

Welcome!

Hi! I'm David Joyner, and along with Melinda McDaniel, welcome to the online version of CS1301—and by "the online version", I mean the version that we built to be online even before the pandemic.

This syllabus page will walk you through everything you need to know to succeed in this course. However, I know there's a lot of information on this page to process, and it can be hard to know what you're really expected to do. So, to get started with the course, you should do the following steps in order:

1. Read this entire page.
2. Complete the start-of-course survey and onboarding quiz.
3. Start learning the course content!

From there, if you're ever lost or confused, just make sure you're reading the weekly start-of-week announcement each Monday, which tells you everything you need to do for the course. As long as you read that weekly announcement and do everything it says to do, you won't overlook anything.

One thing deserves your attention right now, before anything else: this course includes **two required in-person exams**, during the weeks of **October 26** and **December 14**. Everything else in this class is online and flexible, but those two **are not**. You choose your own 90-minute block from a range of options, but you must sign up by the Thursday before, or a block will be assigned to you. Put both weeks in your calendar today, and read the [In-Person Exams](#) section carefully to see where you'll be taking them.

Teaching Team

This course is taught by two instructors and supported by a team of teaching assistants led by four Head TAs. A note on how to reach us before you read any further: **for anything about the course, post on Ed Discussion rather than emailing us directly.** The forum is monitored by the whole team, so you will get a faster answer there than in any individual inbox. The email addresses below are listed for situations that genuinely require reaching one person privately—see [Communicating with Instructors and TAs](#) for the details.

Instructors



Dr. David Joyner

Instructor

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Instructor

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Head Teaching Assistants

The Head TAs coordinate the teaching assistant team, run the help desk schedule, and handle most day-to-day questions on the forum. In practice they are the people you will interact with most.

**Pranav Bhagam**

Head TA

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The full roster of teaching assistants, along with the help desk schedule, will be posted to the course forum within the first two weeks of the semester.

Course Platforms

This course uses two main platforms for delivery: Canvas and Vocareum.



Announcements**Syllabus****Course Surveys****Quizzes****Tests****Grades****Lecture Content****Exercises****Problem Sets****Notebook Assignments**

You will spend the overwhelming majority of your time in this course in two places: Canvas and Vocareum. Everything else listed on this page is supporting cast. If you are ever unsure where you are supposed to be, the answer is almost certainly one of these two.

- **Canvas is your home base and your to-do list.** Navigate the course through the [Modules tab \(https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/539830/modules\)](https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/539830/modules), which directs you to everything you need to do week to week. Canvas is also where you complete course surveys, launch the module tests, sign up for your in-person exam block, and check your grades. Anything listed under Modules with points attached counts toward your grade.
- **Vocareum is where you actually write code.** The course videos, the exercises embedded throughout each chapter, and the coding problem sets all live here, and Canvas will hand you off to Vocareum constantly. This is where the bulk of your hands-on hours will go, and it is the single best predictor of how the course goes for you: students who put real time into the Vocareum exercises and problem sets do well, and students who skim them do not.

Beyond those two, we have three other platforms we use in this course. You'll visit these far less often, but you should know what each one is for:



Ed Discussion (https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/539830/external_tools/12121?



Weekly recitations and the help desk meet via **Zoom** (<https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/539830/>



The six module tests are proctored via **Honorlock** (<https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/539830/>

[display=borderless](#)) is our course forum, where you can ask questions to be answered by the teaching team.

[external_tools/15673](#)), which you can access from within Canvas.

[external_tools/20683](#)). You'll launch these from the Honorlock page in Canvas.

For the online module tests, you'll need to launch them from the Honorlock tool on the sidebar, not directly from the Quizzes page. Honorlock-proctored assessments require a webcam, microphone, and photo ID (driver's license, school ID, passport, etc.) and must be taken via Google Chrome (regardless of operating system). Note that graduate-level seminar students do **not** take the proctored assessments.

In addition to the online module tests, this course includes **two required in-person exams**, given at the conclusion of Module 3 and Module 6. Most students take these on the Georgia Tech campus and reserve their own seat using the Canvas Scheduler; dual enrollment students outside metro-Atlanta area take them at their own school under a proctor there. See the [In-Person Exams](#) section below for the full policy, including which category you fall into, the sign-up deadline, the consequence of missing it, and how conflicts are handled. **Read that section within the first two weeks of the semester.**

Readiness Questions

This class has no strong prerequisites in terms of prior knowledge. To succeed, no math beyond arithmetic is necessary, and all course materials are presented in English. However, the class will be rigorous and demand persistence and self-discipline.

To succeed in this course, you should be able to answer **yes** to the following questions:

- Are you prepared to manage your time in consuming this class material and completing its assignments, including watching lectures and starting assignments well in advance of their deadlines?
- Are you prepared to start approaching a field that requires significantly different ideas and skills than any you've approached before?
- Do you have a growth mindset, the belief that your abilities can be improved through dedication and hard work?
- Do you view failure as an opportunity to learn, rather than a referendum on your own ability?

We recommend a pace akin to a traditional lecture class: dedicate a couple hours a day every day to watching lecture material, completing exercises, and getting started on problems. In computing, it's common to encounter challenges that require you to step back and give your mind a day to think over them, but you can only do that if you start early!

Course Description & Structure

This course is an introductory course in computing. It does not presuppose any advanced knowledge of computer science, and requires no more background in math than basic arithmetic. The class covers the foundations of computing, starting with the fundamental idea of computer programs, the basics of variables and operators, the control structures for directing program flow, and the data structures for advanced computing.

