

ICSI 680 : Master's Project

Course Syllabus – Fall 2023

Professor	Dr. Jeff Offutt	Class hours	Tuesday 4:30—7:20
Email	offutt@albany.edu	Class location	Lecture Center 12
Office	UAB 405	Fulfills project requirement for MS in	
Office hours	Thursday 4:00-5:00 or by appointment	Computer Science	

OVERVIEW

Course description

Semester-long project. This course should be taken in your last semester before graduation.

Learning outcomes

This course will allow students to integrate knowledge from previous courses and to demonstrate mastery of that knowledge. This course will enable students to develop teamwork skills and leadership skills. This course will allow students to learn professional behavior in the workforce.

Course structure and activities

In this project-based course, we will function very much as a professional project in industry, with the professor serving as a project manager. Class meetings will include short presentations on various software engineering topics by the professor, followed by individual team meetings where each team will present a status summary each week.

Semester project

The primary activity of this course will be a collaborative team project with multiple milestones. Teams will have 3 to 5 members and you will be able to form your teams on your own, with additional assignments made by me. I will assign a project, or you may propose your own for me to consider. You will give weekly verbal reports and submit various documents at key milestones.

Student responsibilities

Professional behavior is expected throughout the semester, including:

- **Attend every class meeting.** Exceptions due to illness or other unavoidable conflicts must be requested before class meets. This reflects our industry focus—professional software developers who miss meetings do not keep their jobs long.
- **Be on time.** “On time” means in the room, seated, ready to engage, before the official class start time. Professional software developers who regularly join meetings late do not keep their jobs long.
- **Be a good teammate.** This includes doing the work assigned to you and, when disagreements arise, disagreeing politely and respectfully.
- **Meet your deadlines.** If an issue comes up that will prevent you from completing a deadline on time, inform your teammates and project manager (aka professor) as soon as possible. Informing us at or after the deadline is not professional behavior.
- **Read your albany.edu email.** “I didn’t see my email” is never a valid excuse.

GRADING

Grading formula

- 20 points: Participation—includes attending class and doing work during class (individual)
- 5 points: Description of project
- 15 points: Initial UX/UI design
- 15 points: Software architecture & design
- 15 points: Automated tests
- 30 points: Final project

Participation

You earn points by (1) attending class (1 point for each class meeting), by (2) submitting work done during class, and by (3) participating in the weekly verbal reports to the professor. Participation score is individual. Students must arrive within a 5-minute grace period after the officially scheduled class start time to earn the attendance point.

Excused absences for illness

An absence can be excused if you are ill (covid, flu, cold, etc.) or have an emergency, and you document your reason for your absence. For example, a covid test result is acceptable documentation. If you have an excused absence, you will receive the attendance point and can submit in-class exercises electronically. Please do not abuse my tolerance and flexibility by asking for excused absences for trivial reasons (for example, picking up your parents at the airport is not an excusable absence).

Semester project

Grades for the project milestones will apply to the team. At the end of the semester, each teammate will submit an anonymous assessment of how each teammate performed. These will be used to adjust individual project grades.

Deadlines

Written project reports are due at the beginning of class. Late project submissions will lose 20% per week, starting with the beginning of the class meeting on the date they are due.

Grading summary

I sincerely hope that everyone can earn an A in this capstone course. I also believe that you can. You already have all the necessary skills and thus all you need to do to earn an A is to do the things you are required to do when they are required.

POLICIES

Electronic presence

I always accept linkedin requests from current and former students—we clearly have a professional relationship. Be sure to remind me when you took my class.

Academic honesty, integrity, and professional ethics

There are only two ways to fail this class. One is to not do anything. The other is to plagiarize or otherwise cheat. All projects are done in teams, so collaboration is not cheating. Failing to give credit to a teammate or other source of ideas or solutions, however, is plagiarism. We will discuss ethics during at least one of our class meetings.

Students with disabilities

If you need academic accommodations, please contact the office of Disability Access & Inclusion Student Services (DAISS) at <https://www.albany.edu/dean-students/disability>. You can then explain to me what you need, and I will work with you to ensure your ability to learn.

Class meeting environment

My goal is simple: To have class meetings that enable your ability to learn as much as possible. I strive for an environment that is positive, mutually supportive, and maximally collaborative. I expect us all to respect each other, regardless of gender and gender identity, ethnic and cultural background, academic background, and abilities. Please review Albany's diversity statement for the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion (<https://www.albany.edu/diversity-and-inclusion>). CS courses are diverse by nature. My classes are always inclusive, but I try to go beyond inclusion to ensure that everyone **belongs** here. In my classes, just as in the software industry, differences are normal and an asset to us all.

Gender identity and pronouns

You are welcome to share your name and preferred gender pronouns with me and indicate how you prefer I address you. I use he, him, and his and you may address me as Professor Offutt or Dr. Offutt. I'll also respond to prof, coach, or teacher. I will do my best to pronounce your name correctly. We all know that can be challenging, so feel free to correct me and please be patient.

Campus closing or class cancellation

If the campus closes or class is canceled for any reason, I will send an email regarding how you can continue to learn and include any changes to the course deliverables or deadlines. If closure is weather-related, we might move online and I will send a link. If the closure is campus-wide, you will also be informed by the university.

Religious holidays

I wish U@Albany could declare all major holidays or festivals for all of our students as university holidays, but that seems impractical. If you need to miss a class meeting or deadline due to a religious holiday, please let me know and we can try to make appropriate accommodations.

Title IX

The University at Albany is committed to provide an environment that is free from discrimination, sexual misconduct, bullying, and other acts of interpersonal violence. My classrooms are safe places: I will not accept any form of bullying in my classes, including microaggressions. I encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted, or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support.

As a faculty member, I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to U@Albany's Title IX Coordinator (<https://www.albany.edu/equity-compliance>). Within those constraints, I am happy to talk with you about any issues and will promise respect and confidentiality. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the Counseling & Psychological Services office (<https://www.albany.edu/health-well-being/mental-health/caps>).