

Course options

Visible

Syllabus

Course Information

Computer Science 2211

Software Tools and System Programming

Course Outline – **Summer Evening 2026**

Calendar Description

This course provides an introduction to software tools and systems level programming. Topics include: understanding how programs run (compilation, linking, and loading), an introduction to a complex operating system (UNIX), scripting languages, and the C programming language. As time permits, other topics will be chosen from: system calls, memory management, libraries, multi-component program organization and builds, version control, debuggers and profilers.

Prerequisites

- [Either] Computer Science 1027a/b, 1037a/b, or 2101a/b with a grade of at least 65%
- [-Or-] Integrated Science 1001X with a grade of at least 60%.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Antirequisites

Software Engineering 2250a/b and the former Software Engineering 201a/b

Instructor

Will Beldman

Office:

Office Hours:

E-Mail: wbeldman@uwo.ca

Office: N/A

Office Hours: During lab time or by appointment

E-Mail:

Teaching Assistant Consulting

Questions regarding assignments or lecture materials can be directed to a Teaching Assistant (TA). Questions requiring further information can be dealt with by contacting the course instructor.

Email contact

Occasionally email messages may be sent to the entire class or to students individually. Email will be sent to your UWO email address as assigned to you by Western Technology Services (WTS). It is your responsibility to read this email on a frequent and regular basis.

You should note that email at the university and through other providers have quotas or limits on the amount of space that is dedicated to each account. Unchecked email may accumulate beyond those limits and you may be unable to retrieve important messages from the university. Losing email is not an acceptable excuse for not knowing about the information that was sent.

Email contact with the course instructor is encouraged, and I endeavour to reply to messages within 24 hours between Monday and Friday and within 48 hours on Saturday, Sunday and holidays.

Students can ask questions via email, however if there are any large, somewhat complicated issues, it is recommended to discuss them during office hours. You **must** use your UWO account in order to write to the course email for security and privacy reasons.

NOTE: In the subject line, please include **[2211]** and include a title or topic description of the contents of the email in the subject line and send e-mails from your @uwo.ca e-mail account. The instructor will be unable to respond to questions about your personal grades, assignment, etc. if they are not sent via a known @uwo.ca e-mail account for security and privacy reasons.

For example, please ensure your e-mails look like this:

From: Student Name <sname123@uwo.ca>

Subject: [2211] Assignment 3 part 1: Question about strings

and not like this:

From: Crazy ALIAS name <super+crazy_email@weirddomain.tv>

Subject: RE: RE: FWD: re: Subject FW: Bunch O' Questions

Course Schedule

Lecture Times - XX

Lab Times - XX

Check your personal schedule to determine which time slot you registered for

Course Materials

Recommended Textbooks

- S. Das, *Your UNIX/Linux: The Ultimate Guide*. McGraw-Hill: 3rd edition, 2013.
- K.N. King, *C Programming: A Modern Approach*. Norton: 2nd edition, 2008.

Course Topics

The course will address as many of the following topics as time will allow:

- **UNIX Fundamentals:** UNIX vs. Windows; logging on; files and directories; path names, and directory and file structure; editors; shells; I/O redirection; UNIX concurrency (processes); utilities; file permissions and security; regular expressions; shell programming.
- **C programming:** compiling, linking and loading; data types and operators; control structures; formatted I/O; file I/O; connections between I/O and the underlying operating system; function calls; structs; enumerations; arrays; pointers (pointer arithmetic, pointers and arrays, arrays of pointers, pointers to functions); memory management; linked lists and other dynamically allocated data structures; strings; calling C from UNIX; general libraries; standard libraries and headers; the C preprocessor; C program organization.
- **UNIX Tools:** building and managing multi-component programs; the make utility; version control and configuration management; debuggers; code performance and profiling.

Course Web Page

The course website is located within Brightspace. To access the website, navigate to <https://westernu.brightspace.com> and login with your university personal computer account (user id and password). Lecture notes, assignments and class information will be posted at this site. You are responsible for checking the course site regularly.

Online conduct

For any class content not delivered in person, the content may be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

If you are participating in a Zoom session, you should enable audio and video both at the beginning and the end of the session, but please leave your **audio muted** and **video turned off if you are not speaking**. Unnecessary audio/video uses up computing resources, bandwidth, distracts from the conversation.

For any online interaction related to this course (Zoom or otherwise), as one should with any online interaction, please conduct yourself with maturity and responsibility.

