

CSCI 1250 Introduction to Programming and Computer Science

Course Information	Instructor information
Fall 2026 Section 001 M 9:25 AM – 11:25 AM - Brinkley Center 125 W 9:25 AM – 11:25 AM - Brinkley Center 120 Section 002 M 12:35 PM – 2:35 PM - Brinkley Center 225 W 12:35 PM – 2:35 PM - Brinkley Center 220 Section 201 T 5:00 PM – 6:50 PM - Brinkley Center 115 R 5:00 PM – 6:50 PM - Brinkley Center 120 Traditional Lecture Delivery Final Exam: Schedule in Course Schedule	Mr. Mathew Desjardins Email: desjardinsm@etsu.edu Zoom: https://etsu.zoom.us/my/desjardinsm Office hours can be found here: https://cscihub.etsu.edu/office-hours/faculty/10/ Please schedule all office hours here!

Catalog

Introduces all aspects of the programming and problem-solving process and the elements of good programming style. A high-level language is used as a vehicle for introducing these concepts. Laboratory use of the computer in designing, coding, debugging, and executing programs is an integral part of the course.

Purpose and Goals

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to problem solving and programming. Students will learn to solve problems through problem analysis, decomposition, and modeling. Students will be introduced to the basics of programming such as variables, looping, and decision structures. Students will develop an understanding of proper documentation as well as coding conventions and style.

The department's objectives for offering this course are to:

- Provide students with an understanding of foundational computer science topics
- Prepare students for a career in computing or related fields
- Provide students with a framework for problem-solving

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. **Produce** solutions to simple problems in a managed programming language.
2. **Develop** algorithms for solving simple problems.
3. **Describe** and **implement** a prescribed programming style.
4. **Write** code that use fundamental programming concepts: Assignment, Input/Output, Selection, Iteration, and Methods.

Major Topics

- Computational Thinking
- Introduction to Computers and Programming
- Development Environments
- Coding and Programming Standards
- Code Repository Management
- Input/Output
- Data Types
- Function & Method Creation
- Decisions
- Loops
- Files (Input/Output Extended) & Exceptions
- Collections, Arrays, and Array Methods
- Abstraction, Classes, and Objects

Required Textbooks, Platforms, and Resources

Textbooks

- Conn, Charles, and Robert McLean. *Bulletproof Problem Solving: The One Skill That Changes Everything*. Wiley, 2019. (Available Online through Sherrod Library and Oreilly Books)
- Bill Wagner. "C# Docs - Get Started, Tutorials, Reference." *C# Docs - Get Started, Tutorials, Reference*. | Microsoft Docs, <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/dotnet/csharp/>.
- Bouras, A. (n.d.). *C# and algorithmic thinking for the complete beginner*. Queue. (Available Online through Sherrod Library and Oreilly Books)
- Provided PowerPoints and PDFs.

Platforms and Resources

- **D2L** – <http://elearn.etsu.edu>
 - This course will use Desire2Learn for resource distribution, homework submission, grade reporting, and other class elements, and students should regularly check the D2L site for the class. The course instructor will provide feedback for most graded items through D2L.
- **GitHub** – <https://github.com> 01
 - /Provider of Internet hosting site for software development and version control using Git.
- **diagrams.net** – <https://www.diagrams.net/>
 - A tool used to create visual diagrams and other charts.
- **.NET** – <https://dotnet.microsoft.com/en-us/>
 - .NET is a free, cross-platform, open-source developer platform for building many applications. With .NET, you can use multiple languages, editors, and libraries to build for web, mobile, desktop, games, and IoT.
- **NetPad** - <https://github.com/tareqimbasher/NetPad/releases/tag/v0.11.0>
 - NetPad v0.11.0 is a version of NetPad, an open-source, cross-platform C# editor and playground that lets developers quickly write and run C# code without needing to set up full projects. It provides an interactive environment for prototyping, experimenting with C# scripts, and learning the language in a lightweight interface.
- **O'Reilly Books** – <https://www.oreilly.com/>
 - O'Reilly Books is a comprehensive online learning platform offering books, videos, live online training, and more on a wide range of topics, including programming, data science, and business, designed to help professionals stay current and deepen their expertise. (Use your ETSU credentials to access this platform for Free Access.)
- **Visual Studio Code** – <https://code.visualstudio.com/>
 - Visual Studio Code is a source-code editor made by Microsoft for Windows, Linux, and macOS. Features include support for debugging, syntax highlighting, intelligent code completion, snippets, code refactoring, and embedded Git.

