Computers and computation are pervasive in our society. They play enormously important roles in areas as diverse as education, science, business, and the arts. Understanding the nature of computation and exploring the great potential of computers are the goals of the discipline of computer science. A sample of the areas of research investigated by the Williams Department of Computer Science alone illustrates the vast range of topics that are of interest to computer scientists and computing professionals today. This includes: the use of computer-generated graphic images in the arts and as a tool for visualization in the sciences and other areas; the protocols that make transmission of information over the Internet possible; the design of revolutionary new computer languages that simplify the process of constructing complex programs for computers; the development of machine learning algorithms that can extract useful and even novel information from data that is too complex for humans to analyze; algorithms that can solve problems that were previously too hard to solve in a reasonable amount of time, just by giving up a little bit of optimality in the solution; the investigation of machine architectures and specific hardware aimed at making computing fast.

The department recognizes that students' interests in computer science will vary widely. The department attempts to meet these varying interests through: (1) the major; (2) a selection of courses intended for those who are interested primarily in an introduction to computer science; (3) recommended course sequences for the non-major who wants a more extensive introduction to computer science in general or who seeks to develop some specific expertise in computing for application in some other discipline.

MAJOR

The goal of the major is to provide an understanding of algorithmic problem solving as well as the conceptual organization of computers and complex programs running on them. Emphasis is placed on the fundamental principles of computer science, building upon the mathematical and theoretical ideas underlying these principles. The introductory and core courses build a broad and solid base for understanding computer science. The more advanced courses allow students to sample a variety of specialized areas including graphics, artificial intelligence, computer architecture, networks, compiler design, human computer interaction, distributed systems, and operating systems. Independent study and honors work provide opportunities for students to study and conduct research on topics of special interest.

The major in Computer Science equips students to pursue a wide variety of career opportunities. It can be used as preparation for a career in computing, for graduate school, or to provide important background and techniques for the student whose future career will extend outside of computer science.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Required Courses in Computer Science

A minimum of 8 courses is required in Computer Science, including the following:

Introductory Courses
- Computer Science 134 Introduction to Computer Science
- Computer Science 136 Data Structures and Advanced Programming

Core Courses
- Computer Science 237 Computer Organization
- Computer Science 256 Algorithm Design and Analysis
- Computer Science 334 Principles of Programming Languages
- Computer Science 361 Theory of Computation

Elective Courses
Two or more electives (bringing the total number of Computer Science courses to at least 8) chosen from 300- or 400-level courses in Computer Science. Computer Science courses with 9 as the middle digit (reading, research, and thesis courses) will normally not be used to satisfy the elective requirements. Students may petition the department to waive this restriction with good reason.

Required Courses in Mathematics
Any Mathematics or Statistics course at the 200-level or higher except for MATH 200

**Required Proficiency in Discrete Mathematics**

Students must demonstrate proficiency in discrete mathematics by either passing the departmental Discrete Mathematics Proficiency Exam or by earning a grade of C- or better in MATH 200. This requirement must be met by the end of the sophomore year.

The Discrete Mathematics Proficiency Exam may be taken at most twice and cannot be taken beyond the sophomore year. The exam may not be used to fulfill the requirement for a student who has taken the course pass/fail or who has received a letter grade below C- in Math 200.

Students considering pursuing a major in Computer Science are urged to take Computer Science 134 and to begin satisfying their mathematics requirements early. Note in particular that the Discrete Mathematics Proficiency requirement is a prerequisite for many advanced courses.

Students who take Computer Science 102T, 103, 107, or 109 may use that course as one of the two electives required for the major in Computer Science. Those who count Computer Science 109 toward the major must select an elective different from Computer Science 371 (Computational Graphics) if they want elective credit. Computer Science 102T, 103, 107, 109, and 134 are not open to students who have taken a Computer Science course numbered 136 or higher.

To be eligible for admission to the major, a student must have completed at least two Computer Science courses, including Computer Science 136, as well as fulfilled the Discrete Mathematics Proficiency Requirement by the end of the sophomore year. A Mathematics course at the 200-level or higher (except for MATH 200) must be completed by the end of the junior year. Students are urged to have completed two of the four core courses (Computer Science 237, 256, 334, and 361) by the end of the sophomore year and must normally have completed at least three out of the four core courses by the end of the junior year.

All computer science majors must attend at least twenty Computer Science Colloquia. Juniors and seniors are encouraged to attend at least five during each semester they are present on campus. Prospective majors in their first and second years are also encouraged to attend.

With the advance permission of the department, two appropriate mathematics or statistics courses may be substituted for one Computer Science elective. Appropriate mathematics classes are those numbered 300 or above, and appropriate statistics courses are those numbered 200 or above. Other variations in the required courses, adapting the requirements to the special needs and interests of the individual student, may be arranged in consultation with the department.

**LABORATORY FACILITIES**

The Computer Science Department maintains four departmental computer laboratories for students taking Computer Science courses, as well as a lab that can be configured for teaching specialized topics such as robotics. The workstations in these laboratories also support student and faculty research in computer science.

**THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN COMPUTER SCIENCE**

The degree with honors in Computer Science is awarded to students who have demonstrated outstanding intellectual achievement in a program of study extending beyond the requirements of the regular major. The principal considerations in recommending a student for the degree with honors will be: mastery of core material, ability to pursue independent study of computer science, originality in methods of investigation, and creativity in research. Honors study is highly recommended for those students with strong academic records in computer science who wish to attend graduate school, pursue high-level industrial positions in computing, or who would simply like to experience research in computer science.

Prospective honors students are urged to consult with their departmental advisor at the time of registration in the spring of the sophomore or at the beginning of the junior year to arrange a program of study that could lead to the degree with honors. Such a program normally consists of Computer Science 493 and 494 and a WSP of independent research under the guidance of a Computer Science faculty member, culminating in a thesis that is judged acceptable by the department. The program produces a significant piece of written work and often includes a major computer program. All honors candidates are required to give an oral presentation of their research in the Computer Science Colloquium in early spring semester.

Students considering honors work should obtain permission from the department before registering in the fall of the senior year. Formal admission to candidacy occurs at the beginning of the spring semester of the senior year and is based on promising performance in the fall semester and winter study units of honors work. Recommendations for the degree with honors will be made for outstanding performance in the three honors courses. Highest honors will be recommended for students who have displayed exceptional ability, achievement, or originality.

