



# Rhodes College

CS 103

COMPUTER INFORMATION FLUENCY  
Syllabus

FALL 2008

CRN: 19546

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**Time** Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9AM-9:50AM  
**Location** FRAJEL FJA - Auditorium A in Frazer Jelke  
**Instructor** Eric Breck (<http://faculty.rhodes.edu/brecke>)  
**Office** 419 Ohlendorf (901-843-3725)  
**Office Hours** MWF 10:00 am - 11:00 am; MW 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm, or by appointment  
Tutoring is available in Barret 033 from 7-10PM on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday.  
**Email** [brecke@rhodes.edu](mailto:brecke@rhodes.edu)

**To ensure a quick response, the subject line of your emails should read  
cs103: [subject of question]**

**Do not assume I will read and reply to your messages instantaneously.**

**Moodle:** All assignment submission will be via moodle unless otherwise noted in the assignment. Do not e-mail me assignments.  
Course announcements and any updates to this syllabus will be posted via moodle.

**Book** *none* (reading material will be distributed in class)

**Prerequisites** None. No programming or computer science experience is required.

## Course Description

This course provides a broad introduction to computing appropriate for all students, regardless of intended major. The course introduces fundamentals of computers and computer information management primarily through projects that emphasize mastery of basic concepts, acquisition of skills, and logical reasoning. Concepts presented include computer data representation, an introduction to architecture and how computers work, and basic network organization. Logical reasoning is fostered through working with models and abstraction, algorithmic thinking with an introduction to programming, and critical evaluation of the use of computers and technology. Emphasis is on the development of a conceptual framework for further learning and problem-solving with computers, rather than on the use of specific software or hardware.

## Course Outline (not necessarily in this order)

- Dissecting a computer: input, output, and everything in between
- Thinking like a computer: logic, algorithms, and programming
- Speaking like a computer: from 0s and 1s to HTTP and HTML
- Networking and the web
- Safety and responsibility in a digital world
- Applications, culture, and other fun things.

## Assignments:

- **LATE** assignments will be accepted, with a penalty of one letter grade per day. (If a genuine emergency situation arises, please see me and we will work something out.)

- Collaboration: You are expected to work individually on assignments. However, you are allowed and encouraged to discuss high-level details of the assignments. If group work is allowed, it will be mentioned explicitly in the assignment.
- Each student is responsible for keeping a back-up copy on disk of all files turned in for an assignment. Failure to do so could result in loss of credit for an assignment.

## Grading

- Each major project assignment will each be awarded a letter grade A through F

### A: (100 pts)

'A' papers are clearly written, neatly presented, and are fully consistent with the requirements of the assignment. 'A' programming projects are carefully designed, well documented, and produce clearly formatted, correct output when appropriate. (This description will make more sense later.)

### A- : (94 pts)

This is an 'A' project with one or two of the minor (?) problems described for grade 'B'.

### B: (88 pts)

A 'B' project typically could easily have been an 'A' project, but it may have minor/careless problems such as poor, inadequate, or incomplete documentation; sloppy presentation format; program features that don't work properly; excessive typos, poor grammar; somewhat murky explanations of ideas, etc. (This is not an exhaustive list.) You would be wise to consider 'B' a default grade for an initial complete draft of a project --- this might encourage you to review and polish your first working draft of an assignment to produce a more professional quality final version.

### C: (75 pts)

A 'C' project has more serious problems: poorly expressed ideas in a paper, incorrect output for important special cases of a program, failure to carefully follow organization or design or implementation requirements spelled out in the assignment description, very poor or careless implementation of a program, near complete absence of documentation, etc.

### D: (60 pts)

A 'D' project clearly deviates from or falls short of explicit written requirements for an assignment.

### F: (35 pts)

An 'F' on a writing assignment indicates very little if any attempt to fulfill the requirements of an assignment. Typically, an 'F' programming project produces no correct output. It may "look like a program" when printed as a hard copy, but there remains much work to be done for it to be a correct, working program. Still, as a last resort, an 'F' project is better than no project turned in at all.

## Grade Breakdown:

- 40 % Programming Assignments
- 35 % Midterms
- 25 % Final

## Final Grade Assignments:

- Grading is based on the below scale:
  - A : [93%, 100%]
  - A- : [90%, 93%]
  - B+ : [87%, 90%]
  - B : [83%, 87%]

- B- : [80%, 83%)
  - C+ : [77%, 80%)
  - C : [73%, 77%)
  - C - : [70%, 73%)
  - D : [65%, 70%)
  - D- : [60%, 65%)
  - F : [ 0%, 60%)
- For borderline cases, I may take into account participation, and/or attendance, and improvement during the semester.

#### **Attendance:**

- Attendance is expected for each class. If your attendance deteriorates you will be referred to the dean and asked to drop the course. Attendance, participation, and apparent overall improvement trend may be considered in assigning a final grade.
- Attendance will be checked each class lecture period. After 5 unexcused absences, each additional absence reduces the final grade for the course by one letter grade.

#### **Special Accommodation:**

- If you are in need of special accommodations, please register with the Office of Student Disability Services (<http://www.rhodes.edu/disability>) as soon as possible so that all necessary arrangements can be made. Accommodations cannot be made unless you register; they also cannot be made retroactively.

#### **Scholastic Behavior**

- Plagiarism, cheating, and similar anti-intellectual behavior are serious violations of academic ethics and will be correspondingly penalized. If you are concerned about a possible violation of this kind, please talk with me. I understand the pressure that students may experience while at Rhodes, and I will try to help as best as I can.
- All major projects and tests must be the student's *own* work, unless otherwise instructed by your instructor. Copying all or part of a major project assignment, or downloading code or text from the Internet and submitting it as your own, or having someone else write code or text for your assignment, or having someone else debug your assignment, or *allowing* someone else to copy from you, or writing or coding or debugging someone else's assignment --- these are all included in the definition of reportable Honor Code violations for this course. If you have any doubts about whether or not a work practice on a major project assignment is acceptable, please clear it with the instructor before proceeding.
- Please respect me and your classmates and do not browse the web, check e-mail, send or read text messages, or have private conversations during class.

#### **Exams:**

- There will be two midterms and one final exam:
  - Midterm 1: Friday, October 10th, in class.
  - Midterm 2: Friday, November 14th, in class.
  - Final Exam: Monday, December 15th, 8:30AM.
  - Make-up exams will only be given in extreme circumstances.

#### **Important Dates**

- Drop Add Ends: 9/3/2008
- Extended Drop Period Ends: 9/17/2008
- Pass Fail Period Ends: 9/17/2008
- Withdrawal Period Ends: 10/31/2008

The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus as necessary.