Technical Requirements

Students need consistent and reliable access to a computer to run the software stated above and the internet to complete this class. In addition, the computer should meet minimum specs according to the software vendor sites. (Linux, Mac, or Windows Required)

A GitHub account will be used to store students' code.

Note: Office hour meetings conducted via Zoom require a camera and a microphone.

Course and Assignment Assessment

Grade Distribution

The instructor will base the final grade based on the following attached weights:

Category	Percentage
Quizzes	15%
Code Review	30%
Exams (Expect 3)	30%
Final Exam	25%

Students can use D2L to keep track of their grades throughout the semester. They should calculate their grades according to the "Grade Distribution" information provided for the course.

Grading Scale:

*Percentage	Letter
93.000 – 100.00	A
90.000 – 92.999	A-
87.000 – 89.999	B+
83.000 – 86.999	B
80.000 – 82.999	B-

*Percentage	Letter
77.000 – 79.999	C+
73.000 – 76.999	C
70.000 – 72.999	C-
60.000 – 69.999	D
0 – 59.999	F

Note: *Final Grades **will not observe** traditional rounding rules. (i.e., 89.999 will result in a B+)

Note: CSCI 1250 requires a B- or better for all Computing Majors. Please also note that the prerequisite for CSCI 1260 is a B- or better in CSCI 1250.

Assignments Guidelines and Submission Protocols

Quizzes

Quizzes are designed to reinforce key concepts and assess students' understanding of recent course topics. They serve as frequent, low-stakes opportunities to practice and apply what has been learned in lectures, labs, and assignments.

All quizzes will be administered through **D2L only** and are to be completed **outside of class**. Each quiz may include a variety of question types such as True or False, Multiple Choice, Multi-Select, Short Answer, Fill in the Blank, Matching, Ordering, Written Responses, and Written Code.

Quizzes are usually due one week after they are assigned. Students are expected to complete quizzes individually and within the specified time limit. Quizzes are typically open note; however, relying too heavily on notes may hinder performance within the allotted time.

Unless otherwise noted, quizzes cannot be made up after the due date without **prior instructor approval and valid documentation**. Academic honesty is expected, and any violations of the quiz policy will be addressed according to ETSU's academic integrity guidelines.

Exams

Exams come every 4 weeks. The Final Exam, administered during finals week (last day of class meeting in the summer), assesses the student's cumulative knowledge of course topics.

Exams will be conducted in person on d2l, paper, or a combination of the two. Each exam may include, but is not limited to, the following types of questions and tasks: **True or False, Multiple Choice, Multi-Select, Short Answer, Fill in the Blank, Matching, Ordering, Written Responses, and Written Code**. Students will demonstrate not only conceptual knowledge but also practical programming skills.

Students must complete exams **in the assigned classroom** during the scheduled time. Each exam has a **120-minute time limit**. Students are encouraged to bring and use **HANDWRITTEN notes**; however, it is important to note that **overreliance on notes may cause students to run out of time**. Efficient use of time and independent understanding will be critical to success.

Note: To pass this class, a student must make a 65% or higher on the Final Exam. This is regardless of all other earned grades. Failure to meet the 65% will afford a student with a D+ or lower for the final grade.

