Overview CMSC131: An introduction to programming using the Java language

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What is on the Syllabus

How to succeed in this class

- Read and understand the Syllabus.
- Ask lots of questions.
- Put learning first, grades second.
- Put away the device.
- Do you own work.
- Know the solution before attempting to write the program.

How you are assessed

A lot of this is from the Syllabus, but as we're talking face to face . . .

- *Major Grading Events* Includes **Project**s and **Exam**s.
    - Dates for the Midterms and Final are fixed on the Syllabus.
    - Delivery Dates for Projects are available on the **Submit Server**. When in doubt, the date that appears on the Submit Server is the official date/time for Projects.
    - Please don't ask us to change delivery dates or times for Major Grading Events.
- *Minor Grading Events*: Include near-weekly **Lab**s and **Quizzes**.

What we are about

Pure and simple: we're about learning how to use algorithmic thinking in a broader, life-long context. To do this, we must master:

- *Logic*: the glue that holds everything together and the final arbiter of what's right.
- *Formal Language*: how problems and their solutions are expressed in a non-ambiguous way.
- *Abstraction*: Reconstructing the "problem" in a variety of settings.

Of these, the last is usually the most difficult.

Elements of Programming

But, I thought this class was about "computer programming" in the JAVA *language?*

- Learning a language is not learning how to program, any more than learning English prepares you to write a novel or poetry.
- Learning a particular language is best done "on the job," or in a specialized vocational setting.
- We wish to learn something bigger and more comprehensive than a language or a set of unrelated programming "idioms."

My responsibilities . . .

- Present this material in a variety of formats and from a variety of perspectives;
- Listen to you and adapt my instruction, whenever feasible.
- Bring the subtleties to the surface.
- Provide an equitable learning environment.

Your responsibilities . . .

While everyone and every situation is "different," history shows that successful students:

- Step away from the device. No electronic devices are welcomed in regular lecture.
- Attend lectures and recitations. Procrastination leads to stress and ill-formed solutions.
- Attempt the assignments—on your own. Reading a great novel is *not the same* as writing a good one yourself.
- Ask lots of questions: assume nothing until you understand it.
- Put learning ahead of the "grade."