

# Getting Started

## Computer Science First Day Lab Checklist

Welcome to the first day of this semester! Yes, we do have a lab session on the first day of school. There are some logistical tasks to be completed during this lab period. Complete the following 2-page checklist today:

- 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,  a schedule for online quizzes,  lecture notes for the first week, and  the first lab assignment. Look through this material and identify the syllabus and each of these four attached items. Read and study this material now.
- 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, or a signed “course conflict resolution” form, see the instructor now.
- 3. If you do not already have the **textbook** for this class, go to the bookstore and get it now. You will need it to prepare for lectures, and to do your lab assignments. It will also be useful as a reference during exams.
- 4. If you plan to use your own notebook PC in the lab, set up your PC 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!
- 5. Using a lab computer (or your own notebook PC with a wireless connection), locate the **class website** at <http://comsc.dvc.edu/rburns>. The class website uses email to communicate with you. Be sure that your email allows messages from [rburns@dvc.edu](mailto:rburns@dvc.edu), [vcolber@dvc.edu](mailto:vcolber@dvc.edu), and from [comsc110@googlegroups.com](mailto:comsc110@googlegroups.com).
- 6. You will need a **class website account** 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 instructor receives confirmation from the DVC Admissions office.
  - b. *...or you already have an account for this website from a previous class with Prof. Burns*, you should apply for 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. 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. (This process extends your password's life to 6 months.)
  - 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.

Make sure that you can receive email from the class website, by receiving your new password. If you ever **forget your password**, use the “Can't remember your password?...” link on the sign in page to get another one.

- 7. Make sure that your **email address** on DVC's WebAdvisor is correct and up to date. This is used to automatically invite you to join the class' online discussion group, and to get an account for downloading

selected Microsoft software titles, including XP, Vista, Windows 7, and professional development tools, for free (while you are enrolled in the class).

❑ 8. **Browse** the class website. Locate the clock, synchronized to the atomic clock. Check out all of the links on the home page. Especially make sure that you can find the ❑ lab assignments, ❑ lecture notes, and ❑ online quizzes. Find the “Submit/review your FA2009 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.

❑ 9. Use the “Class online discussion groups” link to **join** the discussion group for this class. This feature is email-based, using “Google groups”. But 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 – respond if you have not already done so.

Students are to direct questions about lab assignments, and **requests for help**, to the online discussion group. The instructor monitors the activity in the group, and answers questions there. But it is also possible for students to answer the questions of other students, and to help them via the discussion group. For questions that other students should be able to answer, the instructor does 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 help, and lets the whole class benefit from the questions and answers that take place in the group.

❑ 10. Read the **reading assignment** for this week. Check the course outline for the material to be covered in the first lecture, and read that material now.

❑ 11. After reading, and before attending the lecture on the subject material, take the first sample **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.

JavaScript needs to be enabled in your browser in order to take a quiz. Most browsers have this enabled by default. To make sure that the computer you are about to use for a scored exam will actually work correctly, try a **sample quiz** first. Note that equipment, software, and networking failures during a quiz can result in a score of zero, so you will want to use sample quizzes to make sure that everything is working.

Take and retake the sample quiz(zes) so that you are prepared to take the scored quizzes when they begin. Check your quiz schedule to determine when the first scored quiz will occur.

❑ 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. Note that points are deducted for late work, per the syllabus. Store incomplete work in your workInProgress folder, or on removable media, like floppies or USB drives. If you need a floppy diskette, ask a lab tech for a loaner disk.

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 FA2009 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.

*Note that the class website is “cookie-friendly” – that is, it does not require you to permit cookies. Nor does it have popups. But note that the “submit your work” feature requires port 8080 instead of the standard HTTP port, which is port 80. Some corporate firewalls do not permit requests to be made to port 8080, and if this is the case for you at your place of work, you will not be able to submit files from there.*