This course has three high-level learning objectives. At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:

- Describe and apply the fundamental thought processes and theories of computing.
- Write command-line computer programs using fundamental principles of programming.
- Apply those abilities to a real target domain.

This course is broadly broken into six modules. Each module concludes with its own test.

- **Module 1: Computing & Procedural Programming** (Chapters 1.1–1.3, 2.1–2.4). We'll cover the basics of computing—what it means to write computer code, how to read it, and what it means to run and debug it—and then the basic paradigm of programming, procedural programming, in which a series of commands are executed in order. Here we'll discuss variables, logical operators, and mathematical operators.
- **Module 2: Conditionals & Loops** (Chapters 3.1–3.3). We begin control structures: lines of code that control when other lines of code run. Conditionals let your program choose between alternatives, and loops let it repeat work.
- **Module 3: Functions & Error Handling** (Chapters 3.4–3.5). We finish control structures with functions, which let you package and reuse code, and error handling, which lets your program respond gracefully when something goes wrong.
- **Module 4: Strings & Lists** (Chapters 4.1–4.3). We begin data structures: how data is structured to be operated upon by a computer. Strings and lists are the two you'll use most often.
- **Module 5: Dictionaries & File I/O** (Chapters 4.4–4.5). We continue with dictionaries, which associate keys with values, and file input and output, which lets your programs read and write data that outlives a single run.
- **Module 6: Objects, Algorithms & AI** (Chapters 5.1–5.3 + **NEW CHAPTER 6**). We preview the next topics in computing: object-oriented programming, computer algorithms, and artificial intelligence, covering what modern AI systems actually do, how they are built out of the programming constructs you've learned, and how to reason about their output as a programmer.

Course Assessments

Your grade in this course is derived from the following categories. Note that only these categories count toward your grade. You are welcome to skip over course videos and supplementary content if you want. Only graded exercises and problem sets count toward your grade. From Canvas, anything listed under Modules with points attached counts towards your grade.

Please note for dual enrollment students: we are not permitted to contact schools with any grade besides the officially-reported grade recorded by Georgia Tech. Your school will be told if you received a final letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F, but will not be given any extra information about how high or low your grade within that range is.

Category	Count	Each	Total
Module Content	—	—	50%
Module Tests (online, Honorlock)	6, lowest dropped	6%	30%
In-Person Exams	2	10%	20%
<i>Extra Credit</i>	<i>4 activities</i>	<i>1–2 points</i>	<i>up to +5%</i>
Total			100% (+5% extra credit)

Content: 50%

Essentially everything present in the Modules tab counts toward your overall Module Content grade, which is worth 50% of your total average. Our expectation is that you'll earn 100% of these points: they all have generous deadlines and grace periods and allow unlimited attempts.

Generally speaking, you'll find the following types of assignments under Module Content. All Module Content can be attempted unlimited times until the deadline until you earn full credit.

- **Exercises:** Most course content is presented via course chapters. Each chapter has multiple embedded exercises interspersed among the lecture videos. Some of these are multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank exercises, while others are programming exercises.
- **Notebooks:** There are a handful of Notebook assignments, a different kind of content.
- **Problem Sets:** Coding problem sets are sets of programming problems provided through Vocareum.
- **Surveys:** There are four course surveys: the Start-of-Course Survey, Quarter-Course Survey, Mid-Course Survey, and End-of-Course Survey. Completing these automatically earns their points.
- **Onboarding Quiz and Test:** The module tests in this class are proctored via Honorlock, and so we've provided an Onboarding Quiz and Test so you can practice with these tools before the first graded test. Completing these counts towards your Content grade.
- **Syllabus Comprehension Quiz:** At the start of the course, you'll be asked to complete the Syllabus Comprehension Quiz/Survey to indicate you understand the contents of this syllabus.

- **Additional Other Assignments As Assigned:** Other assignments may be announced during the semester that will also go into your Content grade. These will always be announced at least two weeks before they are due.

For every type of content in Module Content, you'll see how many points it's worth listed below the assignment title:

	Chapter 2.1 10 pts
	Working with Vocareum Notebooks Aug 17 3 pts
	Chapter 2.2 41 pts
	Chapter 2.2 Problem Set 66.5 pts
	Chapter 2.3 42 pts
	Chapter 2.3 Problem Set 59 pts
	Chapter 2.4 43 pts
	Chapter 2.4 Problem Set 81.5 pts

For example, here you'll see that the 2.1 Exercises are worth 10 points, the Working with Vocareum Notebooks assignment is worth 3 points, the Chapter 2.2 Exercises are worth 41 points, the Chapter 2.2 Problem Set is worth 66.5 points. These points all to your Module Content grade.

The different number of points for each assignment are generally connected to the amount of work required, not the importance. For example, the 2.2 Problem Set is expected to take a couple of hours to complete, while the Working with Vocareum Notebooks assignment is probably only a few minutes of work. Again, our expectation is that you'll earn 100% of the Module Content points.

Module Tests: 30%

There will be six module tests, one at the conclusion of each of the six modules. Each test focuses on

the material for that module, but may also require knowledge gained in earlier modules, because CS builds on itself going forward.

Each test is worth 6% of your average, and **your lowest module test score is dropped**. Six tests at 6% each with the lowest dropped means five scores count, for 30% of your final average. The drop is automatic; you do not need to request it, and it is applied at the end of the semester once all six scores are recorded.