Assignments (In-Class Labs & Homework)

Students will submit all assignments to D2L and/or GitHub. The instructor will provide a Dropbox and/or link to submit code to a specific repository in GitHub associated with your GitHub account. Students will need a free GitHub account and internet access to submit code submissions. (www.github.com)

All assignments will be graded as follows:

- Must have a reasonable attempt. (25%); Produced the correct output and/or met the assignment requirements. (50%); Followed appropriate documentation standards. (Did you follow the instructions for items that do not have a documentation standard?) (25%)

Uniqueness of Code

Writing code is somewhere between solving a math equation and writing a paper. When given a coding problem, we often discuss the algebra/math skills needed to find an answer. Unfortunately, this causes many students to mistake coding for a math course with only one or two ways to solve an equation. However, each programmer will find a slightly different or vastly different approach to solving the problem. Just as an author has a writing style, programmers have their unique style for writing code. You will grow to eventually have your own style of writing code, which can mark your code as your own.

When students get their first error, they will invariably turn to ChatGPT or another AI to find out how to fix their broken code. Students should try to find their answers and be independent in their search for information. A student's professors are here to help, but once students leave campus for a career, they won't be able to rely on a late-night email from their professor to explain what went wrong with their code before their project's deadline. Many solutions to your questions will seem correct, but they may steer you down a path you aren't ready for or appropriate for your problem. A simple litmus test for internet information is this:

"Was this resource covered in a class?" If the answer is no, you are better off not using that resource. But if there is any doubt, ask the professor. Computing is not a field where it is "better to ask for forgiveness than permission." Using the wrong code could easily cause an assignment grade to go from an A to an F, potentially violating the Honor Code.

AI Use Policy for Programming Courses

As artificial intelligence tools become more integrated into programming and education, it is important that we adopt responsible practices in their use. This course supports the ethical and educational use of AI technologies while maintaining academic integrity, student privacy, and personal responsibility. The following policy outlines how AI will be used by both students and the instructor, based on four key principles:

Transparency and Disclosure

Student Expectations:

- Students may use AI outside of class time to help them understand a topic. This may include extending knowledge in a programming area, or getting different ideas on how to do something.
- Students are not allowed to use AI for code generation. Using AI for code generation will result in an immediate F for the course.
- Students will have in class lab assignments where AI is NOT PERMITTED!
- The use of AI may be considered academic misconduct.

Instructor Use:

- I will use AI tools to support class material development, generate example code, or provide alternative explanations to assist students' understanding.
- When AI is used in grading or feedback (e.g., code evaluation assistance), I will review and verify all outputs to ensure fairness and accuracy.
- Any AI-assisted content will be rewritten or created into my own work before being shared with the class.

Privacy and Data Protection

Student Expectations:

- Do not submit any personal, sensitive, or identifying information into AI tools.
- Use caution when sharing data with third-party AI tools not vetted by the university.

Instructor Use:

- I will not input any student-identifiable information into AI tools.
- I will comply with ETSU policies on FERPA and data protection, ensuring that all AI-assisted tools used in teaching or grading maintain student privacy.

Human Oversight and Accountability

Student Expectations:

- You are responsible for understanding and being able to explain any AI-assisted teaching, but submitting code that was generated by AI is not allowed.
- AI should be a learning aid, not a shortcut. Misuse may hinder your own development and be subject to academic penalties.

Instructor Use:

- I will personally oversee and verify any AI-generated content used in teaching, grading, or feedback.
- I will use AI tools only as an enhancement to, not a replacement for, my instructional responsibilities.

Staying Current and Informed

Student Expectations:

- You are encouraged to stay informed about AI tools and their ethical use in programming.
- We will occasionally explore how AI is shaping the future of software development and what this means for your career.

Instructor Use:

- I will stay up-to-date with AI advancements to ensure I provide accurate, current, and relevant instruction.
- I will continuously evaluate this policy and revise it as needed to reflect changes in AI capabilities, university policy, and student needs.