**INTRODUCTORY COURSES**


Computer Science 134 provides an introduction to computer science with a focus on developing computer programming skills. These skills are essential to most upper-level courses in the department. As a result, Computer Science 134 together with Computer Science 136, are required as a prerequisite to most advanced courses in the department. Those students intending to take several Computer Science courses are urged to take 134 early.
Those students interested in learning more about exciting new ideas in computer science, but not necessarily interested in developing extensive programming skills, should consider Computer Science 102 The Socio-Techno Web, 103 Electronic Textiles, 107 Creating Games, or 109 The Art and Science of Computer Graphics.

Students with significant programming experience should consider electing Computer Science 136 (see “Advanced Placement” below). Students are always welcome to contact a member of the department for guidance in selecting a first course.

**COMPUTER SCIENCE 134**

Introduction to Computer Science covers fundamental concepts in the design, implementation and testing of computer programs including loops, conditionals, functions, elementary data types and recursion. There is a strong focus on constructing correct, understandable and efficient programs in a structured language such as Java or Python.

**STUDY ABROAD**

Study abroad can be a wonderful experience. Students who hope to take computer science courses while abroad should discuss their plans in advance with the chair of the department or the departmental study away advisor. Students who plan to study away but do not expect to take courses toward the major should work with the department to create a plan to ensure that they will be able to complete the major. While study abroad is generally not an impediment to completing the major, students should be aware that certain computer science courses must be taken in a particular sequence and that not all courses are offered every semester (or every year). Students who wish to discuss their plans are invited to meet with any of the faculty in Computer Science.

**FAQ**

Students MUST contact departments/programs BEFORE assuming study away credit will be granted toward the major or concentration.

**Can your department or program typically pre-approve courses for major/concentration credit?**

Yes, in some cases, if appropriate course information is available in advance (e.g. syllabi and/or course descriptions), though students should be sure to contact the department.

**What criteria will typically be used/required to determine whether a student may receive major/concentration credit for a course taken while on study away?**

Course title and description, and complete syllabus, including readings and assignments.

**Does your department/program place restrictions on the number of major/concentration credits that a student might earn through study away?**

Yes. Typically no more than two CSCI courses and one Math course.

**Does your department/program place restrictions on the types of courses that can be awarded credit towards your major?**

No.

**Are there specific major requirements that cannot be fulfilled while on study away?**

No.

**Are there specific major requirements in your department/program that students should be particularly aware of when weighing study away options? (Some examples might include a required course that is always taught in one semester, laboratory requirements.)**

Yes. Many CSCI electives are not taught every year. Students should develop a plan to complete all major requirements and discuss them with the department prior to going abroad.

**Give examples in which students thought or assumed that courses taken away would count toward the major or concentration and then learned they wouldn’t:**

Students must have courses pre-approved prior to going abroad to ensure they meet the curricular goals and standards of the department.

**ADVANCED PLACEMENT**

Students with an extensive background in computer science are urged to take the Advanced Placement Examination in Computer Science. A score of 4 or better on the AP Computer Science A exam is normally required for advanced placement in Computer Science 136.

Students who wish to be placed in Computer Science 136 but who have not taken the Advanced Placement Examination should consult with the department. Such students should have had a good course in computer science using a structured language such as Java or Python.

**PLANS OF STUDY FOR NON-MAJORS**

The faculty in Computer Science believes that students can substantially enrich their academic experience by completing a coherent plan of study in one or more disciplines outside of their majors. With this in mind, we have attempted to provide students majoring in other departments with options in our department’s curriculum ranging from two-course sequences to collections of courses equivalent to what would constitute a minor at institutions.
that recognize such a concentration. Students interested in designing such a plan of study are invited to discuss their plans in detail with a member of the faculty. To assist students making such plans, we include some suggestions below.

Students seeking to develop an extensive knowledge of computer science without majoring in the department are encouraged to use the major requirements as a guide. In particular, the four core courses required of majors are intended to provide a broad knowledge of topics underlying all of computer science. Students seeking a concentration in Computer Science are urged to complete at least two of these courses followed by one of our upper-level electives. Such a program would typically require the completion of a total of five Computer Science courses in addition to the Discrete Mathematics Proficiency requirement.

There are several sequences of courses appropriate for those primarily interested in developing skills in programming for use in other areas. For general programming, Computer Science 134 followed by 136 and 256 will provide students with a strong background in algorithm and data structure design together with an understanding of issues of correctness and efficiency. Students of the Bioinformatics program are encouraged to take Computer Science 134 at a minimum, and should also consider Computer Science 136 and 256. The sequence of courses Computer Science 109 and 134 would provide sufficient competence in computer graphics for many students interested in applying such knowledge either in the arts or sciences. For students requiring more expertise in the techniques of computer graphics, Computer Science 136 and 371 could be added to form a four-course sequence.

There are, of course, many other alternatives. We encourage interested students to consult with the department chair or other members of the department’s faculty.

GENERAL REMARKS

Divisional Requirements

All Computer Science courses may be used to satisfy the Division III distribution requirement.

Alternate Year Courses

Computer Science 102T, 103, 107, 109, 315, 319, 326, 331, 333, 336T, 337T, 338, 339, 343, 356T, 358, 371, 372, 373, 374T, 375, 376, 432, and 434T are each usually offered every other year. All other Computer Science courses are normally offered every year.

Course Numbering

The increase from 100, through 200 and 300, to 400 indicates in most instances an increasing level of maturity in the subject that is expected of students. Within a series, numeric order does not indicate the relative level of difficulty of courses. Rather, the middle digit of the course number (particularly in upper-level courses) generally indicates the area of computer science covered by the course.

Course Descriptions

Brief descriptions of the courses in Computer Science can be found below. More detailed information on the offerings in the department is available at http://www.cs.williams.edu/.

Courses Open on a Pass-Fail Basis

Students taking a Computer Science course on a pass-fail basis must meet all the requirements set for students taking the course on a graded basis.

With the permission of the department, any course offered by the department may be taken pass-fail (with the exception of tutorials), though courses graded with the pass-fail option may not be used to satisfy any of the major or honors requirements. However, with the permission of the department, courses taken in the department beyond those requirements may be taken on a pass-fail basis.

CSCI 102  (F)  The Socio-Techno Web  (QFR)

This course introduces many fundamental concepts in computer science by examining the social aspects of computing. As more and more people use the technologies and services available via the Internet, online environments like Facebook, Amazon, Google, Twitter, and blogs are flourishing. However, several of the problems related to security, privacy, and trust that exist in the real world transfer and become amplified in the virtual world created by the ubiquity and pervasiveness of the Internet. In this course, we will investigate how the social, technological, and natural worlds are connected, and how the study of networks sheds light on these connections. Topics include the structure of the Social Web and networks in general; issues such as virtual identity, personal and group privacy, trust evaluation and propagation, and online security; and the technology, economics, and politics of Web information and online communities. No background in computer science or programming is required or expected.

