



CS 361: Syllabus -- Spring 2026

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1 Course Description

1.1 When and Where

Website: [Canvas](#) and <https://www.cs.odu.edu/~zeil/cs361/s26-webss/>

This is an internet-based course. There are no regularly scheduled class lecture times. For the most part, students will work at their own chosen times, subject to deadlines for assignments and exams (described later under [Course Policies](#)).

There will be an optional Orientation session conducted via Zoom on Tuesday, 01/20, 6:00 PM.

There will be weekly optional Review/Q&A sessions every Thursday at 7:30 PM. Sessions will be conducted via Zoom and will be recorded for those unable to attend. Links to these sessions will be in Canvas under “Course Collaboration Tool”. Recordings will also be available via Canvas under “Media Gallery”.

1.2 Objectives

This course explores data structures, algorithms for manipulating them, and the practical problems of implementing those structures in real programming languages and environments. Heavy emphasis is placed upon

the analysis of algorithms to characterize their worst and average case requirements for running time and memory.

Perhaps more than any other course, CS361 should expand the students “toolbox” of basic techniques for manipulating data at both the conceptual and the concrete level. At the conceptual level, the student will see a broad selection of standard practices and approaches used in program design. At the concrete level, the student will begin what should be a career-long practice of accumulating useful, reusable code units.

2 Basic Information

2.1 Instructor

Sumaya Sanober	DRGS 1103B
phone 757-683-7736	email ssanober@odu.edu

Dr. Zeil will be maintaining the course website. Issues with the website (missing pages, broken links, etc.) can be sent to him at zeil@cs.odu.edu

Important: All emails related to this course should have the phrase “CS361” somewhere in the subject line. This flags your message in my mailbox for faster attention. Omit this, and your message may get lost amid the ton of daily spam and ODU administrative messages I get each day.

I try to respond to all (properly marked) messages within 24 hours M-F, within 48 hours on weekends & holidays.

Email is my preferred mode of communication with students. Don’t hesitate to email me your questions, especially those related to getting help with the Assignments. Refer to the [Communications](#) policy for more details.

Please *do not use the Canvas messaging system*. Use regular email instead. The Canvas messaging system is poor at formatting code and math, both of which are frequent elements in any email exchange in this course. The Canvas messaging system is also slower at notifying me about messages.

2.1.1 Office Hours

I hold Zoom and in-person office hours. My Zoom Office hours are listed [here](#). In-person office hours are on Wednesday, 2:00 PM-3:00 PM at DRAGS HALL 1103B room number

2.2 Text

Textbooks for this course are online and free.

In addition to the readings at the course website, listed at the top of this document, the (required) textbook for this course is:

- [OpenDSA Data Structures and Algorithms](#), Copyright 2011-2023 by OpenDSA Project Contributors
- [The Java Tutorials](#), Copyright 1995-2022, Oracle and/or its affiliates.

2.3 Course Prerequisites

The prerequisites for this course are:

- CS 251, Programming in Java, or [CS 261](#), Java for Programmers
- [CS 252](#) Introduction to Unix for Programmers
- MATH 211, Calculus I,

or equivalents.

Although you might not be programming on a Linux system in this course, you will still need a number of the programming tools taught in CS252. Specifically, you should be familiar with running programs from the command line (in any operating system), file transfer, SSH keys and SSH key agents, git and GitHub, building with Gradle, and common programming IDEs.

2.4 Computer Accounts

Students will need three network accounts to participate in this class:

- An ODU ITS (Midas) account. This is the account associated with your @odu.edu email. It will allow you to log into the course's Canvas site when taking quizzes and exams.

All ODU students automatically receive this account, though You may need to activate yours, particularly if you are new to ODU.

- An account on the CS Dept. network. This will be used for access to the CS dept computing resources, and for accessing and submitting assignments.

You may have a CS account already if you were registered for a CS class last semester. If not, the account setup and password can be initiated at <http://www.cs.odu.edu/> by clicking on “Account Creation” under “Online Services”.

A few notes about this:

- Typically, new accounts can be created no earlier than 1-2 weeks before the start of classes.
- There are time lags in the way that information flows around the University and within the CS network.
 - Typically, you will need to have been enrolled in a CS course for 24-48 hours before you can create an account.
 - Once your account is activated, you may need to wait another 24 hours before your account information becomes available to the course website, and you can access the course's assignment pages.
- An account on [GitHub](#). A free account will suffice.

All students in this course are responsible for making sure they have working accounts before the first lab or assignment.

Students on campus will have access to the [CS Dept's PC labs](#). All students can access the CS Dept's [Linux servers](#) and the [Virtual Computer Portal](#) from off campus or from other computer labs on campus.

2.5 Software Requirements

2.5.1 Required

- Web browser: Most up-to-date web browsers should suffice for this course. Chrome and Firefox are recommended. Internet Explorer and Safari are discouraged. Edge is probably OK.

Your browser will need to run JavaScript, particularly when taking self-assessments, quizzes and exams, which are hosted on the ODU Canvas system.

- ssh, sftp: Any program should do. The [CS252 website](#) has some recommendations.
- [Java 21 JDK](#), used for algorithm demos.

All students in this course are responsible for setting up an acceptable programming environment in advance of the first assignment. Options for doing this are explained in the first week's module.

- Exams will be conducted using [SmarterProctoring](#), which allows the student a choice of live or online proctoring. If a student opts for online proctoring, a Windows or MacOS PC is required and the students will need to install proctoring software on it.

