Some Pointers for CISS240 Students

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Prelude

- Make sure you have the prerequisites: MATH 150, CISS 170.
- Read the Mini Orientation for general info and advice.
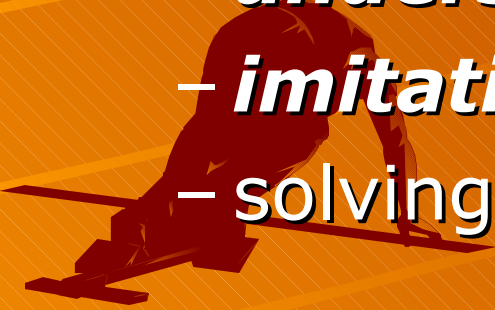- Now for specific advice on CISS240 ...

C++ Language

- Learning a new programming language is like learning a new language …
- ***Practice, practice, practice.***
- ***Learn with your C++ compiler***.
- Even programming gurus learn with a computer.
- Don't be tempted by the Dark Force to download source code from the textbook's website.

Problem-solving Skill

- Understand the *statement* and *requirements* of the problem.
- Learn to *solve* problems by
  - *understanding* someone's solution
  - *imitating* someone's solutions
  - solving it *yourself*

C++ Idiom

- It's possible to know the C++ language and know how to solve a problem ... and yet write awful looking code.

- Learn the C++ *style* or idiom.

- You do this by *following* the coding style from good sources (e.g., good textbooks, lecture notes, etc.)

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General Info

- Read the textbook for other *general info* that all programmers or s/w engineers should know.

- Includes info on computers, UML, software engineering principles, etc.

Notes

- Notes are available online
- However you should get a hardcopy
- Make notes during the lecture because extra information and examples will be covered in class
- Don't be a sloppy learner! Think, ask question, jot down extra information
- Practice active learning

Assignments and etc.

- Always start your work **early**.
- Always turn in your work **on time**.
- Always prepare for exams **early**.
- Every class hour translates to at least 3 hours of study
- This is a 4 hour course, not 3.
- See me if you have questions
- Do not fall behind

Be Organized

- If you're not organized, you're wasting precious time.

- FACT: The average person spends 2 years of his/her life looking for misplaced things!!!

Be Organized

- Get a ring folder and put all the notes – in order!!! – in the folder.
- Don't waste time by hunting for missing notes or reprinting them for every assignment and test!

Be Organized

- Organize your harddrive. Example folder structure:
  - Put all CISS240 stuff in

    Documents > ciss240
  - Put assignment 01 work in

    Documents > ciss240 > a > a01
  - Put question 01 of assignment 01 in

    Documents > ciss240 > a > a01 > a01q01

Be Organized

- Documents
  - ciss145
  - ciss240
    - a
      - a01
        - a01q01
        - a01q02
        - a01q03
      - a02
  - ciss245

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Protect Your Work

- Protect your work!
- Backup your work frequently.
  - Get an extra wallet size external harddrive
  - Use google drive
  - Use an extra USB flashdrive
- I have 3 external harddrives.
- Defrag and disk check once a week.

Resources

- Make full use of resources
- Instructor
- CS tutors: Lots of CS/CIS students are very willing to help you.
- Do NOT put off questions you have.
- Resolve questions ASAP.

Coda

- Most of these are really reminders.
- This course will be tough for many especially for the first 4 weeks.
- But once you get the hang of it, C++ (or any programming language) is really pretty easy.

Coda (cont.)

- According to most experts, the more programming languages you know the faster you pick up the next. It's common for programmers or s/w engineers to pick up a new programming language in 3-5 days.