The module tests feature the same kinds of programming exercises and conceptual questions you have seen in the lessons and problem sets, but they are timed and digitally proctored. You will still have access to the programming interface from the exercises, so you can run your code live and receive immediate feedback on whether it was successful. To start a test, navigate to Honorlock in Canvas and select the desired test; Honorlock will then redirect you to the test in Vocareum and enter the password to get you started.

Module tests are closed: no notes, no books, no scratch paper, no other web sites, and no AI assistants of any kind. During the test, you may not access any resources except for the test itself.

Tests do not open until after the module deadline. Once open, the regular testing window runs from **Monday at 9:00 AM ET to Thursday at 4:00 PM ET** of the week in which the test is listed on the calendar. Thursday at 4:00 PM is the **latest you may start**, not the latest you may finish: you get your full **90 minutes** once you begin, even if that runs past 4:00 PM. So a test started at 3:55 PM Thursday still gives you the whole 90 minutes.

The Friday Grace Period—and Why You Should Not Rely On It

Every module test has a grace period that extends from the Thursday 4:00 PM cutoff to **Friday at 4:00 PM ET**, which is the last moment you may *start* a test. Tests started during the grace period earn full credit, with the full 90 minutes, and there is no late penalty.

However, **the Friday grace period is entirely at your own risk, and it exists for emergencies—not for convenience**. Here is the specific thing you need to understand before you decide to use it:

On Friday, we will not respond to any Ed Discussion posts or emails about technical difficulties or problems with the test. Not slow responses—no responses. If Honorlock will not verify your ID, if Vocareum will not load, if your webcam is not detected, if a problem statement looks wrong to you, or if your session drops midway through, there will be no one available to help you and no one to reset your attempt. Whatever happens on Friday, you are on your own with it, and the resulting score stands.

During the Monday–Thursday window, by contrast, the teaching team is monitoring the forum and can actually fix things: reset a locked attempt, clear a failed Honorlock check, or confirm that a question is behaving correctly. That support is the real reason to take the test early, and it is worth far more than the extra day.

So plan on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday. Treat Thursday as your buffer, and treat Friday as what it is: an emergency exit for the student whose power went out Thursday afternoon, not a normal option. If you routinely wait for Friday, you are choosing to take every test with no safety net.

Because the lowest score is dropped, the module tests are the course's built-in cushion for a bad week: one illness, one hardware failure, one module that simply did not click. Please do not deliberately skip a test to "use" the drop early—if you skip one and then something goes wrong later, you have no cushion left, and a zero from a skipped test counts like any other score.

In-Person Exams: 20%

This course includes **two required in-person exams**, each worth 10% of your final average, for 20% total. Unlike the module tests, **neither in-person exam can be dropped**.

- **In-Person Exam 1** is given during the week of **October 26–30, 2026**, following the conclusion of Module 3. It covers Modules 1 through 3.
- **In-Person Exam 2** is given during the week of **December 14–18, 2026**, following the conclusion of Module 6. It emphasizes Modules 4 through 6 but is cumulative over the entire course, and serves as the final exam for this class.

Each exam is **90 minutes** long, is administered on **paper**, and consists entirely of **multiple choice questions**. There are no computers involved: you will not be writing or running programs, so there is nothing to compile and no partial credit to chase. Expect questions that ask you to read a snippet and predict its output, identify the bug in it, choose the correct construct for a situation, or reason about how the concepts from the modules fit together. The exam booklet and answer sheet are provided; **bring a #2 pencil**. Do not bring a laptop—you will not be able to use one.

Because these exams are on paper rather than in Vocareum, practicing only by running code is not enough preparation. You should be able to trace a program by hand and predict what it does before executing it, since on exam day that is the only tool you will have. **The non-coding problems in each problem set—the multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions you answer without writing a program—are the closest match to the exam format**. When you work through a problem set, treat those questions as exam practice rather than as something to click through on the way to the coding problems.

Where You Take the Exams

Where you sit for these exams depends on who you are. Find yourself in this list:

- **Georgia Tech students:** you take both exams on the Georgia Tech campus, in a room we announce with the sign-up link.
- **Dual enrollment students at metro Atlanta schools:** you also come to the Georgia Tech campus for both exams. The evening blocks exist specifically for you—see below—but you are

also welcome to sign up for a daytime slot.

- **Dual enrollment students at schools outside metro Atlanta:** you do *not* travel to campus. We will arrange for your exam to be **proctored at your own school**, sending the exam materials to your school's DE coordinator or testing office and coordinating with them directly to schedule your sitting during the same exam week. You do not use the Canvas Scheduler; your school will tell you your time and location, and will supply your exam materials on the day. We will contact your school well before each exam week, but if you have not heard anything about your exam arrangements by the Monday of the week *before* exam week, post privately on the course forum immediately so we can chase it down.

If you are unsure which category you are in, ask us in the first two weeks of the semester rather than guessing. Exam week is far too late to discover you were in the wrong group.

Scheduling & Sign-Up (Campus Students)

Rather than a single fixed exam time, each exam week offers **a variety of scheduled 90-minute blocks running Monday through Friday**, and you choose the one that fits your schedule. The exam room's seat count sets the capacity of each block; once a block is full, it disappears from the list and you must choose another. The specific block times differ between the two exams, so do not assume Exam 2 uses the same grid as Exam 1—check the schedule when sign-up opens.

Every exam week includes **evening blocks on every day**. These exist specifically so that dual enrollment students who are in high school classes during the day, and Georgia Tech students with daytime course or work conflicts, can reach campus without missing anything else. If you are a DE student, plan on an evening block by default.

