

07-129

FRESHMEN IMMIGRATION
COURSE

Introduction

Instructor

Course Theme & Purpose

Succeeding at CMU-Q

Course Requirements



Short Intro on myself...

Education

Industry

Research

Teaching

Most recent teaching experience...



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Course Theme

Generally, the course generally helps students navigate the new world of CS@CMU

Specifically, we work on sowing the seeds of:

- CS AWARENESS
 - COMMUNICATION
 - CAREER PREPARATION
 - INDEPENDENT LEARNING
- 

Course Purpose

“Freshman CS majors meet and hear from different members of the SCS community. The speakers talk about our school, their research in CS, the history of computing, and future trends. The goal is to expand the students' concepts of what is Computer Science and what resources are available to them as students within the School of Computer Science.”



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CLASS STRATEGIES

ORGANIZING INFORMATION

WORKING WITH FACULTY AND STAFF



Strategic Discussion

Is CS hard?

Core future tips:

- The Pareto/zipf distribution, or 80/20 rule
- The Normal/Gaussian distribution

Rob, Computer Science

“Basically, in high school, it’s just read the book, do the problems, and the answers are in the book. Now you need to know concepts to do the problems. That is a totally different learning style.”



Naoka, Architecture

“Honestly, the work itself wasn’t as tough as I thought it would be; it’s just different. There’s a lot more reading and a lot more responsibility, because the teachers aren’t nagging you to do your work. If you don’t do it, you’ll just fall behind.”




Class Strategies

Go to class.

- If you must miss a class for a valid reason, call or email your professor.

Follow the syllabus.

Come prepared.

- Do your homework.
 - Do the required reading before class. At least skim.
 - Review notes from last lecture.
- 

Gwo, Civil and Environmental Engineering

“Try to avoid missing classes, even the ones at 8:30 a.m. or the ones you hate. If you do miss class then try to catch up *immediately*, because if you don’t, it will snowball and flatten you when you take a test.”



Jenna, Business Administration

“If you miss a lecture, you’re going to have to make it up later. You could have been in a lecture and have understood 90% of it. If you miss that lecture, you’re going to have to spend two to three hours outside class asking someone and understanding it on your own.”



Professor, Economics

“The better prepared you are for class, the freer you are to absorb the tougher stuff without being sidetracked by the more mundane material, or by unnecessary note taking. You’ll have more time to filter and prioritize the information.”



Professor, Social and Decision Sciences

“Don’t be afraid to ask ‘dumb’ questions in class. There is usually no better place to ask them, and most of them are not so dumb after all. Learning to communicate effectively in the classroom is a skill you need to develop.”



To be a better listener, try:

Looking at the speaker

- And paying attention to both verbal and non-verbal messages

Zeroing in

- on the information that seems most important

Paraphrasing the speaker's message

- to yourself. Don't jump to conclusions.

Connecting information

- to things already learned or currently discussed.
- 

Some Resources

Academic Resource Center

- Peer tutoring
 - Writing
 - Programming
- Math tutoring

Student Affairs



More Strategies

Join the discussion.

Meet the professor.

Watch yourself

- Don't come late, leave early, read the newspaper, sleep, wear headphones, make or answer cell phone calls or talk to friends during the lecture.
 - This usually attracts unwanted attention from the professor.

Maria, Professional Writing

“Try and participate as much as you can. Listen to the discussion, too, because you’ll get some very good ideas for papers in the discussion. Participating just makes doing the work for the course a lot easier.”



Professor, Engineering and Public Policy

“Discussion is part of the learning process. Even if class participation is not required, it helps you learn when you have the give and take among you, the professor and your fellow students.”



Organizing Information (Notetaking Strategies)

Don't rely on your memory alone.

- Take some notes.

Realize the professor may say things in a different way

- than what's in the readings.

Write down material from blackboard

- but also annotate with professor's comments.

If available, print out class notes from web.

Review your notes within 24 hours.



Thuy, Computer Science

“I have a notetaking buddy in each course. If I have to miss class, I contact him or her and ask for the notes I missed. It also helps to compare notes with my buddies when it’s time to review for a test.”



Professor, Mathematical Sciences

“When I’m writing the theorem on the board, you should be copying that down. But what’s equally important is what I’m saying about when and why you should use the theorem. You should be writing that down, too.”



Professor, History

“Unprepared students have a tendency to write *everything* down, which cuts into the time/ability to understand the material. You do want a good set of notes, but you really don't want lectures to just become notetaking sessions. Somehow you have to optimize the process.”



Working with Faculty and Course Staff

Get to know your professors.

- Make use of the office hours.
- Beneficial for later conducting undergraduate research.

Meet the teaching/course assistants



Tatiana, Modern Languages

“It’s amazing when you have these professors who have written famous books encourage you to come and talk to them outside of class. In high school, you couldn’t call teachers unless it was a matter of life and death.”



Paul, Chemistry

When the professors say 'email me' they mean it! The second day of my biology class, I emailed the professor and told him I was very scared and I would surely fail his course. He told me to come to see him in his office and he gave me some good advice on how to study, and it worked."



Professor, Architecture

“Develop relationships with certain faculty members so they get to know you and your work. This will pay off when you need letters of recommendation later. Sadly, there are some students who may need letters but do not know any faculty well enough to ask them for the support. Don’t be one of them!”



Satoru, Business Administration

“TAs are more important than you think. They do a lot of the grading. Once I started talking to the TA I started noticing that he put more feedback on my homeworks, which helped me a lot.”



Janet, Biological Sciences

“When I was a freshman, I decided that recitations and office hours were unnecessary during the first couple of weeks of the semester. When I did not do very well on my first couple of tests, I decided to change my attitude, and began getting up for those recitations. I got to know my TAs and asked questions more often. TAs really become one of the most important parts of a course, because they can gear a session toward what you do not specifically understand and toward what’s on the test, which they may have made up anyway.”



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Let's go to the website:

- <https://web2.qatar.cmu.edu/~kharras/courses/07129/>

Let's begin!

Watch Randy Pausch's time management presentation.
(Link to the presentation is under "other" in the course webpage)

Initial webpage due Saturday (11:59pm). (Link to web publishing resource is under resources in the course page)

Randy Pausch assignment due (upload on your webpage) Saturday (11:59pm):

- Summary that includes:
 - Who is Randy Pausch?
 - What was he known for?
 - 5 points that you liked in his talk.