CSC343: Intro to Databases

Summer 2019

Administrative Information

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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Admin Stuff

Important: Read the course syllabus

- Communication:
  - Website (Quercus): required reading
  - Piazza: our FAQs and pinned posts are required reading
  - your questions: to Piazza please
  - personal matters: email or visit me
- Office hours:
  - Start next week, to be announced

Prerequisites

- For A&S students, the prerequisites are:
  (1) CSC165/240 or MAT (135+136)/137/157 and
  (2) CSC207.
- Email Mark immediately if you don't have the prerequisites.
  Include your unofficial transcript from Acorn.
- Engineering students, contact Mark if you need any permission.

Active lectures

- Goal: get your gears turning in class.
- Activities like:
  - team problem solving, reviewing other students' solutions, and short quizzes.
- Weekly "lecture prep activities" will get you ready.
  - exercises, reading, watching videos
- All three hours will be here, with me.
- We probably won't use the "tutorial" time slot until next week.

Benefits of active learning

- Exercise your knowledge and skills in class, with support.
- We'll know where the difficulties are.
- Get more from when I'm lecturing.
- Boosts learning, and grades [1].

What it requires

- Doing the **lecture prep**.
- Being active in class, including working with others and looking at each other's solutions to problems.
- A positive, encouraging environment.

Notes

- We'll post the slides and code you see in lecture.
- But a great deal more happens in class.

- We strongly recommend taking notes.
- Try to synthesize and summarize, rather than transcribe verbatim.
- This boosts learning too [2].

- If you expect to miss many classes, plan to buy and read the textbook.

Course Marking Scheme

Work	Weight	Comment
Weekly lecture prep	10%	1% each, due Thursday at noon (weeks 2-11)
3 Assignments	30%	10% each
Midterm	15%	During class, location TBA
Final exam	45%	You must earn at least 40% to pass the course

Recommended Resources

- Ullman and Widom,
  "A First Course in Database Systems",
  third edition.
- Jennifer Widom's online mini-courses
  from Stanford.

Assignment Policies

- You may work with a partner on assignments.
- Can be from any section.
- Can change partners between assignments.
- Both partners get the same mark.
- You may not dissolve a partnership without permission.
- Assignments must be submitted via MarkUs.
- Your code must run on our lab computers.
- Late policy on course syllabus

To-do list

- Anyone new to the CS Teaching Labs:
  - Your account name is your UTORid.
  - Check your email account declared on Acorn for a message with your password.
  - Try logging in.
- Read the course syllabus.
- Do the class prep due Thursday.
  (It will be posted on Friday)

References

1. Active learning:
   Freeman et al, “Active learning increases student performance in science, engineering, and mathematics.” PNAS 111 (23), 2014.
2. Taking notes:
   Mueller et al, “The pen is mightier than the keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop note taking.” Psychological Science, 2014.