Final points

- **Assistance, Not a Replacement:** AI tools like ChatGPT should be used to supplement your learning, not complete your assignments. You are encouraged to ask questions and seek explanations, but you should not rely on AI to generate code or solutions that you submit as your own work.
- **Original Work:** While AI can be a helpful resource, the final code, project, or solution you submit must be your original work. You are responsible for understanding and being able to explain every aspect of the code or solution you submit.
- **Academic Integrity:** Submitting AI-generated code violates the academic integrity policy. Such actions will be treated as plagiarism and subject to disciplinary action.
- **AI Detection Tools:** Be aware that AI detection tools may be used to evaluate your work for signs of AI-generated content. If these tools flag your work, you may be required to explain your process and demonstrate your understanding of the material.
- **Learning Focus:** The goal of this course is for you to develop a strong understanding of programming concepts. Over-reliance on AI tools can hinder your learning process. Use AI as a learning aid, not as a crutch.
- **Informed Use:** If you are unsure how to use AI tools appropriately, please consult the instructor before incorporating them into your work.
- **Instructor Use:** The instructor will use AI tools to assist with supplemental assistance such as grading, new content generation to keep this fresh from semester to semester, and to aid with redundant tasks. AI will not replace the knowledge the instructor possesses.

Late Work Policy

Pay attention to Dropbox deadlines and the course calendar—there will be no makeup assignments, quizzes, or exams.

Note: While the Instructor will keep the course calendar up to date, the associated Dropbox/Quiz/Exam item will be the published due date for assignments. Discrepancies should be notified to the instructor ASAP for clarity and direction.

Attendance, Participation, and Communication

Lecture

The professor offers this course in lecture format. Students are required to attend class in person on ETSU's campus.

The professor requires attendance for all class meetings. The professor may offer some course materials and assignments accessible online at any time on your schedule, so long as you meet the expected deadlines and

due dates. Common methods of instruction will feature weekly class meetings where the faculty member will deliver instruction in real-time in the classroom. Assignments may include written work, real-time and asynchronous discussions, real-time assignments/activities, and group work. The instructor is available in real-time.

Attendance

This course does require active and consistent participation. The professor expects you to attend all required class meetings. Further, the professor expects you to come to class prepared, meaning that you have reviewed the appropriate materials and have completed the required assignments. Any class meeting missed or arrived late, regardless of cause, reduces learning and may adversely affect a student's achievement in the course.

If a student must miss class, ask your classmates for missed information. Missing class does not extend or allow for makeup on assignments.

Participation

In addition to attending class, please stay engaged with the course by observing the following: Students should check email frequently and regularly to stay current with university-related communications and communications regarding this course. In addition to communicating via email, students should check D2L regularly to keep up with any changes or new information regarding this course.

Email Communication

You should only use email to contact the instructor if necessary. If you have a complex question or a question related to code, it is better to schedule a meeting rather than await an email response. Start on assignments early so you have ample time to finish and ask questions. **Questions for items hours before the due date will not receive a response.**

Please make an appointment if posted office hours do not align with your schedule. My schedule and office hours are attached to the course information section.

Electronic communication via email is the best way to get in touch for issues unrelated to coding assignments. However, you might experience delayed responses to electronic communications, especially late at night, early in the morning, or on weekends.

An email will typically be responded to within 24-48 hours during the regular business week (Monday – Friday) between 9 am – 5 pm. Emails received on the weekend will generally be responded to the following business day. Please be aware of this as you work on projects and need help.

Note: Students should isolate questions from personal needs. Students should post general content questions in D2L's Discussion Board under FAQ. Posting questions to the FAQ allows other students to learn from your questions.

All email subjects must be in the format of **CSCI {Course #} - {Subject Matter}**. (E.g., CSCI 1250-077 New Computer Question) Following this format will ensure an email appropriately delivers and notifies the instructor. You are not guaranteed a response should you fail to adhere to this subject line format.

Personal Technology Use Policy

Students must silence Mobile phones, iPads, Laptops, etc., during all classroom and lab lectures. Students are welcome to use laptops or tablets in class if it contributes to their classroom learning environment. The

instructor will ask students to leave if students use devices for anything outside the classroom learning environment.