Sign-up is handled through **Canvas Scheduler appointment slots**. From the Canvas Calendar, click *Find Appointment*, select this course, and reserve a slot. You may change your own reservation freely up until the sign-up deadline, so it costs you nothing to claim a slot early and adjust later—and claiming early is the only way to guarantee you get the time you want. The exam room and building will be listed on the appointment slots themselves and announced in Canvas at least two weeks before each exam week.

The Sign-Up Deadline—and What Happens If You Miss It

If you are taking the exam on campus, you must have a reserved slot by **11:59 PM ET on the Thursday before exam week**:

- **Exam 1:** sign up by **Thursday, October 22, 2026**.
- **Exam 2:** sign up by **Thursday, December 10, 2026**.

If you have not reserved a slot by that deadline, **you will be randomly assigned to one of the remaining open slots**. We will send your assigned day and time by email and Canvas notification on the Friday before exam week. A randomly assigned slot is **binding**: it is treated exactly as if you had

chosen it yourself, and "I did not pick that time" is not grounds for a reschedule. The remaining slots at that point are, by definition, the least popular ones, so signing yourself up is strongly in your interest.

After the sign-up deadline passes, self-service changes close. Swaps in the final days before an exam depend on a seat being free in another block and are not guaranteed; request one by private post on the course forum, not by email.

Exam Day Rules

- **Arrive 15 minutes early.** Blocks are spaced to allow the room to clear and reset between sittings, and a late start eats into your own 90 minutes. The 90-minute clock starts at the posted block start time, not when you sit down.
- **Bring a photo ID** (BuzzCard, driver's license, high school ID, or passport). You will not be seated without one.
- **Bring a #2 pencil.** Answers are marked on a bubble sheet, and answers marked in pen cannot be scanned or regraded. Bring a spare.
- **Arriving more than 20 minutes late forfeits the block.** At that point you are treated as a missed exam; see below.
- The exam is closed: no notes, no books, no phones, smartwatches, headphones, calculators, or other devices, and no AI assistants. Bags and personal items go to the front of the room.
- Mark every answer on the bubble sheet. Work written in the exam booklet is not graded, and an unmarked bubble is scored as incorrect, so if you are running short on time, fill in your remaining answers rather than leaving them blank.
- Turn in both your booklet and your answer sheet before leaving. You may leave when you finish, but you may not return to the room afterward.

Conflicts, Accommodations, and Missed Exams

With blocks spread across all five days of exam week and into the evenings, we expect the overwhelming majority of students to find a workable time. If none of them work for you, act early:

- **Accommodations:** If you are registered with the Office of Disability Services and receive extended time, a reduced-distraction environment, or any other testing accommodation, **do not use the Canvas Scheduler.** You schedule your own exam appointment directly with the **ODS Testing Center.** Do this as far in advance as you can—Testing Center slots fill quickly, especially in the weeks around midterms and finals, and the two weeks this course uses are exactly when demand peaks. See the Disability Services section below for details.
- **Genuine conflicts with every block:** Contact us by private forum post no later than **two weeks before** the exam week, describing your availability across the full week. We will work with you on an alternative sitting where we can. Requests made during exam week itself will generally not be accommodated, because the room and proctors are already committed.
- **Emergencies:** If you miss your exam because of an illness, injury, or other emergency, contact

the Dean of Students office as described in the Late Work policy below and notify us as soon as you are able. A makeup exam requires Dean of Students verification.

- **Missing an in-person exam without an approved reason results in a zero for that exam.**

Because there are only two and neither can be dropped, that is 10% of your final average. Please treat these two dates as immovable from the first week of the semester, and check them against your work schedule, travel plans, and other courses' exam schedules now.

Extra Credit: 5%

You can earn up to 5 extra credit points on your final average in this class. While these points are extra credit in the sense that they raise the maximum number of total points to 105, we hope everyone completes them.

To summarize, they are:

- **Extra Credit 1 (1 point): Complete a MOOC.** Complete a MOOC available via Coursera, edX, or another platform. We offer one for free, or you can choose to earn a verified certificate in a different one. You may find more information or submit your proof of certificate [on the Assignment page \(\\$CANVAS_OBJECT_REFERENCE\\$/assignments/gdf12b2176a27bf3a642bef6edc44c1ca\)](#).
- **Extra Credit 2 (1 point): Read a Book.** There are a handful of books we highly recommend. You can earn one extra credit point by reading one and earning at least a 90% on a quiz available via Canvas. You may find available book quizzes and their instructions [on the Assignments page \(\\$CANVAS_OBJECT_REFERENCE\\$/assignments/gf0d635fb8b94d0bd8d88d8e36e04109e\)](#).
- **Extra Credit 3 (1 point): Complete a Coding Activity.** There are a number of different additional coding-based challenges we offer for one additional extra credit point. More details will be made available during the semester.
- **Extra Credit 4 (2 points): Final Problem Set.** At the end of the course in Vocareum, there is a Final Problem Set you may complete for up to 2 extra credit points. It consists of a number of problems significantly more challenging than those in the rest of the course. Note that Extra Credit 4 is autograded and offers extra credit like a regular problem set, and is due alongside the Module 6 content.

You may earn up to 5 extra credit points if you complete all activities. Note that Canvas is set to not factor in extra credit until the **end of the semester**; that's because Canvas's math is such that it appears as if *not* doing the extra credit hurts you until you complete all the other assessments. We'll set extra credit to factor into your average at the end of the term, but in the meantime, you may just mentally add the extra points you earn to your average.

