

Course Syllabus - Fall C 2025

CSE 230: Computer Organization and Assembly Language!

Get ready to embark on an exciting journey into the world of computer systems! This course is designed to help you understand the inner workings of computers, from the ground up. Whether you're already passionate about computer architecture or just curious to learn more, this class is going to be a blast as we dive into topics like register-level computer organization, assembly language, memory management, and much more.

Course Essentials:

Course management: We'll be using Canvas on MyASU for everything from announcements to assignments. Make it a habit to check in regularly so you don't miss out on any updates or important info.

Questions and Communication: Got questions about the course content? Perfect! Use the ED discussion board on Canvas to get help and share insights. It's a great way to learn together, and you can even post anonymously if you'd like. For other matters, connect during office hours—we're here to help! Please do not email me, it is easier to get hold of me during my office hours or study hours for any queries.

Instructor:

Professor Dr. Swathi Punathumkandi

Email: pswathi@asu.edu

Office: BYENG 330

Office Hours: Thursday 10.00 am-11.00 am Online @ [Zoom](#) (any one-on-one discussion with instructor)

Study Hours:

Need help? Study hours are your go-to for assistance with course material, assignments, and quizzes. Feel free to drop by any session that fits your schedule. Study hours will be held as listed above. Any student can attend study hours for help on any course-related content, lectures, quizzes, and assignments. For questions related to course policies, and personal questions, visit the Instructor Office Hours.

ASU Tutoring:

Did you know Fulton Schools of Engineering offers free virtual tutoring for CSE and SER? Take advantage of this awesome resource! Please visit the Fulton Virtual Tutoring Page. (<https://fultonapps.asu.edu/tms/>)

Course Description:

Register-level computer organization. Instruction set architecture. Assembly language. Processor organization and design. Memory organization. IO programming, Exception/interrupt handling.

Course Objectives:

At the end of the course the student shall be able to:

1. Explain how programs written in high-level languages are executed by a computer system.
2. Write relatively simple assembly language programs employing flow of control constructs and procedures.
3. Explain what hardware factors impact program performance and how to write programs for performance.
4. Explain techniques used by computer hardware designers to improve performance.
5. Explain the reasons for the ongoing transition to multiprocessor architectures.
6. Explain data representation, instruction sets, and addressing modes.
7. Explain how a datapath can be implemented as a single-cycle or pipelined design.
8. Explain how the memory hierarchy impacts performance.

Prerequisites:

Credit is allowed for only CSE 230 or EEE 230. Three (3) credit hours. Lecture/No lab.

- CSE 120 or EEE 120 with C or better;
- CSE 100, 110 or 200 with C or better
OR
- Computer Science or Computer Systems Engineering Graduate student;

Review the following from the prerequisites:

- C programming:
 - If-else
 - Pointers
 - Arrays
 - Linked Lists
 - Loops (for, while)
 - Functions
- 120 Basics:
 - Binary Arithmetic / Boolean Algebra
 - Combinational Logic, MUX, Decoder

- Sequential Logic, D-FlipFlop

Course Material and Resources:

We'll be using ZyBooks for our textbook. It's interactive and great for the hands-on learning we'll be doing. Make sure you get access right away! Plus, don't forget to bring your MIPS Green Card to every class.

- Chapters 1 - 6 from the textbook:
 - [In Praise of Computer Organization and Design: The Hardware/ Software Interface, Fifth Edition](#)
 - [Computer Organization and Design, The Hardware/Software Interface, Fourth Edition](#)
- **Mandatory:** This course will be using zyBooks for the above textbook. You will need to purchase by clicking on the first reading materials link (Buy or Register Zybooks).
- **Bring to every class:** The MIPS Green Card from the textbook or a copy of it.
- **Canvas:** All material and assignments will be accessible through Modules.

MIPS Software Simulators:

- ZyLab: Embedded Simulator in ZyBooks. **Required for Zylab submissions.**
- MARS: MIPS Assembler and Runtime Simulator
- SPIM: A MIPS32 Simulator - More difficult to install and use.

