

# CS112A Visual Basic Intro to Programming Policy Statement Spring 2012

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## Contact Info

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## Course Description

This is a first course in programming and problem solving using Visual Basic 2008. The goal of this course is for you to learn elementary programming concepts, the use of windows forms and common form controls, and event processing. I assume you are familiar with the Windows interface and Windows application techniques, such as using menus and the mouse and saving files.

Learning any computer system effectively requires many hours of work. A student needs to plan on time for reading the book and notes and working on the assignments and individual experimentation. As is common in many classes in this area, this class becomes progressively harder during the semester. Concepts introduced in the first few weeks become the foundation for the rest of the semester. You need to put in the effort needed to build a firm foundation.

## Software

This course uses Visual Basic Pro 2008 for the assignments and the tests. You can borrow the discs to install the software from the CCSF library (either the downtown campus library or Rosenberg on the Phelan/Ocean campus) to install on your computer. You can use the Express version of VB which you can download from the Microsoft site. You can also use VB 2010 but demos will be provided with VB 2008. You can access VB in the ACRC on the Phelan/Ocean campus. Consult their web page for their hours of operation. See the class web page for information about obtaining the software for this class.

## Textbook

Gaddis & Irvine *Starting Out With Visual Basic 2008 (4th edition)*. This is an introductory programming textbook. Since it is a textbook it has a rather high list price of \$118.00; you can find it for less online and you should consider a used book from our book store.

I post class notes but they are not at the level needed for a student who has not done any programming. If you need help understanding what a loop does or what a selection structure is, then you need to get the textbook. If you understand those concepts in Java or C++ or Fortran, then you might wish to get a different book that focuses more on the VB syntax and less on elementary programming concepts. If you have never worked with a language that produces a graphical interface for the end user then you need a book that helps with that ( the Gaddis book will help with this.)

I post additional notes and demos for this class.

## Tech-Enhanced Class

This class is a tech-enhanced class; that means it has a F2F (face to face) component and an online component. Each week there will be posted readings and some demo programs for you to work with before the next class meets. These are a required part of the class. When we meet we will expand on the notes and do additional experiments with the demos but I will not go through the notes in detail in the class. Visual Basic has a heavy graphic component and that is often easier to understand in a F2F environment. Beginning programming students sometimes are helped with a F2F session. If you have previous programming experience you can decide if you need to attend specific classes ( other than taking the exams).

The online component also includes a graded forum.

## Web Page

There is a CCSF web site for this class at <http://insight.ccsf.edu>. This site is used for obtaining course materials, turning in assignments, and participating in the forums. To use this web page you have to login using your ccsf student id and you must be enrolled in this class; if you are adding the class, complete the add process ASAP.

## Grades

This course allows Pass/No Pass grading.

Your final grade is determined by points you earn in the following areas:

Assignments	400 points
Forums	100 points
Exams	300 points

The cutoff points for the final letter grade are no higher than:

A	92 %
B	82 %
C (Pass)	65 %
D	55 %

## Exams

There will be four exams throughout the semester. The other exams are 100 points each and I will drop your lowest exam score giving a exam components of 300 points. The exams dates are

Feb 21	March 20	April 24	May 22
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There are no makeup exams. If there is any change to the exams dates, you will be notified in class. Each exam focuses on recent material but may also cover material from throughout the semester. The exams are based on class lectures and the textbook. The exams are open book and open notes. You are responsible for bringing your book and class notes; you may not share books or notes with other students during an exams. The use of computers is not allowed during these exams; if you keep your notes on your laptop, you will need to print them out if you want to refer to them during the exam. The exams are based on techniques you should have used on the lab assignments, the textbook, forums, and posted class notes.

## Assignments

See also the Assignment Rules document posted in the class web site.

There will be weekly assignments in the first half of the semester and less frequently in the second half of the semester. Assignments will be submitted to the web site. I will return assignment grading reports to the web site. Assignments are maxxed at 400 points. Lab assignments are to be done individually. Some assignments will build on earlier assignments- so it is important to do all of the assignments.

Assignment files where the program does not compile and run generally will receive a very low score.

**Late Assignments:** Assignments are turned in via the Insight system and it is set up to not accept late assignments. There is no grace period for uploading assignments. Note that the time is based on the server time. Do not wait until the last minute to do or turn in assignments.

In the event of some *very* unusual circumstance, you can email me to negotiate an extension to a due date. Email me re an extension no later than the due date; include a brief explanation of your problem and a date by which you will submit the assignment. Do not assume this will be granted. An excuse such as "I just got behind" is not acceptable. If an extension is allowed, the assignment files would need to be emailed to me.

Sometimes people email their assignment late without any prior arrangements; in that case if I have not graded the assignments, I will mark that assignment for feedback, but it will not earn any points.

To forestall some questions:

- Student: "The Insight clock is off- I used the US atomic clock (my grandfather's grandfather clock, my computer's clock. "  
Reply: "I only use the upload time indicated by Insight and Insight handles the cutoff time."
- Student: "My internet connection failed during the upload (I had a local power failure/ the cat unplugged my cable) and I tried to upload the files again and I couldn't because it was after the cutoff time."  
Reply : "I am sorry but I cannot verify such a problem- so the assignment is late."
- Student: "I am in a different time zone and I uploaded on time based on my time zone."  
Reply: " I only use the upload time indicated by Insight"
- Student: "I cannot figure out how to upload the assignment files"  
Reply: "It is part of the class policy that you learn how to upload the files."
- Student: "I know this would be late but I just figured it out and I need the points."  
Reply: "It is late"

- Student: "I am taking more than one class and I uploaded the wrong files (I uploaded the files to the wrong assignment)."  
Replay: "You need to read and check the files before you upload them. It is possible to delete the files and upload the correct set but you need to do that before the cut off time."
- Student: "**Insight was down from all day Thursday- so I emailed you the assignment**"  
**Reply: "This one might be valid. We are generally informed if Insight has a failure. But if I see that other people uploaded their assignments during that time frame then I will not allow this excuse. If Insight has a failure- check my main web page. I will generally post a note there and will let you know if I am extending the due date. And in that case you will still need to upload the files to Insight."**

## Forums

I use three types of forums. These forums are a required part of the class material- just as a discussion in a F2F class is part of the course.

