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COP 3530

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Postmortem

1. What were the goals and did you achieve them?

My goals were to fully understand the theories of all the basic/fundamental data structures and algorithms, and know how to implement them in C++. However, I did not achieve them very well. I think I understand about 80% the theories of the data structures and algorithms, the remaining I missed may be something tinny but important. For the implementation, I did not achieve them very well. The reasons for this are limited time and poor programming ability. I only learned C++ for about one semester, and it still hard for me to be familiar with all the “grammars” in C++. Thus, it took a lot of time just working on the coding itself. Another reason is that I cannot consider all the situations when dealing with the ADTs. For example, when implement a hash map using open addressing methods, I could forget the wrap-around characteristics.

1. Were the schedule, resources, feature set, and quality expectations realistic for achieving the set goals?

The schedule is really tight for me. It took time to understand the materials talked in class, read materials on the book, figure out how to implement it in C++. The resources and quality provided by the professor and the TAs is very good. However, the project is really rush.

1. What went right? What went wrong?

The professor require us to take notes in class is a good idea for us.

The homework may not be very good. There are some homework assigned, but not discussed in the discussion session.

I think the deadline for the projects are not very reasonable. After the first project, it took almost one month to start the second project. And for the second project, it comes almost at the end of the semester, similar time with the third exam. At that time, there are so many things to work on for students. The project itself also took a lot of time.

1. What are the lessons you learned?

I learned the basic data structures, such as queue, stacks, priority queues, trees, maps, etc, and some algorithms, such as sorting.

Besides this, another thing I learned from this class is “you get what you pay for”. This is not a very difficult class, but it really takes time to understand everything and finish the project. For me, because of other work I need to do, I did not get enough time to do all the assignments and projects well.

1. What would you do differently if you had it to do over again?

If I had to do it again, I will spend more time on implementing the data structures and algorithms. Because sometimes, I feel I understood the theories, but actually I did forget something important. By implementing them, I can test and figure out what is going wrong.

1. What grade (0-100) do you believe you earned and why do you believe you earned that grade?

I think I only get 60-70 points. For the exam, I did not do well. Most of the answers I do not know were how to implement something. This may because I do not fully understand the theories that I cannot apply them in reality. Sometimes, I might make mistakes even when I knew the answer. For the project, there are so many parts, and every part has sections. I did not get enough time to get all of them done.