Course Calendar

This course runs 17 weeks, from **August 24, 2026** through **December 18, 2026**. The calendar below provides the content we expect you to work on each week.

Release Schedule

Although all the course material (except the tests) is available on Day 1, we make periodic changes and improvements to the course. The week in which a chapter is listed in the calendar is the date by which you may assume the material for that chapter is finalized. For example, Chapter 2.2 is listed under Week 2: this means that on Monday of Week 2, you may assume that Chapter 2.2 has been finalized.

You are encouraged to work ahead, however we may make changes to chapters until their official release date. Generally, these changes will be adding new content or exercises, so you wouldn't risk completing something that would later be removed. If you do work ahead, you should just make sure to check back and see if your score remains where you expect it to be after the release date has passed.

Deadlines

Each chapter is officially due on Friday of the week on which it appears on the calendar. Thus, every chapter of the course is finalized on the Monday of the week on which it appears, and is due on the following Friday. For example, Chapter 2.2 is officially due on the Friday of Week 2. This includes the chapter exercises *and* the problem set (e.g. the exercises embedded in Chapter 2.3 and the Chapter 2.3 Problem Set). However...

Grace Period

You may complete any chapter and its problem set for full credit until the day before that module's test **opens**. For example, all of Module 1 (Chapters 1.1 through 2.4) is officially due across Weeks 1–3, but you may complete any of it through Sunday, September 13 for full credit, because the Module 1 Test opens Monday, September 14. This is to encourage you to keep trying even after the official deadline has passed in order to prepare for the test, as well as to give you time to ask questions and get answers if you get stuck.

Module Tests

Module tests open on Monday at 9:00 AM ET in the week in which they are listed, and **Thursday at 4:00 PM ET** is the last time you may start one, with a grace period allowing you to start as late as **Friday at 4:00 PM ET**. You get the full 90 minutes from whenever you begin, even if that carries past the cutoff. The Deadline column in the calendar below shows the Friday grace-period end for test weeks. Before you plan on using Friday, read [The Friday Grace Period](#) above—there is no teaching-team support available that day.

In-Person Exams

The two in-person exams occupy Weeks 10 and 17 and are not tied to the online testing window described above; you attend the 90-minute block you reserved through the Canvas Scheduler. Sign-

up opens two weeks before each exam week and closes at 11:59 PM ET on the Thursday before it. Both exam weeks are marked in bold on the calendar below. There is no grace period of any kind on an in-person exam.

Don't Procrastinate

This course is intentionally flexible to give you plenty of room to work around other classes' schedules, work, extracurricular activities, or personal issues. However, if you procrastinate and wait until too close to the deadlines to complete the work, you will find it very difficult to catch up. We recommend working ahead, especially early in the semester, to give yourself plenty of leeway to get stuck and struggle later.

School Breaks

You'll notice our calendar largely doesn't observe school breaks (fall break, spring break, etc.). This is because this class comprises both Georgia Tech students and Dual Enrollment students, many of whom have different school breaks. For this reason, we don't bother incorporating breaks into the recommended schedule. If you do plan to take time off for a break or any other kind of interruption, you're welcome to work ahead. If you have an official conflict with the entirety of the time a module test is open, let us know and we may be able to open it early.

Two exceptions. First, **the two in-person exam weeks are fixed**. Working ahead does not let you skip them, and unlike the online tests they cannot be opened early for you. Check October 26–30 and December 14–18 against your travel plans now.

Second, **Thanksgiving**. Week 14 is the week of November 23, and the Georgia Tech Student Recess runs November 25–27. Two things land in that week, so read this carefully:

- The **Chapter 5.1 deadline is moved up to Wednesday, November 25**, so no course content is due over the holiday itself.
- The **Module 5 Test** window is that same week. **Take it Monday, November 23 or Tuesday, November 24**. You may technically start as late as Thursday at 4:00 PM, or Friday at 4:00 PM using the grace period, but Thursday is Thanksgiving Day and Friday is a recess day—so for this test in particular, the last two days of the window are days on which nobody will be available to help you if something goes wrong. Monday and Tuesday are the only days that week with normal support.

Course Calendar

Tests and exams are written in bold. Remember, although there are official deadlines listed here, there is a grace period to submit any Module Content for full credit until the day before the corresponding module test opens.

Week #	Week Of	Module	Chapters	Other Assignments	Deadline
1	08/24/2026	1	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Start-of-Course Survey Syllabus Comprehension Quiz/Survey	08/28/2026
2	08/31/2026	1	2.1, 2.2	Onboarding Quiz & Test	09/04/2026
3	09/07/2026	1	2.3, 2.4		09/11/2026
4	09/14/2026	2	3.1, 3.2	Programming Quiz 1	09/18/2026
5	09/21/2026	2	3.3		09/25/2026
6	09/28/2026	3	3.4	Programming Quiz 2 Quarter-Course Survey	10/02/2026
7	10/05/2026	3	3.5		10/09/2026
8	10/12/2026	4	4.1	Programming Quiz 3	10/16/2026
9	10/19/2026	4	4.2	In-Person Exam 1 sign-up closes Thu 10/22	10/23/2026
10	10/26/2026	4	4.3	IN-PERSON EXAM 1 (90 minutes, multiple choice; campus block or school-proctored sitting)	10/30/2026
11	11/02/2026	5	4.4	Programming Quiz 4 Mid-Course Survey	11/06/2026
12	11/09/2026	5	4.5		11/13/2026
13	11/16/2026	6	5.1	Programming Quiz 5	11/20/2026
14	11/23/2026	6	5.2		11/25/2026

15	11/30/2026	6	5.3	Programming Quiz 6	12/04/2026
16	12/07/2026	—		In-Person Exam 2 sign-up closes Thu 12/10 End-of-Course Survey	12/11/2026
17	12/14/2026	—		IN-PERSON EXAM 2 (Final Exam) (90 minutes, multiple choice; campus block or school-proctored sitting)	12/17/2026

Important Dates

The calendar above gives a detailed guide for pacing yourself through the class. However, between chapters and problem sets and tests and grace periods, we understand it can be a little confusing. Here's a short form of the truly binding dates for the class.