Class Format: groups of three or four

Requirements/Evaluation: tutorial discussions, presentations, problem sets and labs, a midterm exam, and a final project or paper
CSCI 103 (F) Electronic Textiles (QFR)
Digital data is being infused throughout the entire physical world, escaping the computer monitor and spreading to other devices and appliances, including the human body. Electronic textiles, or eTextiles, is one of the next steps toward making everything interactive and this course aims to introduce learners to the first steps of developing their own wearable interactive technology devices. After completing a series of introductory eTextiles projects to gain practice in necessary sewing, circuitry, and programming skills, students will propose and design their own eTextiles projects, eventually implementing them with sewable Arduino components, and other found electronic components as needed. The scope of the project will depend on the individual's prior background, but can include everything from a sweatshirt with light-up turn signals for bicycling, to a wall banner that displays the current air quality of the room, to a stuffed animal that plays a tune when the lights go on, to whatever project you can conceivably accomplish with sewable Arduino inputs, outputs, and development board in a semester context. This class will introduce students to introductory computer programming, circuitry, and sewing with the goal of creating novel wearable artifacts that interact with the world.

Class Format: interspersed with hands-on activities in a computer lab
Requirements/Evaluation: weekly homework assignments and a final project
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 18
Enrollment Preferences: first-year students and sophomores who have not previously taken a computer science course
Expected Class Size: 18
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)
Not offered current academic year
This course provides an opportunity to develop an understanding of the theoretical and practical concepts underlying 2- and 3-dimensional computer graphics. The course will emphasize hands-on studio/laboratory experience, with student work focused around completing a series of projects. Students will experiment with modeling, color, lighting, perspective, and simple animation. As the course progresses, computer programming will be used to control the complexity of the models and their interactions. Lectures, augmented by guided viewings of state-of-the-art computer generated and enhanced images and animations, will be used to deepen understanding of the studio experience.

Class Format: lecture/laboratory
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on progress in project work and two examinations
Prerequisites: this course is not open to students who have successfully completed a CSCI course numbered 136 or above
Enrollment Limit: 36
Enrollment Preferences: first-year students and sophomores who have not previously taken a computer science course
Expected Class Size: 36
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)
Attributes: FMST Related Courses
Not offered current academic year

CSCI 134  (F)(S)  Introduction to Computer Science  (QFR)
This course introduces students to the science of computation by exploring the representation and manipulation of data and algorithms. We organize and transform information in order to solve problems using algorithms written in a modern object-oriented language. Topics include organization of data using objects and classes, and the description of processes using conditional control, iteration, methods and classes. We also begin the study of abstraction, self-reference, reuse, and performance analysis. While the choice of programming language and application area will vary in different offerings, the skills students develop will transfer equally well to more advanced study in many areas. In particular, this course is designed to provide the programming skills needed for further study in computer science and is expected to satisfy introductory programming requirements in other departments.

Requirements/Evaluation: weekly assignments, programming projects, and examinations
Prerequisites: none, except for the standard prerequisites for a (QFR) course; previous programming experience is not required
Enrollment Limit: 90(18/lab)
Enrollment Preferences: if the course is over-enrolled, enrollment will be determined by lottery
Expected Class Size: 90
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Unit Notes: students with prior experience with object-oriented programming should discuss appropriate course placement with members of the department
CSCI 136  (F)(S)  Data Structures and Advanced Programming  (QFR)

This course builds on the programming skills acquired in Computer Science 134. It couples work on program design, analysis, and verification with an introduction to the study of data structures. Data structures capture common ways in which to store and manipulate data, and they are important in the construction of sophisticated computer programs. Students are introduced to some of the most important and frequently used data structures: lists, stacks, queues, trees, hash tables, graphs, and files. Students will be expected to write several programs, ranging from very short programs to more elaborate systems. Emphasis will be placed on the development of clear, modular programs that are easy to read, debug, verify, analyze, and modify.

Requirements/Evaluation:  programming assignments, homework and/or examinations
Prerequisites:  CSCI 134 or equivalent; fulfilling the Discrete Mathematics Proficiency requirement is recommended, but not required
Enrollment Limit:  60/15/lab
Enrollment Preferences:  if the course is over-enrolled, enrollment will be determined by lottery
Expected Class Size:  60
Grading:  yes pass/fail option,  yes fifth course option
Distributions:  (D3)  (QFR)
Attributes:  BIGP Recommended Courses
CSCI 237 (F)(S) Computer Organization (QFR)

This course studies the basic instruction set architecture and organization of a modern computer. It provides a programmer's view of how computer systems execute programs, store information, and communicate. Over the semester the student learns the fundamentals of translating higher level languages into assembly language, and the interpretation of machine languages by hardware. At the same time, a model of computer hardware organization is developed from the gate level upward.

Requirements/Evaluation: projects, and one or more exams
Prerequisites: CSCI 134, or both experience in programming and permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 12 per lab
Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors
Expected Class Size: 12 per lab
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)

Fall 2019

LEC Section: 01 MWF 11:00 am - 11:50 am Bill K. Jannen
LEC Section: 02 MWF 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm Kelly A. Shaw
LAB Section: 03 W 1:00 pm - 2:25 pm Bill K. Jannen
LAB Section: 04 W 2:35 pm - 4:00 pm Bill K. Jannen
LAB Section: 05 T 1:00 pm - 2:25 pm Kelly A. Shaw
LAB Section: 06 T 2:35 pm - 4:00 pm Kelly A. Shaw

Spring 2020

LEC Section: 01 MWF 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm Kelly A. Shaw
LAB Section: 02 R 1:00 pm - 2:25 pm Kelly A. Shaw
LAB Section: 03 R 2:35 pm - 4:00 pm Kelly A. Shaw

CSCI 256 (F)(S) Algorithm Design and Analysis (QFR)

This course investigates methods for designing efficient and reliable algorithms. By carefully analyzing the structure of a problem within a mathematical framework, it is often possible to dramatically decrease the computational resources needed to find a solution. In addition, analysis provides a method for verifying the correctness of an algorithm and accurately estimating its running time and space requirements. We will study several algorithm design strategies that build on data structures and programming techniques introduced in Computer Science 136. These include induction, divide-and-conquer, dynamic programming, and greedy algorithms. Additional topics of study include algorithms on graphs and strategies for handling potentially intractable problems.

