Welcome!

COMS W3136
Essential Data Structures in C/C++
Fall 2021

Teaching staff

- 3 Teaching Assistants (TAs)
  - Brian Paick
    - bsp2121@columbia.edu
  - Sebastian Hereu
    - smh2278@columbia.edu

Teaching staff

- TA email & office hours
  - Email to cucs3136-tas@googlegroups.com goes to all teaching staff
  - TA room – 1st floor, Mudd building
  - TA calendar: http://bit.ly/3136-cal (will be filled by this weekend)
- Instructor email & office hours
  - Tim Paine tkp2108@columbia.edu – CEPSR 7LW1A
  - Office Hours - TBD

Prerequisites and course objective

- Prerequisites
  - One semester of introductory programming course
    - Ex) 1006 (Python), 1004 (Java), or equivalent
    - High school CS class you took 3 years ago does NOT count
  - No prior knowledge of C/C++ or UNIX is assumed
- Course objective
  - Meet the increasing demand for solid programming skills in many non-CS disciplines including EE & IEOR
  - Provide the minimum prerequisite for non-majors who are interested in taking upper-level CS courses

Course summary

- Follow-on course for ENGI E1006
  - Intended for non-CS majors
  - Bridges E1006 and many upper-level CS courses
  - Interleaves C/C++ language and data structure topics
  - Introduces professional UNIX programming tools
- Fusion of 3157 and 3134
  - 3157-lite: C & C++, but no heavy systems stuff
  - 3134-extract: only the most important data structures
  - Kill two birds with one 4-credit stone!
  - Perfect for EE & IEOR folks who came to 3157 to learn C/C++ but found it a bit too much

Review session

- Logistics
  - One topic / week, multiple sessions by different TAs
  - When:
    - Evenings – hours TBA
  - Where:
    - CLIC lab: http://www.cs.columbia.edu/clic/directions.html
  - Attendance optional, but recommended
- Topics
  - UNIX basics, editors, Git, etc. (in the beginning)
  - Lecture reviews
  - Lab assignment clarifications & reviews
  - Lab solutions walk-through
  - Exam preps

Participate in class, please!

- Classes are no fun (for me, at least) if we don’t interact
  - Answer questions I pose
  - Ask questions anytime
  - Embarrass me when I’m wrong
- People are afraid to ask when they think:
  - “I’m the only one who doesn’t know this.”
  - “I can’t frame this question clearly and eloquently.”
  - “Maybe he just said it when I dozed off just now…”
- Big class, so I may not entertain all questions, but:

NEVER BE AFRAID TO ASK ANYTHING, IN THIS CLASS AND IN LIFE!

Course structure and focus

- Start with C and move toward C++, interleaving data structures throughout
- Focus on programming with data structures, not mathematical analysis
- “Job postings just say C++. Why waste time with C?”

Grading

- Grading logistics may change later
- You get overall score out of 100, comprised of:
  - HW assignments – 33%
  - Midterm exam – 33%
  - Final exam – 33%
- I look at everyone’s HW & exam scores in a big spreadsheet sorted by the overall score
- I decide cutoffs for letter grades A+, …, D, F
  - No predetermined formula for cutoffs
- Booster: I reserve the right to raise one’s overall score by a small amount (typically less than 0.5%)

Booster

- Grade boost based on subjective evaluation
  - Most people will not get it
  - Have been used to boost some borderline cases
  - Can be up to 5% in theory, but never been > 1%
- Based on:
  - Class participation
  - Mailing list participation
  - Beautiful code
  - Awesome documentation
  - Optional work (if any)

HW (aka lab)

- Probably 6 HW assignments
  - Mostly programming assignments
  - Some of them may have written parts
- Deadline
  - Soft deadline, and then hard deadline 2 days later
    - You use 1 late day if you submit within 24 hours after the soft deadline
    - You use 2 late days if you submit between 24 and 48 hours after the soft deadline
    - After 48 hours past the soft deadline, no submission will be accepted
  - You have 5 late days total; up to 2 can be used for a single hw
    - Check your late days by running: `/home/w3136/submit/check-late-days`
  - Absolutely no exception under any circumstances
  - After you receive grade, you have 2 weeks to send re-grade request

Lab grading

- Grading model
  - You are a software company
  - I hire you to develop a product according to spec
  - You ship the finished & polished product on time
  - TAs are the end users who will pay you with grade
- What this means:
  - Your software doesn’t work, they don’t pay
  - Your software didn’t follow spec, they don’t pay
  - Your software didn’t ship on time, they don’t pay
  - But you worked so hard… they sympathize, but they don’t pay
- For example:
  - Your software doesn’t compile – you get ZERO
  - Deductions for not following spec EXACTLY
    - Ex) Spec asked for README.txt file, not README, not README.md, not Readme.txt

Cheating. Please don't.