Computing facilities

Each student will be given an account on the Computer Science Department senior undergraduate computing facility, GAUL. GAUL accounts are automatically created, normally within 24 hours, after enrollment and the username/password would be the same as your UWO email account. If a student is able to log into his/her UWO email, but is unable to log into the GAUL systems after 3 days of enrollment, please submit a ticket. with Science Technology Services at <https://helpdesk.sci.uwo.ca>. In accepting the GAUL account, a student agrees to abide by the computer science department's *Rules of Ethical Conduct*.

Access to GAUL is **REQUIRED** to complete this course. You are welcome to work on assignments and labs on your own Unix/Linux environment if you wish but everything you submit must work on GAUL.

Time zone and Scheduling of Course Components

All times listed in this document and on the OWL course site are assumed to be in Eastern Time (the local time of the Western University campus) unless otherwise stated. Quizzes and exams will be scheduled for the Eastern Time Zone. Students must ensure they are available during these times even if they are located outside of Ontario. No alternative deadlines, quiz dates/times, or exam dates/times will be offered for students outside of the Eastern Time Zone.

Student Evaluation

Element	Weight
5 Assignments	30%
Midterm Exam	20%
10 (out of 12) Labs	10%
Final Exam	40%
Course Grade	100%
Bonus: One late penalty reversed	+1.5%

To be eligible to obtain a final grade of 60% or higher in this course, you must achieve

- at least a 50% weighted average on the midterm and final exam; and
- at least a 50% weighted average on the five assignments.

To be eligible to obtain a final grade of 50% or higher in this course, you must achieve

- at least a 40% weighted average on the midterm and final exam; and
- at least a 40% weighted average on the five assignments.

There will be no exceptions or waiving of this requirement for any reason or circumstance.

General information about missed coursework

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sept24.pdf

This policy does not apply to requests for Academic Consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person.

The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

Note: For course elements without flexibility, the policy permits students to request one absence without proof of documentation. The midterm exam is excluded from this policy. Since sufficient flexibility is built into all other course components, all academic consideration requests will require proof of documentation.

Lectures

This course is in person or "asynchronous" as required by the University.

If delivery is in person, accompanying course slides will be provided prior to the lecture.

If delivery is "asynchronous", all lecture materials will consist of videos and accompanying course slides.

Labs

- There will be 12 equal weight labs (1 per week or 2 per week for 6 week semesters)
- Lab details are scheduled each week
- Labs begin the first week of classes
- Lab descriptions will be posted on the course website.

- To be eligible for full marks, you must participate and complete at least 10 out of 12 labs, however participating and completing all 12 labs is recommended.
- The labs don't need to be handed in and reviewed because they are not an assessment of your ability to apply the subject matter. That's what the assignments are for. Labs act as practice/tutorial sessions where you can solve problems and interact with the TA and other students. **Collaboration and assisting others is encouraged.**
- Labs are the "attendance" portion of your grade. You will need to check in with the TA. The TA will mark your lab participation as complete or incomplete in Brightspace

Assignments

Students are expected to view the lecture materials and complete the online exercises to prepare for the assignments. Once the assignment is completed, all parts of the assignment must be submitted on the OWL site. It is the **student's responsibility** to ensure that all parts of each assignment are correctly uploaded and submitted in OWL, to ensure that the assignment can be marked accordingly.

Note: Assignments emailed to the instructor or teaching assistant **will not** be accepted, unless there are extenuating circumstances and prior approval from the instructor.

The following is the tentative assignment schedule (subject to change):

Assignment	Weight	Due Date (by 11:55 PM)
1	6%	Tuesday, May 12, 2025
2	6%	Tuesday, May 19, 2025
3	6%	Tuesday, May 26, 2025
4	6%	Tuesday, June 2, 2025
5	6%	Tuesday, June 9, 2025

The due dates of the assignments are shown in the table above. Please note that all these dates are tentative. The due dates will be confirmed when the assignments are posted on OWL. The dates will coincide with the class progression on subsequent topics.

If for any reason the assignment schedule given above cannot be adhered to, the assignment marks will be pro-rated. The five (5) assignments are worth 30% of the overall

mark for the course. If an assignment must be cancelled for any reason, the remaining assignment weights will be prorated to add up to 30%.

