

Syllabus CMSC 250H: Discrete Structures

This document has three parts with three very different functions.

1. **CONTENT:** What is the content of the course.
2. **POLICY:** How the course is run (office hours, tests, HW, etc).
3. **GENERAL INFO:** This information is helpful for any course you take at UMCP.

CONTENT

1 Content of the Course

General Idea In this course we will learn how to prove simple and not-so-simple theorems in mathematics. Some of what we prove has direct relevance to computer science. The kind of math you learn is the kind of math that a computer scientist encounters.

All number-of-weeks are approximate:

1. Prop Logic and Circuits - 1 week
2. Pred Logic and Quantifiers and Order Notation - 1 week
3. Sets, functions, relations - 0.5 weeks
4. Proof Techniques, Mod Arithmetic, Basic Number Theory - 3 weeks
5. Induction - 3 weeks
6. Combinatorics, Probability, Bayes Theorem - 3 weeks
7. Pigeon Hole Principle, Ramsey Theory, Muffin Mathematics - 2 weeks
8. Countable and Uncountable sets. - 1 week
9. Optional topics depending on time - 1 week

REQUIRED TEXT There is no text. There will be notes online and slides online.

PREREQUISITES CMSC 131 and MATH 141, and you must be in some Honors Program or have permission of the instructor.

POLICY

1 Basic Information

Course Title and Number: CMSC 250H

Term: Spring 2026

Credits: 4

Course Dates: Jan 26-May 8. No class March 16,17,18,19,20 (Spring break)

Lecture Time and Place: Tu and Th 9:30-10:45. Room IRB 2207.

Recitation Time and Place: M and W 1:00-2:00. Room IRB 1207.

Course Website: <http://www.cs.umd.edu/~gasarch/COURSES/250/S26/index.html>

This will contain slides, notes, and HWs.

ELMS: ELMS will have the recordings of the lectures and recitations. However, you are advised to go to class and recitation.

Gradescope: You will submit HW on Gradescope and this is where you can see your grades and make regrade requests. Such requests must be made within a week of the HW being graded.

Piazza: We will be using Piazza as a forum to ask questions and get answers, in addition to the recitation and office hours.

2 Course Guidelines

Academic Integrity

1. **Homework** You may talk to your fellow students or use ChatGPT about the problems, however you must hand in your own work and you must understand your own work.
2. **In-class quizzes** these must be solely your own work.
3. **Exams** These must be solely your own work.

Communication from you to the instructor or TA You should feel free to email us or post things on piazza or meet us in office hours. You can also request a zoom meeting if that makes more sense.

Communication from us to you We will email you (1) when HWs are posted, (2) when HW solutions are posted, and (3) other things you need to know. We will respond to your piazza posts promptly.

3 Homework, Quizzes, Exams, and Grading

For all of the below see the Academic Integrity section above for guidance on how much help you can get on the Homework and Exams.

1. **Homework** There will be problems based on the material. They will be roughly once a week. The Homework will be posted on the course website (NOT on elms) in three forms. We do an example with hw00.

hw00.pdf

hw00st.txt- this is plaintext

hw00st.tex- this is LaTeX

You may use the .txt or .tex to help you typeset your homework.

After the Dead-Cat day has passed (see later for what that means) I will post hw00sol.pdf- Solutions to some of the problems.

Typed Homework must be typed and submitted on Gradescope. We strongly recommend that you use LaTeX (if you don't know it, learn it). If diagrams are needed to be drawn they can be handwritten.

2. **Honors Homework** There will be some recitations or lectures where you learn HONORS MATERIAL. This is material that 250-Non-Honors does not learn. There will be *honors homeworks* on this material. Also needs to be **typed**.

Dead Cat Policy HW is posted on Monday and due the following Monday at 1:00PM (before recitation). But *everyone* gets an extension to Wednesday at 1:00PM. *Do not think the real deadline is Wednesday*. I have already given you an extension to Wednesday hence I am not going to give you another one. I use the phrase **Morally due Monday, 1:00PM**.

3. **Quizzes** There will be in-class quizzes in recitation. This will be about once a week on Mondays.
4. **Midterm 1** In TWO parts. An untimed part (about a week to do it) and a timed part (1 hour 15 minutes in class) The untimed part will be MORALLY DUE Monday Feb 23 at 1:00PM (before recitation). The untimed part will be 25 points. The untimed part is open-book, open-notes, open-web.