3 Resources & Getting Help

A useful list of resources for this course can be found [here](#).

For help with the course, you can

1. Check the course [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
2. Email your instructor or consult them during their [office hours](#).
3. Make use of tutoring at the [CS Undergraduate Resource Center](#).
4. Technical questions about the website, assignment submission, & automatic grading can be directed to Prof. Zeil at zeil@cs.odu.edu.
5. Technical questions about accounts and access to CS online resources can be directed to the CS systems staff at root@cs.odu.edu. Do not bother asking the ODU ITS Help desk. They really can't help with issues relating to the CS Dept network.
6. Visit the CS361 channel of the [ODU CS/STEM Discord](#).

4 Course Policies

4.1 Due Dates

The course is divided into three parts. Each part has associated assignments and a closing exam. (The final exam, following Part III, is cumulative).

Most assignments are marked with an explicit due date, and are due at the end of that day (11:59:59PM, ET). Where a date range is indicated, the assignment or test is due at the end of the final day listed. You will find these dates on the Canvas course calendar.

Programming assignments may be submitted up to two days late, at a penalty of 10% for the first day after the due date, 20% penalty for the second day. Late submissions of programming assignments will not be accepted after the second day.

Late submissions of quizzes, non-programming assignments, and exams (anything not submitted via GitHub) will not be accepted.

Except as outlined above, exceptions to due dates will be made only in situations of unusual and unforeseeable circumstances beyond the student's control.

"I've fallen behind and can't catch up", "I'm having a busier semester than I expected", or "I registered for too many classes this semester" are *not* grounds for an extension.

4.2 Academic Honesty

Everything turned in for grading in this course must be your own work.

The instructor reserves the right to question a student orally or in writing and using his/her evaluation of the student's understanding of the assignment and the submitted solution as evidence of cheating. Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct & Academic Integrity for consideration for possible punitive action.

Students who contribute to violations by sharing their Code/designs with others may be subject to the same penalties.

Students are expected to use standard Unix protection mechanisms (chmod) to keep their assignments from being read by their classmates. Failure to do so will result in grade penalties, at the very least.

This policy is *not* intended to prevent students from providing legitimate assistance to one another. Students are encouraged to seek/provide one another aid in learning to use the operating system, in issues of the programming language, or to general issues relating to the course subject matter.

Students should avoid, however, explicit discussion of approaches to solving a particular programming assignment, and under no circumstances, should students show one another their code for an ongoing assignment, nor discuss such code in detail.

Use of Online Resources

You may **not** post details of course assignments, projects, or tests at online Forums, Bulletin Boards, Homework sites, etc., soliciting help.

You may use information that you have not solicited but have located, subject to the following restrictions:

- Just as when writing a paper, if you use someone else’s ideas, you must cite your sources appropriately. Within code, such citations appear in comments.

Example:

```

:
double x = 23.0;
double xsqrt = sqrt(x);
// Search algorithm based upon code by S Zeil at
// https://www.cs.odu.edu/~zeil/cs361/latest/Public/functionAnalysis/index.html#orderedsequent
int loc = 0;
while (loc < arraySize && numbers[loc] < xsqrt)
:

```



- Just as when writing a paper, if you use someone else’s words (code), you must cite your sources appropriately **and** mark the quoted text. Within code, such citations appear in comments.

Example:

```

:
double x = 23.0;
double xsqrt = sqrt(x);
// Begin quoted code from S Zeil at
// https://www.cs.odu.edu/~zeil/cs361/latest/Public/functionAnalysis/index.html#orderedsequent
int loc = 0;
while (loc < listlength && list[loc] < searchItem)
{
    ++loc;
}
// End quoted code
:

```



- Failure to appropriately cite any such “found code” will be taken as evidence of plagiarism.
- The overall principle stated in the first sentence of this section remains in effect. “Everything turned in for grading in this course must be your own work.” If the bulk of your assignment, project, test answer, etc., are copied, even with appropriate citation, to the degree that, in the judgment of the instructor, you have not demonstrated your own knowledge of the course material, you will receive a zero for that submission.

Use of AI Assistance

This is considered the same as other online resources. Any code obtained via the use of ChatGPT or other AI assistants must cite the AI engine as the author and indicate where code has been directly quoted from the AI source, as described above.

In addition, the prompts used to query the AI assistant should be copied to a file `aiPrompts.txt` stored in the root directory of your project and committed and pushed to your git repository along with your regular code.

4.3 Grading

labs:	10%
Assignments & Quizzes:	50%
Midterm Exam:	15%
Final Exam:	25%

The lowest assignment/quiz grade will be dropped before computing your overall score.

- [Details](#) on how grades are computed.

5 Educational Accessibility

Old Dominion University is committed to ensuring equal access to all qualified students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Office of Educational Accessibility (OEA) is the campus office that works with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

- If you experience a disability which will impact your ability to access to any aspect of the course, present me with an accommodation letter from OEA so that we can work together to ensure that Appropriate accommodations are available to you.
- If you feel that you will experience barriers to your ability to learn and/or complete examinations in the course, but do not have an accommodation letter, consider scheduling an appointment with OEA to determine if academic accommodations are necessary.

The Office of Educational Accessibility is located at 1021 Student Success Centre, and their phone number is (757)683-4655. Additional information is available at the [OEA website](#).

