CSC104, Fall 2016
course information sheet

Danny Heap

CSC104, "Computational Thinking" introduces undergrads to Computer Science, with the aim that they should change the world of computing, rather than just observe it. Here's a summary of the administrative details for Fall 2016. Please visit the course web page http://www.cdf.toronto.edu/~heap/104/F16/ often, and you must read email sent to your U of T email for important announcements.

Contact: I'll meet you each Monday and Friday (L0101 at 11:10, L0201 at 12:10) in HS610 for discussion, worked examples, and programming demonstration. On Wednesdays, from 10:10 to 2 p.m. you will have an opportunity to meet with your teaching assistants in BA3175–BA3195, Bahen building closed labs, get some help understanding your weekly course exercises. You also need to sign up on ROSI for a Wednesday tutorial slot, which determines when (and where) you write your weekly quiz. I'll be available for office hours Fridays 2:30–3:30 in BA4270, and Wednesdays noon–1 p.m. in BA3175.

Textbook and computing: I will provide slides and links to readings online, and I will use Picturing Programs, in PDF form. I think you should pay $4.99 for *Picturing Programs*, and we can argue about why when we discuss intellectual property. By taken this course you automatically receive an account on the CS teaching facility. Find out how to create a password and starting using your account as quickly as possible.

The first week (yes, September 14th!), in BA3175–BA3185 Wednesday 10:10–2:00 you'll be able to get help from course TAs in setting up your account and the DrRacket computing environment.

Syllabus: We'll discuss the following topics:

- Problem solving and algorithms
- History of computing machines, data representation and manipulation
- Computers and privacy

In parallel with these discussions we will be constantly messing with a programming language called **racket** and its favourite environment **DrRacket**. Your understanding of computers, and the culture associated with them, will be enhanced by a gentle introduction to program design.

Marking scheme: The marking scheme is designed to place a low weight (40%) on the final exam, since I believe this reduces a potential source of stress for students. In order to do this, I have to introduce frequent-but-smaller sources of stress: 9 quizzes during the tutorial time, two term tests (also during tutorial time), two projects, and a blog. These are timed, and weighted, as follows:

Work	Due	Weight
9 Quizzes	September 21st and 28th October 5th, 12th, and 26th November 2nd, 9th, 23rd, 30th Quizzes are brief, and meant to verify basic concept acquisition.	(total) 18%
3 Assignments	Project #1: October 28th, 10:00 p.m. Project # 2: December 2nd, 10:00 p.m. courSe bLOG (SLOG)Oct 14th, November 11th, December 7th, 10:00 p.m.	(total) 24%
2 Term tests	Term test #1, Friday October 21st, during your lecture time Term test #2, Friday November 18th, during your lecture time	(total) 18%
Final exam	Some time during exam period	40%

Nuances: Everybody has better and worse days. I aim to give higher weight to your better work. For example, the weights of the assignments sum to 24%, so your best effort will have weight 10%, next best 8%, worst 6%. Similarly, the term tests sum to 18%, so your best effort will have weight 12% and your lesser effort will have weight 6%. Your best 3 quizzes have will have weight 3% each, your next 3 weight 2% each, and your worst 3 weight 1% each. The 40% weight of the final is, however, not changeable.

Lateness, sickness, natural disasters: There is a 5%/hour late penalty for the projects and SLOG, otherwise I don't accept late work. However, 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 (link on this web page) and provide all supporting documentation. I will do my best to ensure there is no penalty for a deadline missed for a valid reason.

Re-marks: It is very important that the mark I submit at the end of the course correctly reflects the quality of your term work. If you disagree with the grading of a piece of term work, you will have the opportunity to submit a re-mark request. Your work will be re-marked with fresh eyes, and the mark may go up, go down, or stay the same. Any changed mark will be updated by the end of the course, but I cannot guarantee any earlier.

Independent work: It is a serious academic offence to pass of somebody else's work as your own for credit. Be sure to give full and generous credit to any person or book (except this course's instructor and teaching assistants) you consult in solving assignments. If you take notes when you consult a source, 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 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.

Email: I received several thousand course-related email messages. This means that (a) you need to send mail from your university mail account with "CSC104" in the subject line, and (b) it may be several days before I reply. If your mail is suitable for sharing with classmates, consider using Piazza.