- **REQURED READING: http://www.cs.columbia.edu/~jae/honesty.html**
- You are cheating if you:
  - Take code from friends, or search for code on the Internet
  - Look at solutions that your friend has from previous semester
  - Upload any class materials (including your own code) to public repository (ex. GitHub) during or after this semester
- We can tell
  - We compare you submissions to CURRENT AND PREVIOUS submissions
    - I have all of Jae's previous semesters' code
  - You submit work history – minimum 5 commits required
- Result of cheating
  - Case 1: You get caught
    - Academic penalty – 1 letter grade down for mild cases; F for severe ones
    - Referral to the Office of Judicial Affairs
    - **I will make sure you are expelled. Your cheating devalues MY degrees.**
    - Spring 2016: 50+ cases of suspected cheating (still pending); 36 convicted cases
  - Case 2: You get away with it
    - You will keep cheating for the rest of your life – have a nice life.

Class ListServ

- Communication between all of us
  - Official announcements, lecture notes, lab assignments
  - Should be the 1st place to go for non-personal questions
- Do:
  - Ask & answer questions
  - Provide helpful tips and fun links for your classmates
  - Be considerate & friendly
- Don't:
  - Ask questions without first trying to solve it on your own
  - Post code or critical info that leads directly to solution
  - Be impatient & rude
- TAs and I respond to emails in this order:
  1. All pending questions on the listserv first
  2. All pending questions sent to cucs3136-tas@googlegroups.com
  3. Then individual emails
  4. NEVER send a same question separately to multiple people
     - You will get banned from ever sending an email if you get caught doing this.

Manage ListServ emails

- Learn to manage high volume – filter by tags in subject
  - [Cs3136] – all emails from the class listserv will have this tag
  - [ANN] – important announcements from me or TAs
  - [HW*n*] – information relevant on a particular hw
  - Examples:
    - [Cs3136][ANN] Sample midterm exam
    - [Cs3136][ANN][HW3] Correction on lab3 instruction
    - [Cs3136][HW4] in case you're curious about the optional part
- Setup Gmail filters
- Keep up diligently

- Yes, I know about Piazza. Thanks for your suggestion.

Required textbooks

- *Foundations of Computer Science: C Edition*
  - By Alfred V. Aho and Jeffrey D. Ullman
  - Out of print, but available for free
  - http://infolab.stanford.edu/~ullman/focs.html

1. *The C Programming Language* (2nd ed.) – aka K&R C
   - By Kernighan and Ritchie
   - Simply the best
2. *A Tour of C++*
   - By Bjarne Stroustrup

Last semester, only 4% bought them at the local bookstore
So get them wherever you usually get your textbooks

Recommended references

- Other data structures textbooks
  - *Data Structures and Algorithm Analysis in C++*
    - Mark A. Weiss
    - 4th ed. Is the latest, but any edition will do
    - Older editions based on C might be even better if you can find it
  - *Algorithms (4th Edition)*
    - Robert Sedgewick and Kevin Wayne
    - Best introductory DS & Algorithms book I have seen, but in Java

HW0 (may or may not be graded)

- **Part A (50 points): due noon tomorrow**
  1. Subscribe to 3136 ListServ today
     - https://lists.cs.columbia.edu/mailman/listinfo/cs3136
     - In the textbox “Your name (optional)” put Your Full Name (UNI)
       - For example: Tim Paine (tkp2108)
     - **You must reply to the confirm email (which might be in your spam folder)**
     - Then receive “Welcome to the "Cs3136" mailing list”
       - This email contains your password for accessing archives of past postings
  2. Get the textbooks
     - Start reading K&R chapters 1,2,3,4

HW0 continued

- **Part B (50 points): due Thursday 11:59pm**
  1. Read the following two documents:
     - http://www.cs.columbia.edu/education/honesty
     - http://www.cs.columbia.edu/~jae/honesty.html
  2. Send me an email containing:
     - Subject: "[3136] hw0-UNI"
       - Without the quotes, sole space before hw0, UNI replaced with your actual UNI in lowercase
     - Your name, major & school program, year
       - Ex) Tim Paine, Computer Science, Columbia College, class of 2014
     - Your pledge
       - see honesty.html above
     - CS classes taken and/or other programming background
     - Optionally anything else you want to let me know
     - Optionally attach a picture of you, but please reduce image file size to about 100KB