Course Schedule (tentative):

Week	Topics	Reading Modules	Dates
1	Chapter 1 - Computer Abstractions and Performance	1.1-1.7	Aug 21 - 26
2	Chapter 2 - Introduction, ALU and Data Transfer Instructions	2.1-2.4 and 2.6	Aug 27 - Sep 3

3	Chapter 2 - Branch Instructions and Machine Code	2.5 and 2.7	Sep 4 -10
4	Chapter 2 - Procedure Execution	2.8	Sep 11 - 17
5	Chapter 2 - Linking, Loading and Summary	2.9-2.12	Sep 18 - 24
6	Chapter 3 - Binary and Floating Point Arithmetic	3.1-3.5	Sep 25-Oct 3
7	Midterm		Oct 3-10
8	Fall Break		Oct 10-14
9	Chapter 4 - Single Cycle Implementation	4.1-4.4	Oct 15 - 22
10	Chapter 4 - Multicycle Implementation and Pipeline Implementation	4.5-4.7	Oct 22 - Oct 29
11	Chapter 4 - Pipeline Hazards and Exception Handling	4.8-4.11	Oct 30- Nov 6
12	Chapter 5 - Memory Hierarchy, Multi-level and Direct Mapped Caches	5.1-5.3	Nov 7- 14
13	Chapter 5 - Associative Caches	5.4 and 5.8	Nov 15- 22

14	Chapter 5 - Virtual Memory	5.7	Nov 23-Nov 29
15	Chapter 6	6.1-6.4 and 6.10	Nov 30 - Dec 6
16	Final Exam Review		Dec 1- 5

The following topics are tentative and may be changed during the semester. **Assessments:** (subject to change until first week of classes)

Your performance will be assessed through a mix of exams, ZyLabs, assignments, quizzes, and in-class challenges. Each is designed to reinforce your learning and keep you engaged. **Just a reminder: please keep all discussions and work on all assessments, except in-class challenges individual.** This means no talking with peers, collaborating, or using tools like ChatGPT. Thanks for your understanding!

Exams:

This course will have two exams, one midterm conducted during the last class before the Fall break and the final exam will be conducted as per the ASU Calendar . These exams will be conducted either on paper/ Online (Please follow instructor's Announcements). No exam will be dropped. You are allowed to bring a 1 page (2-sided) cheat sheet and calculator. MIPS Green sheet will be provided.

Zylabs:

There will be 6 MIPS simulation assignments to be submitted through Zybooks. One lowest score will be dropped. No late submissions or extensions will be accepted. For each Zylab:

- 4 points - Auto graded based on successful simulation
- 1 point - Manual Score based on code specifications

Assignments:

There will be 10 homework assignments and 2 lowest scores will be dropped.

- All submissions should be typed text or word or pdf documents. Except for diagrams, charts or tables, answers **MUST** be provided in typed form. Handwritten submissions, Scanned submissions, unreadable and unclear answers will be graded with 0 points.
- Shareable documents will not be accepted. Such documents will also receive 0 points.

- For grading purposes, DO NOT copy the questions, label the question number correctly and segment your submission. Unsegmented submissions will be graded with 0 points.
- The assignments should be submitted on gradescope.
- Each assignment will have 2-3 questions.
- No late submissions will be accepted.

There will be 5 Bonus Questions that will be counted towards extra credit if you submit. This should also be submitted via Gradescope, similar to the regular assignments. No late submissions will be accepted.

Video Quizzes:

Every week, you are required to watch videos related to the material and answer a quiz. These quizzes will be conducted through Canvas and will have to be taken before the topic is discussed in class ONLY. You will have 2 attempts and the highest score will be considered. You are allowed to access any material and discuss doubts with the TAs or the instructor but no discussion with your peers. The discussion with TAs and/or instructor should NOT be the answer to the questions. The quizzes will have fill in the blank or multiple choice questions and will be autograded. There will be No partial credit. 12 highest scored quizzes will be counted towards required credit. No late submissions or extensions will be accepted.

In-class Challenges:

Every lecture, we will use the whiteboards and paper to answer questions and solve problems related to the topic covered in the class. You will be given time to work on them. During that time, you may work in groups and discuss with the TAs or the instructor to come up with a solution. By the end of the class, your work related to these challenges will be submitted. You are allowed to access any material. There will be 13 lecture classes with in-class challenges. 10 highest scores will be counted towards required credit. 0 points - <75% attempt; 0.3 - > 75% attempt, and 0 correct; 0.4 - >75% attempt, 50% correct; and 0.5 - 100% correct.

