

# Introduction To CPSC 217

- Instructor contact information
- Course policies
- Evaluation: Determining your grade

James Tam

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## Contact Information (James Tam)

- Identification

- James Tam (Tam...James Tam): [tam@ucalgary.ca](mailto:tam@ucalgary.ca) (I'm the 'Tam' guy).
- FYI: for those who communicate formally the honorific to use is 'Prof.' (Associate professor).



- How to reach me

- Email: [tam@ucalgary.ca](mailto:tam@ucalgary.ca)
- Make sure you **specify the course name and number** in the subject line of the email e.g. 'CPSC 217' (otherwise I might miss it).

- Office time

- Monday, Tuesday: 2:30 – 3:00 PM
- Zoom (passcode = hope) URL: <https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/93114407392>

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## Who Are You Going To Ask?

- This course is coordinated so the person you contact will depend upon the issue/question.
- **Course instructor** (that's the guy in front of you now).
  - o Things related to the lecture e.g. you don't understand a concept being taught.
- **Course coordinator.**
  - o Overall course policies e.g. the specifics of the term grading system.
    - E.g. (From the official course outline) "Each of the above components will be given a letter grade using the official university grading system (see section F.1.1)."
  - o Time conflicts with the two out of class midterms (see course outline for details).
  - o Michelle Cheatham: [michelle.cheatham@ucalgary.ca](mailto:michelle.cheatham@ucalgary.ca)
  - o FYI: for those who communicate formally the honorific to use is 'Dr.'.
- **"Head" Teaching Assistant (TA).**
  - o Assignment grading issues: the head TA (in writing):
    - Paige So'Brien [paige.sobrien@ucalgary.ca](mailto:paige.sobrien@ucalgary.ca) (graduate student student).
- **Teaching Assistant teaching your tutorial.**
  - o What's required for exercises or assignments ('projects') or if you are 'stuck'.
  - o They have assigned hours to answer questions on Discord: <https://discord.gg/FuzC22JbyK>
  - o Exam grading issues (you may not want to ask questions that specifically pertain to you on Discord).
    - TA contact information on next screen.
- Other
  - o Class mates:
    - To catch up when you miss class i.e. to get their notes
  - o Missed midterm -> no one (weight for one is automatically added to final exam)
  - o Final exam deferral -> <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-final-exams>

**New from Course Coordinator, Sept. 2:**  
 get permission here before exams can be reweighted:  
<https://forms.office.com/r/3hESEf7V7c>

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## TA Contact Information (As Of Aug. 29)

T01	MW 09:00-09:50	Yomna ElGhazouly	yomna.elghazouly@ucalgary.ca
T02	TR 11:00-11:50	Timothy George	timothy.george@ucalgary.ca
T03	MW 12:00-12:50	Aref Motamedi	aref.motamedi1@ucalgary.ca
T04	TR 09:00-09:50	Aref Motamedi	aref.motamedi1@ucalgary.ca
T05a	TR 11:00-11:50	Adnan Ferdous Ashrafi	adnan.ashrafi@ucalgary.ca
T05b	TR 11:00-11:50	Moshfiq-U-Saleheen Chowdhury	moshfiquissaleheen.ch@ucalgary.ca
T05c	TR 11:00-11:50	Ebun Makinde	ebunoluwa.makinde@ucalgary.ca
T06a	TR 12:30-13:20	Adnan Ferdous Ashrafi	adnan.ashrafi@ucalgary.ca
T06b	TR 12:30-13:20	Moshfiq-U-Saleheen Chowdhury	moshfiquissaleheen.ch@ucalgary.ca
T06c	TR 12:30-13:20	Ebun Makinde	ebunoluwa.makinde@ucalgary.ca
T07a	TR 14:00-14:50	Saadman Rahman	saadman.rahman1@ucalgary.ca
T07b	TR 14:00-14:50	NAM NGUYEN VU	namnguyen.vu1@ucalgary.ca
T07c	TR 14:00-14:50	Raphael Aubut	raphael.aubut@ucalgary.ca
T08a	TR 15:30-16:20	Saadman Rahman	saadman.rahman1@ucalgary.ca
T08b	TR 15:30-16:20	NAM NGUYEN VU	namnguyen.vu1@ucalgary.ca
T08c	TR 15:30-16:20	Raphael Aubut	raphael.aubut@ucalgary.ca
T09	TR 16:00-16:50	Saina Daneshmandjehromi	saina.daneshmandjehromi@ucalgary.ca
T10	TR 17:00-17:50	Mahta Ghorbanian	mahta.ghorbanian@ucalgary.ca
T11	WF 14:00-14:50	Timothy George	timothy.george@ucalgary.ca
T12	MW 10:00-10:50	Yomna ElGhazouly	yomna.elghazouly@ucalgary.ca
T13	MW 17:00-17:50	Carson Witts	carson.witts@ucalgary.ca

