

CSC125 Intro to Computing Syllabus

Tom Rule Spring 2009

CSC 125.002 TR 0925AM 1040AM CSB 306
CSC 125.003 TR 1050AM 1205PM STN 256

How to contact me:

Off-campus Email address: tom@tomrule.info ← this is checked much more often than the Mercer account

Official Mercer email address: rule_ts@mercerc.edu

Facebook: Tom Rule, in the Mercer group (**YOU MUST be in the Mercer network. Go make this happen now!**)

Online form: <http://www.tomrule.info>

Mailbox in Computer Science office

Cell phone: _____ (announced in class)

Office: I'm adjunct, and so do not have an office or office hours. Cell & Email are the best ways to contact me.

Prerequisites: none

Handy URLs:

www.myitlab.com ← you'll be doing a lot of work here

mercercs125.blogspot.com ← the class blog – announcements, tips, ideas, etc. *SUBSCRIBE to it now!*

mercerc.blackboard.com ← might be used. We'll see.

MyItLab will be used for online training and testing. The **blogspot address** is a blog I setup for use with this class – I *strongly* suggest you subscribe to it. There is also a **Facebook group** for the class – you **MUST** be in the Mercer “network” to see it. Once you are, search for the group and request to join.

Essential knowledge, skills, abilities needed: common sense. Some computer experience is nice because it will make learning and doing the projects faster. Time and sweat will make up for lack of experience (just like in the “real world”). Yes, it's nicer to have your own computer – but there are machines available all over campus where you can get your work done. Think of it as the computational equivalent of the Laundromat.

Course objectives: This course is designed to fill in some computing gaps you have (and probably don't know you have). It is centered on Microsoft Office 2007, but will deal with a plethora of other computing and technology-related subjects. While no prior computing experience is required, students in CSC 125 are expected to read at the college level and also demonstrate math competency.

Upon completion of this course, a student will demonstrate competence in each of the following areas:

1. Describe the hardware components of a computer system and be able to explain the role of each component in the integrated computer system,
2. Describe the components of a computer network and explain how each piece functions in connecting one to other computers on the network and to the Internet and WWW,
3. Use the WWW in a sophisticated manner to conduct research on a given topic,
4. Use the Windows operating system,
5. Use Office application software for word processing, spreadsheets, database systems, and (optionally) WWW page generation.
6. Use Office application software to carry out common tasks in academic and business environments. This includes, but is not limited to, research papers, graphing, and financial calculations.
7. (Possibly, depending on time) Understand the very basic function and purpose of a high level programming language through the use of instructional tools used to teach object oriented programming.

What you'll need:

Exploring Microsoft Office 2007 volume one (by Grauer et al).

A login code for myITlab.

Access to Office 2007 (Including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access). Available at a discount through Mercer University (mercer.edu/tss – click on “Student computer purchases”)

A computer running the capable of running the above programs (Windows 2000SP4, XP SP2, Vista).

Ask me about Macs.

An Internet connection

A thumb/flash/keychain/whatever-ya-wanna-call-em drive

A Bargain:

the Windows OS through the Computer Science Department. DIRT CHEAP!

Electronic Submission of Assignments:

Students bear sole responsibility for ensuring that papers or assignments submitted electronically to a professor are received in a timely manner and in the electronic format(s) specified by the professor. Students are therefore obliged to have their e-mail client issue a receipt verifying that the document has been received. Students are also strongly advised to retain a copy of the dated submission on a separate disk. Faculty members are encouraged, but not required, to acknowledge receipt of the assignment.

Cell Phone and Pager Usage: The polite, official version:

Out of courtesy for all those participating in the learning experience, all cell phones and pagers must be turned off before entering any classroom, lab, or formal academic or performance event.

Cell Phone and Pager Usage: The real life, colloquial version:

Turn the flippin' cell phone off, for pete's sake. Your mother would be ashamed! Have more consideration for your teacher and fellow students.

Reasonable accommodation from students with disabilities will be welcomed.

Students with a documented disability should inform the instructor at the close of the first class meeting or as soon as possible. If you are not registered with Disability Services, the instructor will refer you to the Student Support Services office for consultation regarding documentation of your disability and eligibility for accommodations under the ADA/504. In order to receive accommodations, eligible students must provide each instructor with a Faculty Accommodation Form from Disability Services. Students must return the completed and signed form to the Disability Services office on the 3rd floor of the Connell Student Center. Students with a documented disability who do not wish to use accommodations are strongly encouraged to register with Disability Services and complete a Faculty Accommodation Form each semester. For further information please contact Disability Services at 301-2778 or visit the website at http://www.mercer.edu/stu_support/swd.htm.

Grievances

“Students have the right to bring grievances against faculty members concerning academic or behavioral matters.”
You might try talking to me first when something bothers you – it'll likely get resolved faster.

Grading:

Final Exam: 15%

Capstone Projects: 40%

MyITLab projects/exams 35%

Misc Mini-projects: 10% (*Alice, What's in Your Wallet Computer*)

DO NOT use the built-in gradebooks on Blackboard or myITlab – they are a royal pain to setup and use. Use them **ONLY** to see what your scores are for individual items. There is a downloadable Excel spreadsheet available (probably in the “files stash” on Blackhawk) you can use to track your grades & average.