ALL electronic devices, including cell phones, must be off and stored during an exam. If you have an emergent need, please schedule it outside of the exam time. Students with disabilities who need to use electronic devices should register through disability services and provide the appropriate documentation to the instructor well before taking an exam.

Inclusivity and Cultural Competence

Your experience in this class is imperative to me. I intend that this course will serve students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives and that the diversity students bring to this class will be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. You will be treated with respect. I also expect all students to treat each other with respect.

Professional Etiquette

Students should conduct themselves professionally during class and outside of class. Behave in class like you would in a professional setting, and you will build good habits for the future. Some elements of professionalism include:

- Ask relevant questions. This should be used before emailing the instructor.
- Be attentive in class.
- Come to class prepared.
 - Students who forget standard classroom supplies usually waste class time. Students learn by completing assigned work. Many assignments cover questions students typically ask, and having students finish the assignment aids in learning.
- Do not have private conversations.
 - The noise is distracting to other students.
- Contribute to the class discussions when appropriate.
- Help keep the classroom tidy and use the equipment properly.
 - Please return your work area to its original state, ensuring the next group of students will have the same learning environment you had.
- Share new ideas.
- Take responsibility for your education.

Student and Instructor Expectations

Students and instructors should have expectations of one another, many of which are mutual.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to arrive to class on time, be prepared, be attentive, participate in class, complete assignments on time, make a genuine effort to meet the course objectives and devote considerable time and effort to the course. **As a general rule, be prepared to spend a minimum of 2-3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.**

Learning to program is much like learning to play a musical instrument. **It requires A LOT OF PRACTICE to understand the concepts and to be a better problem solver.** You should practice your programming daily by reviewing concepts and examples we discussed in class, working through the checkpoints and examples throughout the chapter, and working on your assignments. **If class time is the only time you spend on this class, it will not be sufficient to learn how to program.**

You are encouraged to ask appropriate questions and to participate in class discussions and activities. You may learn as much from one another as from the instructor. If you are confused about some point, the chances are that others are also confused and will appreciate that you asked for clarification. In addition, it is also important that you take notes in class. Engaging in class and not just simply listening will benefit you in the learning process.

Students should respect their classmates and instructors and should not distract others or disrupt the learning environment. The instructor will not generally reprimand the disruptive student public, but the instructor may ask them to leave or lower their overall grade.

Mutual respect should extend to all class-related activities and interactions with classmates and faculty. Communication should be professional, building good habits for a student's career.

Instructor Expectations

The instructor's objective is to maximize every student's learning. The instructor pledges to be prepared for each class, organized, and respectful of each student. In return, the instructor expects the same from every student.

The instructor is expected to arrive at class on time, be prepared, be attentive to students, be available to answer questions, provide help related to the course, and make a genuine effort to help students achieve course objectives. On those rare occasions when the instructor must miss class, students should expect suitable arrangements for the class to continue in the instructor's absence. Students should expect the instructor to devote considerable time and effort to the course.

Students are highly encouraged to ask for help and have office-hour meetings to ask questions. The instructor schedules office hours 2-3 hours in advance. Please email the instructor with a list of times and topics. The instructor will respond with an Outlook Calendar invite containing the meeting time and location, typically via Zoom. Please use the instructor's office hours times posted at the start of the syllabus to suggest times. Suggest more than once since the instructor may accommodate other students' requests.

General Policies and Guidelines

Academic Integrity & Code of Conduct Policies

This section expands on East Tennessee State University's Student Conduct and Rights section of the catalog. (<https://catalog.etsu.edu/content.php?catoid=42&navoid=1780#student-conduct-and-rights>)

Honor Code

East Tennessee State University is committed to developing the intellect and ethical behavior of its students. Students who violate policies on plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication will be held accountable for their actions. Any knowledge of academic misconduct should be reported. Students are expected to act with honesty, integrity, and civility in all matters.

