CS-480—Senior Seminar
Syllabus
Fall '02

James Rogers

x1671

jrogers@cs.earlham.edu

www.cs.earlham.edu/~jrogers

Contact: Scheduled office hours: Monday, Tuesday and Friday 11:00–12:00, Monday 3:30–5:00, Friday 1:30–2:30.

Also other times by appointment. I strongly encourage you to send questions/requests for clarifications to me via e-mail. Unless you specifically request otherwise (or it seems inappropriate) I will strip identifying information off and send my response to the class list. Since most of your fellow students will have the same questions, you will be doing all of us a favor by making the effort to submit them—very much appreciated.

Text: We will be working with selected articles from the current and past literature.

Structure: The senior seminar has two components. The first is a capstone study— a large-scale development or research project that serves as a culmination of your CS studies. This will usually include development of a substantial software system and will invariably include a written paper as well as an oral presentation covering the paper (and the system) at a colloquium at the end of the semester. You will also submit a formal proposal for your project along with a detailed plan for carrying it out and a shorter survey of the the area in which you plan to work. (The survey will include an initial bibliography for your final paper.) These will be presented to the class as a whole, the survey about a third of the way into the semester and the proposal about two-thirds of the way in. In addition, you are expected to maintain a web page on your project which will be linked into the class web. This should include a log of your progress and which should be updated at least weekly.

The project portion of the class is being jointly led by Charlie and me. Some of you will work with Charlie as your project advisor, the rest will work with me.

The second component is group reading and discussion on a topic within the broad area of computer science. This semester the readings will be drawn from the literature. I have chosen the first two papers, a short one for the first class meeting an a pair of short papers for the second. The remaining papers will be selected by the class members, with my help and approval. Each of you will be responsible for preparing one paper (or set of short papers). You will select a paper from either the current journal literature or from our library's serials collections, discuss it with me and obtain my approval, prepare a set of study questions for the class, again with my approval, and lead the discussion. Finally, you will prepare a brief synopsis of the paper and our discussion which will also become a part of the class web. The papers and study questions will be distributed to the class the week before the discussion.

The class is scheduled to meet once a week for three hours. *(Note that the course catalog is wrong: this is a three hour class, it nominally meets from 2:30 until 5:20.)* During this time you will report on the progress of your projects, discuss problems you have encountered, present your proposals, distribute study questions and discuss the readings. This will not necessarily require the full three hours each week. In addition each of you will meet with your project advisor for about 1/2 hour each week to discuss the details of your project. Finally, in the weeks surrounding the discussion you are to lead, you will need to arrange to meet with me to review your study questions and synopses.

Evaluation: Each of the deliverables listed below will receive a letter grade along with, in most cases, a written evaluation. Each deliverable will have a specific due date and the grade will be reduced 1/2 letter grade for each weekday it is late. Presentations will receive no credit if they are not ready on their due date. Study questions are due the week before discussion is scheduled, synopses are due one week following it.

Tentatively, I am planning to weight these components as follows:
Study questions and synopses — 10%
Discussion (participation both in discussions you help lead and those led by others) — 5%
Survey (written paper and oral presentation) — 10%
Bibliography — 5%
Proposal (written and presentation) — 15%
Final paper — 15%
Final project — 25%
(In the case of a research project these previous two will be combined.)
Log/web page — 5%.
Final presentation — 10%

Tentative Schedule:

28/Aug.	First day of class.
4/Sept.	First discussion (led by me).
11 & 18/Sept.	Second and third discussions.
25/Sept. & 2 Oct.	Survey presentations.
9 & 16/Oct.	Fourth and fifth discussions.
23 & 30/Oct.	Proposal presentations.
6, 13 & 20/Nov.	Sixth, seventh and eighth discussions.
4/Dec.	Final draft of paper due, project should be complete. (This is two weeks prior to the end of the semester to allow time for revision.)
4 & 11/Dec.	Ninth and tenth discussions.
Finals week	Colloquium.

Disabilities: Please let me know as early in the semester as possible if there are any adaptations or accommodations you require, if there is any emergency medical information I should know about, or if you might need special arrangements in the case that the building needs to be evacuated. I will be happy to work to accommodate any student with disabilities. The Earlham policy is:

> Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact Academic Support Services and the instructor at the beginning of each semester. *Accommodation arrangements must be made during the first-two weeks of the semester.*

It is important to follow this procedure.