

Answers to FAQs

> What is the relationship with CS1631, software design methodology?
> I took CS1631 before, and it seems to be the same as this course.
> Can I take this course again? am confused.

Answer: In previous years, due to lack of faculty we combined 1530 and 1631 into a single course. Now that we have more faculty, we will re-establish 1530 and 1631 into a sequence. I am designing a new 1631 with major emphasis on component based software engineering and visual software engineering. Therefore, if you took 1631 before, it is identical to the current 1530 so you need not take this course again. In case you really need to take this course for some reason, let me know. I will put people with similar background of 1631 into one group, and assign more advanced topics/projects to this group only.

> i am in the midst of doing the user's manual and my particular job is the
> product overview. i have a couple of questions as to what kind of format
> it should take.
>
> 1. first, i was wondering if the product overview could be called
> introduction because i was reviewing a couple other users manual
> (including the one i wrote for cs1530) and it only makes sense
> at least from my point of view. however, i don't mind adhering
> to guidelines you have set.

Answer: Yes, it should be called "introduction". "Product overview" refers to its contents.

> 2. i was also wondering if the user's manual is geared towards
> promotion or if it's geared towards clients with a fairly
> comprehensive knowledge of the product. in it's preliminary
> stages, i don't know where i stand from a developer's perspective.

Answer: Of course, a user's manual should be for the client. But whether the client has a comprehensive knowledge of the product is debatable. A good user's manual should be for both the novice and the expert. In other words, if I am a novice I should be able to use the user's manual to get started and read only the first 14 pages of the manual (14 is just an example, could be more or less). For an expert, he will skip the first 14 pages and start from page 15.

The user's manual is NOT for promotion. The presentation IS for promotion. No executive in his/her right mind will read the user's manual. S/he will just listen to the presentation.

> From: Allan Wind
>
> Do we need to use a database? Can we restrict the product to a single
> user application running on a single computer? If not, what about single
> concurrent user?

ANS: Knowledge Tables are shared by many decision makers. And they interact to accomplish the objectives of the organization. But it is conceivable to have a single user application running on a single computer. In this case, each decision maker will sit down before this computer, inspect his(her) KT, and make some updates, and send messages to other users. Other users, who are not on-line, will log in later to do similar things. Thus, there is no concurrent update problem for this single user system. Otherwise, everything is the same for a multiple user system.

However, no matter what it is - a single user system or a multiple user system - using a database will considerably simplify the problem. But it is possible not to use a database.

The design implication, actually, is whether to use a Web server or not. See below.

> Do we need to use a web server? E.g. can we make the application
> client-server or will we need to deploy a 3-tier architecture?

ANS: Again, for a system where the user must sit down before this computer to interact with KTS, the KTS is a stand alone system and does not need use a Web server. This stand alone system has its advantage. The decision maker can load it into his(her) notebook and take it with him(her). On the other hand, for a multiple user system, if they can interact via the Web, it is definitely very attractive. In which case, the design can rely on WebBase or a similar product.

> Am I correct in saying that a knowledge table (kt) consist of a ordered
> set of knowledge slices (ks). And that the term kt and plan is
> interchangeable?

ANS: KT consists of a collection of knowledge slices. A KT can be a plan, or a sub-plan or part of a plan. A plan consists of a single KT or a collection of KTs.

>
> Are there any relation between slices in a particular plan (except in your
> example a slice that is a kt in itself occupy multiply slices)?

ANS: Yes, although this is beyond the scope of your project. Knowledge slices can be facts, graphs or inference rules. So they are definitely related.

> What does the term "active index" mean?

ANS: Again this refers to the visual software engineering approach I am developing and is beyond the scope of this project. I will talk about it in class to give you an idea.

>
> Does a "owner" have exclusive right to modify a particular table or does
> this need to be sync'ed?

ANS: The 'owner' and 'super-owner' have the right to modify a KT. The 'super-owner' can override anything. This is for security reasons. Otherwise what if a low-level manager rebels?

> Can you please provide us with more information about Section 3.2 -
> Processing Narrative? We are not sure what this is.

The processing narrative is basically a description of what a functionality will do. For example, if the functionality is UPDATE. The processing narrative will describe the details of the update operation: what is the input, what database and/or internal data structures are affected, what is the output, and so on.

> Where can we obtain a copy and license for WebBase?

ANS: WebBase will grant you a temporary licnse good for one month. All information about WebBase can be found at: www.webbase.com
Peter Thorsen, Sales Representative
WebBase, ExpertTelligence
1-800-888-8670
(\$599.95 - 25% = \$449.95)
E-mail: peter@expertelligence.com
E-mail: Peter.Thorsen@expertelligence.com

For a concise intro to WebBase and CGI concepts, please download my class notes for CS1565. It is available from my web page. Look for module on WebBase.

> How detailed should be our design?

ANS: The design document is not a big document. For an example please refer to textbook's Appendix G. Notice this example has exactly 20 pages. Your document will be roughly the same size.

Looking ahead, the source codes for the fifth milestone are like Appendix I.

Finally, the 6th milestone is for test cases and ACTUAL RESULTS of the test. You should show me your test cases when you deliver the 5th milestone, and the actual results at the 6th milestone.

> How would you grade the term project?

ANS: The final evaluation can be considered "Acceptance Testing". I would use the following form:

Acceptance Testing

Acceptance Testing

Please use the following checklist in preparation for your final demo.

The following is 1 point:

() Software configuration is complete. Document includes requirements, design, test plan, test results, source codes, user manual, installation procedure (which may be included in user manual), software maintenance procedure (may also be included in user manual).

The following is 0.5 point each:

() a plastic jacket containing the diskettes containing the source.
() sections in the document are separated by labelled dividers.

The following is 0.5 point each:

() Install KTS software.
() Open an existing knowledge table KT.
() Insert a new knowledge slice KS.
() Modify an existing KS.
() Delete an existing KS.
() Save KT. Re-open to verify save is correct.
() Create a new KT.

() Insert a few KSs.
() Save KT. Re-open to verify save is correct.
() Search for a KS in a KT.
() Search for a KS in all KTs.
() Traverse a link from one KT to open another KT.
() Back to original KT.
() Print out KT (either on printer or as a disk file).
() Save one KT or all KTs on diskette. Reload to verify save is correct.
() Show how you can maintain the software: find source code, make a simple
modification and recompile. Time may not permit you to go through the
entire sequence, so you should include this also in the user manual
as a separate section on software maintenance.

Bonus points: (filled in by instructor)

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TOTAL: ()

REMEMBER, ENTIRE DEMO SHOULD BE NO LONGER THAN 25 MINUTES!