Every module test below follows the same pattern: it **opens Monday at 9:00 AM ET, must be started by Thursday at 4:00 PM ET, and has a grace period allowing a start as late as Friday at 4:00 PM ET**, during which no teaching-team support is available. All cutoffs are start times—you always get your full 90 minutes. The dates listed are the Monday–Thursday window; the Friday in parentheses is the grace-period end.

- **August 31 – September 3 (grace to September 4):** The Honorlock Onboarding "Quiz" and "Test" are open. (Technically these are open from day 1, but this window is when they are intended to be completed.) Complete them—this is your only chance to hit an Honorlock problem before it counts.
- **September 13:** The last day to complete any **Module 1** work (Chapters 1.1–1.3, 2.1–2.4, and the accompanying problem sets) for credit.
- **September 14 – 17 (grace to September 18):** The **Module 1 Test** is open.
- **October 4:** The last day to complete any **Module 2** work (Chapters 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and the accompanying problem sets) for credit.
- **October 5 – 8 (grace to October 9):** The **Module 2 Test** is open.
- **October 12:** In-Person Exam 1 sign-up opens in the Canvas Scheduler for students testing on campus.
- **October 18:** The last day to complete any **Module 3** work (Chapters 3.4, 3.5, and the accompanying problem sets) for credit.
- **October 19 – 22 (grace to October 23):** The **Module 3 Test** is open.
- **October 22, 11:59PM ET:** Deadline for campus students to reserve an **In-Person Exam 1** block. After this, unreserved students are randomly assigned a slot and notified on Friday, October 23.
- **October 26 – 30: In-Person Exam 1**, covering Modules 1–3, in your reserved 90-minute block on campus or at your school's proctored sitting.

- **November 8:** The last day to complete any **Module 4** work (Chapters 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and the accompanying problem sets) for credit.
- **November 9 – 12 (grace to November 13):** The **Module 4 Test** is open.
- **November 22:** The last day to complete any **Module 5** work (Chapters 4.4, 4.5, and the accompanying problem sets) for credit.
- **November 23 – 26 (grace to November 27):** The **Module 5 Test** is open. **Take this one Monday or Tuesday**—Thursday is Thanksgiving Day and Friday is a recess day, so no help will be available in the back half of this window.
- **November 25:** The Chapter 5.1 deadline, moved up from Friday for the Thanksgiving recess.
- **November 30:** In-Person Exam 2 sign-up opens in the Canvas Scheduler for students testing on campus.
- **December 6:** The last day to complete any **Module 6** work (Chapters 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and the accompanying problem sets, as well as the Final Problem Set) for credit. **This is the last day to submit any Module Content in this course.**
- **December 7 – 10 (grace to December 11):** The **Module 6 Test** is open.
- **December 10, 11:59PM ET:** Deadline for campus students to reserve an **In-Person Exam 2** block. After this, unreserved students are randomly assigned a slot and notified on Friday, December 11.
- **December 14 – 18: In-Person Exam 2 (Final Exam),** cumulative with emphasis on Modules 4–6, in your reserved 90-minute block on campus or at your school's proctored sitting. This is the last graded activity of the semester.

Note that extra credit may have earlier deadlines as specified on the corresponding assignment pages.

If you write only four dates from this page into your own calendar, make them these: the weeks of **October 26** and **December 14** (the two in-person exams), and—if you are testing on campus—**October 22** and **December 10**, the two sign-up deadlines.

Course Policies

The following policies are binding for this course.

Official Course Communication

In terms of course administration, you are responsible for knowing the following information:

1. This entire syllabus.
2. Anything emailed directly to you by the teaching team (including announcements via the course forum or Canvas), 24 hours after receiving such an email.

Generally speaking, we will post announcements via Canvas and cross-post their content to the course forum; you should thus ensure that your Canvas settings are such that you receive these

announcements promptly, ideally via email (in addition to other mechanisms if you'd like). If we need to contact you individually, we will do so via email. Georgia Tech generally recommends students to check their Georgia Tech email once every 24 hours. So, if an announcement or message is time sensitive, you will not be responsible for the contents of the announcement until 24 hours after it has been sent.

Note that this means you won't be responsible for knowing information communicated in several other methods we'll be using. You aren't responsible for knowing everything posted to the course forum that isn't linked from an official announcement. You aren't responsible for anything said in recitation or the help desk or any other third-party sites we may sometimes use to communicate with students. You don't need to worry about missing critical information so long as you keep up with your email and understand the documents on this syllabus.

Communicating with Instructors and TAs

Communication with the course teaching team should be handled via the discussion forum. If your question is relevant to the entire class, you should ask it publicly; if your question is specific to you, such as a question about your specific grade or submission, you should ask it privately. Please refrain from emailing the instructor or teaching team unless you are sharing information that should only be seen by the instructor; you will generally get a more rapid response by posting privately to the forum and having the TAs either answer your question or quickly alert the instructor that a question needs to be answered.