Assignment Extensions: Please note that I can't offer extensions for assignments. However, don't worry—your lowest score will be dropped for each assessment, so you have some flexibility if things don't go as planned! You may utilize this during unforeseen situations. This policy can be quite beneficial if you're ever in a situation where you can't submit an assignment on time. Just make sure you're aware of the deadlines and manage your time to make the most of the dropped score policy.

Grading Policy: (subject to change till first day of classes)

Grade Distribution:

Item	Percent of Grade
Exams	20%

Zylabs	25%
Assignments	25%
Video Quizzes	10%
Reading Activities	10%
Projects	10%
In-Class challenges	5% (Bonus)
	105 %

Note: Canvas calculations are confusing and sometimes inaccurate. To obtain your final score, just add all your scaled scores on canvas.

Final Grade:

Final Grade	Percentage
A+	$\geq 97\%$
A	$\geq 88\%$ and $< 97\%$
B+	$\geq 82\%$ and $< 88\%$
B	$\geq 74\%$ and $< 82\%$
C+	$\geq 68\%$ and $< 74\%$
C	$\geq 60\%$ and $< 68\%$
D	$\geq 50\%$ and $< 60\%$
E	$< 50\%$

Incomplete Grade:

In the Student Services Manual, SSM 203-09 Grade of Incomplete discusses the University policy regarding incomplete grades. This ASU knowledge base article also discusses the policy. In general, an instructor may assign a grade of incomplete (I) when a student is otherwise doing acceptable work, but is unable to complete the final work due to extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control. My policy is

that the student must have taken every exam, except possibly the final exam, up to the end of the semester when the student requests an I grade. The student must also have completed all but the final one or two homework assignments and quizzes. If I agree to assign an I grade, you will have one year from the date when final letter grades are due to be submitted to the Registrar's Office to complete the missing work and submit it to me for grading. The student must complete the incomplete grade request form and submit it to me at the first instance when he or she decides to request an I grade and no later than the time when I submit final letter grades. Once final letter grades have been assigned and submitted to the Registrar's Office, I will not entertain any incomplete grade requests.

Grading Appeals:

- Any questions, corrections, or appeals on grades of programs or tests must be done via Gradescope within ONE week after it has been graded.
- For Zylabs, after all the Zylabs are graded, there will be an option on canvas to request for any regrades.
- State the problem and the rationale for any change in your grade in your appeal.
- If your request has not been addressed (either grade change or reason why your request cannot be approved) a week after your request was made, you may talk to the instructor during the Office Hours (not Study Hours)

Attendance Policy

There is a strong and well-established correlation between class attendance, learning, and performance; therefore, regular class attendance and participation is expected. There will be in-class challenges during every class based on the concepts taught in class. These are counted towards your final grade.

Excused Absence/Delayed Exam Policies:

ONLY for exams, you will be provided an alternative option for the exam, if and only if you provide **valid** documentation from

- a doctor/physician's note accompanied by valid medical reports; for medical reasons,
- your employer; for a reason related to your job,
- ASU; due to an approved ASU function,
- or other appropriate documentation depending on the circumstances

Tips for success:

To thrive in this course, stay engaged! Attend every class, keep up with readings and assignments, and don't hesitate to ask questions—whether in class, on Canvas, or during office hours. The more you put in, the more you'll get out of this course.

Remember, I'm here because I care about your success. I want this course to be a valuable and enjoyable experience for you. Together, we'll explore the fascinating world of computer organization, and I'm excited to see what you'll achieve!

I believe that students must be actively involved in their own learning process, that one of the purposes of college education and the Arizona State University mission is for students to develop skills such as problem solving, independent learning, critical thinking, and effective written and spoken communication. Some more tips for success in this course include:

- Attend and be prepared for every class
- Read the textbook and watch the assigned videos.
- Begin and complete the assignments well before the due date.
- Prepare thoroughly for and complete every exam and quiz.
- Do any additional exercises (questions at the end of the chapter or Zylab exercises for MIPS code practice) you must, to understand the material.
- Ask questions in class. If you do not feel comfortable asking the question in class, ask questions later on Canvas or during Study hours.
- If you do not complete an assignment by the deadline, complete it anyway later (no credit), you might learn something.
- If you miss points on an assignment, quiz, or exam, determine why your answer was graded incorrect and learn the correct answers.
- Seek help from the instructor, teaching assistant, or a tutoring center before you are too far behind on your understanding of the subject.
- Check Canvas and your email every day for new announcements and updates.