Assignment Marking:

- Assignments will be marked by a TA within 2 weeks of the assignment due date where possible.
- Individual marks and a detailed marking scheme will be posted on the OWL site once marks are returned.
- Questions regarding the marking of assignments should first be directed to the teaching assistant that graded your assignment and then the course instructor assigned to your section if your discussion with the teaching assistant was not satisfactory.
- Requests for mark adjustments will only be considered if they are made within **1 week** of receiving the assignment mark and have been first discussed with the teaching assistant who marked the assignment. **Assignment marks will be final after that date.**
- Requests for mark adjustments will only be considered when they are for adjustments of **5 marks or greater.**

Late Policy for Assignments

It is expected that students budget enough time to properly submit their assignments via OWL and allow for any unforeseen technological issues. 11:55 PM is a **hard deadline** and no extensions or relief will be given for assignments that just miss this deadline or miss the deadline due to technical issues. Students are expected to regularly backup their assignments and submit well before any deadline.

- Assignments will be accepted only up to two (2) days late.
- Assignments submitted after 11:55 PM on the due date but before 11:55 PM on the day after the posted due date will be **deducted 10% of the total grade.**
- Assignments submitted after 11:55 PM on the day after the due date but before 11:55 PM on the next day will be **deducted 25% of the total grade.**
- Assignments cannot be submitted after 11:55 PM on the next day after the posted assignment due date will receive a grade of zero (0).
- Late assignments will have a penalty of **10% or 25% of the maximum mark** for the assignment deducted based on time of submission as listed in OWL. Thus, if a

student would have received 90% on an assignment based on 100%, then if it was submitted five hours late the student would receive 80%, if it was submitted twenty five hours late the student would receive 65%

Exceptions to the deadline and late policy

Life happens and sometimes it will not be possible to submit your assignment on time. If events cause you to require flexibility, you can take advantage of one of the following options:

- **Academic counselling**

- https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/procedures/academic_consideration_f_or_absences/academic_considerations.html (or academic counselling appropriate for your program)
- If there are circumstances beyond your control that precludes you from submitting on time, connect with an academic counsellor who can recommend an extension on your behalf. Documentation will likely be required for the academic counsellor. **Documentation should not be sent to the instructor.**
- Then connect with the instructor to decide an appropriate deadline given your circumstances. If it is not possible to determine an appropriate deadline, the weight of the assignment will be placed on the final exam.
- This can be applied proactively or retroactively but only if recommended by the academic counsellor

- **One late penalty automatically reversed**

- Each assignment is worth 6% of your overall grade. A -25% late penalty on 6% is -1.5% of your overall grade. Therefore, each student will automatically receive the equivalent of +1.5% to their overall grade. In other words, **all students will receive +1.5% on their overall grade for free.**
- In practice, this means

	Deductions from overall grade	One late penalty automatically reversed	Effective change to overall grade
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All assignments on time	0.0%	+1.5%	+1.5%
One assignment submitted two days late	-1.5%	+1.5%	0.0%
One assignment submitted one day late	-0.6%	+1.5%	+0.9%
Two assignments two days late	-3.0%	+1.5%	-1.5%
...

- Note:
 - The late penalty will still be applied to the assignment. The +1.5% is added to your final grade, not the assignment.
 - The final grade is still capped at 100%
 - This is applied automatically and input from the student is not required.

Examinations

There will be a Midterm exam and a Final exam. The following is the tentative exam schedule (subject to change):

Exam	Weight	Date
Midterm	20%	Monday, May 25, 2025 (during lecture time)
Final	40%	Saturday June 13 or Sunday June 14, 2025

The midterm exam will be conducted in person and cover all course material including assigned readings, tutorials, lecture slides, and materials covered in assignments and lab homework **up to the end of the previous week. There is no makeup midterm.** If a student has an approved absence from an academic advisor, the weight of the missed midterm will be placed on the final exam.

The final exam will be conducted in person and cover all course material including assigned readings, tutorials, lecture slides, and materials covered in assignments and lab

homework. The final exam will be scheduled during Finals Period at Western or, if not applicable, at a suitable date and time after the course completes.

Both exams are closed book; however, students will be allowed to bring in one 8.5 x 11 sheet of hand-written notes. No electronic devices of any kind are allowed.

All exams are to be completed individually, with no assistance or contact with others. Violation of this rule, any other exam rule, or cheating of any kind will result in a 0% grade for the exam and the possibility of additional penalties as deemed appropriate by the course instructor, department, or university including but not limited to a failing grade being entered for the course

Additional Statements

Religious Accommodation

When conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request an accommodation for their absence in writing to the course instructor and/or the Academic Advising office of their Faculty of Registration. This notice should be made as early as possible but not later than two weeks prior to the writing or the examination (or one week prior to the writing of the test).

