

Introductory Missive

Fall 2004

Introduction

Welcome to CS009 section 2, Talking with Computers.

The course is a freshman seminar; enrollment is limited to 20 students. If you are not preregistered for the course, please speak with the professor for more information.

In this course, you'll get an introduction to computing and the field of computer science. You'll learn to write programs that make use of powerful libraries to build useful applications and working prototypes of larger systems. We'll investigate fundamental models for thinking about computation in the process of explaining how computers, networks and modern computer applications work. The course is aimed at students interested in using and learning about computers whether or not they intend to major in computer science.

Instructors

The course has a professor and two undergraduate teaching assistants (TAs).

Professor	Office	Email
Tom Dean	default: University Hall 417 (backup: CIT 555)	tld@cs.brown.edu

Teaching Assistants	Email
Vanessia Wu	vywu@cs.brown.edu
Damien Suttle	dsuttle@cs.brown.edu

You can send mail to the entire course staff by e-mailing `cs009-2tas@cs.brown.edu`.

Assignments and Grading Scheme

Your final grade is determined by your grades on individual assignments, as follows:

Type	Percentage
In-class participation	10 %
Weekly written take-home quizzes	10 %
Midterm project proposal	10 %
Midterm project	20 %
Final project proposal	20 %
Final project	30 %

Note that there are no set percentages which correspond to certain letter grades, and that grades are not assigned on a competitive basis. A's will be awarded to all who earn them.

In-class participation

In this class, there will be pretty much no homework other than reading, because there will be lots and lots of in-class, hands-on participation. Most classes will involve students working on PCs in the CS Department's Internet Lab with each other and with the guidance of Professor Dean and the TAs.

Take-home Quizzes

The quizzes will only be a tool to ensure that students are doing the reading. So they will be very easy, assuming you have done the reading. Quizzes will be assigned each week, and you will have about one week to complete them. All quizzes are due in class at the beginning of class on the date and time specified. Quizzes not turned in by the due date will receive no credit.

Quiz responses must be typed and handed in electronically (i.e. emailed to cs009-2tas@cs.brown.edu). The midterm and final projects must be typed and handed in electronically. Please put your name, CS login name, and the course number (CS009-02) on the first page of every assignment. Put your name on every page thereafter.

Midterm Project

The midterm project is designed to give you a chance to explore a topic in computer science in greater depth. You will be given a choice of programming topics. All topics will require knowledge of the material covered in the first half of the semester. A preliminary deadline for topic approval and a prototype (i.e. program design) counts toward your grade for this assignment.

Final Project

The final project will give you practice in putting together a larger, more

complicated project than the midterm project. You will be given a choice of programming projects. All projects will require you to build on and expand the skills and knowledge you acquired during the course.

Professor Office Hours

Professor Dean plans to have office hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M., but this may change during the semester. You can also call or email Gayle Morse (863-9488 / Gayle_Morse@brown.edu) to make an appointment with Tom.

TA Hours

TA hours will be held in the TA rooms on the second floor of the CIT, room 227. TA hours will be announced during the first weeks of class and posted on the course webpage.

TAs will gladly help explain concepts covered in readings or in class, help with the midterm and final projects, and help you with general questions about the class. They will not do your work for you or re-give a lecture that you missed for reasons other than emergencies.

TAs are here to help you, but remember that TAs are students too. Please avoid asking them questions outside of official TA hours. If you ever feel that you can't possibly make the scheduled TA hours or the professor's office hours, please email the course staff to set up an appointment.

Collaboration Policy

In order to make sure that every student is evaluated fairly and according to the amount she or he learns, we have instituted a few rules governing collaboration. Note that these rules are specific to CS009-02; rules vary widely from course to course.

- **Quizzes**

These must be entirely your own work. They are short and simple, assuming you have done the reading. Copying someone else's answers without being caught may earn you credit for the quiz, but you will struggle in class to learn the material. If you struggle in class to learn the material, you will struggle on the projects, which constitute the bulk of your grade.

- **Midterm and Final Projects**

These must be entirely your own work. You are encouraged, however, to discuss the topics with your fellow students.

Books

The course textbook is *Talking With Computers* by Professor Dean, published by Cambridge University Press, ISBN # 0-521-54204-9. You can obtain a copy of the book from the Brown Bookstore.

The Web

Take-home quizzes, lecture notes, documentation, important notices, and nifty links will all be available from the course web page. Please check the web page as often as you can (within reason, of course - go out and enjoy the sunshine every now and again), as important notices and the like will be posted there. The CS009-02 web page can be found at

<http://www.cs.brown.edu/courses/cs009/02/>.

The Newsgroup

Announcements, assignment clarifications, info about upcoming CS talks, interesting links and more will be posted to the course newsgroup, `brown.cs.cs009-2`. You can post questions there (as long as they don't give away your answer to a problem, or violate the collaboration policy!), and the course staff will answer them pretty quickly. If you want to know something about the course, the newsgroup is a good first place to check; chances are someone else wanted to know, too.

Class

You must attend class well-prepared to participate in discussions and to program. Active participation is vital to your success! You are responsible for knowing what went on in class even if you don't attend, and even if it isn't mentioned in the online class notes. (Remember, if you miss a class for an emergency, you are always welcome to come to TA hours to find out what happened in class.) TA hours to learn