CMSC 206: Database Management Systems

Introduction

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Introductions

Lecturer

My name is Thomas LAURENT, I am a PhD candidate at University College Dublin, Ireland and will be in charge of CMSC 206 this year.

I have experienced databases through my training as an engineer and a scholar. I hope I can show you how versatile and powerful they are and pass some of my knowledge of them on to you.

Students: You!

I encourage you to make a post on the Self-introductions forum in Moodle to introduce yourself to me and your classmates[1]. You can also reply to each other and get to know everyone. Here are a few things you can mention.

Background

What brought you to this course. What experience do you have with databases and/or DBMSes, if any.

Expectations

What you are looking for in this course, things you would like us to discuss or experiment with.

Apprehensions

Anything you are particularly worried about in the course.

[1] Good reasons why: *https://tinyurl.com/y8zdx75o*

About the course

Why take a DB course?

Databases are everywhere! See for example
https://www.benkuhn.net/ml-bugs/#comment-1403489596

Whatever you do, you will always have to manipulate and store data. Better know the tools to do it painlessly (i.e. DBMSes) than having heaps of loose files accumulating on your (or your user's) system.

Course structure and Contents

The module is structured in *13 classes* (including this one), that are described in the course guide.

In these 13 classes we will view both the *theory* and the *practice* of databases and DataBase Management Systems (DBMSes). We will see *what* they are, *how* they are *modelled*, and *implemented* and how to *use them*.

We will focus on *relational databases* but will explore other kinds of databases in the later topics.

Communication

I will try to accompany you as best I can and help you through the course. Also remember you are not alone taking the module and your classmates can help you, and you should help them when you can.

Here is how we will communicate during this module:

Group communication

I will upload all course materials (slides, references, quizzes, etc) to Moodle, so make sure to check it. Furthermore, the **Moodle forums** will be our **main channel of communication**. A problem solved on the forums benefits to all the class, so make use of them, please.

Private communication

If you **need** to contact me privately, please use Moodle private messages. Only email me if I ask you to, as emails can get buried easily.

Evaluation

The module will be evaluated through 3 means, cf. course guide:

Weekly quizzes

Short **mandatory** quizzes in Moodle to test your understanding of the topic. This week's quiz is here to familiarise yourselves with the interface and will not count in your grade. Take it anyway!

Assignments

Tree assignments, where you will apply the knowledge covered in the lectures. The deadlines are **hard deadlines**.

Participation

Whether or not you have engaged with the materials through Moodle, if you have handed in your work, interacted on the forums, etc.

Additional Materials

Sometimes my slides will not be enough for everyone to really ”get it”. Each week will have its own Q&A forum where you can ask questions about the week’s topic and me and your classmates can help.

In addition to that, I will provide links to specific resources you can check out each week. Here are a couple general ones that should help you throughout the course. Some come from me, some from your predecessors who found them helpful.

Book: Fundamentals of Database Systems, Elmasri and Navathe.

Videos: Stanford DB classes *youtube channel*

Videos: Caleb Curry’s Database Design *youtube playlist*

TODO for next week

TODO

Before the next session (12/09), please:

- Introduce yourself on the dedicated forum
- Take the practice quiz to see how the Moodle quizzes will work
- Answer the git survey, as we might use Github classrooms for the assignments

Thank you, see you next week!