Requirements/Evaluation: problem sets and programming assignments, and midterm and final examinations
Prerequisites: CSCI 136 and fulfillment of the Discrete Mathematics Proficiency requirement
Enrollment Limit: 24
Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors
This course will provide an overview of Computational Biology, the application of computational, mathematical, statistical, and physical problem-solving techniques to interpret the rapidly expanding amount of biological data. Topics covered will include database searching, DNA sequence alignment, clustering, RNA structure prediction, protein structural alignment, methods of analyzing gene expression, networks, and genome assembly using techniques such as string matching, dynamic programming, hidden Markov models, and expectation-maximization.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on weekly Python programming assignments, problem sets, a few quizzes and a final project
Prerequisites: programming experience (e.g., CSCI 136), mathematics (PHYS/MATH 210 or MATH 150), and physical science (PHYS 142 or 151, or CHEM 151 or 153 or 155), or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: based on seniority
Expected Class Size: 8
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)
This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
PHYS 315 (D3) CSCI 315 (D3)
Attributes: BIGP Recommended Courses
mechanisms that are aberrantly altered by siRNA knockdown of putative regulatory components. This functional genomic strategy will be coupled with independent projects using phosphorylation-state specific antisera to test our hypotheses. Proteomic analysis will introduce the students to de novo structural prediction and threading algorithms, as well as data-mining approaches and Bayesian modeling of protein network dynamics in single cells. Flow cytometry and mass spectrometry will be used to study networks of interacting proteins in colon tumor cells.

Class Format: two afternoons of lab, with one hour of lecture, per week

Requirements/Evaluation: lab participation, several short homework assignments, one lab report, a programming project, and a grant proposal

Prerequisites: BIOL 202; students who have not taken BIOL 202 but have taken BIOL 101 and CSCI 315 or PHYS 315, may enroll with permission of instructor. No prior computer programming experience is required.

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: seniors, then juniors, then sophomores

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Unit Notes: does not satisfy the distribution requirement for the Biology major

Distributions: (D3) (QFR)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

BIOL 319 (D3) CSCI 319 (D3) MATH 319 (D3) PHYS 319 (D3) CHEM 319 (D3)

Attributes: BIGP Core Courses BIMO Interdepartmental Electives

Not offered current academic year

CSCI 326 (S) Software Methods (QFR)

Sophisticated software systems play a prominent role in many aspects of our lives, and while programming can be a very creative and exciting process, building a reliable software system of any size is no easy feat. Moreover, the ultimate outcome of any programming endeavor is likely to be incomplete, unreliable, and unmaintainable unless principled methods for software construction are followed. This course explores those methods. Specific topics include: software processes; specifying requirements and verifying correctness; abstractions; design principles; software architectures; concurrent and scalable systems design; testing and debugging; and performance evaluation.

Class Format: lecture/lab

Requirements/Evaluation: homework, programming assignments, group work, presentations, exams

Prerequisites: CSCI 136, and at least one of CSCI 237, 256, or 334

Enrollment Limit: 24

Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors

Expected Class Size: 24

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D3) (QFR)

Spring 2020

LEC Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Stephen N. Freund

LAB Section: 02 R 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Stephen N. Freund

LAB Section: 03 R 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Stephen N. Freund

CSCI 331 (F) Introduction to Computer Security (QFR)

This class explores common vulnerabilities in computer systems, how attackers exploit them, and how systems engineers design defenses to mitigate them. The goal is to be able to recognize potential vulnerabilities in one's own software and to practice defensive design. Hands-on experience writing C/C++ code to inspect and modify the low-level operation of running programs is emphasized. Finally, regular reading and writing assignments round out the course to help students understand the cultural and historical background of the computer security "arms race."

Requirements/Evaluation: assignments, midterm exam, and final exam

Prerequisites: CSCI 136 and CSCI 237
Enrollment Limit: 24
Enrollment Preferences: upper-level students
Expected Class Size: 24
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)

Fall 2019
LEC Section: 01 TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm Daniel W. Barowy

CSCI 333  (S) Storage Systems  (QFR)
This course will examine topics in the design, implementation, and evaluation of storage systems. Topics include the memory hierarchy; ways that data is organized (both logically and physically); storage hardware and its influence on storage software designs; data structures; performance models; and system measurement/evaluation. Readings will be taken from recent technical literature, and an emphasis will be placed on identifying and evaluating design trade-offs.

Class Format: lecture/lab
Requirements/Evaluation: problem sets, programming assignments, and midterm and final examinations
Prerequisites: CSCI 136; CSCI 237 or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 24
Enrollment Preferences: current Computer Science majors, students with research experience or interest
Expected Class Size: 24
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)
Quantitative/Formal Reasoning Notes: This course will have students develop quantitative/formal reasoning skills through problem sets and programming assignments.

Spring 2020
LEC Section: 01 MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Bill K. Jannen

CSCI 334  (F)(S) Principles of Programming Languages  (QFR)
This course examines the concepts and structures governing the design and implementation of programming languages. It presents an introduction to the concepts behind compilers and run-time representations of programming languages; features of programming languages supporting abstraction and polymorphism; and the procedural, functional, object-oriented, and concurrent programming paradigms. Programs will be required in languages illustrating each of these paradigms.

Requirements/Evaluation: weekly problem sets and programming assignments, a midterm examination and a final examination
Prerequisites: CSCI 136
Enrollment Limit: 30
Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors
Expected Class Size: 30
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)

Fall 2019
LEC Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Stephen N. Freund
Spring 2020
LEC Section: 01 TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Daniel W. Barowy
CSCI 336 (F) Computer Networks (QFR)
This course explores the design and implementation of computer networks. Topics include wired and wireless networks; techniques for efficient and reliable encoding and transmission of data; addressing schemes and routing mechanisms; resource allocation for bandwidth sharing; and security issues. An important unifying themes is the distributed nature of all network problems. We will examine the ways in which these issues are addressed by current protocols such as TCP/IP and 802.11 WIFI.

Class Format: groups of three or four
Requirements/Evaluation: problem sets, programming assignments, and midterm and final examinations
Prerequisites: CSCI 136 and 237
Enrollment Limit: 18
Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors
Expected Class Size: 18
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)
Not offered current academic year

CSCI 337 (S) Digital Design and Modern Architecture (QFR)
This tutorial course considers topics in the low-level design of modern architectures. Course meetings will review problems of designing effective architectures including instruction-level parallelism, branch-prediction, caching strategies, and advanced ALU design. Readings will be taken from recent technical literature. Labs will focus on the development of custom CMOS circuits to implement projects from gates to bit-sliced ALUs. Final group projects will develop custom logic demonstrating concepts learned in course meetings.

