Course Information

Lecturer:	Prof. Ronald L. Rivest NE43-324, 3–5880 Office Hours by appointment
Teaching Assistant:	Yoav Yerushalmi NE43-334, 3–5866 `yoav@mit.edu` Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday 4:00 - 5:00 P.M.
Secretary:	Be Hubbard NE43-322, 3–6098 `be@theory.lcs.mit.edu`

1 Prerequisites

The prerequisites for the course are 6.033 (*Computer System Engineering*) and 6.042J (*Mathematics for Computer Science*). It is also recommended that students have had 6.046J and some experience with modular arithmetic.

2 Units

This is a 12-unit (3-0-9) U-level course intended primarily for seniors and first-year graduate students. (Graduate students will *not* receive H–credit for this class.)

3 Lectures

Lectures will be held in Room 37-212 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30 to 4:00 P.M. Students are expected to attend all lectures.

4 Handouts and course notebook

Handouts will be available at the beginning of lecture. If you fail to obtain a handout in lecture, you can get a copy in the class file cabinet outside room NE43-311. If you take the last copy of a handout, please inform the course secretary so that more copies can be made. Also, handouts will be made available online (if possible) through the web page.

5 The class on line

We have a Web page at

`http://web.mit.edu/6.857/www/home.html`

We also have a course locker on Athena. In order to access the locker type `attach 6.857` at your Athena prompt and then `cd /mit/6.857`.

There is also a mailing list `6.857-students@mit.edu` which will be used to send out last-minute announcements. Please check your e-mail regularly if possible.

We will use the Web page and the Athena course locker to make handouts and lecture notes available on line.

6 Textbook

There is no required textbook for this course, as the material covered is broad and usually very new. There will, however, be reading handouts. Also, recommended books and readings will be mentioned during lectures.

7 Homework

Problem sets will be assigned on approximately a weekly basis. They will be handed out on Thursday and be due on the following Thursday. Late homework will **not** be accepted. If you can't make it to class when a problem set is due, turn it in early at the course secretary's office.

8 Lecture Notes

In the past, we have had students take turns as "scribe" writing up the lecture notes for each class. This year, we will try to get the lecture notes out during the relevant class. There may be some cases in which lecture notes are not available, and we'll need a scribe for a lecture. A student who acts as scribe is excused from one homework assignment.

9 Term project

Students will be responsible for a term project. The nature and the topic of the project is your choice, although it needs the teaching staff approval. You must work on the term project in a team of 2–4 people. The proposal for the project is due in class on November 5th, and the final written term project is due in class on December 10th. The last two classes (December 8th and 10th) will be devoted to short presentations of each term project.

10 Grading

Besides weekly problem sets and the final project the class will have a midterm exam. Grading will be as follows: 30% each the problem sets, the midterm and the final project. The remaining 10% will be for class participation (including scribing of the lecture notes). Write well; your writing style is a factor in determining your grade. There is *no* final exam.

11 Collaboration

You may collaborate in study groups for the solutions of homeworks. You must, however, write up solutions on your own. If you do collaborate, acknowledge your collaborators in the write-up for each problem. If you obtain a solution with help (e.g., through library work), acknowledge your source, and write up the solutions on your own. Plagiarism and other anti-intellectual behavior will be dealt with severely.

No collaboration is permitted on the take–home midterm quiz.