1: **Weekly discussion forums:** These are forums for you to post questions regarding assignments and notes in addition to questions in class. You can post questions about the assignments; often another student has already figured out an answer to the question. I encourage students to help each other with these types of questions. It is not appropriate to post answers to assignments in the forums- but it is highly appropriate to post comments such as which of the Notes documents addresses the question or a reference to a page in the book that you found helpful. Often people see the answer to their problem 15 minutes after posting a question; in that case a "never mind" post is appreciated.

Weekly discussion forums are also the place where a student might ask for clarification of an assignment. When I respond to that type of question, the response is part of the assignment. (This does not mean that I will change an assignment at the last minute, but occasionally a question from a student shows that they did not understand part of the assignment and my response is a clarification.)

Therefore you need to read the weekly discussion forums at least every other day.

You should email me, as the instructor of the class, primarily for matters that are personal in nature. Emails for help with assignments will generally be answered more slowly than questions posted in the forums and I will often post the answer in the forum.

2- **Graded forums:** There will be graded forums most weeks in the semester which is part of the tech-enhanced portion of this class. These will generally consist of 2-3 questions related to the material you should have done before class.

3- **Code review forums:** I will post feedback after the assignments have been graded. I do not post "the answers" to the assignments. I made provide additional explanation, more details as how to solve the problem, perhaps sample code.

Code review is the equivalent of an instructor going over an assignment when it is returned to the class. Not reading code review is the equivalent of walking out of class when the instructor goes over an assignment after it is graded.

### Forum Threads and Posts:

Each post that is started in a forum has a subject line that should be relevant. A relevant subject line identifies the part of the assignment where you have a question or problem and something about the problem ( "task 03 should this be sorted ?"). A subject line such as: "quick question", "Need help", does not provide any information. Please keep your posts relevant to the subject line; do not start off on a new topic in a thread. If you have three different questions about the assignment, you might need three different posts.

It is possible to search forums to see if a question on you topic has already been asked- and hopefully answered.

Civility and relevance to the course is expected in all posts. I reserve the right to edit forum posts (but I seldom do that) and I might move a post to a more appropriate forum.

## Email/ Office Hours

If you are sending me email, your email should have a subject line that includes the class number. We all get a lot of email and the subject line helps prioritize our responses; email with no subject line or a subject such as a Help,

Question does not generally get a response. Do not reuse a previous email message with an irrelevant subject line when sending me a question.

## **Withdrawals and Drops**

Consult the official time schedule for the last day to drop or withdraw from classes. You do not need a code from me to drop a course. I would appreciate hearing from you before you make the decision to drop a course. Sometimes we can work out a solution to help you stay in the course.

I will allow a grade of incomplete or a late withdrawal from class only under verifiable circumstances. I will not normally approve either of these if your class performance (quizzes and assignments) is below a C average (65%) at the time of the request. If you are requesting a Late Withdrawal, please contact me as well as the Dean of Students to explain your reason. Late withdrawals require the instructor's approval- it is not automatic.

I reserve the right to drop students who have missed two assignments. However, you should not rely on me to drop you from the class rolls. It is the student's responsibility to drop/withdraw from this class. If you simply stop participating in class, you will probably receive a failing grade for this class. Phone or email messages requesting that I drop you will NOT be honored.

On the other hand you should not expect me to keep you on the rolls if you are doing no work in class and are enrolled in the class to maintain a certain number of units.

## **Academic Accommodations**

Students who need academic accommodations should request them from the Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) located in the Rosenberg Library, Room 323 on the Ocean Campus. Telephone: 415-452-5481 (V) 415-452-5451 (TDD). DSPS is the campus office responsible for verifying disability-related need for academic accommodations, assessing that need, and for planning accommodations in cooperation with students and instructors as needed and consistent with course requirements. Please inform me of any accommodation you have so that we can work together to help you.

## **CCSF Computer Policy**

You can obtain a copy of the CCSF Computer Policy from the CCSF catalog, including the on-line version of the catalog. If you violate this policy, you risk having your computer account(s) suspended and your acrc privileges revoked and possibly other disciplinary measures. This may result in your being unable to complete the assignments for this course. You may not use CCSF computer resources for any commercial business. The policy can be found at: <http://www.ccsf.edu/Policy/policy.shtml>

## **Cheating**

If a student is found to be cheating on any test or assignment, he shall receive a grade of zero for that work. It is acceptable to help other students with assignments by answering questions about how to do part of an assignment, but it is not acceptable to work together on all or many of the steps of the assignment.

The policy on cheating applies equally to students who give inappropriate assistance as well as to those who receive it. Do not "loan" your files to other students. If they submit that work as their own, you may also lose all points for that assignment.

If a situation arises where you are uncertain about the ethics involved, talk to me.

## **Exceptions to Policies**

Exceptions to policies may be made on an individual basis under unusual verifiable circumstances. If you negotiate an exception, you must get the details of the exception from me in writing (email).

I reserve the right to change any of these policies as necessary during the semester and will inform you of any changes.

“The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.”

Mark Twain