Class Format: groups of three or four
Requirements/Evaluation: microprocessor design projects, participation in tutorial meetings, and examinations
Prerequisites: CSCI 237
Enrollment Limit: 18
Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors
Expected Class Size: 18
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)
Not offered current academic year

CSCI 338 (F) Parallel Processing (QFR)
This course explores different parallel programming paradigms used for writing applications on today's parallel computer systems. The course will introduce concurrency (i.e. multiple simultaneous computations) and the synchronization primitives that allow for the creation of correct concurrent applications. It will examine how a variety of systems organize parallel processing resources and enable users to write parallel programs for these systems. Covered programming paradigms will include multiprogramming with processes, message passing, threading in shared memory multiprocessors, vector processing, graphics processor programming, transactions, MapReduce, and other forms of programming for the cloud. Class discussion is based on assigned readings. Assignments provide students the opportunity to develop proficiency in writing software using different parallel programming paradigms.

Requirements/Evaluation: homework assignments, programming projects, and exams
Prerequisites: CSCI 136 or equivalent programming experience, and CSCI 237, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 24
Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors
Expected Class Size: 24
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)
Quantative/Formal Reasoning Notes: The course will consist of substantial problem sets and programming assignments in which quantitative/formal reasoning skills are practiced and evaluated.

Fall 2019
LEC Section: 01    MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Kelly A. Shaw

CSCI 339  (S)  Distributed Systems  (QFR)
This course studies the key design principles of distributed systems, which are collections of independent networked computers that function as single coherent systems. Covered topics include communication protocols, processes and threads, naming, synchronization, consistency and replication, fault tolerance, and security. Students also examine some specific real-world distributed systems case studies, including Google and Amazon. Class discussion is based on readings from the textbook and research papers. The goals of this course are to understand how large-scale computational systems are built, and to provide students with the tools necessary to evaluate new technologies after the course ends.

Class Format: lecture/laboratory
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on homework assignments, programming projects, and exams
Prerequisites: CSCI 136 or equivalent programming experience, and CSCI 237, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 24
Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors
Expected Class Size: 24
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3)  (QFR)

Spring 2020
LEC Section: 01    MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Jeannie R Albrecht

CSCI 343  (F)  Application Development with Functional Programming  (QFR)
This course will enrich the participants on how functional programming can reduce unintended complexity and create code bases that are simpler to maintain and reason about. Functional programming is a paradigm, which focuses on values and pure functions rather than mutable objects and imperative statements. Since good code design is intersubjective, we need to be open-minded and continuously reflect upon the decisions we make. Together we will reflect on the design choices made and the dilemmas that will arise. We will learn that there are often multiple solutions, each often having their benefits and drawbacks. By gaining experience, we will acquire empirical knowledge, intuition and sensors for avoiding unintended complexity, creating appropriate abstractions and a sustainable code base. Class will consist of a lot of live coding, code-reviews and a dialog on how we can improve our architectural design and knowledge. Topics include code quality, readability, maintainability, collaboration, version control system (git), global state, dependencies, pure functions, persistent data structures, data consistency, single source of truth (SSOT), reactive programming, web development, functional programming and comparison with object oriented programming, designing for testability, documentation, state management, atomic updates, concurrency, dynamic types, DSLs, lisp and REPL. The concepts are not limited to a specific programming language. We will use Clojure and ClojureScript to realize the ideas in the specific project. Hence, also rigorous abilities in lisp, repl workflow and Clojure/ClojureScript will be an outcome of the course. For each week there will be a video talk from programming conferences that will serve as inspiration and give us the opportunity to reflect. The videos will be posted when the course starts.

Requirements/Evaluation: a semester-long programming project, and midterm and final presentations
Prerequisites: CSCI 136, and at least one of CSCI 237, 256, or 334
Enrollment Limit: 24
Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors
Expected Class Size: 24
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3)  (QFR)

Quantative/Formal Reasoning Notes: The course will involve a programming project that emphasizes quantitative/formal reasoning skills.
CSCI 356  (F)  Advanced Algorithms  (QFR)
This course explores advanced concepts in algorithm design, algorithm analysis and data structures. Areas of focus will include algorithmic complexity, randomized and approximation algorithms, geometric algorithms, and advanced data structures. Topics will include combinatorial algorithms for packing, and covering problems, algorithms for proximity and visibility problems, linear programming algorithms, approximation schemes, hardness of approximation, search, and hashing.

Class Format: this class will follow the meeting structure of a tutorial, with groups of three or four

Requirements/Evaluation: weekly problem sets, several small programming projects, weekly paper summaries, and a small, final project

Prerequisites: CSCI 256; CSCI 361 is recommended but not required

Enrollment Limit:  10

Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option,  no fifth course option

Distributions: (D3)  (QFR)

Fall 2019

TUT Section: T1   TBA   William J. Lenhart

CSCI 358  (S)  Applied Algorithms  (QFR)
This course is about bridging the gap between theoretical running time and writing fast code in practice. The course is divided into two basic topics. The first is algorithmic: we will discuss some of the most useful tools in a coder's toolkit. This includes topics like randomization (hashing, filters, approximate counters), linear and convex programming, similarity search, and cache-efficient algorithms. Our goal is to talk about why these efficient algorithms make seemingly difficult problems solvable in practice. The second topic is applications: we will discuss how to implement algorithms in an efficient way that takes advantage of modern hardware. Specific topics covered will include blocking, loop unrolling, pipelining, as well as strategies for performance analysis. Projects and assessments will include both basic theoretical aspects (understanding why the algorithms we discuss actually work), and practical aspects (implementing the algorithms we discuss to solve important problems, and optimizing the code so it runs as quickly as possible).

Class Format: Lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: primary evaluation is a course-long project and written final exam, in addition to shorter programming assignments and problem sets

Prerequisites: CSCI 256 or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 24

Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors

Expected Class Size: 24

Grading: no pass/fail option,  no fifth course option

Distributions: (D3)  (QFR)

Quantative/Formal Reasoning Notes: The course will consist of programming assignments and problem sets in which quantitative/formal reasoning skills are practiced and evaluated.

Spring 2020

LEC Section: 01   TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm   Samuel McCauley

CSCI 361  (F)(S)  Theory of Computation  (QFR)
Cross-listings: CSCI 361  MATH 361
Primary Cross-listing

This course introduces a formal framework for investigating both the computability and complexity of problems. We study several models of computation including finite automata, regular languages, context-free grammars, and Turing machines. These models provide a mathematical basis for the study of computability theory—the examination of what problems can be solved and what problems cannot be solved—and the study of complexity theory—the examination of how efficiently problems can be solved. Topics include the halting problem and the P versus NP problem.

