

CS 105: Programming Languages

Fall 2021

<https://canvas.tufts.edu/courses/32301/>

Class Sessions	Virtual
Instructor	Richard Townsend, richard@cs.tufts.edu
Richard's Office Hours (Halligan 230)	Mondays 11:00am-12:00pm EST Tuesdays 2:00pm-3:00pm EST (also available by appointment)
Richard joins TA Office Hours	MW 1:30-2:45pm EST (e.g., class time)

Course Overview

Summary

CS 105 introduces you—through extensive practice—to ideas and techniques that are found everywhere in today's programming languages. You will learn high-level, flexible programming skills that are applicable to older languages, popular modern languages, and even languages that don't yet exist. No matter what language you work in, when you finish 105, you'll be writing more powerful programs using less code. At the same time, you will learn the mathematical foundations needed to talk precisely about languages and programs: abstract syntax, formal semantics, and type systems.

You will explore and apply programming language concepts through multiple case studies, conducted using (mostly) tiny languages that are designed to help you learn. In any given case study, you may act as a practitioner (by writing code in a language), as an implementor (by working on an interpreter for the language), as a designer (by inventing semantics for a related language), or as a scholar (by proving mathematical properties of the language).

Logistics

Due to room booking constraints imposed by COVID-19, this course will operate with both virtual and in-person content (or all virtual for Online students). Lecture videos will be viewed online, while recitations and office hours will be offered in-person (unless you are an Online student).

The main point of access for the course is the Canvas website (the link is at the top of this document): it provides all the lectures, readings, homeworks, solutions, and recitation materials. There are Canvas modules organized by week (telling you what to do and when to do it) and those organized by unit (containing detailed lecture videos and check-your-understanding questions).

To ensure that you stay on top of the course material, we suggest this weekly flow of tasks:

1. Watch the lecture videos (and answer the check-your-understanding questions) associated with a given unit by the deadline suggested on Canvas. This will ensure you're prepared for assignments and recitations. **Recitations will not be useful to you if you haven't watched the associated videos first.**

2. Read over the homework spec *before* attending recitation. Ask questions about it on Piazza and in office hours, or talk about it with your classmates.
3. Go to recitation, where you will get supervised practice working on problems that resemble the homework problems.
4. Work on your assignment, first by doing the reading and comprehension questions and then by completing the programming and/or proof problems. Make sure you spread this out so you have breaks between your 105 work. Post on piazza or come to OH if you need assistance.

If you feel like you're falling behind or are overwhelmed with 105, please reach out to a member of the course staff; we want to help you!!!

Prerequisites

- CS 15 Data Structures: You need substantial programming experience to keep up with the homework, particularly working with dynamically allocated (i.e., heap-allocated) data structures and recursive functions. We will also be referencing many classic data structures (stacks, queues, lists, search trees) and algorithms (sorts, graph algorithms) throughout the course.
- CS/MATH 61 Discrete Math: You need some experience proving theorems, especially by induction. You should also be comfortable reading and writing formal mathematical notation.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, students should be able to

1. Design code using algebraic laws.
2. Read and write code that uses functional programming techniques.
3. Recognize the merits of polymorphism, type checking, and type inference.
4. Use functional and object-oriented language features to hide implementation details.
5. Understand precise specifications of how programming languages work.
6. Mathematically prove the behavior of programs written in a given language.

Technical Resources

Office Hours

This course is challenging, but we want to help you succeed! If you need help understanding a concept, tackling an assignment, or dealing with a pernicious bug, you can participate in our TA office hours sessions. You can also attend Richard's office hours for any of these reasons, to discuss any issues you're having with the course, or just to say "hi!"

Office hour assistance is meant to help you along or provide a nudge in the right direction; we expect that you will have tried to grapple with your issue on your own before asking for help (but do ask for help if you need it!). To help you follow this practice, you are required to provide a

specific topic or question to receive help (see below for how this will be implemented). Here are some *poor* examples of specific topics/questions: “why doesn’t my program work?”, “debugging”, “impcore”. Here are *much better* examples: “why does my function produce a number when it should produce a list?”, “debugging a syntax error”, “calling a function in impcore”.

The full office hours schedule is posted and kept up to date as a pinned Piazza post; make sure you check it before trekking to Halligan or trying to join a Zoom meeting! The logistics for office hours are a bit different depending on how you’re taking this course:

1. On-the-ground students: office hours (other than Richard’s) will take place in the upstairs kitchen in Halligan Hall. There is a whiteboard there where you can write your name and your question/topic for help. TAs will prioritize groups of students who want to talk about similar issues; note that groups cannot look at any students’ code, algebraic laws, or function contracts. If you need help with algebraic laws or code that you’ve written or want to write, you must request private help.
2. Online students: office hours will take place over Zoom. You will use a wait-list system built with Google Sheets to provide your name and your question/topic for help; you will then join the waiting room of a TA’s Zoom session until it’s your turn. The Zoom ID of the TA on-duty will be provided in the same piazza post that contains the office hours schedule.