Our workflow is to regularly filter the forum for Unresolved posts, which includes top-level threads with no answer accepted by the original poster, as well as mega-threads with unresolved follow-ups. If your question requires an official answer or follow-up from an instructor or teaching assistant, make sure that it is posted as either a Question or as a follow-up to a mega-thread, and that it is marked Unresolved. Once an instructor or TA has answered your question, it will automatically be marked as Resolved; if you require further assistance, you are welcome to add a follow-up, but make sure to unmark the question as Resolved in order to make sure that it is seen by a member of the teaching team.

One category of post is worth calling out before you write it: **please do not post or email asking for a deadline extension**. We cannot grant one without an approved letter from the Dean of Students, so these posts cannot be answered with anything except a pointer to the Late Work policy below. Go to the Dean of Students first; see [Extensions](#).

Similarly, in order to keep the forum organized, please post as a Post or Note instead of a Question if your question does not require an official response from the teaching team. For example, if you are interested in getting multiple perspective from classmates, getting feedback on your ideas, or having a discussion that does not have a single answer, please use Post or Note instead of Question. Please reserve Question threads for questions that will likely have a single official response. TAs and

instructors will regularly convert Questions to Posts or Notes that do not need a single official answer, but it will save time and allow them to focus their attention on other students if you correctly categorize your post in the first place.

Late Work

All assignment due dates are specified in the course calendar. There are also generous grace periods after the due dates: you may turn in work until the end of the grace period for full credit. The course is already designed to offer everyone the maximum amount of flexibility we can reasonably offer while still allowing the class to run smoothly and to ensure students are always on pace to succeed.

You are responsible for ensuring that your assignments are submitted and that credit has been granted. All exercises and problem sets are graded automatically. In Canvas, you may confirm that surveys and module tests are all submitted at appropriate times.

The late work policy does not apply to the two in-person exams, which have no grace period: you either attend your reserved block or you do not. See the [In-Person Exams](#) section for how conflicts and emergencies are handled there.

If you have an emergency and absolutely cannot submit an assignment by the posted deadlines, we ask you to go through the Dean of Students' office regarding class absences. The Dean of Students is equipped to address emergencies that we lack the resources to address. Additionally, the Dean of Students office can coordinate with you and alert all your classes together instead of requiring you to contact each professor individually. You may find information on contacting the Dean of Students with regard to personal emergencies here: <https://studentlife.gatech.edu/request-assistance> (<https://studentlife.gatech.edu/request-assistance>)

The Dean of Students is there to be an advocate and partner for you when you're in a crisis; we wholeheartedly recommend taking advantage of this resource if you are in need. Justifiable excuses here would involve any major unforeseen disruption to your classwork, such as illnesses, injuries, deaths, and births, all for either you or your family.

Extensions: Read This Before You Ask

We do not grant extensions without an approved letter from the Dean of Students. There are no exceptions to this, for anyone, for any reason.

This means that **emailing us or posting on Ed to request an extension will not get you one.** Please do not do it. A private post explaining your situation, however sympathetic, cannot change the answer, because the decision is not ours to make—it belongs to the Dean of Students office, which is equipped to verify circumstances in a way we are not. The only reply we can give such a post is a link back to this paragraph, and in the time you spend writing it, you could have started the DoS request that actually works.

So if you need an extension, **skip us entirely and go straight to the Dean of Students** at <https://studentlife.gatech.edu/request-assistance> (<https://studentlife.gatech.edu/request-assistance>). Once their office approves your request and sends us a letter, we will act on it immediately and you do not need to negotiate anything further with us. One request to them also covers all of your classes at once, instead of you contacting every professor separately.

Two things worth understanding about why we hold this line. First, this policy is what keeps the course fair: the deadlines and grace periods on this page are identical for all several hundred students, and quietly extending them for whoever asks would mean the students who plan ahead and never ask are the ones who lose out. Second, the course is already built with a great deal of slack—generous grace periods on all Module Content, unlimited attempts until the deadline, and a dropped lowest module test score. That flexibility is deliberately front-loaded so that an ordinary bad week is already absorbed without anyone needing to ask for anything. Please use it, rather than saving it and asking for more later.

Academic Honesty & AI Collaboration Policy

Every Student is expected to read, understand and abide by the [Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code](http://www.honor.gatech.edu/) (<http://www.honor.gatech.edu/>). Academic misconduct is taken very seriously in this class.

Exercises and problem sets are collaborative. You are encouraged to work with your classmates to talk through problems, debug code, explain a concept, etc. However, the work submitted for a grade must be your own. You should not copy answers directly from other students, nor should you copy any code directly from other students.

Similarly, you should not send any code you write to your classmates. You can show it off either side-by-side or via teleconference, but it should not be shared in its copyable text format. When asking questions about your code on the course forum, we ask that you post screenshots of your code along with its output rather than copying the code itself. This makes it slightly more difficult to directly borrow from someone else's work, as well as often helps us answer your question by seeing its output and referencing specific line numbers.

Additionally, you should not copy/paste questions from this course to any third-party web sites, such as Stack Overflow. You are welcome to use these resources for additional support, but when doing so, you should have already attempted the problem and be able to explain what your goal and issue are in your *own* words. You should not copy the entire problem description and ask, "Can anyone help with this?" Instead, you should attempt the problem and be prepared to ask a question like, "I'm trying to reverse this string, but right now the string never seems to get changed. What's wrong? Here's my current code:" Not only is this restriction necessary to maintain academic honesty, but it is also good programming practice: you will often find that in the process of explaining where you're stuck, you solve the issue yourself.

