

**Texas A&M University  
Department of Computer Science  
Spring 2008**

**CPSC 483: Computer System Design**

<b>Section 501:</b>	MW 04:10PM-05:00PM TR 01:00PM-03:00PM	HRBB 126 (Lecture) HRBB 218 (Lab)
<b>Section 502:</b>	MW 04:10PM-05:00PM MW 03:55PM-06:00PM	HRBB 126 (Lecture) HRBB 218 (Lab)

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**URL:** [http://courses.cs.tamu.edu/rgutier/cpsc483\\_s08/](http://courses.cs.tamu.edu/rgutier/cpsc483_s08/)

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### **Catalog Description**

Engineering design; working as a design-team member, conceptual design methodology, design evaluations, total project planning and management techniques, design optimization, systems manufacturing costs considerations; emphasis placed upon student's activities as design professionals. Prerequisites: CPSC 431 and 462 and senior classification.

**NOTE: concurrent enrollment with CPSC 462 is not allowed.**

### **Textbook and references**

#### Required

- *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: a Leadership Fable* by Patrick M. Lencioni (Jossey-Bass, 2002)

#### Recommended

- *Design for Electrical and Computer Engineers*, by Ralph Ford and Chris Coulston (McGraw-Hill Science, 2007).
- *Fundamentals of Engineering Design*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., by Barry Hyman (Prentice Hall, 2003).
- *The Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High-Performance Organization*, by Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith, Collins (2003). Available on-line at TAMU Libraries.

#### Supplemental

- Technical material from the literature, manufacturer's datasheets and user manuals.

### **Detailed Course Description**

CPSC 483 is a project-oriented course aimed at developing system integration skills. Students work in groups of 4-5 people to complete a significant engineering design project. Every project requires complete implementation, documentation and demonstration of a computing system design with both hardware and software components. The focus is not only on the final product but also on design methodology, management process and teamwork.

Each team will be required to manage its own efforts to complete its project in a timely manner. Group members will be required to keep individual lab notebooks recording their efforts and their personal impressions of the project. Students will be graded based on both the quality of the group product and their individual contributions.

Every team will be required to schedule a weekly meeting with the course instructor and the TAs, preferably during the official class or lab hours. These meetings must be attended by every group member. Since the projects will be student managed, the exact nature and style of these meetings is at the group's discretion. **However, every member of the group is expected to participate.**

At the end of the semester, each group will make a public presentation describing and demonstrating their work. These presentations will be open to the university community.

### **Course objectives**

To prepare students for engineering practice with a major design experience based on the knowledge and skills acquired in earlier course work and incorporating engineering standards and realistic constraints that include most of the following considerations: economic; environmental; sustainability; manufacturability; ethical; health and safety; social; and political.

### **Expected outcomes**

It is expected that successful participation in the course will allow the student to demonstrate:

- an ability to apply knowledge of mathematics, science, and engineering (3.a)
- an ability to design and conduct experiments, as well as to analyze and interpret data (3.b)
- an ability to design a system, component, or process to meet desired needs (3.c)
- an ability to function on multi-disciplinary teams (3.d)
- an ability to identify, formulate, and solve engineering problems (3.e)
- an understanding of professional and ethical responsibility (3.f)
- an ability to communicate effectively (3.g)
- an ability to use the techniques, skills, and modern engineering tools necessary for engineering practice (3.k)

### **Grading Policy**

The final grade you will receive in the class will be based on points accumulated during the semester. Thus, both continued progress (the process) and the quality of your product (and other deliverables) will determine your grade. Although the bulk of your grade is based on the performance of your team, individual performance will also be gauged.

1. **Project Proposal (15%):** These points will be based on (1) the originality, creativity and feasibility of the proposed work, the analysis of alternative solutions, the consideration of economic and societal aspects, the project management approach (10%), and (2) the quality of the oral presentation (5%). *A template for the proposal report and a presentation rubric are available on the course webpage.*
2. **Weekly Progress (10%):** This grade will be based on your team's ability to maintain the project on schedule. The weekly report should be incremental, and should specifically address the following:

- a. Agenda for the weekly meeting with the instructor and the TA
- b. Any major accomplishments during this time period, including figures and results
- c. An overview of the plan of work for the following two weeks
- d. An update on project management, including teamwork, purchases, schedule and milestone status
- e. Minutes of the previous meeting

Weekly progress reports are due two hours prior to the time of the weekly meeting. The responsibility of preparing these reports will be rotated among team members. The team member preparing the report will also be in charge of facilitating the discussions during that weekly meeting, and preparing an *action list* for the following week. The action list contains the set of specific goals that each team member has agreed to complete AND a deadline for completing them.