Piazza

We will be using Piazza for class discussion; you can get to the 105 page via [this link](#) or on the Syllabus page of Canvas. **Piazza will host all of our major course announcements; it is your responsibility to check in regularly to avoid missing any important information.**

In general, you should post all questions related to the course on Piazza; post publicly if at all possible, as other students may have similar questions or be able to help you faster than the course staff. Please post privately to the course staff if your question reveals individual work (e.g., algebraic laws or code) or concerns your grades.

Textbooks

This course has two required textbooks:

- *Programming Languages: Build, Prove, and Compare*. Norman Ramsey. Tufts University, Fall 2020.

You must have this specific edition! It can be purchased from the main CS office, mailed to you (contact Donna Cirelli at dcirelli@tufts.edu), or you can borrow a copy from anyone who has taken the course since Fall 2020.

- *Seven Lessons in Program Design*. Norman Ramsey.

This short booklet is available on our course website.

There is also one optional textbook that is useful for the few ML assignments we have:

- *Elements of ML Programming, ML97 Edition*. Jeffrey Ullman. Pearson, 1997.

Tentative Schedule

The tentative schedule for the course is displayed in the calendar below; topics and assignments are subject to change, and may be updated as the semester progresses (you will be informed of any changes as soon as they happen). For each week, the calendar displays the topic of Monday and Wednesday's lectures, the homework due that week (all due on Tuesdays **except for the emboldened Type Systems homework, which is due on a Friday**), and the recitation topic. Canvas provides the specific dates and deadlines for each lecture and assignment.

Week	Monday	Homework	Wednesday	Recitation
Sep 6	<i>(No Class)</i>	—	Introduction; Impcore	Impcore
Sep 13	Operational Semantics	Impcore	Operational Semantics	Opsem
Sep 20	Scheme I	Opsem	Scheme II	Scheme
Sep 27	Scheme II	Scheme	Scheme III	HOFs
Oct 4	Scheme III	HOFs	<i>(No Class)</i>	Continuations
Oct 11	<i>(No Class)</i>	Continuations	ML	<i>(No Recitation)</i>
Oct 18	ML	—	Type Systems	ML
Oct 25	Type Systems	ML	Type Systems	Type Systems I
Nov 1	Type Inference	Type Systems	Type Inference	Type Systems II
Nov 8	Type Inference	—	Modules	Type Inference
Nov 15	Modules	Type Inference	Lambda Calculus	Modules
Nov 22	Ethics in Software	Modules	<i>(No Class)</i>	<i>(No Recitation)</i>
Nov 29	Smalltalk	—	Smalltalk	Smalltalk I
Dec 6	Smalltalk	—	Smalltalk	Smalltalk II
Dec 13	Course Wrap-Up	Smalltalk	<i>(Classes end)</i>	<i>(Classes end)</i>

Assessments and Grading

Your course grade will be produced as a weighted sum of your scores in five categories:

1. Check-Your-Understanding Questions (10%)
2. Recitations (15%)
3. Participation (5%)
4. Homework: Programming and Proof Problems (70%)

Although your ultimate course grade will be a conventional letter, your specific work will be graded on a scale of No Credit, Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good, and Excellent. These grades correspond to numeric values of 0, 65, 75, 85, 95, and 100, respectively. For example, if an assignment has 3 equally weighted components and you received a Good on two parts and a Very Good on the third,

your grade for that assignment would be approximately $.33 * 85 + .33 * 85 + .33 * 95 = 87\%$. In a typical class, a consistent record of Very Good work will lead to a course grade in the A range. Work rated Good corresponds to a wide range of passing grades centered around B. Work rated Fair will lead to low but satisfactory course grades around a C; if a significant fraction of your work is Poor, you can expect an unsatisfactory grade.

Check-Your-Understanding Questions

These questions are interwoven with the lecture videos to maximize your learning and engagement. You may encounter free response, coding, or multiple-choice questions. Multiple-choice questions are graded automatically by Canvas (based on correctness) and are the only ones that will affect your grade; the other questions are simply there to improve your learning.

Each set of multiple-choice lecture questions is graded as follows:

- **Very Good:** All answers are correct.
- **Good:** A majority of answers are correct.
- **Fair:** A majority of answers are incorrect.
- **Poor:** All answers are incorrect.

