CS242 – Computer Networks

Instructor and support

• Who:
  – Christine Bassem

• When:
  – Lectures: Mondays and Thursdays from 10am to 12:45pm EST
  – Office hours: Last 45 minutes of every lecture, and by request Tuesday evening

• Where:
  – In the matrix 😊

• No really! We’ll be using:
  – Zoom (Lectures and office hours)
  – Piazza (All communication)
  – Slack (Fun stuff)
  – GitHub (All submissions and grading)
Textbook

- Computer Networking: A Top-Down Approach
  - by James Kurose and Keith Ross
  - 6th edition or higher

Course structure

- As you know, we will be learning about Networks in 6 condensed weeks.
  - So, this will be a very fast paced course!
  - Please feel free to talk to me if you are not comfortable with the pace of the course.

- The course has the following components:
  - Pre-lecture Assignments: 25%
  - Post-lecture Assignments: 25%
  - Final Project: 20%
  - Quizzes: 20%
  - Class Participation: 10%
Course components (1)

- There are 13 lectures as shown on the course schedule. Each lecture will have:
  - Reading from the textbook (Already posted on the course webpage)
  - Slides (Posted weekly on the course webpage)
  - Videos (On YouTube and shared weekly via Piazza)
  - Pre-lecture exercise (Posted on the course webpage and submitted via GitHub or Forms)
  - Post-lecture exercise (Posted on the course webpage and submitted via GitHub or Forms)

All of these components complement each other, and are necessary for your learning experience.

Course components (2)

- There are 2 online quizzes:
  - Dates are indicated in the course schedule
  - They will be open-notes
  - Might have a bit of programming

- There is a final project to be started in the last 2 weeks of the course.
  - It will be an implementation of a Networking application / protocol

- There will be no final exam 😊
Course components (3)

- Class participation is very critical in this remote environment.
  - If you don’t attend a lecture, without giving me a heads up, I will get worried and will have to nag-mail you until you re-assure me that you are okay!

- Does participation mean only attendance?
  - Nope 😐
  - ...

Class participation

- Participation has a lot of components.
- Its main goal is for me to know that you are okay and always part of the discussion.

- Here are some examples of good participation:
  - Attending class (I think you might have guessed that already 😊)
  - Keeping your video on during our meetings
  - Reacting to my questions and comments with a thumbs up or thumbs down at least (and laughing at my jokes, JK!)
  - Posting questions on Piazza
  - Answering questions on Piazza
  - Participating in the activities on Slack
Assignments

- There are two types of assignments in this course:
  - Pre-lecture exercises
  - Post-lecture exercises

- I always offer late passes in my courses, because "life happens".
- Due to the different structure of this course, I will be doing the following instead:
  - No late submissions allowed for the pre-lecture exercises
  - One day (24 hours) late submissions allowed for post-lecture exercises
    - You don’t need to ask for permission
    - I highly recommend that you finish things on time though

Course readings

- You will notice that the course readings are a lot!
  - You will typically be reading at least 30 pages per lecture

- Here is my advice when you are studying:
  - Do a first pass on the required reading by scanning the content and understanding figures
  - Watch the lecture videos and take notes
  - Go back to the textbook, do a second pass, and mark those notes on the text

- You might prefer to take notes on the slides.
  - They contain a good amount of descriptive text
  - But, the textbook should be your source if you want to know more
Collaboration Policy *

• You will be expected to work with a partner on all course assignments, as well as the final project.

• For assignments, I will randomly pick the two-team members.
  – Pairings will be for the duration of a whole week
  – I will switch it up every week

• For the project, you can partner with any of your classmates.

• The pairing will be random, but I will try to avoid conflicts (in terms of local time, and working style).
  – Fill out this quick form, to tell me more about your working style

* More details can be found on the course website: https://cs.wellesley.edu/~cs242/