The timed part will be on Mar 3 at 9:30-10:45 in class. The timed part will be 75 points. For the timed part you can bring in one page that you can put anything you want on (8.5×11 inches, both sides fine).

5. **Midterm 2** In TWO parts. An untimed part (about a week to do it) and a timed part (1 hour 15 minutes in class) The untimed part will be MORALLY DUE Monday April 6 at 10:00AM (before recitation). The untimed part will be 25 points. The untimed part is open-book, open-notes, open-web.

The timed part will be on April 14 at 9:30-10:45 in class. The timed part will be 75 points. For the timed part you can bring in one page that you can put anything you want on (8.5×11 inches, both sides fine).

6. **Final** The final will be in a timeslot based on THE TIME THE CLASS IS GIVEN and NOT part of the COMMON 250 timeslot. You can bring in one page that you can put anything you want on

4 Grading Structure

We will make each HW worth and each Honors HW worth 1% of the grade. We intend to have 12 HW and 8 honors HW. That leads to the following table; however, if we have a different number of HW this will change slightly.

Honors Homework	5%
Homework	15%
Quizzes	10%
Midterms one	20%
Midterms two	20%
Final	30%

Grades Cutoffs: ROUGHLY

- 90-100 is an A
- 80-89 is a B
- 70-79 is a C
- 60-69 is a D
- 0-59 is an F.

Notice that (1) this is ROUGH- there may be some adjustments in any direction, and (2) this will be further refined with + and - after the final.

Academic Dishonesty: This will be dealt with harshly.

Staff, Office Hours, Email Addresses

- Prof William Gasarch gasarch@umd.edu Office Hours Tu-Th 11:00-12:00, 2:00-4:30PM. in his office, IRB 2242. You can also email for an appointment which might be on zoom. <https://umd.zoom.us/my/gasarch>

- **TA:**

Office hours:

Location:

Note on Location of TA office hours for CS TAs These are set by the dept and are here: <http://www.cs.umd.edu/class/resources/cstarooms/fallspring/>

GENERAL INFO

1 Course Evaluations

COURSE EVALUATIONS In May you will be asked to fill out course evals. I will urge you to fill out, not just the eval for me, but the eval for ALL of your courses. I have been on the committees that reads these evals and hence I can assure you that they are important.

2 UMD Policies and Resources for Undergraduate Courses

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the UMD policies that relate to all courses, which include topic like

- Academic Integrity
- Student and Instructor Conduct
- Accessibility and Accommodations
- Attendance and Excused Absences
- Grades and Appeals
- Copyright and Intellectual Property.

Please visit

<https://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>

for the UMCP policy on these issues.

3 Resources and Accommodations

3.1 Accessibility and Disability Services

The University of Maryland is committed to creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive educational, working, and living environment for people of all abilities. The University of Maryland is also committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to discrimination. The Accessibility & Disability Service (ADS) (see here:)

<https://www.counseling.umd.edu/ads/>

provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals to provide equal access to services, programs and activities. ADS cannot assist retroactively, so it is generally best to request accommodations several weeks before the semester begins or as soon as a disability becomes known. Any student who needs accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that I have sufficient time to make arrangements. For assistance in obtaining an accommodation, contact Accessibility and Disability Service at 301-314-7682, or email them at adsfront-desk@umd.edu. Information about sharing your accommodations with instructors, note taking assistance and more is available from the Counseling Center.

3.2 Student Resources and Services

If you are not doing well in the course and want to do better feel free to talk to me so we can see what we can do. There are also campus services that might be helpful:

Tutoring and Academic Success

<https://tutoring.umd.edu/>

UMD Writing Center

<https://english.umd.edu/writing-programs/writing-center>

Website of Heath Services Websites

<https://sph.umd.edu/academics/advising-resources/undergraduate-center-academic-success-and-a-casa-student-resources-and-information>

3.3 Basic Needs Security

If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day or lack a safe and stable place to live, please visit

UMD Division of Student Affairs website

<https://studentaffairs.umd.edu/basic-needs-security>

for information about resources the campus offers you.