CMSC 420 Data Structures

Readiness Self-Quiz

or

How to Help Yourself This Summer

and Keep Me Sane...uh..er..Stable

Summer I, 2010

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DO NOT TURN THIS IN!

This little self-assessment is provided to give you a concrete way of judging the potential impact of CMSC 420, “The Summer Edition”, on your life.

Section 1: “Priorities”

Answer (T)rue, (F)alse, or (S)ort of, to indicate the extent to which each statement characterizes you.

1.1 I am taking other course(s) besides 420 during Summer I or Summer II.

1.2 I work more than 10 hours a week during Summer I or Summer II.

1.3 I plan to take 3-day mini-vacations on our 3-day weekends, since class meets only 4-days.

1.4 I have significant (family/significant other/private) commitments this summer that (can/may/might/probably will/must) take priority over my 420 course work.

Section 2: Problematic Processes

Answer (T)rue, (F)alse, or (S)ort of, to indicate the extent to which each statement characterizes you.

2.0 I don’t “do” JAVA.

2.1 I do all my programming on line, examining the specification ONLY when I begin this process.

2.2 I only read the parts of the books needed to understand the project or the sample exam questions or the assigned problems.

2.3 I expect the teacher to talk about everything in the book and everything on the project; reading the book should be optional.

2.4 I expect to cram for the final exam.

2.5 I can only focus on one portion of the course per week.

2.6 I want to learn just enough to get a C and/or graduate and/or pass the GRE’s.

2.7 I expect everything that I need to know and every decision that I need to make to be spelled out in the project specification.

2.8 I program ALL my objects from scratch, never reusing code from prior projects, nor using templates or custom API’s.
Section 3: “Resources”

Answer (T)rue, (F)alse, or (S)ort of, to indicate the extent to which each statement characterizes you.

3.1 I will follow the course requirements.
3.2 I will read the book ahead of the lecture covering that material.
3.3 I will attempt the problems and check the answers only after a sincere attempt.
3.4 I will organize/attend a study group regularly.
3.5 I will explore the resources on the class webpage and in other textbooks before giving up and posting the question on the newsgroup.
3.6 I will visit the TA during office hours with well formed questions and a hard copy of my code if needed.

Section 4: Scoring and Interpretation

Give yourself two points for every item to which you answered (T) in part 1, and one point for every (S) in part one. Add these numbers together to get your part 1 score. Do this for each of parts 2 and 3.

Now, multiply the part 1 score by the part 2 score, and compare the product to the part 3 score. If the part 3 score is larger than the product, then you have a good chance of passing this course and doing well. Otherwise, the smaller the part 3 score, or the wider the gap between it and the product of part 1 and part 2, the more difficult your task will be. If either part 1 or part 2 score is larger than your part 3 score, you should expect to have a difficult semester. If both part 1 and part 2 are larger than part 3, don’t expect to pass unless you increase your part 3 score, OR decrease part 1 and part 2 somehow, or all of the above.

You should reevaluate these measures regularly should you find yourself falling behind in the course.