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## Updated TA Assignments (Sept. 22)

Type	Times	GAT	Name	Email
head	tbd	1	Paige So'Brien	paige.sobrien@ucalgary.ca
T01	MW 09:00-09:50	0.5	Yomna ElGhazouly	yomna.elghazouly@ucalgary.ca
T02	TR 11:00-11:50	0.5	Aref Motamedi	aref.motamedi1@ucalgary.ca
T03	MW 12:00-12:50	0.5	Aref Motamedi	aref.motamedi1@ucalgary.ca
T04	TR 09:00-09:50	0.5	Aref Motamedi	aref.motamedi1@ucalgary.ca
T05a	TR 11:00-11:50	0.5	Adnan Ferdous Ashrafi	adnan.ashrafi@ucalgary.ca
T05b	TR 11:00-11:50	0.5	Moshfiq-Us-Saleheen Chowdhury	moshfiqussaleheen.ch@ucalgary.ca
T05c	TR 11:00-11:50	0.5	Ebun Makinde	ebunoluwa.makinde@ucalgary.ca
T06a	TR 12:30-13:20	0.5	Adnan Ferdous Ashrafi	adnan.ashrafi@ucalgary.ca
T06b	TR 12:30-13:20	0.5	Moshfiq-Us-Saleheen Chowdhury	moshfiqussaleheen.ch@ucalgary.ca
T06c	TR 12:30-13:20	0.5	Ebun Makinde	ebunoluwa.makinde@ucalgary.ca
T07a	TR 14:00-14:50	0.5	Saadman Rahman	saadman.rahman1@ucalgary.ca
T07b	TR 14:00-14:50	0.5	NAM NGUYEN VU	namnguyen.vu1@ucalgary.ca
T07c	TR 14:00-14:50	0.5	Raphael Aubut	raphael.aubut@ucalgary.ca
T08a	TR 15:30-16:20	0.5	Saadman Rahman	saadman.rahman1@ucalgary.ca
T08b	TR 15:30-16:20	0.5	NAM NGUYEN VU	namnguyen.vu1@ucalgary.ca
T08c	TR 15:30-16:20	0.5	Raphael Aubut	raphael.aubut@ucalgary.ca
T09	TR 16:00-16:50	0.5	Saina Daneshmandjahreni	saina.daneshmandjahreni@ucalgary.ca
T10	TR 17:00-17:50	0.5	Mahta Ghorbanian	mahta.ghorbanian@ucalgary.ca
T11	WF 14:00-14:50	0.5	Ebun Makinde	ebunoluwa.makinde@ucalgary.ca
T12	MW 10:00-10:50	0.5	Yomna ElGhazouly	yomna.elghazouly@ucalgary.ca
T13	MW 17:00-17:50	0.5	Carson Witts	carson.witts@ucalgary.ca

