:50 in Science 2435.

Instructor: Samuel A. Rebelsky, Science 2427. Office hours MTuWF 11:00-12:00

Regular Work: Because you will often be reading primary materials, rather than distillations of those materials, I will expect you to read those materials carefully and to reflect on them. For each reading, you will send me a one-paragraph reflection on some aspect of the reading by 8:00 p.m. the night before we are scheduled to discuss the reading in class. You will also have regular programming assignments.

Grading (*subject to change*):

- Class participation: 15%
- Reflections on readings: 15%
- Presentation: 15%
- Homework assignments: 15%
- Mid-semester examination: 15%
- Final examination: 15%
- Best of [reflections,presentation,homework,midsem,final]: 10%

My experience shows that students who turn in work late learn significantly less than students who turn material in on time. (I'm not sure about cause and effect.) Hence, I strongly discourage late assignments. Unless prior arrangements have been made, assignments are due within five minutes of the start of class. After that they are considered late. Late assignments are penalized one letter grade per day late (or fraction thereof).

Textbooks:

There is no textbook for the course. We will use a variety of readings from “the literature”, which I will distribute to you as appropriate.

Good-Faith Grade Guarantee:

Students who make a “good faith” effort in this class will pass the class, with at least a C. A good-faith effort includes missing no more than two classes, turning in every homework assignment and reflections on at least 90% of the readings, and spending the requisite time on each examination.

Extra Credit: I offer a number of forms of extra credit during the semester. Here are some of the most common ones. Throughout the term, I may suggest other forms of extra credit.

- I will occasionally give you quizzes to ensure that you’re keeping up with the reading. Correct answers on the quizzes will give you some amount of extra credit.
- I will often offer 1/2 point of extra credit for attending a particular talk (e.g., a computer science talk or college convocation) or for supporting your classmates in their public endeavors (e.g., attending a concert or a dance recital). Each category is capped at 1.5 points.

Warning!

At times I will post your work or notes about you in the course web. I tend to leave everything available for past and future generations. If you would like the references to you deleted, please notify me after the semester has ended.