

Course Information

Course Number: CSCE-637
Course Title: Complexity Theory
Section: 600
Time: TR 5:00 pm – 6:15 pm
Location: CHEN 108
Credit Hours: 3

Instructor Details

Instructor: Jianer Chen
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Office Hours: TR 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Course Description

Computational complexity theory comprises a major part of the research activity in theoretical computer science, which is focused on the study of computational models and computational resources required to solve a variety of problems. This course will offer an in-depth introduction to the major results and developments, as well as the most active research to date in computational complexity. The course topics will include the fundamentals of NP-completeness theory, advanced topics in general complexity theory, and recent developments and applications in complexity theory. Reading the textbook and selected research papers to understand the fundamentals of the area is essential to the course. Participation in the course research projects is an important component of the course. Problems for the research project will be suggested by the instructor in the class. Students are also encouraged to find research problems for the course project by themselves.

Course Prerequisites

Background in Discrete Mathematics and undergraduate Analysis of Algorithms, or permission from the instructor.

Course Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the course, the students will have a good overview of modern complexity theory and be able to apply the theory and techniques in computational complexity to variety of areas in computer science and other related fields.

Textbook and/or Resource Materials

- Christos H. Papadimitriou, *Computational Complexity*, Addison-Wesley, 1994, and
- Supplementary reading materials to be handed out in class.

Grading Policy

- Grading Scale: A = 85-100%, B = 70-84%, C = 60-69%, F = 0-60%
- The course will have home assignments, paper reading and presentation, and a course project.
- Homework assignment: 25%, Paper reading and presentation: 30%, Course project: 45%.

Late Work Policy

The assignments are due on the designated due dates at the beginning of class. No late submissions will be accepted. Discuss unusual circumstances in advance with the instructor.

Course Schedule

- Week 1: Computational models, Turing machines, time/space complexity
- Week 2: P, NP, reductions, NP-completeness
- Week 3: Circuit complexity,
- Week 4: A detailed proof for Cook Theorem, co-NP, polynomial time hierarchy, first homework assignment due
- Week 5: Space complexity, Immerman-Szelepcsenyi theorem
- Week 6: randomized computation
- Week 7: The class P/poly and BPP, second homework assignment due
- Week 8: Karp-Lipton Theorem and related results
- Week 9: Relativized computation
- Week 10: Parallel computation and NC hierarchy
- Week 11: Approximation algorithms, third homework assignment due
- Week 12: Non-approximability and PCP theorem, project proposal due
- Week 13: Parameterized computation, fourth homework assignment due
- Week 14: Kernelization algorithms
- Week 15: Paper presentations, course project due.

University Policies

Attendance Policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor” ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

“The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence” ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#).)

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.”

“Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one’s work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case” ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at aggiehonor.tamu.edu.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Resources in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit disability.tamu.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

Title IX and Statement on Limits to Confidentiality

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

With the exception of some medical and mental health providers, all university employees (including full and part-time faculty, staff, paid graduate assistants, student workers, etc.) are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Title IX Office if the employee experiences, observes, or becomes aware of an incident that meets the following conditions (see [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#)):

- The incident is reasonably believed to be discrimination or harassment.
- The incident is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who, at the time of the incident, was (1) a student enrolled at the University or (2) an employee of the University.

Mandatory Reporters must file a report regardless of how the information comes to their attention – including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Although Mandatory Reporters must file a report, in most instances, you will be able to control how the report is handled, including whether or not to pursue a formal investigation. The University’s goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and to ensure access to the resources you need.

Students wishing to discuss concerns in a confidential setting are encouraged to make an appointment with [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS).

Students can learn more about filing a report, accessing supportive resources, and navigating the Title IX investigation and resolution process on the University’s [Title IX webpage](#).

Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student’s academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in proper self-care by utilizing the resources and services available from Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). Students who need someone to talk to can call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](#).

COVID-19 Temporary Amendment to Minimum Syllabus Requirements

The Faculty Senate temporarily added the following statements to the minimum syllabus requirements in Fall 2020 as part of the university’s COVID-19 response.

Campus Safety Measures

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, Texas A&M University has adopted policies and practices for the Fall 2020 academic term to limit virus transmission. Students must observe the following practices while participating in face-to-face courses and course-related activities (office hours, help sessions, transitioning to and between classes, study spaces, academic services, etc.):

- Self-monitoring—Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. **Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction.**
- Face Coverings—[Face coverings](#) (cloth face covering, surgical mask, etc.) must be properly worn in all non-private spaces including classrooms, teaching laboratories, common spaces such as lobbies and hallways, public study spaces, libraries, academic resource and support offices, and outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain. Description of

face coverings and additional guidance are provided in the [Face Covering policy](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) available on the [Provost website](#).

- Physical Distancing—Physical distancing must be maintained between students, instructors, and others in course and course-related activities.
- Classroom Ingress/Egress—Students must follow marked pathways for entering and exiting classrooms and other teaching spaces. Leave classrooms promptly after course activities have concluded. Do not congregate in hallways and maintain 6-foot physical distancing when waiting to enter classrooms and other instructional spaces.
- To attend a face-to-face class, students must wear a face covering (or a face shield if they have an exemption letter). If a student refuses to wear a face covering, the instructor should ask the student to leave and join the class remotely. If the student does not leave the class, the faculty member should report that student to the [Student Conduct office](#) for sanctions. Additionally, the faculty member may choose to teach that day's class remotely for all students.

Personal Illness and Quarantine

Students required to quarantine must participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and **must not attend face-to-face course activities**. Students should notify their instructors of the quarantine requirement. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities.

Students experiencing personal injury or illness that is too severe for the student to attend class qualify for an excused absence (See [Student Rule 7, Section 7.2.2](#).) To receive an excused absence, students must comply with the documentation and notification guidelines outlined in Student Rule 7. While Student Rule 7, Section 7.3.2.1, indicates a medical confirmation note from the student's medical provider is preferred, **for Fall 2020 only, students may use the Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class form in lieu of a medical confirmation. Students must submit the Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class within two business days after the last date of absence.**

Operational Details for Fall 2020 Courses

For additional information, please review the [FAQ](#) on Fall 2020 courses at Texas A&M University.