Requirements/Evaluation: problem sets, a midterm examination, and a final examination

Prerequisites: CSCI 256 or both a 300-level MATH course and permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 30

Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors

Expected Class Size: 30

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D3) (QFR)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
CSCI 361 (D3) MATH 361 (D3)

Attributes: COGS Interdepartmental Electives

Fall 2019
LEC Section: 01 MWF 11:00 am - 11:50 am Aaron M. Williams

Spring 2020
LEC Section: 01 MWF 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm Thomas P. Murtagh

CSCI 371 (F) Computational Graphics (QFR)

PhotoShop, medical MRIs, video games, and movie special effects all programmatically create and manipulate digital images. This course teaches the fundamental techniques behind these applications. We begin by building a mathematical model of the interaction of light with surfaces, lenses, and an imager. We then study the data structures and processor architectures that allow us to efficiently evaluate that physical model.

Students will complete a series of programming assignments for both photorealistic image creation and real-time 3D rendering using C++, OpenGL, and GLSL. These assignments cumulate in a multi-week final project. Topics covered in the course include: projective geometry, ray tracing, bidirectional surface scattering functions, binary space partition trees, matting and compositing, shadow maps, cache management, and parallel processing on GPUs.

Class Format: lecture, with optics laboratory exercises

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation based on assignments, projects, and exams

Prerequisites: CSCI 136 and CSCI 237 or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 24

Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors

Expected Class Size: 24

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D3) (QFR)

Attributes: FMST Core Courses

Not offered current academic year

CSCI 373 (S) Artificial Intelligence (QFR)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become part of everyday life, but what is it, and how does it work? This course introduces theories and computational techniques that serve as a foundation for the study of artificial intelligence. Potential topics include the following: Problem solving by search, Logic, Planning, Constraint satisfaction problems, Uncertainty and probabilistic reasoning, Bayesian networks, and Automated Learning.

Requirements/Evaluation: several programming projects in the first half of the semester and a larger project spanning most of the second half of the semester; reading responses and discussion; midterm examination
**CSCI 374 (S) Machine Learning** (QFR)
This tutorial examines the design, implementation, and analysis of machine learning algorithms. Machine Learning is a branch of Artificial Intelligence that aims to develop algorithms that will improve a system's performance. Improvement might involve acquiring new factual knowledge from data, learning to perform a new task, or learning to perform an old task more efficiently or effectively. This tutorial will cover examples of supervised learning algorithms (including decision tree learning, support vector machines, and neural networks), unsupervised learning algorithms (including k-means and expectation maximization), and possibly reinforcement learning algorithms (such as Q learning and temporal difference learning). It will also introduce methods for the evaluation of learning algorithms, as well as topics in computational learning theory.

**Class Format:** tutorial

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on presentations, problem sets, programming exercises, empirical analyses of algorithms, critical analysis of current literature

**Prerequisites:** CSCI 136 and CSCI 256 or permission of instructor

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**CSCI 375 (F) Natural Language Processing** (QFR)
Natural language processing is a branch of computer science that studies methods for analyzing and generating written or spoken human language. It is a rapidly developing field that has given rise to many useful applications including search engines, speech recognizers, and automated personal assistants. Potential topics include information retrieval, information extraction, question answering, and language models.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** exams, problem sets, and programming projects

**Prerequisites:** CSCI 136 and (CSCI 256 or permission of instructor)

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**CSCI 376 (F) Human-Computer Interaction**

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**Primary Cross-listing**
Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) principles are practiced in the design and evaluation of most software, greatly impacting the lives of anyone who uses interactive technology and other products. There are many ways to design and build applications for people, so what methods can increase the likelihood that our design is the most useful, intuitive, and enjoyable? This course provides an introduction to the field of human-computer interaction, through a user-centered approach to designing and evaluating interactive systems. HCI draws on methods from computer science, the social and cognitive sciences, and interaction design. In this course we will use these methods to: ideate and propose design problems, study existing systems and challenges, explore design opportunities and tradeoffs, evaluate and improve designs, and communicate design problems and solutions to varying audiences.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** course projects, in-class group work/participation, and exams

**Prerequisites:** CSCI 136

**Enrollment Limit:** 24

**Enrollment Preferences:** current or expected Computer Science majors

**Expected Class Size:** 24

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D3)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

CSCI 376 (D3) STS 376 (D2)

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Fall 2019

**LEC Section: 01**  MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm  Iris Howley

**CSCI 397 (F) Independent Reading: Computer Science**

Directed independent reading in Computer Science.

**Prerequisites:** permission of department

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D3)

Fall 2019

**IND Section: 01**  TBA  Jeannie R Albrecht

**CSCI 398 (S) Independent Reading: Computer Science**

Directed independent reading in Computer Science.

**Class Format:** independent study

**Prerequisites:** permission of department

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D3)

Spring 2020

**IND Section: 01**  TBA  Jeannie R Albrecht

**CSCI 432 (S) Operating Systems (QFR)**

This course explores the design and implementation of computer operating systems. Topics include historical aspects of operating systems development, systems programming, process scheduling, synchronization of concurrent processes, virtual machines, memory management and virtual memory, I/O and file systems, system security, os/architecture interaction, and distributed operating systems.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** several implementation projects that will include significant programming, as well as written homework and exams

**Prerequisites:** CSCI 237 and either CSCI 256 or 334
Enrollment Limit: 24
Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors

Expected Class Size: 24
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)
Not offered current academic year

CSCI 434 (S) Compiler Design (QFR)
This tutorial covers the principles and practices for the design and implementation of compilers and interpreters. Topics include all stages of the compilation and execution process: lexical analysis; parsing; symbol tables; type systems; scope; semantic analysis; intermediate representations; run-time environments and interpreters; code generation; program analysis and optimization; and garbage collection. The course covers both the theoretical and practical implications of these topics. Students will construct a full compiler for a simple object-oriented language.

