Welcome to CMPUT274

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University of Alberta

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Meet your Instructor

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Evaluation

- Assignments - 30%
  - Five assignments each worth 6%
- Midterm - 31%
- Final - 39%

Assignment Slip Day Policy

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You will have to send an email **following a specific format** in order to use your slip days for an assignment - check the syllabus for details on the formatting of this email.

Why Slip Days?

There are several reasons why I believe in this slip day policy.

1. In the real world most deadlines are *not* hard. While hard deadlines do exist, most deadlines can be pushed if a member of an organization requires it for some reason - personal or professional. The slip day policy seeks to bring assignments closer to the real world.

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   - "I love deadlines. I love the whooshing noise they make as they go by." — Douglas Adams

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   • Student A may think "Well, I'm sick now two days before the assignment was due, that's my fault for not starting it earlier I guess I just have to accept zero".

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    - Student A may think "Well, I'm sick now two days before the assignment was due, that's my fault for not starting it earlier I guess I just have to accept zero".
    - Student B may think "Whoops I forgot to get this done on time... maybe if I ask for an extension they'll just give it to me — can't hurt to try right?".

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3. Fairness. In a policy where students can request accommodations for different reasons, there is simply no way to judge all student's individual circumstances equally and fairly.

   - Another fair policy is simply to never accept late assignments. However, that policy fails to recognize that in life things happen and sometimes students need a break.
   - Also, ignoring the inability to fairly judge all students individual circumstances... I simply don't want to have to handle hundreds of emails per semester about individual hardships.

Assignment Slip Days - Example 1

Tanisha is a student in CMPUT 274 who understands the usage of slip days.

- Tanisha has a cold the week of assignment 1, so she uses three slip days to give her more time to work on the assignment.
- Tanisha uses zero slip days on assignment 2.
- Tanisha uses two slip days on assignment 3.
- Tanisha uses two slip days on assignment 4.
- Tanisha gets very busy at the end of the semester, but has zero slip days left after having used all 7 already! As she has no slip days left to spend she must hand assignment 5 in on time.

Assignment Slip Days - Example 2

Tian is another student in CMPUT 274 who does not understand the usage of slip days.

- Tian uses no slip days on assignments one through four.
- Tian now *wants* to use all seven slip days on assignment 5 to be able to hand in assignment 5 in seven days late.
- There is a maximum of three slip days per assignment though, so Tian can only apply three slip days to assignment 5, and four slip days go unused.

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- There is a maximum of three slip days per assignment though, so Tian can only apply three slip days to assignment 5, and four slip days go unused.

Note: It's okay if slip days go unused! Don't use them frivolously as you never know if you'll have a week with lots of deadlines or catch a cold on a future deadline — you'll wish you still had some!

Excused Absences

Slip days are meant to account for 99% of all issues. However, if a student is encountering *extraordinary* hardship in the form of incapacitating mental or physical illness, severe domestic affliction, or other compelling reasons then that student may apply for an excused absence.

Valid excused absences are for very severe cases, and are generally rare. An excused absence is not guaranteed to be granted just because you asked.

Excused Absences Weight Shifting

In the case of an excused absence being granted for an assessment the weight is shifted to other assessments based on the following policy.

- Assignments due before the midterm date have their weight shifted to the midterm. Assignments due after the midterm have their weight shifted to the final exam.

- If the midterm exam is excused then the weight is shifted to the final exam.

- The final exam cannot be excused — in fact I am not even allowed to do so if I would want to. If you are unable to write the final exam you must speak to your faculty office per the University's policy on deferred examinations.

Discussion Forum

Ed Discussion Forum

We will be using an Ed Discussion forum as our primary means of communication for this course.

You will receive an e-mail to join soon - as well a link to join will be posted on eClass and included on the syllabus

All questions should be posted to the discussion forum!

Topics in this course

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In focusing on problem-solving we will work on top of the many abstractions provided for us by our chosen language of Python, not focusing as much on how things work "under the hood" except when necessary.

In the follow-up course CMPUT 275 we will peel back the layers of abstraction that are presented to us by languages like Python to uncover some truths about the reality we have been operating in.

Algorithms and data structures

This course will also introduce a number of data structures, and discuss their pros and cons.

Additionally, we will introduce the basics of algorithm analysis as a tool for how to evaluate the effectiveness of our different algorithms and data structures.

Object-oriented programming

Additionally, through our study of Python we will also learn the basics of object-oriented programming and how to design object-oriented programs.