UNSW Course Outline

COMP1521 Computer Systems Fundamentals - 2023

Course Code : COMP1521
Year : 2023
Term : Term 3
Teaching Period : T3
Delivery Mode : Multimodal
Delivery Format : Standard
Delivery Location : Kensington

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Labs Assessment FormatIndividual	15%	Start DateWeek 3 - Week 10, Except Week 6 Due DateWeek 3 - Week 10, Except Week 6
Tests Assessment FormatIndividual	10%	Start DateWeek 3 - Week 10 Due DateWeek 3 - Week 10
Assignments 1 and 2 Assessment FormatIndividual	30%	Start DateNot Applicable Due DateNot Applicable
Final Exam Assessment FormatIndividual	45%	Start DateDuring Exam Period Due DateDuring Exam Period

Assessment Details

Labs

Assessment Overview

Following the tutorial class each week, there will be a two-hour laboratory class, during which you will work on a variety of small practical problems involving the tools introduced in lectures. Because this course has a significant practical component, laboratory classes are **important**. If you do not put a good amount of effort into the lab classes, you risk failing the final exam.

Each week, there will be one or more exercises to work on. These exercises will be released in the week preceding the lab class.

During the lab, your tutor will provide feedback on your approach to the problem and on the style of your solution. Some labs may contain exercises which will be assessed during the lab.

Completed exercises need to be submitted. You must submit exercises before the deadline using **give** to obtain a mark for a lab exercise, The usual lab exercise submission deadline will be 12:00 (midday) Monday some lab exercises may have an extended deadline.

The lab exercises for each week are worth in total 2 marks. All of your lab marks will be summed to give you a mark out of 18; if their sum exceeds 15, your total mark will be capped at 15.

Most labs include one or more challenge exercises. Challenge exercises may involve concepts not covered in lectures and they range in difficulty from not-very-hard to almost-impossible.

The contribution of challenge exercises to lab marks will be limited to 20%; hence you can obtain nearly all (over 95%) marks available for the lab component without completing challenge exercises.

If you wish to obtained a high mark for COMP1521, attempting some challenge exercises is highly recommended.

If your goal is just to master the core material and pass COMP1521, you can ignore challenge exercises.

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Tests

Assessment Overview

There will be weekly tests from weeks 3–10 designed to give you timely and realistic feedback of your understanding of the course material. Tests may be programming exercises, multiple choice questions, or both.

These will be conducted in your own time under self-enforced exam-like conditions. Each test will specify the conditions, but typically these will include:

1. no assistance permitted from any person;
2. a time limit;
3. no access to materials (written or online) except specified language documentation or man pages.

Each test is worth 1.7 marks, and will be automarked. Your total mark for the tests component is computed as a sum of your best 6 of 8 test marks.

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assignments 1 and 2

Assessment Overview

There are two assessable programming assignments. Assignments give you the chance to practice what you have learnt on relatively large problems (compared to the small exercises in the labs). Assignments are a *very important* part of this course, therefore it is essential that you attempt them yourself.

- Assignment 1, on Assembly programming (MIPS) worth 15%
- Assignment 2, on System programming worth 15%

Assignments are primarily automarked, with feedback from tutors on programming style.

Detailed Assessment Description

- Assignment 1, on Assembly programming (MIPS), worth 15% - Due End of Week 5
- Assignment 2, on System programming, worth 15% - Due End of Week 10

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Final Exam

Assessment Overview

There will be a three-hour final exam, held in the CSE labs during the exam period. The exam runs in a closed environment (no internet) but with relevant documentation provided.

During this exam you will need to execute, debug and test your answers to implementation tasks which will be similar to those encountered in lab exercises and weekly tests.

There is a hurdle requirement on the final exam. If you do not score at least 40% (18.0/45) on the exam (after scaling), you cannot pass this course. If your overall course score exceeds 50%, despite scoring very poorly (<40%) on the exam, the hurdle will be enforced via a grade of UF.

Assessment Length

3 hours

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Hurdle rules

There is a hurdle requirement on the final exam. If you do not score at least 40% (18.0/45) on the exam (after scaling), you cannot pass this course. If your overall course score exceeds 50%, despite scoring very poorly (<40%) on the exam, the hurdle will be enforced via a grade of UF.

General Assessment Information

Laboratory Classes

Following the tutorial class each week, there will be a two-hour laboratory class, during which you will work on a variety of small practical problems involving the tools introduced in lectures. Because this course has a significant practical component, laboratory classes are **important**. If you do not put a good amount of effort into the lab classes, you risk failing the final exam.

Each week, there will be one or more exercises to work on. These exercises will be released in the week preceding the lab class.

During the lab, your tutor will provide feedback on your approach to the problem and on the style of your solution. Some labs may contain exercises which will be assessed during the lab.

Completed exercises need to be submitted. You must submit exercises before the deadline using **give** to obtain a mark for a lab exercise, The usual lab exercise submission deadline will be 12:00 (midday) Monday some lab exercises may have an extended deadline

The lab exercises for each week are worth in total 2 marks. All of your lab marks will be summed to give you a mark out of 18; if their sum exceeds 15, your total mark will be capped at 15.

Most labs include one or more challenge exercises. Challenge exercises may involve concepts not covered in lectures and they range in difficulty from not-very-hard to almost-impossible.

The contribution of challenge exercises to lab marks will be limited to 20%; hence you can obtain nearly all (over 95%) marks available for the lab component without completing challenge exercises.

If you wish to obtained a high mark for COMP1521, attempting some challenge exercises is highly recommended.

If your goal is just to master the core material and pass COMP1521, you can ignore challenge exercises.

Assignments

There are two assessable programming assignments. Assignments give you the chance to practice what you have learnt on relatively large problems (compared to the small exercises in the labs). Assignments are a *very important* part of this course, therefore it is essential that you attempt them yourself.

- Assignment 1, on Assembly programming (MIPS); due Friday Week 5; worth 15%
- Assignment 2, on System programming; due Friday Week 9; worth 15%

Late assignments submissions will be penalised. The exact penalty will be the standard UNSW

late penalty of a mark reduction equal to 5% of the maximum assessment mark per day late, or a zero mark after 5 days (i.e. 120 hours).

Weekly Tests

There will be weekly tests from weeks 3–10 designed to give you timely and realistic feedback of your understanding of the course material. Tests may be programming exercises, multiple choice questions, or both.

These will be conducted in your own time under self-enforced exam-like conditions. Each test will specify the conditions, but typically these will include:

1. no assistance permitted from any person;
2. a time limit;
3. no access to materials (written or online) except specified language documentation or man pages.

Each test is worth 1.7 marks, and will be automarked. Your total mark for the tests component is computed as a sum of your best 6 of 8 test marks.

Final Exam

There will be a three-hour final exam, held in the CSE labs during the exam period. This will be centrally timetabled, and appear in your UNSW exam timetable.

During this exam you will need to execute, debug and test your answers to implementation tasks which will be similar to those encountered in lab exercises and weekly tests.

There is a hurdle requirement on the final exam. If you do not score at least 40% (18.0/45) on the exam (after scaling), you cannot pass this course. If your overall course score exceeds 50%, despite scoring very poorly (<40%) on the exam, the hurdle will be enforced via a grade of UF.

Grading Basis

Standard

Requirements to pass course

There is a hurdle requirement on the final exam. If you do not score at least 40% (18.0/45) on the exam (after scaling), you cannot pass this course. If your overall course score exceeds 50%, despite scoring very poorly (<40%) on the exam, the hurdle will be enforced via a grade of UF.