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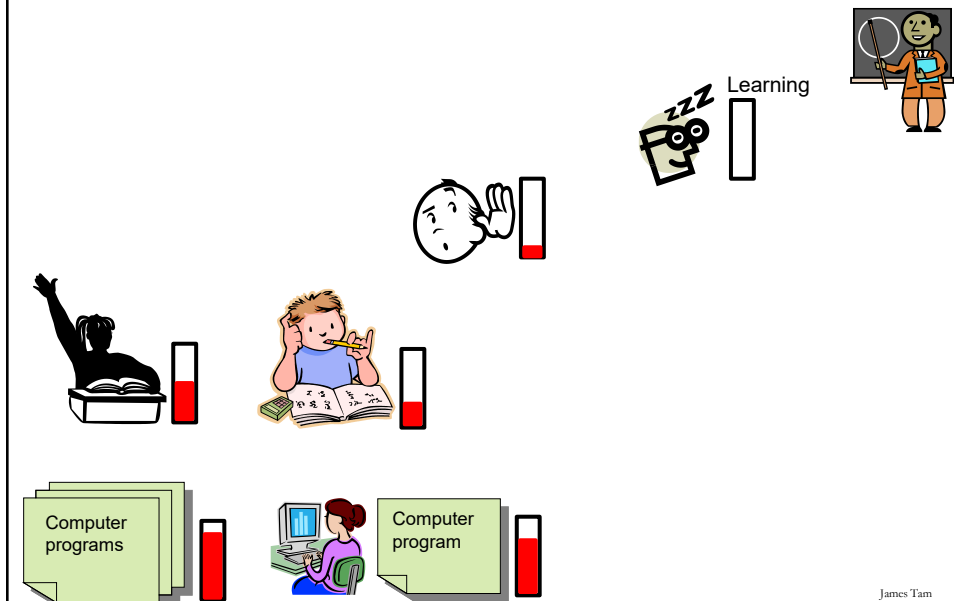
## Course Resources

- Required resources:
  - D2L site (You **must** get the notes from here before lecture)
    - Course website can be reached via D2L (Content -> L02 – my lecture) or <https://pages.cpsc.ucalgary.ca/~tami/2025/217F/>
      - The website includes all resources (not all of which may be individually linked to in D2L) and may display better than viewing them from within D2L.
      - Recommended but not required textbook: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-18873-3>
      - Alternatively you can access any book licensed by the university ("for free") on the library web site: <https://library.ucalgary.ca>

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## Your Engagement Level $\rightarrow$ Your Learning



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## Lecture: How To Use The Course Resources

- They are provided to support and supplement this class.
  - The notes outline the topics to be covered
  - At a minimum look through the notes to see the important topics.
  - However the notes are just an outline and just looking at them without coming to class isn't sufficient to do well
  - You will get additional details (e.g., explanations) during lecture time
    - Take notes!
    - If you miss a lecture then get a copy of the in-class notes from another student (who takes detailed notes)

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## Lecture Content

- You need to attend class
- New programming concepts
  - E.g. repetition, functional decomposition...
- Filtering concepts (i.e. you are told what to focus on): programming languages are extensive, even professional software developers aren't experts in all parts of a language.
  - You will be informed as to what concepts are important for this course
  - What parts of the language are important.
  - How to do things with language e.g. how to use a random number function as computer simulation.
- While "Googling it" can provide links to example programs Google won't show you all the answers e.g. what's important for this course.
- Beyond this lecture will (may?) provide some opportunities to develop your skills e.g. we'll go over practice problems

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## Tutorials

- Tutorials provide time to practice using those concepts to solve problems and get help in a small group environment
- **Students may only attend the tutorial sessions for which they are registered (course coordinator: Michelle Cheatham).**

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## Tam's House Rules (Remote Learning)

NA: this semester

of the common sense rules and social norms that apply for face-to-face to learning also apply to the online version e.g. turn taking.

- Please do ask questions!
- But when you have a question use the “raise your hand” feature in Zoom: Reactions -> Raise hand
  - Of course you shouldn't just turn on your microphone and start talking.
  - Please raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged before you use your talk (with your mic) or type into the chat.

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## Tam's “House Rules” (In Person)

- I will endeavor to keep the lecture within the prescribed time boundaries



- You won't pack up and end before time is up



- Or if you have to leave then make sure you do it quietly.