Having said all that, I want you to know that I care about all of my students and their education. I want all of you to succeed, to feel you have gained something from the course, to have some fun in the process, and I will do all I reasonably can to assist you in your efforts!

ASU Policies

Policy regarding expected student behavior

Students in this class are expected to acknowledge and embrace the FSE student professionalism expectation located at: <https://engineering.asu.edu/professionalism/>

Generative AI

Generative AI is a technology that can often be useful in helping students learn the theories and concepts in this course. However, unless explicitly allowed by your instructor, the use of generative AI tools to complete any portion of a course assignment or exam will be considered academic dishonesty and a violation of the ASU Academic Integrity Policy. Students confirmed to be engaging in non-allowable use of generative AI will be sanctioned according to the academic integrity policy and FSE sanctioning guidelines.

Academic Integrity

All engineering students are expected to adhere to the ASU Student Honor Code and the ASU academic integrity policy, which can be found at <https://provost.asu.edu/academic-integrity/policy>). Students are responsible for reviewing this policy and understanding each of the areas in which academic dishonesty can occur. If you have taken this course before, you may not reuse or submit any part of your previous assignments without express written permission from the instructor. All student academic integrity violations are reported to the Fulton Schools of Engineering Academic Integrity Office (AIO). Withdrawing from this course will not absolve you of responsibility for an academic integrity violation and any sanctions that are applied. The AIO maintains a record of all violations and has access to academic integrity violations committed in all other ASU college/schools.

Student Copyright Responsibilities

You must refrain from uploading to this course shell, discussion board, website used by the course instructor or any other course forum, material that is not your own original work, unless you first comply with all applicable copyright laws. Course instructors reserve the right to delete materials from the course shell on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement. The contents of this course, including lectures and other instructional materials, are copyrighted materials. Students may not share outside the class, including uploading, selling or distributing course content or notes taken during the conduct of the course. Any recording of class sessions by students is prohibited, except as

part of an accommodation approved by the Disability Resource Center. (see ACD 304–06, “Commercial Note Taking Services” and ABOR Policy 5- 308 F.14 for more information).

Policy against threatening behavior, per the Student Services Manual, SSM 104–02

Students, faculty, staff, and other individuals do not have an unqualified right of access to university grounds, property, or services (see SSM 104-02). Interfering with the peaceful conduct of university-related business or activities or remaining on campus grounds after a request to leave may be considered a crime. All incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student (whether on- or off-campus) must be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students.

Disability Accommodations

Suitable accommodations are made for students having disabilities. Students needing accommodation must register with the ASU Student Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Services office and provide documentation of that registration to the instructor. Students should communicate the need for an accommodation in enough time for it to be properly arranged. See ACD 304-08 Classroom and Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.

Harassment and Sexual Discrimination

Arizona State University is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for the entire university community, including all students, faculty members, staff employees, and guests. ASU expressly prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation by employees, students, contractors, or agents of the university based on any protected status: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetic information. Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>. As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling> is available

if you wish to discuss any concerns confidentially and privately. ASU online students may access 360 Life Services, <https://goto.asuonline.asu.edu/success/online-resources.html>.

Photo requirement

Arizona State University requires each enrolled student and university employee to have on file with ASU a current photo that meets ASU's requirements (your "Photo"). ASU uses your Photo to identify you, as necessary, to provide you educational and related services as an enrolled student at ASU. If you do not have an acceptable Photo on file with ASU, or if you do not consent to the use of your photo, access to ASU resources, including access to course material or grades (online or in person), may be negatively affected, withheld, or denied. Syllabus changes: Any information in this syllabus (other than grading and absence policies) may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice. How Long Students Should Wait for an Absent Instructor: In the event the instructor fails to indicate a time obligation, the time obligation will be 15 minutes for class sessions lasting 90 minutes or less, and 30 minutes for class sessions lasting more than 90 minutes. Students may be directed to wait longer by someone from the academic unit if they know the instructor will arrive shortly.