

# CS138: Distributed Systems

## Course Information and Syllabus

### Spring 2021

Lectures	I hour 20 min: 1:00–2:20 on Tuesdays and Thursdays
Room	Zoom! (Except for Session: C01, the hybrid session, which meets on Wednesdays @ W 12pm-12:50pm in CIT 477)
Lecture Notes	<a href="http://www.cs.brown.edu/courses/cs138/s21/syllabus.html">http://www.cs.brown.edu/courses/cs138/s21/syllabus.html</a> A recording of each lecture will be available soon after it is given.
Text	<i>Distributed Systems: Concept and Design</i> , by Colouris, Dollimore, Kindberg, Blair, 2011  Systems Papers (attached on website)
Prerequisite	CS 33 or CS32
Instructor	Theophilus A. Benson (tab@cs.brown.edu)
Office	CIT 327 (Also online on Zoom)
Office Hours	<i>Tuesdays 2:30-3:30 and Thursday 2:30-3:30, or by appointment</i>
Head TAs	John Lhota (jlhota)

UTAs	<p>Akshat Mahajan (amahaja5)          Johnny Roy (jroy8)          March Boonyapaluk (kboonyap)          Qingyi Li (qlu9)          Xiling Zhang (xzhan199)</p>
Requirements	<p>4 Programs (50%)          6 Homeworks (15%)          Midterm Exam (10%)          Final Exam (15%)          Post lecture Quizzes (7%)          Class participation (i.e., TopHat/Zoom polls/Think-pair-share) (3%)</p>
Time Requirements	<p>In addition to three hours per week in class, you will spend 10 to 20 hours per week on homeworks and programs.</p>
Goals	<p>We will teach you the theoretical underpinnings of distributed systems and will teach you to write programs that run on multiple, geographically dispersed computers and that are tolerant of many sorts of faults.</p> <p>You will do problem sets based on the lectures that will help you grasp and apply the theoretical material. You will do a sequence of programming projects, working in groups of two that not only apply what's covered in lectures, but give you experience in coding and debugging distributed systems. We have you write the programs in a language that's probably new to you, Go, chosen because it allows you to focus on the distributed aspects of a system without getting bogged down in other details.</p>

All Are Welcome	<p>Our intent is that this course provides a welcoming environment for all students who satisfy the prerequisites. Our TAs have undergone training in diversity and inclusion; all members of the CS community, including faculty and staff, are expected to treat one another in a professional manner.</p> <p>If you feel you have been treated unprofessionally by any of the course staff, please contact Prof. Benson (the instructors), Prof. Cetintemel (the department chair), or Laura Dobler (the department's coordinator for diversity and inclusion initiatives). We take all complaints about unprofessional behavior seriously</p>
Grading	<p>Homeworks, exams, and programs are given numerical grades; "curving" is done on a per-assignment basis.</p> <p>The final course grade is the weighted average of the "curved" homework, exam, and program grades. The first program is 10% of your course grade; each of the others is 13.33% The midterm exam is 10% of your course grade; the final exam is 15%. Homework is 15% of your course grade.</p>
	<p>Please note that your assignments will be graded by the TAs, most of whom are undergraduates. If you have a question about the grading of an assignment, please bring it up first with the TA who graded it. If your question is not resolved to your satisfaction, then bring it up with Prof. Benson.</p> <p><b>Regrades:</b> Regrades can be requested at most one week after the return of grades. The exceptions are the final – for these you will only get 24hours. During regrades, you may <b>get points back or lose points -- regrades may result in grades going up, down, or staying the same.</b></p>
Incomplete Policy	<p>We expect everyone to complete the course on time. However, we certainly understand that there may be factors beyond your control, such as health problems and family crises, which prevent you from doing so. If you feel you cannot complete the course on time, please discuss with Prof. Benson the possibility of being given a grade of Incomplete for the course and setting a schedule for completing the course over the summer.</p>
Due Dates	<p>All assignments are submitted electronically (via department</p>

	<p>machine handin scripts or GitHub for programming projects and via Gradescope for written homework assignments) due at 11:59 pm.</p>
Late Policy	<p>The late-day policy described here applies to all late days other than those due to illness and religious holidays. Thus, days missed because of job interviews are included in the late-day policy.</p> <p>Everyone is allowed a total of four late days on projects free of charge, but no more than <b>three late days may be applied</b> to any one assignment. <b>Except Puddlestore, you will only get two days.</b> Beyond that, you are penalized 10% of the assignment's total worth for each day it is late. So, if the assignment is out of 100 point and you get 88 points but are one day late: then it becomes 78 points.</p> <p>We will apply late days to assignments in an optimal fashion (with respect to your grade). <b>Note that late penalties are applied after grades have been curved.</b></p> <p>If you are ill, you may get an extension without using the late days. Please get a note from either health services or the office of student life and contact one of the instructors.</p>
	<p>If you must miss an assignment deadline because of a religious holiday, you may also get an extension without using late days; please contact one of the instructors. Please contact the instructors within the first three weeks of the course to declare such conflicts and we will plan accordingly.</p>
Accommodations	<p>If you feel you have physical, psychological, or learning disabilities that could affect your performance in the course, we urge you to contact SEAS (<a href="https://www.brown.edu/campuslife/support/accessibility-services/">https://www.brown.edu/campuslife/support/accessibility-services/</a>). We will do whatever we can to support accommodations recommended by SEAS.</p>

Mental Health	<p>Being a student can be very stressful. If you feel you are under too much pressure or there are psychological issues that are keeping you from performing well at Brown, we encourage you to contact Brown's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS: <a href="https://www.brown.edu/campus-life/support/counseling-andpsychological-services/">https://www.brown.edu/campus-life/support/counseling-andpsychological-services/</a>). They provide confidential counseling. In addition, the deans of student life as well as the deans of the college can provide notes supporting extensions on assignments for health reasons.</p>
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