Please visit the Diversity Calendars posted on our university's EDI website for the recognized religious holidays:

<https://www.edi.uwo.ca>.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and

cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be

found at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Academic Policies

The website for Registrar Services is <https://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>.

In accordance with policy,

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf

the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at their official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

Only a simple, non-programmable calculator is permitted for all examinations.

Support Services

Please visit the Science & Basic Medical Sciences Academic Counselling webpage for information on add/drop courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education at http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html if you have any questions regarding accommodations

Learning-skills counsellors at the Student Development Centre (<https://learning.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Western University is committed to a thriving campus as we deliver our courses in the mixed model of both virtual and face-to-face formats. We encourage you to check out the Digital Student Experience website to manage your academics and well-being: <https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/>.

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <http://westernusc.ca/services>.

Ethical Conduct

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Plagiarism

All required assignments, quizzes and exams may be subject to submission for textual and metadata similarity review to plagiarism detection software. All assignments, quizzes and exams submitted for such checking may be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of such services are subject to the licensing agreement with The University of Western Ontario. These services and software may include but are not limited to Turnitin (<http://www.turnitin.com>), MOSS, SCANEX, and custom plagiarism detection software developed for the course.

Computer-marked multiple-choice quizzes and exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All **assignments** are individual assignments. You may discuss approaches to problems among yourselves; however, the actual details of the work (assignment coding, answers to concept questions, etc.) must be an individual effort. All assignments will be subject to both content and metadata plagiarism analysis.

All **quizzes** and **exams** are to be written individually, the content and questions not shared and provided rules followed.

Tutors and Outside 'Help' on assignments

Students may receive the help of a tutor on assignments, so long as the tutor only identifies errors or demonstrates sample problems that are **not** part of the assignment. If the content of your assignment is significantly different than if you had not received help, then this is an

indication you may have crossed the line into cheating. Again, if you are unsure about how much help is too much, ask your instructor.

The role of tutoring is to help students understand course material. Tutors should not write any part or all of an assignment for the students who hire them. Tutors should not 'advise' or 'suggest' what is to be entered into an assignment or the solutions to any portion of the assignments. Any aid beyond what you would have received directly from the instructor will be considered an academic offense. Having employed the same tutor as another student is not a legitimate defense against an accusation of collusion, should two students hand in assignments judged similar beyond the possibility of coincidence.

Academic dishonesty

Evidence of purposeful or accidental academic dishonesty will result in an **academic offence** for **both** students.

For **assignments**, this includes (but is not limited to):

- Sharing assignments either in person or through online channels. This includes
 - Using another student's assignment or work as a "template" or "starting point" for your own work
 - Using sites dedicated to sharing assignment solutions or aiding cheating, including but not limited to Course Hero, OneClass, and Chegg
- Using code from an external source (textbook, instructor, course website, Stack Overflow, LLM services) where a student's own code is expected. **If in doubt, ask your instructor.**
- Completing an assignment for or with another person. This includes any unacceptable collaboration.
 - There is a difference between discussing assignments and solutions with fellow students and working together on the solutions to the point where the work submitted is clearly not individual work. **If in doubt, ask your instructor.**
- Any other activity that could be reasonably considered cheating off another student
- Any other activity that could be reasonably considered helping another student cheat off you (accidentally or on purpose)

For **quizzes** and **exams**, this includes (but is not limited to):

- Sharing quiz or exam questions or solutions either in person or through online channels
- Completing a quiz or exam for or with another person
- Any other activity that could be reasonably considered cheating off another student
- Any other activity that could be reasonably considered helping another student cheat off you (accidentally or on purpose)

The penalty for academic dishonesty in any course component is receiving 0% for that component **AND** the possibility of additional penalties as deemed appropriate by the course instructor, department or university including but not limited to an additional penalty equal to the course component, or a failing overall grade being entered for the course. Note that receiving 0% on an assignment may make you ineligible for a passing grade due to the 50% requirement given in the Student Evaluation section. Receiving 0% on the final exam, will make you ineligible for a passing grade in this course.

You are responsible for reading and respecting the Computer Science Department's policy on:

Scholastic Offences:

https://www.csd.uwo.ca/undergraduate/current/policies/scholastic_offenses.html

and Rules of Ethical Conduct:

https://www.csd.uwo.ca/undergraduate/current/policies/ethical_conduct.html