Course Information

Lectures

Lectures are MWF 3:10–4:00 in 217 Art.

Instructor

Prof. Phillip Rogaway. Engineering II, #3063. Phone: 752–7583. `rogaway@cs.ucdavis.edu`. Office hours: T 2:00–3:00 and R 11:30–1:00.

Teaching Assistant

Eddie Lo. Engineering II, #3087. `loe@cs.ucdavis.edu`. Office hours: R 2–4 in Engineering II, #053 (in the basement).

Midterm

*Important: There will be an **evening** midterm, to be held Thursday 10/31.* It is tentatively schedule for 7:00–9:00 pm. To compensate for the evening exams there will be no class meetings on the following Wednesday, 11/1.

I am trying the evening exam because I have found that students can feel overly time-pressured during what I intend to be a 50 minute exam. The evening exam is meant to relieve time pressure. I hope most students will prefer this format. I will attempt to make the midterm no longer than an in-class exam (I'll pretend I'm writing a 50 minute exam).

Important: If you have an irreconcilable conflict with the Thursday exam then you must see me during the first week (10/2–10/6) of the term. I won't be too accommodating after that!

Prerequisites

ECS 100 is the official prerequisite. An equivalent level of "mathematical maturity' will do as well. If you don't have much of this elusive stuff going in, I hope you'll have a good deal more coming out.

Textbooks

This term we have the privilege of using the fine draft text by Prof. Mike Sipser, a former teacher of mine from MIT:

> Michael Sipser, *Introduction to the Theory of Computation*. Elseiver Press, 1996 (expected).

We will cover most of the material of Chapters 1–7. But only Chapters 1–6 were available by the time we needed to get the book to the bookstore; Chapter 7 will be made available to you later.

Handouts

If you miss one, you may find extras just outside of my office.

Grading

There will be weekly problem sets, a midterm, and a final exam. These will constitute approximately 30%, 25%, and 45% of your grade, respectively. The exams will be closed book.

Problem Sets

Homework will usually be assigned on a Friday and will be due at the beginning of class on the following Friday. Please, no late problem sets.

Much of what one learns in this course comes from trying to solve problems, so work hard on the problem sets. I intend that you find some of the problems quite challenging. Doing a conscientious job on the homeworks is the best preparation for the exams.

Be clear and precise in your presentation. Understandability of the solution is as necessary as correctness. You may lose points when you provide a "correct" solution with a not-so-great writeup.

If you can't solve a problem, briefly indicate what you've tried and where the difficulty lies. I prefer absent solutions to wrong ones, and I'll ask the grader to try to reflect this preference in the grading.

See the TA, Eddie, if you think a problem was misgraded.

Collaboration

Collaboration on homeworks is encouraged. First, think about the problems, and try to solve them yourself. If you find a problem hard, discuss it with other students. Write up problems entirely on your own. When you discuss problems with someone make certain to acknowledge them.

Feedback on the Text

You are encouraged to help in the evolution and improvement of Sipser's text. To do this, maintain a numbered list of typographical errors, material errors, specific points where you felt an explanation was sub-optimal, and general comments and suggestions for improvements. Be as terse, useful, and specific as possible. Pass your comments on to me and I, in turn, will give them to Prof. Sipser. Submit your comments (hardcopy or by electronic mail) by the time of the course final.

If I see that you have provided particularly useful and conscientious feedback then I will take this into account when assigning final grades (up to half a grade impact). Beyond that, if you provide useful comment then you perform a service to future students, and you may get personally acknowledged in this soon-to-be popular text. Being acknowledged in a book feels nice.

Receiving lots of comments reporting idential bugs would be a chore to go through, so I encourage you to get together in a group for consolidating your feedback.

Parting Thoughts

Don't forget: theory is *fun*!