6.149 Class Syllabus

http://web.mit.edu/6.149/www

Welcome to 6.149 IAP 2014! 6.149 will provide a comprehensive, fast-paced introduction to Python. We have a staff:student ratio of about 1:10, and we are all eager to help you learn to code. In return, we ask that you students be enthusiastic and motivated. We expect you to come to lectures, come to office hours to ask questions when you get stuck, and **run your code before turning it in!**

Administrative Details

Class

Lectures will meet at 11 a.m. in 10-250 Monday through Friday. Office hours will be held in 32-044 from noon to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Though attending office hours isn't mandatory, you should plan to spend a minimum of 2-3 hours a week getting homework checkoffs and help in office hours. We will add morning office hours if needed.

You are expected to provide your own laptop and to bring it to office hours for checkoffs. Many students find bringing their laptops to lecture helps them learn because they can try examples as we teach. We expect you to use your laptop to help you in class, and ask that you avoid using your laptop to check email or websites that may be distracting to those around you.

Staff

The course instructor are Michelle Szucs and Ben Horkley. You can contact the course staff at anypoint at 6.149-staff@mit.edu. Questions regarding Python, IDLE, programming in general, and class logistics, should be directed to the class Piazza page, http://piazza.com/mit/spring2014/6149, for the fastest response. The class has a large number of lab assistants who will help you with your work during office hours.

Textbook

There is no required text for the class. Lecture notes/readings are posted online; the free textbook *How to Think Like a Computer Scientist* is fantastic and is posted on the **Resources** section of the course website.

Grading

This class is a fast-paced 3-week course. Attendance to class sessions is required, as those who miss lecture will soon fall far behind and we can't provide 1-on-1 tutoring for students. Attendance to office hours will occasionally be required for checkoffs. Because we wish to emphasize learning, there are no letter grades. Rather, to pass the class, all you have to do is try! If you attempt every required problem, you will pass this class easily. Ask questions in recitation and at office hours, and post on Piazza if you have questions. If you're really stuck and can't get help, write as much code as you can and write comments within your code explaining where you're stuck. Be sure to read grader comments when your project is returned!

Because the class is large we do formally 'grade' your assignments to keep track of overall effort. They will be graded on the $\checkmark+, \checkmark, \checkmark-$ system. Roughly, these marks mean:

- $\checkmark+$: Every problem attempted, effort on all problems, commented code. Even if the answers to some problems are wrong or give incorrect results, effort has been made and code has been tested.

- $\checkmark$: Very little or no effort made for at least one problem, code has very obviously not been tested, or code is uncommented.

- $\checkmark-$: No effort made on at least half of the assignment, or assignment not turned in.

To pass this class, you must earn a $\checkmark+$ on the majority of assignments. One $\checkmark-$ is call for concern and will require a meeting with an instructor; two $\checkmark-$ will fail the course. Please contact the staff as soon as you can regarding problems with assignments; however, because of the pace of the course, we cannot accept late assignments as we will be posting solutions immediately.

There will be no formal exams, but an optional take-home miniquiz will be provided at the end of the course. You are welcome to ask questions about the miniquiz in office hours. This miniquiz will help you assess your Python knowledge going into 6.01.

Cheating

In short: DON'T DO IT! You may work with friends to help guide problem solving, but copying - from friends, previous students, or the Internet - is strictly prohibited. *If caught cheating, you will fail this course.* There are plenty of resources available to you if you're stuck, and remember that we grade on effort, so there is no reason to cheat. Please don't do it.

Deadlines

For a detailed calendar, please visit `http://web.mit.edu/6.149/www/calendar.html`. Homework checkoffs are to be completed during office hours anytime before the due date/time. Project 1 is to be turned into the instructors in paper form before 5 p.m. on the due date.

- Wed. Jan. 8: HW1 checkoffs due by 5 p.m.
- Fri. Jan. 10: HW2 checkoffs due by 5 p.m.
- Wed. Jan. 15: Project 1 due to instructor in print form by 5 p.m.
- Fri. Jan. 17: HW3 checkoffs due by 5 p.m.
- Wed. Jan 22: HW4 checkoffs due by 5 p.m.
- Fri. Jan 24: Project 2 due by 5 p.m.