Computer and Digital Systems
Architecture

EE/CpE-517-A

Bruce McNair
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Week 0

Course introduction
Course Introduction

• Course logistics
• Textbook(s), other reference material
• Course requirements & Grading policy
• Course outline
Contact and interaction

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Means of course interaction

  In-class participation (for on-campus section) \  
  - for general interest 

  Moodle discussion posting / topics 

Stevens email (bmcnair@stevens.edu) – for questions or submissions 

Phone: 201-216-5549 
Visit my office (I am generally on-campus ~9:30 - ~4 Monday-Thursday). Check personal.stevens.edu/~bmcnair/schedule.htm for detailed times.
Textbooks and reference material

• Primary text:

• Secondary reference (optional)
Grading Policy

• Participation in discussions: 10%
• Homework assignments: 50%
• Final project report written: 35%
• Final project ‘presentation’: 5%

• All items will leave *lots* of room for extra credit

• All assignments must be emailed, not scanned handwritten pages

• Homework will be assigned in Weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11. Assignments will be due 2 weeks later

• The course project will be defined in Week 4. A one paragraph abstract for the project will be due in Week 6. The final report is due the last day of the class, the final presentation is due before Week 13 of the class (for on-campus classes, the presentation is due the Saturday before Class 13, for on-line classes, the presentation will be due the Saturday before the start of Week 13)
Plans for this course

• This course is NOT CpE/CS-514, Computer Architecture. That course (currently uses Hennessy & Patterson, Computer Architecture, a Quantitative Approach, which treats the topic from a traditional CS perspective.

• This course will focus on Computer and Digital System Architecture from more of an EE/CpE perspective, particularly focused on embedded systems.

• We will use the ARM processor as a discussion vehicle. The ARM processor is one of the most widely used embedded processors in use today (look inside your cell phone, you will probably find one)

• When this course is fully debugged, it will be offered on-campus and via WebCampus (you’ll notice reference to WebCampus throughout as I put the stubs in place for that format)
A note on work for this course

• Homework assignments are individual work. You may study together, but when you solve the problems, make sure you work independently.

• There are no tests or quizzes in this course. Grading will be based on ~6 homework assignments during the semester and the final project.
A Note on Plagiarism and the Honor Code

• Plagiarism:
  – From the Stevens Honor Board web site:
    • “The dictionary defines plagiarism as the act of ‘...stealing and using the ideas, writings, or inventions of another as one's own’ or ‘.... taking passages, plots, or ideas from another and using them as one's own’.”
  – All work submitted for this class for credit must have a full citation of the source – enough to enable the reader to find the specific material without any additional searching.
  – Work found to be substantially identical or directly derived from a cited source or other unidentified sources will be assigned a grade of 0 without further discussion or options for resubmission
  – Should you find it necessary to use the words of the sources’ authors unmodified, they must be specifically quoted (as I have done above). If the words aren’t quoted, you are implicitly saying that they are yours; however, if a substantial portion of the paper consists only of direct quotes, you should seriously consider what the value added of your portion of the paper is
• Obviously, this slide wouldn’t be necessary unless problems with plagiarism continued.

• ANY REPORT SUBMITTED WITHOUT A COMPLETE CITATION OF THE SOURCE WILL NOT BE GRADED.

• This is a proper citation of a source:
  – Clearly, Seymour, “Must The Obvious Be Restated?,” International Conference on Repetitive Events, Podunk, Iowa, April 1, 2006.
    (Enough information for someone to find the material in the future)

• These are NOT a proper citations of a source:
  – Clearly, “Must the Obvious Be Restated”
  – Seymour Clearly, Obvious paper.

• If the last two examples sound silly, I can show you a few submissions for other courses that have tried to pass off citations as those shown. Misleading citations (e.g., copy from X, partially cite Y) will not be viewed favorably.
Notes on submissions

1. Depending on the semester, I am teaching 2-3 undergraduate courses and about 4 sections of 3 graduate courses. To keep things straight, I need students to mark their submissions so I can tell them apart. Your email attachment must include your name, the course and the submission information. For instance, Sally Smith, submitting the 2\textsuperscript{nd} homework to EE517A should title her attachment something like:

   ssmith5-HW2-EE517A.doc

   This is particularly important for students enrolled in more than one of my courses when they submit work after the due date (see next slide about due dates)

2. With hundreds of students in all the course sections, I do not directly acknowledge any submissions and cannot review drafts of papers. Instead, I use WebCT to give students feedback on the status of their submissions. Within a day or two of the paper submission, I will change the status of the assignment in the WebCT “My Grades” page. Overdue, submitted, and graded work will be so marked. Work that is not due or has not been acknowledged will be unflagged.

3. When you email me an assignment, use Stevens email. If you send a large (>4 MB) attachment, please send a separate email to let me know you sent it, in case the attachment causes the email to get bogged down.
Withdrawals, Incompletes and Late Submissions

• Since I am invariably asked about late submissions, incompletes and withdrawals, etc. in or after the final weeks of my courses, I’ll address the questions up front. I am normally sorry for making some of my policies known, but I am actually pretty lenient about late submissions. I know that there are sometimes good reasons outside the school for a student not to be able to get work in on time, so I do not penalize late submissions for most assignments. The exception for this course is the final presentation, which is heavily penalized for late submission.

• A related question is about submissions after the end of the class. For this, I am restricted by school policies. I’d love to let you take an extra month to finish all your work, but consider what this would mean to the Administration. How can they send out final grade reports on time if the instructors don’t turn grades in on time? For this reason, we are obligated to finalize grades within a predetermined time after the last day of the course or the final exam, whichever comes first. For this reason, I am limited in how late I can accept assignments for credit in the course.

• Finally, there is the question of Withdrawing from the course or taking an incomplete. Again, the school sets the policy. Withdrawal is permitted up to a certain date, which varies for on-campus and WebCT classes and by semester. You can find the school policy on the school calendar on the Registrar’s web site. Similarly, there are restrictions on when a grade of Incomplete can be granted. I will generally allow an incomplete if it is for good reasons, consistent with school policy. “I didn’t have enough time to finish everything” is not an allowable excuse. Real, extenuating circumstances, like death (but not the student’s), illness, or extreme natural calamities will generally be accepted as valid reasons to permit an incomplete. If you do receive an incomplete in one of my courses, there will always be a set date by which you will retake the course. The chances of getting permission the Nth time for an incomplete in a course section that you are making up an incomplete drop even faster than late presentation submissions.
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Week 0 Assignment

• Under “Discussions” there is a section “Introduction”. Post a short (a few sentences) note about yourself: interests, background, what you expect to get out of the course.
• Upload a small file with your posting (a small JPEG image of yourself would be useful so others in the class can put a face with the name)
• Using the WebCT email tool, send me (bmcnair) a message when you have posted your message or send me a message if you are having difficulty.
• As a last resort, send me email outside of WebCT at bmcnair@stevens.edu

Note: this is for the WebCT sections only