

Getting Started

Computer Science First Day Checklist

Comsc-110-1261, Comsc-110-8263, Comsc-210-8093 and Comsc-266-1274

Welcome to the first day of this semester! Complete the following checklist *today*. Print it and deliver it to your instructor either in person, email, or mail to Robert Burns, DVC, 321 Golf Club Road, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523.

1. Make sure that you received a **syllabus** from the instructor during the first lecture period. If not, get one from the instructor now. Included with the syllabus should be a course outline with the schedule for the semester. Read and study this material now. Done.

Note the **meeting times** – they are all 2 hours and 50 minutes, with breaks in between as your instructor decides. You are expected to attend for the full 2:50 which will be split between lecture and supervised lab as your instructor decides. Yes, I understand I'm expected to be in class for 2:50 every class session.

Yours is **not an online class**. While there is an online component to communications and distribution of materials, help is generally *not* provided online. You are expected to participate during class hours, and seek help during the time provided for supervised lab and your instructor's posted office hours. I understand.

2. If you are **not already registered** in the class, go to DVC Admissions and complete your registration now. If you need a "late add code", or a signed "add" card, see the instructor now. My registration is complete.
3. If you do not already have the **textbook** for this class, go to the bookstore and get it now. I have a book. You will need it to prepare for lectures, and to do your lab assignments. It will also be useful as a reference during exams. (Students can access PDF versions of the first chapters of the Burns COMSC 110 textbook here: www.dvc.edu/org/departments/computer-science/textbooks.htm).
4. If you plan to use your own notebook PC or Mac in the lab, set it up now and see if you can get to the wireless internet. Otherwise, use any lab computer. It is recommended to **reboot any lab PC** before use, to erase any files and reset any configuration changes made by the previous student. Hand-wipes are recommended, too – lots of hands have been on the keyboard, and you don't know where they've been! I plan to use the lab PCs and/or my own notebook.
5. Using a lab computer (or your own notebook with a wireless connection), locate the **class website** at <http://cs.dvc.edu> (or its backup, www.rdb3.com). The class website uses email to communicate with you, by your preferred address as you enter into your "profile" on the class website. Be sure that your email allows messages from your instructor's email account, the department chair's account: rburns@dvc.edu, and also from comsc110@googlegroups.com (or 210 or 266 – whichever you're taking). I understand.
6. We do *not* use WebCT or the portal. You will need a **class website account** on cs.dvc.edu in order to sign in to the website and see the class materials that are there. *One* of the following should apply to you:
 - a. *If you are not yet enrolled in the class*, you will not be able to obtain a password and sign in until your registration is completed and the dept. chair receives confirmation from DVC Admissions. That's me.
 - b. *...or you already have an account for this website from a previous class* -- request a new password by using the "Can't remember your password? Click here to get a new one" link on the sign in page. A new password will be sent to the email address associated with your account in your "**Profile**". When you receive the new password, sign in with it, and immediately use the "Change Password" link to change it to a password of your choosing, thus extending its life to 6 months.) I renewed my password.
 - c. *...or you do not already have an account* -- sign in with your 7-digit student ID (which should appear on your registration receipt), and a blank password. If you are able to reach the home page without an error message, then you are in fact enrolled. As directed, use the "**Profile**" link to confirm your name and

email address, and to choose notification options. After you click the “**Save/Confirm profile**” link, the system will choose a password for you and send it to your email address. When you receive the new password, sign in with it, and immediately use the “Change Password” link to change it to a password of your choosing. Your password will be good for 6 months. Done – profile confirmed.

7. Make sure that you can receive email from the class website, by receiving your new password. This is not sync'd with your portal password. If you ever **forget your password**, use the “Can't remember your password?” link on the sign in page to get another one. If that absolutely does not work, contact your instructor who can get a temporary (1-day) password. I know what to do if I forget my password.
8. **Browse** the class website. Make sure that you can find the lab assignments done, lecture notes done, and online quizzes done. Find the “Submit/review your SP2012 work” link, and use it now to submit a file to your personal workInProgress folder. See if you can submit some small file, download it to your desktop, and then delete it. Done – I uploaded and retrieved and deleted a file.
9. Use the “Class online discussion groups” link to **join** the Google online discussion group. This feature is email-based, using “Google groups”. Use any and as many email accounts as you wish. You do not need a Google or GMail account, and it does not generate spam. You may have already been invited by email to join the group via your Insite portal address – respond if you have not already done so. I'm in the group.

Students outside of class hours can direct questions about lab assignments to the online discussion group. The instructor moderates the group and answers questions. But it is also possible for students to answer the questions of other students. For questions that other students should be able to answer, the instructor may not answer right away so that students have a chance to answer instead. Of course, any incorrect information in answers by students is noticed and corrected, if not by other students, then by the instructor. This feature of the class provides 24/7 support, and lets the whole class benefit from the questions and answers that take place in the group. Inappropriate posts will be denied by the instructor. Understood.

The online discussion group is *not* for help in debugging code. Get debugging help in class or during office hours. I will not post code to the group for others to debug for me.

10. Read the **reading assignment** for this week done. Check the course outline for the material to be covered in the first lecture, and read that material now done. Be prepared for a quiz on the reading material as explained below.

After reading, and before attending the lecture on the subject material, take an **online quiz**. The purpose of online quizzes is to provide incentive for students to read the material to be covered in lecture *before* the lecture actually takes place. Therefore, the quizzes cover material that you should have read about, but that has not yet been covered in lecture. I understand that quizzes are to be taken *before* attending lecture.

To make sure your computer works with quizzes, try the **sample quiz**. I've taken the sample quiz.

11. Take the survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/sp2012comscPre, which you will be asked to repeat at the end of the semester. The purpose is to measure student learning. I completed the survey.
12. Work on the first **lab assignment**. Check the course outline for the due date – assignments are to be submitted by midnight of the evening of the due date. Store incomplete work in your workInProgress folder, or on a USB flash drive. I started work on lab 1. Read in the syllabus about the point penalties for turning in late work. I understand how the scoring of lab assignments works in this class.

When you submit lab work to the class website, it gets **time stamped**. If you can see a time-stamped file under your “Submit/review your SP2012 work” link's list, then the instructor can see it as well. But the instructor does not look into the workInProgress folders, so submit your work to the proper folder as designated in each lab assignment. I understand that I am to submit work to specified folder, using file names as specified.