Class Format: groups of three or four
Requirements/Evaluation: presentations, problem sets, a substantial implementation project, and two exams
Prerequisites: CSCI 237 and 256 CSCI 334 is recommended, but not required

Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: current or expected Computer Science majors

Expected Class Size: 10
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D3) (QFR)
Not offered current academic year

CSCI 493 (F) Research in Computer Science
This course provides highly-motivated students an opportunity to work independently with faculty on research topics chosen by individual faculty. Students are generally expected to perform a literature review, identify areas of potential contribution, and explore extensions to existing results. The course culminates in a concise, well-written report describing a problem, its background history, any independent results achieved, and directions for future research.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, presentations, and the final written report
Enrollment Preferences: open to senior Computer Science majors with permission of instructor
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Unit Notes: this course (along with CSCI 31 and CSCI 494) is required for students pursuing honors, but enrollment is not limited to students pursuing honors
Distributions: (D3)

Fall 2019
HON Section: 01 TBA Jeannie R Albrecht
HON Section: 09 TBA Iris Howley

CSCI 494 (S) Senior Thesis: Computer Science
Computer Science thesis; this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494).
Class Format: independent study
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on class participation, presentations, and the final written report
Prerequisites: CSCI 493
Enrollment Preferences: open to senior Computer Science majors with permission of instructor
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D3)

Spring 2020
HON Section: 01  TBA  Jeannie R Albrecht

CSCI 497 (F)  Independent Reading: Computer Science
Directed independent reading in Computer Science.
Prerequisites: permission of department
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D3)

Fall 2019
IND Section: 01  TBA  Jeannie R Albrecht

CSCI 498 (S)  Independent Reading: Computer Science
Directed independent reading in Computer Science.
Class Format: lecture/laboratory
Prerequisites: permission of department
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D3)

Spring 2020
IND Section: 01  TBA  Jeannie R Albrecht

Winter Study ---------------------------------------------------------------

CSCI 10  (W)  C, Unix and Software Tools
This course serves as a guided introduction to the Unix operating system and the C programming language. The course is designed for individuals who understand basic program development techniques as discussed in an introductory programming course (Computer Science 134 or equivalent), but who wish to become familiar with a broader variety of computer systems and programming languages. Students in this course will work on Unix workstations, available in the Department's laboratory. By the end of the course, students will have developed proficiency with Unix and the C programming language. The exact topics to be covered may vary depending upon the needs and desires of the students.
Requirements/Evaluation: completion of labs and assignments
Prerequisites: CSCI 134 (or equivalent programming experience)
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: preference will be given to students who have not yet completed a CSCI course at the 300 level or above
Grading: pass/fail only
Materials/Lab Fee: cost of texts

Winter 2020
LEC Section: 01  TWR 10:00 am - 12:50 pm  Lida P. Doret

CSCI 11 (W)  Video Game Appreciation (1972-1992)
Many video games from the 1970s and 1980s are still enjoyable today. However, most classics cannot be fully appreciated without proper historical context. For example, [Pong] (Atari, 1972) is trivial when played with modern gamepads but is very challenging with paddle controllers; [Missile
Command] (Atari, 1980) fills with tension when its political backdrop is considered; [Pac-Man] (Namco, 1980) is a nimble orchestration when the AI governing each ghost is understood; [Super Mario Bros.] (Nintendo, 1985) is revolutionary only after playing previous platformers; [Mortal Kombat] (Midway, 1992) is only controversial when compared to previous fighting games. Students will immerse themselves in the first 20 years of commercial video game history through instruction, game play, and game development. We will meet three times a week for 2 hour lectures on digital art, music, culture, technology, business, law, and the people behind developments in these areas. The classes are augmented twice a week by 60-minute sessions in the new Williams College video game lab. Throughout the course, special emphasis will be placed on the constraints that shaped the design of classic video games. At the end of the term students demonstrate their newfound knowledge by developing a retro-inspired video game. Enrollment preference will be given to students who have completed CSCI 134 or have a skill related to video game development (e.g. programming, playtesting, level design, storytelling, pixel art, sound engineering, etc.)

Requirements/Evaluation:  video game
Prerequisites:  none
Enrollment Limit:  16
Enrollment Preferences:  students who have completed CSCI 134 or can demonstrate a skill related to video game development
Grading:  pass/fail only
Materials/Lab Fee:  $30 for software licenses and routine equipment maintenance of the video game lab

Winter 2020
LEC Section: 01    MWF 1:00 pm - 3:50 pm     Aaron M. Williams

CSCI 12  (W)  Geometry in Stained Glass

Geometry allows us to observe mathematical objects from different viewpoints. It may be approached both visually and algebraically. Building geometric structures in the real world allows us to view them from different angles and sometimes, gain new insights. In this class students will work together to design and build a pentagonal tiling in stained glass. There are only fifteen types of convex pentagons that can tile a two-dimensional surface, and the secret behind their assembly lies in the relationship between edges and angles. We will use Euclidian geometry, drafting by hand using only straightedge and compass, to figure out angles and dimensions. Students will then learn how to cut precise shapes in colored glass, wrap them in copper and solder together into a stained glass window. Students will also work individually or in small groups on projects of their own choosing. These may be two- or three-dimensional geometric figures, including those on non-Euclidian surfaces. In past years a student of organic chemistry modeled cyclohexane and a physics major, the spectral emissions of a star. In 2018 the class built a mirrored glass quasicrystal. Students interested in mathematical tiling patterns, networks, cellular or molecular assembly, crystallography, or simply curious about geometry would be welcome in this class. Exhibition of work on the last day of Winter Study is mandatory. All students must participate in setting up the exhibition and tidying the lab at the end of Winter Study. Please note: we will not be painting images on glass. Adjunct Instructor Bio: Debora Coombs has an MFA from the Royal College of Art in London, England. Her stained glass work is commissioned and exhibited internationally. Debora’s interest in tiling patterns and mathematical projection led to a collaboration with Williams Professor of Computer Science Duane Bailey. Their sculptures are currently on exhibit in the SCHOW science library.

Requirements/Evaluation:  short paper and final project or presentation
Prerequisites:  none, however, self-motivated students with good hand skills, patience and an interest in mathematics will find the course most rewarding
Enrollment Limit:  10
Enrollment Preferences:  preference to seniors
Grading:  pass/fail only
Materials/Lab Fee:  $285
Attributes:  EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Winter 2020
LEC Section: 01    M-F 10:00 am - 12:50 pm     Debora Coombs

CSCI 13  (W)  Designing for People

Cross-listings:  PSYC 13  CSCI 13
Primary Cross-listing

Many technologically-innovative and aesthetically-beautiful products fail because they are not sensitive to the attitudes and behaviors of the people who interact with them. The field of Human Factors combines aspects of psychology with software development, education, architecture, and physiology, and other fields, to design objects that provide an easy, enjoyable, efficient and safe user experience. The course will provide students with a theoretical framework for analyzing usability, as well as practical knowledge of a variety of human factors testing methodologies. The course will examine the usability of a wide variety of designed objects, including buildings, publications, websites, software applications, and consumer electronics gadgets. Students will demonstrate their understanding of human factors theory through a short paper and participation in class discussion. Students identify a usability problem and design a solution which they will evaluate by heuristic analysis and a usability test with 8-10 human test subjects. Findings will be presented on the final day. Adjunct Instructor Bio: Rich Cohen ‘82 has designed communications, social networking and education applications used by over 100 million people and has conducted usability research on four continents.

