CSC104, Summer 2007
Course information sheet

Danny Heap

CSC104, "The why and how of computing," provides an introduction to Computer Science for undergraduates from other disciplines. Here's a summary of the administrative details for Summer 2007. Please check the course wiki (see below) often.

WEB SITE: You'll find course web resources at http://www.cdf.toronto.edu/~heap/104/S07. Most course communication is carried out through the wiki, where you'll use your CDF userid, but use your student number as your password. If you don't have a CDF userid yet, you may log in as user *newcomer* with password *let__me__in*.

CONTACT: Lectures are Tuesdays from 2–4 pm. From 4–5 pm there will be problem-solving material, or solutions to tests or assignments. If you've got questions that aren't answered in class, come to office hours, Thursdays from 4–5 pm in BA4270. You may also question and revise lecture material on-line by clicking on "Lectures materials" on the course wiki.

TEXTBOOK AND COMPUTING: There is NO required text for this course, although I will post on-line sources for the information you need in this course. You can contribute to this effort by helping to edit the course wiki. Each student enrolled in the course will have an account at cdf.toronto.edu, so that you can experiment with software, as well as send and receive mail there. In addition to CSC104 TAs lab help hours, there is a CDF TA who can help introduce you to the CDF labs.

If you want to use some of the same software as we use in the course on your home machine, you may download nano (for editing text) http://www.nano-editor.org/ or firefox (a web browser) at http://www.firefox2.com/ca/ (both available for free on the web). Ask the CDF TA for help and advice.

SYLLABUS: We will discuss the following topics:

- Problem solving and algorithms
- History of computing machines
- Hardware, software, OS: components of a contemporary computer
- Outside the box: the web and internet
- Data representation and manipulation
- Programming techniques
- Computers and society

MARKING SCHEME: The marking scheme is designed to put a low weight (37%) on the final exam, since I believe this reduces a potential source of stress for students. In order to do this I will need to make several smaller (and hence, I hope, less stressful) evaluations of your work. In the marking scheme below most items are worth 6%–12% of your final mark, depending on how you do. The procedure will be to sort 7 pieces of term work, and your best effort is marked out of 12%, your next best out of 11%, continuing until your worst effort is marked out of 6%. Each test is correlated with material on the assignment preceding it. You must receive at least 40% on the final exam to pass this course.

ITEM	DUE	WORTH
Problem-solving wiki	May 15 – August 10	6%–12%
Assignment 1	Thursday June 7	6%–12%
Test 1	Tuesday June 12	6%–12%
Assignment 2	Thursday July 5	6%–12%
Test 2	Tuesday July 10	6%–12%
Assignment 3	Thursday August 2	6%–12%
Test 3	Tuesday August 7	6%–12%
Final exam	Three hours during the exam period	37%

LATENESS, SICKNESS, NATURAL DISASTERS: Late work cannot be accepted, since I will be posting solutions promptly. If you have special circumstances that force you to miss a deadline, please contact me immediately (usually before the work is due) and fill out either the "Request for special consideration," or the standard medical excuse form, (both forms are available on the web page) and provide all supporting documentation. Although I won't accept late work, I will do my best to ensure that there is no penalty for a deadline missed for a valid reason.

INDEPENDENT WORK: Passing off somebody else's work as your own for credit is a serious academic offence, and it can have serious academic consequences. Be sure to give full and generous credit to any person or book (except the instructor and teaching assistants) you consult in solving your assignments. If you take notes when you consult a source, then you should quote that source in full.

If you intend to present work as your own, for credit, then you should avoid looking at similar work by other students, in either written or electronic form, since looking can easily turn into plagiarism. Avoid showing your own assignments to other students. Take a couple of hours break after even verbal discussions of the assignment before writing it up, to make sure it's your own work you submit.