General Information

Staff

Lecturer
Prof Uday Reddy
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Tel: 414 2740
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Office hours: Tue 4:30–5:30, Thu 2–3,
and other times by appointment

Demonstrator
Guanzhou Lu
Office: 218
Tel: 414 3736
Email: G.Lu
Office hours: TBA
(More demonstrators to join us during the first two weeks.)

Demonstrator
Funmilade “Funmi” Faniyi
Office: 121
Tel: 414 8201
Email: fof861
Office hours: TBA

Lectures
Tuesday, 3:00–4:00, LG 32 Learning Centre
Wednesday, 9:00–10:00, Lect Theatre 2, Law Building

Exercise sessions (Practicals)
Mondays, 10:00–11:00, LG 04, Computer Science
Thursdays, 3:00–4:00, LG 04, Computer Science

Mailing list
The course mailing list is mod-fund-db. All the registered students are included on this list.
Please read your email regularly during the first two weeks for any changes in arrangements.

Web page
The course web page at http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/~udr/fund-db/ has announcements and lecture notes on a topic-by-topic basis.

Course content
This is a starter course in databases, meant for students with no prior background in the subject.
The module id 06-21980 called ICY: Databases shares the same teaching and majority of assessment as Fundamentals: Databases. (The difference in titles is due to administrative requiements.)

Textbooks
There is no prescribed text book for the module. Detailed course notes will be provided in class, with electronic copies on the course web page.
The following texts can be consulted for additional reading.

- Garcia-Molina, H., Ullman, J. D. & Widom, J. Database Systems: The Complete Book, Prentice-Hall, 2002. (This is a more comprehensive version of the above.)
The book’s web-page is at http://www.cs.wisc.edu/~dbbook/

Our coverage of Database design is strongly influenced by Stefano Ceri and colleagues, which is covered in the textbooks:


**Exercises**

There will be an exercise sheet every week which you should work on during the practical sessions and continue later at home. The completed exercises should be submitted in the exercise class the following week to receive feedback on the work.

These exercises are *unassessed*. However, it is important to work on them in the course of the lectures and clear up any doubts by talking to the staff. The assessed class tests will be directly based on these exercises.

**Assessment**

• 20% class tests: There will be three class tests, each lasting 50 minutes. (The approximate dates are on week 4, week 8 and week 11 of the term.)

  The marks for these tests will be published on the course web-site.

• 80% 2-hour examination in May.

  If you do not receive pass marks, then you have one resit opportunity in August (but you can not achieve more than 40% in a resit exam).

**PostgreSQL**

This is a good quality open source database management system that is available to everyone in the School. The handouts mentioned above describe how interact with it from one of the UNIX machines. You can learn a lot from trying out the concepts that we discuss abstractly in the course.

You can also use PostgreSQL on your home computer; it is part of the standard distribution of Linux. You can get a Windows installation from postgresql.org.

You can also use the School’s PostgreSQL installation from your home computer. If you use VPN, then the host dbteach.cs.bham.ac.uk is available for your use. If you use SSH, tunnel the port 5423 to this host, and then use your ‘localhost’ as the database server.

**Responsibilities**

You are responsible for:

• Attending lectures on a regular basis and learning the material covered in lectures.

• Finding out from friends or staff about the material covered, if you have to miss a lecture, and catching up via self-study.

• Coming prepared for the exercise classes along with your notes, so that you can complete roughly half of the exercise sheet in class.

• Collecting promptly returned course work with feedback and reviewing any mistakes you might have made.

• Approaching staff during office hours to clear up any questions and misunderstandings.

For a 10 credit module, you are expected to spend 100 hours of learning over the course of the academic year, which amounts to 5–6 hours per week plus revision for exams.

We are responsible for:

• Presenting the course material in an understandable fashion.

• Answering questions and clearing up any misunderstandings as and when they arise.

• Giving you feedback on course work in a timely fashion (within 1-2 weeks) to identify any mistakes in your understanding.

Beyond these formalities, we want you to have fun in learning! Computer Science is an exciting subject with interesting ideas and rapid development. We invite you to be part of this excitement.