Requirements/Evaluation: short paper and final project or presentation
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: Instructor seeks a diverse group of students with interests in design, psychology, and human-computer interaction
Grading: pass/fail only
Materials/Lab Fee: none

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
PSYC 13 CSCI 13

Winter 2020
LEC Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 11:50 am Rich Cohen

CSCI 14 (W) Ethics of Technology
Cross-listings: CSCI 14 PHIL 14 STS 14

Secondary Cross-listing

A prominent company recently realized the machine-learning algorithm trained on its past hiring data had learned a bias against female candidates and so was unsuitable for resume evaluation. But given competing definitions of fairness, how should we decide what it means for an algorithm to be unbiased? Machine vision algorithms are systematically less likely to recognize faces of people of color. Since many face recognition algorithms are used for surveillance, would improving these algorithms promote justice? Deep fakes may pose serious challenges to democratic discourse, as faked videos of political leaders making incendiary statements cast doubt on the provenance of real videos. Do the researchers developing these algorithms, often academics funded by National Science Foundation grants, have an obligation to desist? In a field filled with such vexing questions, the ethical issue most commonly addressed by the media is whether a self-driving car should swerve to hit one person in order to avoid hitting two. In this class, we will go beyond the headlines to explore the ethics of technology. We will discuss issues such as transparency, bias and fairness, surveillance, automation and work, the politics of artifacts, the epistemology of deep fakes, and more. Our discussion will rely on articles from the course packet, enlivened by discussions with experts in the field over Skype. Students will apply their ethical knowledge to write multiple newspaper length op-eds arguing for their views. If students choose to submit these op-eds for publication, the instructor will coach them on appropriate procedures and venues. Adjunct Instructor Bio: Kathleen Creel ’10 is an advanced doctoral student in the Department of History & Philosophy of Science at the University of Pittsburgh. Her research focuses on epistemic and ethical issues in computer science and its scientific applications, such as transparency in machine learning and the ability of algorithmic decisions to provide reasons.

Requirements/Evaluation: 3 op-eds for a total of 10 pages
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: based on a written paragraph expressing interest
Grading: pass/fail only
Materials/Lab Fee: $20

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
CSCI 14 PHIL 14 STS 14
CSCI 15 (W) An Introduction to the Modern Internet
This course is about the basics of the modern Internet: how it works, and how it is used in our daily lives. We will focus on issues of security and privacy. We will try to answer two main questions in this course: How is information transmitted online? Who has access to this information, and how do they use it? Students will learn about and discuss these topics based on readings and lectures, and will do a small number of hands-on projects during class. The final assessment will be a 10-page paper on a related topic. No background in computer science or programming is required or expected.

Requirements/Evaluation: 10-page paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 30
Enrollment Preferences: students who have not taken a computer science course should have priority
Grading: pass/fail only

CSCI 23 (W) Introduction to Research and Development in Computing
An independent project is completed in collaboration with a member of the Computer Science Department. The projects undertaken will either involve the exploration of a research topic related to the faculty member's work or the implementation of a software system that will extend the students design and implementation skills. It is expected that the student will spend 20 hours per week working on the project. At the completion of the project, each student will submit a 10-page written report or the software developed together with appropriate documentation of its behavior and design. In addition, students will be expected to give a short presentation or demonstration of their work. Prior to the beginning of the Winter Study registration period, any student interested in enrolling must have arranged with a faculty member in the department to serve as their supervisor for the course.

Class Format: TBA individually arranged
Requirements/Evaluation: final paper and presentation/demonstration
Prerequisites: project must be preapproved by the faculty supervisor
Enrollment Limit: POI
Enrollment Preferences: preference given to sophomores and juniors
Grading: pass/fail only
Materials/Lab Fee: none

CSCI 28 (W) Solution Design and Product Management
Cross-listings: CSCI 28 ECON 28
Secondary Cross-listing
Google Glass, Blackberry Storm, and the initial Obamacare Website represent just a few of the many failures that litter the IT project graveyard: 40 to 60 percent of large technology projects fail. All too often, the cause has little to do with the quality of technical engineering. More often, companies choose the wrong problem to solve or the wrong way to solve it. Google failed to account for the Google Glass price tag and privacy concerns. Blackberry failed to fully appreciate the touchscreen revolution. The Obamacare website failed to address management issues. The underlying conflict is that engineers and IT teams like to be told what to build, but customers often do not know what they want or how to express it. Identifying the right problem, designing the right solution, communicating the correct specifications to engineers, and delivering the right product to primary stakeholders are all difficult challenges crucial for successful product development. This course will explore various frameworks that product managers use to address these challenges. In doing so, we will model interactions between market forces, corporate directives, engineering challenges, and user
experiences to interrogate the resilience of our ideas. We will also analyze and critique methodologies presented in readings by technology management prophets Marty Cagan, Steve Blank, Don Norman, Steve Krug and Eric Ries. Throughout the course, students will work in small teams to develop their own product management toolkit and deploy it towards solving a technology problem of each team’s own choosing. Adjunct Instructor Bio: Allan Wellenstein is a senior vice-president at DataArt, a global technology consulting firm and the head of their Solution Design consulting practice. Allan has over 15 years of experience helping some of the world largest companies design and implement massive technology transformations. Though technically headquartered in New York City, he lives with his wife and three children in Pittsfield, MA.

Requirements/Evaluation: final project or presentation

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: students will be asked to submit a brief paragraph describing their interest in the course and what they hope to get out of it

Grading: pass/fail only

Materials/Lab Fee: $10 and approximately $30 for books

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

CSCI 28 ECON 28

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Winter 2020

LEC Section: 01 MWF 1:00 pm - 2:50 pm Allan Wellenstein

CSCI 31 (W) Senior Thesis: Computer Science

To be taken by students registered for Computer Science 493-494.

Class Format: independent study

Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2020

HON Section: 01 TBA Jeannie R Albrecht

CSCI 99 (W) Independent Study: Computer Science

Open to upperclass students. Students interested in doing an independent project (99) during Winter Study must make prior arrangements with a faculty sponsor. The student and professor then complete the independent study proposal form available online. The deadline is typically in late September. Proposals are reviewed by the pertinent department and the Winter Study Committee. Students will be notified if their proposal is approved prior to the Winter Study registration period.

Class Format: independent study

Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2020

IND Section: 01 TBA Jeannie R Albrecht