3. **Critical Design Review (10%):** The CDR is a mid-semester evaluation of your project. The grade will be based on your progress to date, and the quality of the oral presentation and accompanying written report. *A template for the CDR report and a presentation rubric are available on the course webpage.*
4. **Final Communication (10%):** This grade will be based on the quality of the final presentation (5%), as well as the contents and professional finish of the documentation (10%). *A template for the final report and a presentation rubric are available on the course webpage.*
5. **Project Grade (20%):** A final grade will be assigned to your project based on the completion of all the objectives stated in the proposal, as well as on a live demonstration in front of the class. The complexity of your project and the size of your team will be factored in.  
Due date: Project demonstrations will take place 48 hours prior to the final presentation (or the Friday prior if on a weekend). This earlier deadline for the demo ensures that teams have time to prepare the final communication and final presentation.
6. **Team work (5%);** It is very important to understand that accomplishing the technical objectives of the project is not sufficient. These accomplishments should not come at the expense of destroying relationships among team members. Thus, a grade will be assigned based on the ability of the group to function as a team. Is there evidence that the group engaged in team building activities? Were contributions to the project evenly distributed? Were members equally engaged in discussions during meetings? Was there an effective division of responsibilities?
7. **Individual Performance (30%):** Points in this category are awarded based on assessments of your personal contribution to the team efforts:
  - a. Notebook (10%): You are required to use a laboratory notebook to record what YOU do as a member of the project. Entries in the book should be made during or shortly after every work session. Each entry should include (1) the date, (2) the objectives for that session, and (3) record of what was done.  
A grade will be assigned to your personal design notebook based on:
    - i. The regularity of your entries throughout the semester.

- ii. The evidence of an engineering design process, including but not limited to schematics, block diagrams, circuits, pseudo-code, tables of experimental results, and mathematical derivations.
- iii. The clarity, legibility and organization of your annotations.

Notebooks must have permanent binding (i.e., composition pads); spiral-bound notebooks will not be accepted. Samples of good, average and poor notebooks from previous years will be made available at the beginning of the semester. Each student is expected to review these notebook samples with the TA prior to the proposal presentation; failing to do so will result in a 5% penalty on the final grade.

- b. Participation (10%): The instructor and TAs will evaluate your attendance to meetings, participation in the discussions, and contributions to the team. Team leaders will instead be evaluated by their ability to make the group operate as a team, i.e., item (6) above.
- c. Peer Review (10%): Your performance will be evaluated by each of your team members throughout the semester.

**NOTE:** Grades will not be assigned until all project deliverables have been turned in (see below), all borrowed items (e.g., keys, books, equipment) have been returned to their proper location or their owner, and the workstations in HRRB 218 have been thoroughly cleaned up. All team members are required to be present at the time of the final delivery.

### **Final deliverables**

- 1) Bound hardcopy of the final documentation
- 2) CDROM including the following (please organize into folders, e.g., Docs, Source, Hardware, Media, References, Freeware)
  - a) Designs: code, schematics, data, data sheets, freeware software tools, etc.
  - b) Reports: proposal, CDR, weekly reports, final report, and ALL presentations
  - c) Audiovisual media: close-up pictures of your system \*AND\* a high-quality movie demo of the system working, for posterity (see gallery in the course webpage for movie samples)
- 3) Final hardware prototype, as well as any spare parts and supplies
- 4) Software install, to be demonstrated on several machines
- 5) Peer reviews
- 6) Notebooks

### **Document preparation**

All major documents (proposal, CDR, and final documentation) should be submitted in a professional format (e.g., spiral-binding), and should contain a title page, an outline, as well as clear section and subsection headings, etc. Please run a spell check before submitting.

### **Attendance Policy**

Not attending weekly meetings harms the other members of your group and makes it much more difficult for the instructor to assess your contributions to the group effort. Therefore, attendance, punctuality and active participation in the weekly meetings are required. Failure to

attend a meeting or late arrivals (more than 15 minutes late) will reflect in your individual grade. Emergencies, however, do happen. Lateness or absence can be excused if there is a valid reason. Illness, job interviews out of town, death in the family, inclement weather or accidents for commuters, etc., are valid reasons. Oversleeping, a term paper due, an exam to cram for, etc., are not valid reasons. Ultimately, the instructor reserves the right to determine what constitutes a “valid reason” on a case by case basis. If you know you’re going to be late or miss a class, please let the instructor *and* your teammates know, so that they may plan for your absence and make the best use of their time.

### **Scholastic Dishonesty**

Please review Section 20 of the TAMU Student Rules (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/>) for a list of examples of scholastic dishonesty. In particular, be aware of the issues of *plagiarism* and *fabrication of information*. The use of existing software implementations or hardware designs should be discussed with the instructor prior to being incorporated into the project. Proper credit must be given to the original source of concepts, designs, software, technical documents, scientific literature, etc.

### Course Schedule and Milestones

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Classroom meeting</b>	<b>Material due dates</b>
1	01/14	Course introduction	
	01/16	Kick-off lecture	Resumes
2	01/21	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	
	01/23	Teamwork quiz / Brainstorming	Teams are formed
3	01/28	Kick-off lecture / Brainstorming	
	01/30	Kick-off lecture / Brainstorming	
4	02/04	Proposal presentations	Project proposals
	02/06	Proposal presentations	Peer review
5	02/11		
	02/13		
6	02/18		
	02/20		
7	02/25		
	02/27		
8	03/03	CDR presentation	Critical Design Review
	03/05	CDR presentation	Peer review
9	03/10	Spring Break	
	03/12	Spring Break	
10	03/17	Team assessment workshop	
	03/19		
11	03/24		
	03/26		
12	03/31		
	04/2		Peer review
13	04/07		
	04/09		
14	04/14		
	04/16		
15	04/21		
	04/23		
16	04/28	Project demos	Project demos
	04/30	Final presentation (TBD)	Final presentation
	05/01		
17	05/05	Check out (3:30-5:30 PM)	Final report All deliverables