

CS595 – Computer Science Seminar – Spring 2007

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Goals:

1. Oral presentation. Every student will make at 3 formal oral presentations of approximately 30 minutes (including questions). In addition, students will be expected to participate in the class discussions related to both the formal presentations and the required readings.
2. Social and ethical issues related to computer science. There will be weekly readings, a short weekly quiz, and class discussion based on chapters of the required text.
3. Exposure to computer science research and recent developments in the field.

Text: Baase, *A Gift of Fire*, Second Edition, Prentice-Hall.

Oral presentations:

Each student will make at 3 presentations over the course of the semester. One must deal with an *ethical or social issue* related to computer science or the computer science profession; one should deal with new or emerging *applications* of computers, and one should deal with a current computer science *research* topic.

Approximate grading distribution:

1. Formal oral presentations (60%). Oral presentations will be evaluated based on both *preparation* and *delivery*. Presenters must prepare presentation slides (such as PowerPoint) to *support* their presentations.
2. Peer evaluations (10%). Each class every student will evaluate at least one peer presentation as well as your own presentation. Summaries of these evaluations will be given to the presenting student as additional feedback. The evaluation will not affect the *presenter's* grade, but the peer evaluations will be evaluated as part of the grade for the *evaluator*.
3. Class participation (15%). You will be graded on attendance and the quantity and quality of your participation. You will *not* be graded on whether I agree with your position or not, only on whether and how well you have presented it. Unexcused absence from class earns a 0 for class participation and that day's peer evaluation.
4. Quizzes and final (15%). Weekly quizzes are based on the readings, the final is based on the presentations.

Oral Presentations

Presentation length

Each student will make 3 oral presentations over the course of the semester. Each presentation will be allotted a fixed amount of time (20-25 minutes) plus at least 5 minutes for questions and comments. You should have practiced your presentation, so that you will effectively utilize your allotted time and no more. The time limit will be enforced. Points will be deducted from the presentation grade if it must be cut short; points will also be deducted if a presentation is significantly too short.

Slides

You must utilize presentation software (such as PowerPoint or OpenOffice Presentation) as a presentation tool. Presentation software should support your presentation, not replace it. Your slides should provide outline information to keep the audience (and you) on track; it should not be a transcript. Slides should not be dense; a maximum of 6-8 bullets per slide is a good

guideline. Your slides should aid in information transfer, not disguise the fact that you have no information. Glitz seldom enhances information transfer. Avoid *PowerPoint-lessness*.

Topic choices

You are free to choose any topic within the designated areas. For your social/ethics topic you can provide a balanced (descriptive) presentation of some topic, or you can take a position on some issue (advocacy).

You can get information for your topics from books, journals, magazines, and/or the web. The *research*-oriented topic probably should come from a computer science journal; the *emerging applications* could come from a computer science journal or magazine, or from more general interest media.

You must list all your sources as the last slide of your presentation.

Assigned reading and associated discussions

Assigned reading in the Baase book has been identified for most classes. The class will start with a short quiz on the day's reading, followed by a 15 minute discussion session covering the assigned reading. One student will be assigned to serve as a discussion moderator. The moderator will be responsible for initiating the discussion of the reading as well as eliciting comments from fellow students.

Notes on computer science publications

The ACM (Association for Computing Machinery) and the IEEE Computer Society publish the largest number and (generally) most respected computing journals and magazines. Most of them are in our library and all of them are available online via the UNH library web site. Go to <http://www.library.unh.edu/branches/eng.html> and then scroll down a bit and click on *IEEE Journals* or *ACM Digital Library*.

You can also get information on ACM publications, see <http://www.acm.org/pubs/journals.html>.

More general interest (magazines): Communications of the ACM, IEEE Computer

For more information on IEEE publications, see <http://www.computer.org>, then click on *Publications*, then *Magazines* or *Journals*.

Other computer science publications come from Springer-Verlag (<http://springer.com>) and Elsevier (<http://elsevier.com>).