Grading Scale: 90-100 = A 87-89=B+ 80-86=B 77-79=C+ 70-76=C

Attendance policy: You are strongly encouraged to attend every class. Much of what you will learn in this course will be learned in class through lectures and hands-on experience with the computer. Some assignments will be completed and submitted in class. Changes to schedules and assignments will be announced in class [and probably on the facebook group and blog]. I will not give private lectures to students who miss class. At 5 unexcused absences, you will lose 10 points from your final grade. Each additional unexcused absence deducts an additional 2 points from your final grade. For example, if you had a 95 average in the coursework, with 5 absences it become an 85. With 7 absences your average becomes an 81.

If you are granted excused absences from Mercer University for university-related activities, please let me know ahead of time - especially if there's coursework due.

Policies as to late, extra-credit, make-up, and “perfectible” work: Extra credit work is not something I do. If you get into some trouble (life happens), communicate with me! Late work will have points deducted. EXTREMELY late work won't even be looked at. Exceptions are allowed, but are rare. Talk to me about it!

Honor Code:

All suspected violations of the University Honor Code **will** be forwarded to the Honor Council.

Common Sense:

If you receive a failing grade during the course, meet with me and discuss the work/assignment(s) in question.

Final notes, advice, and various miscellany:

1. It will ALWAYS take longer than you think. Plan ahead!
- 2.
3. You are in this class to develop skills¹ – this takes time. Make working on this stuff a regular part of your schedule.
4. The computer WILL crash – and it will be at the worst possible moment. The closer you are to a deadline, the more often it will crash – it can sense these things
5. You think I'm lying right now – but you'll see the truth of these words about mid-semester, when you waited until the last minute and you lost everything at 11:59 pm.
 Yes, it's happened before.
 Yes, the student lost points.
6. BACKUPS are critical. I have no compassion on people who can't turn in an assignment because their only copy hosed.
- 7.
8. MAKE MULTIPLE COPIES. Thumb drives are cheap. Even cheaper: Email a copy to yourself as a backup.
9. DO YOUR OWN WORK. NEVER give someone else access to your work. NEVER. This is not only dishonest and wrong – but will be referred to Honor Council. Do you really need the hassle?
10. However – DO ask questions, confer with a fellow classmate on how to solve an issue, eyeball their work to doublecheck it. Ask me about the Fortran story involving me and my now-sister-in-law.

¹ No, that wasn't a *Napolean Dynamite* reference.

11. Re: MyITlab – there are 2 types of things to do in myITlab – training and exams. There are 2 paths you can take to get these done – Skill-based, and Project-based. Ask me about these if you still aren't clear after I talk about it in class.
12. **You CANNOT multitask**, and have a snowball's chance in Macon of getting what we're covering in class. Stay out of Facebook/MySpace/Email/News/Sports/Chat/Shopping/fill-in-your-own-distraction-here while we're in class. The stuff was online before you sat down, and it'll be there when you leave.

Important Dates

Classes begin August 25
 Fall Break Oct 15-16
 Thanksgiving Nov 25-27

Mid-term progress reports around Oct 14
 Course Withdrawal Deadline Oct 29
 Last Day Dec 11

EXTRAORDINARILY Tentative schedule.

| Week | Class# | Date | Material | Project |
|------|--------|---------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 1 | 1 | 25-Aug | Get files off webpage, 1cl vs 2cl, facebook group, online virus scan, ram, os updates, malware updates, blog subscribe | |
| | 2 | 27-Aug | Email org, attachments, zip, search process, thumbdrive use | PPT intro |
| 2 | 3 | 1-Sep | Search cont. | PPT1 |
| | 4 | 3-Sep | Measure Data, Moving Data | PPT2 |
| 3 | 5 | 8-Sep | Disks/format/eject | PPT3 |
| | 6 | 10-Sep | file formats | PPT4 |
| 4 | 7 | 15-Sep | OS vs app, App types | Alice Intro |
| | 8 | 17-Sep | PPT to Dev Graphics | Excel Intro PPT DEADLINE |
| 5 | 9 | 22-Sep | Alice | XL2 |
| | 10 | 24-Sep | Alice | |
| 6 | 11 | 29-Sep | Parts overview: Hw/Sw | XL2 |
| | 12 | 1-Oct | Processor | |
| 7 | 13 | 6-Oct | Alice | XL3 |
| | 14 | 8-Oct | Alice | XL4 |
| 8 | 15 | 13-Oct | Cards/Busses | |
| 9 | 16 | 20-Oct | | DB intro EXCEL DEADLINE |
| | 17 | 22-Oct | Network 1 | DB1 |
| 10 | 18 | 27-Oct | Network 2 | |
| | 19 | 29-Oct | Alice | DB2 |
| 11 | 20 | 3-Nov | Monitors/connections/graphics cards | DB3 |
| | 21 | 5-Nov | Alice | |
| 12 | 22 | 10-Nov | Printers/Sharing/Types | DB4 |
| | 23 | 12-Nov | OS Compare | |
| 13 | 24 | 17-Nov | | WP Intro DB DEADLINE |
| | 25 | 19-Nov | Alice Presentations | WP1, WP2 |
| 14 | 26 | 1-Dec | Alice Presentations | WP3 |
| | 27 | 3-Dec | Alice Presentations | WP4 |
| 15 | 28 | 8-Dec | Alice Presentations | |
| | 29 | 10-Dec | Alice Presentations | WP DEADLINE |

Final Exam taken during Exam week – details given in class