Honor Pledge (Pledged at University Orientation)

By becoming a member of the campus community, students agree to live by the standards of the honor code and thereby pledge the following: "I pledge to act with honesty, integrity, and civility in all matters."

Cheating

You are encouraged to discuss material in the courses, including assignments, with class members and others. Helping one another find and understand problems in assignments is permitted if a student makes an honest individual attempt to solve the problem. Students must do their own work. Completing an assignment "by committee" and submitting it as personal work is academic misconduct. Your name on the submitted work affirms that the work is yours.

All work must be your own work.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves using someone else's words, ideas, and code without crediting the original author. Even if one does not copy the words exactly or even copies only a tiny part of someone else's work, one must cite the original author's name and provide a reference to that person's work (e.g., the title of work, year of publication, and name of publisher).

Repeating a Course and Coursework Resubmission

When students must repeat a course, they may not resubmit work submitted in a prior class instance. In the case of research papers or other class items of that sort, students must select a different topic, and the work on the project must be wholly different than the work previously submitted. For other course assignments, the student must submit original work. Students may not submit work from other classes.

Violation of the Honor Code

In cases where the honor code or other topics in the academic integrity section is violated, known as academic misconduct, the penalty will be an 'F' in the course. Be aware repeated academic misconduct may result in other penalties being applied.

Student Services and Technical Resources

Student Services

The [ETSU Services webpage](#) includes a comprehensive list of services available to all ETSU students.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

It is the policy of ETSU to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal law, state law, and the University's commitment to equal educational access. Any student with a disability who needs accommodations, for example, arrangement for examinations or seating placement, should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Faculty accommodation forms are provided to students through Disability Services in the D.P. Culp Center, Room 326, telephone 423-439-8346. [Visit the Disability Services webpage for more information.](#)

Mental Health Services

The BucsCARE website is meant to be a resource for students and for student referrals. BucsCARE includes the most referenced offices and campus resources in various categories. This page includes a link to ETSU's "Need Help ?" site, including a comprehensive listing of other resources by topic area.

Learn more about the BucsCARE services at: <https://www.etsu.edu/bucscare/default.php>

Library Resources

The Sherrod Library extends access and services to all currently enrolled ETSU students. These services include traditional library patronage via Research and Instructional Services, Technology, and Content Services. Learn more about the Sherrod Library by visiting <https://libraries.etsu.edu>

Technical Resources

Help Desk

The Information Technology Services (ITS) Help Desk is the best resource for most technical problems. Find answers to common questions on the [Help Desk website](#), call, email, or stop in to see them on the first floor of the Sherrod Library. Phone: 423-439-4648 Email: itshelp@etsu.edu

Desire2Learn (D2L) Online Help

Faculty, Staff, and Students can find answers to D2L related questions on the [D2L Help Student Home](#). If you are still having trouble finding what you need, contact the Help Desk.

Microsoft Office Software

Microsoft Office productivity applications, including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, OneNote, and more, are free for students through the University's Office 365 campus agreement. For instructions on obtaining the software, see the [Office 365 page of the ITS Help Desk website](#).

Turnitin Plagiarism Detection

Turnitin is a plagiarism detection service available to students and faculty at ETSU. This tool compares student written work against a comprehensive database of other work and various internet sources. Faculty may employ this service for some or all written assignments to help students learn to cite sources accurately and ensure academic integrity. Learn more on the [Turnitin home page](#).

ETSU Technical Resources

Faculty, Staff, and Students can find many other technical resources on the [Online Help webpage](#).

Syllabus Attachment

Students can find information regarding other University policies, procedures, and resources here: <https://www.etsu.edu/curriculum-innovation/syllabusattachment.php>

Disclaimers

Syllabus Changes

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus as necessary. If changes are necessitated during the course term, the instructor will immediately notify students by posting the notification and nature of the change(s) on the course site.

Schedule Changes

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the course schedule as necessary. If changes are necessitated during the course's term, the instructor will immediately notify students by posting the notification and nature of the change(s) on the course site.