These policies apply straightforwardly to collaboration with AI agents such as ChatGPT and Github Copilot as well. We encourage use of these tools as assistants when working on exercises and problem sets, but you should make sure you are using them as *assistants*. You should learn from these tools, then let that improved understanding show on the problems you complete. You should never send the entirety of a problem description to an AI assistant, nor should you copy the response you receive back into your own submission. Instead, you should attempt problems yourself, ask AI assistants for help if you are stuck, learn from their responses, and recreate those responses in your own work. You can ensure you are using AI assistance effectively by following these two heuristics: (a) never Copy (literally, Ctrl/Cmd+C copy) anything you receive from an AI assistant, and (b) do not have your own code open while interacting with the assistants. If you follow these two heuristics, you guarantee that any assistance you receive will contribute to your own understanding, which you can then demonstrate on the assignments.

Note that Module 6 includes a chapter on artificial intelligence. Studying how these systems work does not change the policy above or below: the AI chapter is content to be learned, not a license to use AI assistants differently on graded work.

No collaboration is permitted during module tests or in-person exams. You may not interact with anyone during an assessment: not in person, not via phone, not via the computer. During an assessment, you should only access the test or exam itself; no other resources, including AI assistants. Honorlock will automatically flag any violations on the online module tests, and the in-person exams are proctored in the room.

Because the in-person exams are administered in multiple blocks across a week, and at multiple locations, students will take them at different times. **Discussing the contents of an in-person exam with anyone who has not yet taken it is a violation of the Honor Code**, and that includes describing the topics, the number of questions, or how hard it was. This applies to the course forum, group chats, conversations in the hallway outside the exam room, and messages to classmates at other schools. If you are asked, the correct answer is "I can't talk about it." Exam versions vary across blocks, and we do compare submissions across the week.

To summarize:

- You are permitted and encouraged to seek help from others on course exercises and problem sets, but you may not copy anyone else's code into your own submission.
- You are permitted and encouraged to help your friends and classmates, but you may not send them your actual code in an easily copyable format.
- You are permitted to seek additional support from third-party services like Stack Overflow and other sites, but you may not copy the actual assignment instructions into your question; instead, you must present your request in your own words.
- During module tests and in-person exams, you may not consult any other resources or interact

with any other people via any mechanism.

- You may not discuss the contents of an in-person exam with anyone until the entire exam week has concluded.

Core IMPACTS

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Institutional Priority area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How does my institution help me to navigate the world?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and solve problems related to academic priorities at their institution.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Critical Thinking
- Teamwork
- Time Management

Disability Services & Testing Accommodations

Georgia Tech supports students with documented disabilities through the [Office of Disability Services \(https://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/\)](https://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/). If you have a disability and need accommodations in this course, please register with ODS and provide us with your accommodation letter as early in the semester as possible.

Accommodations matter especially for the two in-person exams. If your accommodations include extended time, a reduced-distraction environment, assistive technology, or anything else that a standard 90-minute block in a shared room cannot provide, **do not reserve a slot through the Canvas Scheduler**. Instead, **you are responsible for scheduling your exam directly with the ODS Testing Center** for a time during the exam week. Also send us a private forum post letting us know you have done so, so that we can get your exam materials to the Testing Center in time and know not to expect you in the general room.

Schedule early. Testing Center appointments are booked on a first-come, first-served basis across all of Georgia Tech, and they fill up fast—particularly in October and December, when every course is running exams at once. Do not wait until the week before. As soon as each exam week is on your

calendar, book your appointment. If you find that the Testing Center has no availability during the exam week, tell us immediately by private forum post rather than waiting; the earlier we know, the more options we have.

You will need to do this separately for each of the two exams. Booking Exam 1 does not reserve anything for Exam 2.

Accommodations for the online module tests are configured in Canvas and Honorlock once your letter is on file, and apply automatically from that point forward.

Help Desk

Aside from the two in-person exams described above, this course has no mandatory in-person meeting times or locations. There are no lectures. In lieu of lectures, you are expected to complete the online material for this class.

Students may also seek additional support at the TA help desk, administered [via Zoom \(https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/539830/external_tools/15673\)](https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/539830/external_tools/15673). At the TA Help Desk, TAs will be on hand to answer questions live via videochat and screenshare. A schedule for the TA help desk, along with directions for accessing it, will be posted to the course forum within the first two weeks of the semester starting. Check the Announcements in Canvas or the Help Desk folder on the forum for the schedule and details

Feedback

Although this course has now been running for several semesters, we're always experimenting with, expanding, and fixing things. As a result, there are bound to be things that go wrong. We ask your patience and support as we figure things out, and in return, we promise that we, too, will be fair and understanding, especially with anything that might impact your grade or performance in the class.

Second, we want to consistently get feedback on how we can improve and expand the course for future iterations. You can take advantage of the feedback box on the forum (especially if you want to gather input from others in the class), give us feedback on the surveys, or contact us directly via private forum messages. You can also complete [this form \(https://goo.gl/forms/r7HmYSesay3wKzsP2\)](https://goo.gl/forms/r7HmYSesay3wKzsP2) especially to give feedback on the content, but note that if you want a response quickly, you should use the other methods as this survey is shared with public MOOC students. It's also off-site and purely anonymous. Feel free to complete it as many times as you want!

Please don't hesitate to share any thoughts, no matter how small. We want this to be a fantastic experience for everyone.