Recitations

Each recitation is graded on a three-point scale:

- **Very Good:** You attend recitation and contribute with a question, answer, idea, or solution.
- **Fair:** You simply attend recitation.
- **No Credit:** You do not attend recitation.

We drop your two lowest recitation grades, effectively letting you miss two recitations at no penalty. There is no such thing as an “excused absence” from recitation, so if you need to miss one just let your recitation leader know. If you need to miss more than two recitations due to a personal emergency, please explain the situation to your academic dean and ask them to make contact with Richard.

Participation

Throughout the course we will ask you to fill out surveys that help us evaluate the course, and we may also ask you to report information about how you engage with the course (e.g., how long an assignment takes you, how often you attend office hours, etc.). Responding to all of these will earn you top marks for participation.

Homework

To receive a grade, all homework files must be submitted via the course-specific submission scripts that will be provided on each assignment. No submissions will be accepted via email or other means. Each assignment is due at 11:59:00PM on its due date. To avoid missing this strict deadline, you should submit whatever you have a bit earlier (or much earlier!) even if incomplete; you may submit as many times as you wish before the deadline. We will always grade the latest submission.

Comprehension Question Grades A set of comprehension questions (CQs) is associated with each homework assignment. Your answers to these questions are graded based on the number of questions answered and the correctness of each answer, roughly following this scale:

- **Excellent:** All answers are completely correct.
- **Very good:** All answers are mostly correct.
- **Good:** A majority of answers are mostly correct.
- **Fair:** Most answers are incorrect, but all were reasonably attempted.
- **Poor:** Most answers are incorrect or blank.
- **No Credit:** No answers are provided.

Programming and Proof Problem Grades The programming and proof problems on each assignment will be graded both for correctness (e.g., Do your programs pass our automated tests? Are your theoretical proofs and rules accurate and complete?) and for structure and organization (e.g., Does your code follow our course coding standards? Are your algebraic laws accurate and complete?). Correctness is typically evaluated by automated testing scripts that explain why you got the grade you did and what mistakes you may have made. Structure and organization is evaluated by our course staff. Both of these components are graded with a coarse five-point scale:

- **Excellent:** Your submission is outstanding in all respects. It is rare to receive an excellent unless your work exceeds our expectations.
- **Very Good:** Your submission does everything asked for, and does it well. This is the normal top grade for an assignment.
- **Good:** Your submission demonstrates quality and significant learning.
- **Fair:** Your submission is quite lacking in one or more aspects; key issues need to be addressed. This is the lowest satisfactory grade.
- **Poor:** Your submission shows little evidence of effort or has other serious deficiencies. This is an unsatisfactory grade.
- **No Credit:** No submission provided OR the submission exhibits plagiarism OR the submission violates a rule that the homework indicated would result in no credit.

Late Policy

Each student is automatically issued **seven “late tokens”** to be used on assignments. It is your responsibility to track how many late days you’ve used over the semester. By expending a late token, you get a 24-hour extension on an assignment. This extension happens automatically: when you turn in any piece of work past the deadline, the course software charges you one late token. Expenditure of late tokens is governed by these rules:

- At most **one** late token can be used on a single assignment. **No submission will be accepted more than one day late.**

- Once you are out of late tokens, late homework will no longer be accepted and will receive a score of No Credit.
- If you are pair programming with another student (on an assignment that allows it), submitting late will expend a token from **both** partners. Furthermore, both partners must have enough late tokens to receive credit for a late submission. For example, if one student in a group has a late token but the other does not, both students will receive No Credit if the submission is late.

You should think of late tokens as extensions you have been granted ahead of time and use them when you might have otherwise tried to ask for an extension.

If you experience an extraordinary difficulty, such as serious illness, family emergencies, or other extraordinary unpleasant events, your first step should be to contact your advising dean as soon as you can: explain the situation to them and ask them to contact Richard. Your dean will work with Richard to make appropriate arrangements. **IMPORTANT: The earlier you notify your dean, the more flexibility the course staff will have to make appropriate arrangements.**

Regrades

If you want to request a regrade for an objective error on our part, you must submit a private request to the Instructors via Piazza explaining the error. The deadline for these requests is **one week** from the time the grades were posted for a given assignment; no exceptions to this policy will be made. A regrade request may or may not result in a new grade being assigned. You are always welcome to ask for an explanation of the grade you received.

Collaboration and Academic Honesty

If you have **any** questions about the below policies or a specific situation dealing with academic integrity, do not hesitate to ask Richard. All students are expected to read and adhere to the [Tufts Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Collaboration

In general, you are encouraged to discuss the lecture content, reading material, and the questions posed on assignments with your classmates. However, **you must not discuss anything that you produce for an assignment with classmates in any form (e.g., English, pseudocode, pictures, etc.)**. Examples include proofs, code, algebraic laws, and function contracts. You may not show your work at this level to other students nor may you look at others' work at this level. This also applies to testing and debugging: you may not test or debug another student's code or let them test or debug your code. Due to this policy, any Piazza post that discloses your work on an assignment must be posted privately.

Lifting partial or complete solutions from anyone (classmates, online sources, strangers) is completely prohibited. You may not work on the specific problems with anyone other than TAs or Richard, and you should not use the internet in any capacity to help solve any specific problem. No questions, student solutions, or instructor-provided solutions should be posted online in any capacity (except as a submission to Canvas); **this means that you are prohibited from posting**

any of your work for 105 in a public Github repository.

If an assignment contains a *pair programming* component and you choose to pair program, you are welcome to discuss/view any part of that component with your partner, but not any other students.

Policies for Students Retaking CS 105

If you are repeating the course or any part of it (e.g., you withdrew or dropped after doing one or more assignments), you must let Richard know at the beginning of the semester. In this case, you are expected to abide by the following policies:

- There is no acceptable use of instructor-provided solutions from prior semesters. If you have kept any such solutions, destroy them.
- If you have written your own solutions for past semesters, it is acceptable to consult them for ideas, and it is acceptable to submit parts verbatim. Such use must be explicitly acknowledged in a README.
- In every homework, your README file must note what work is new, what work is based on work from a prior semester, and what work is submitted verbatim from a prior semester. Even if nothing is from a prior semester, your README file must disclose this information. (README files are anonymized, but PDFs are not. If you wish to preserve your privacy from graders, consider removing your name from any PDFs you submit.)
- In every homework, you must cite collaboration with every partner with whom you worked on the assignment in a past semester—even if none of that partner work survives

Academic Honesty

Any violation of the above policies will be considered cheating, and all students involved in any capacity will be forwarded directly to the Office of Student Affairs, who will investigate the case independently. Their sanctions range from horrible to inconceivably horrible. It's not worth it.

Inclusivity, Accessibility, and Additional Help

This course strives for inclusion of all participants, regardless of personal identity (gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, etc.), socio-economic background, disabilities, or neurodivergence. In the classroom and our discussion forums, everyone is expected to treat everyone else with dignity and respect. If you feel unwelcome or mistreated for any reason by either another student, a TA, or the course itself, please let an appropriate member of the teaching staff know so we can work to make things better. If you wish to speak with someone outside of the course, you're encouraged to contact Edward Alexander Jr. (Ed.Alexander@tufts.edu), Diversity Program Administrator for the CS department.

COMP 105 can be especially difficult for first-generation college students and for members of historically underrepresented groups in computing, who may not have the family or social support that helps them develop their skills in “how to be a college student.” If you are a student in either of these categories, you are strongly encouraged to meet with Richard or contact him early in the term to talk about your support system.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Tufts University values the diversity of our body of students, staff, and faculty and recognizes the important contribution each student makes to our unique community. Tufts is committed to providing equal access and support to all qualified students through the provision of reasonable accommodations so that each student may fully participate in the Tufts experience. If a student has a disability that requires reasonable accommodations, they should please contact the StAAR Center (formerly Student Accessibility Services) at StaarCenter@tufts.edu or 617-627-4539 to make an appointment with an accessibility representative to determine appropriate accommodations. **Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively; all accommodation notes must be provided to the instructor within one week of the note being written to guarantee consideration.**

Academic Support at the StAAR Center

The StAAR Center (formerly the Academic Resource Center and Student Accessibility Services) offers a variety of resources to all students (both undergraduate and graduate) in the Schools of Arts and Sciences, and Engineering, the SMFA, and The Fletcher School; services are free to all enrolled students. Students may make an appointment to work on any writing-related project or assignment, attend subject tutoring in a variety of disciplines, or meet with an academic coach to hone fundamental academic skills like time management or overcoming procrastination. Students can make an appointment for any of these services by visiting tutorfinder.studentservices.tufts.edu, or by visiting students.tufts.edu/staar-center.

Religious Holy Days

We will reasonably accommodate any student who, for reasons of observing religious holy days, will be absent from recitation or experience any hardship in the completion of their work during the holy days. Please contact the instructor in advance of the holy day if you will miss recitation or if you need any additional accommodation (such as for assignments); reasonable accommodations will be allowed at no penalty **only if the instructor is notified well in advance.**

Acknowledgements

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