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## Tam's "House Rules" (In Person)

- No recordings/captures without permission during class please



- SAS students with a letter can probably get permission.
- (Recall that learning tends to increase with additional levels of engagement).



- Consequently lectures won't be recorded.

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## Tam's "House Rules" (In Person)

- Quiet whispering is OK...
- But "I can hear it" then you are probably disturbing the students around you.
  - "Take it outside" if you have urgent matters to discuss.

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## How You Will Be Evaluated

- From the official course outline created by the course coordinator.

### 1. Assessment Components

The University policy on grading and related matters is described in [F.1](#) and [F.2](#) of the online University Calendar.

In determining the overall grade in the course the following weights will be used:

Component	Weight	Due Date	Modality	Location
Exercises (10 over the course of the semester) <a href="#">Tied to tutorial</a>	10%	Ongoing		
Projects (3 over the course of the semester) <a href="#">Assignments</a>	21%	Ongoing		
Midterm 1	19%	Oct 04 2025 at 06:30 pm (60 Minutes)	in-person	TBD
Midterm 2	19%	Nov 01 2025 at 06:30 pm (60 Minutes)	in-person	TBD
Registrar Scheduled Final Exam	31%	<a href="#">Final Exams Schedule</a>	in person	<a href="#">Final Exams Schedule</a>

Each of the above components will be given a letter grade using the official university grading system (see [section F.1.1](#)). The final grade will be calculated using the grade point equivalents weighted by the percentages given above and then converted to a final letter grade using the official university grade point equivalents.

- Reminder: if you have questions about the grading system then you need to contact:
  - Michelle Cheatham: [michelle.cheatham@ucalgary.ca](mailto:michelle.cheatham@ucalgary.ca)

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## Exercises (Course Coordinator)

- Small problems provided to help you practice a specific programming construct
- 3 or so provided each week, but you only turn in one
- Graded pass/fail on completion, not correctness (“did you give it an ‘honest’ attempt”).
- Once you turn something in, you can see others’ answers in D2L and discuss solutions with them

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## Projects/Assignments (Course Coordinator)

- Larger, more open-ended problems for which you'll need to pick and choose which ideas covered in lecture should be used
- **Two** deliverables for each project:
  - implementation (i.e. python programming code)
  - reflection (blog post)

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## Cutoff (Course Coordinator)

A+	[97-100]	C+	[67-70]
A	[94-97)	C	[64-67)
A-	[90-94)	C-	[60-64)
B+	[87-90)	D+	[57-60)
B	[84-87)	D	[50-57)
B-	[80-84)	F	[0-50)

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## Special Grading Considerations (Course Coordinator)

- (From another part of the course outline)

**Missed Components of Term**

4. Work

Alternative arrangements will only be provided for **one** missed midterm exam. Students who miss one of the midterm exams due to an excused absence will have the weight of the missed exam transferred to the final exam. An excused absence will only be granted if it is requested ahead of the exam (or as soon after the exam as is practical in the circumstances if an absence could not have reasonably been requested before the exam) and is supported by appropriate documentation.

Students will have a bank of five "grace days" that can be used to extend the deadline on projects. These will be deducted automatically; no action is required on your part. After these grace days are exhausted, projects will not be accepted late under **any** circumstances.

Exercises will not be accepted late.

- Details of '5 days'
- Each one extends a project deadline by 24 hours
  - This includes weekends and holidays
  - You do not need to provide a reason; they will be applied automatically

- Shortcut link to the course outline:

d2l.ualgary.ca/d2l/le/content/692796/Home

Supplementary Materials	16
LO2: James Tam (MWF: 1:00 - 1:50 PM)	14
Lecture content for LO2	14

which is monitored by the TAs: tam@ualgary.ca

- Please identify yourself as a CPSC 217 student when you contact me either email (put the course name and number in the subject and a title describing for contacting me).

Official course outline (includes information about):

- Course policies (grading an otherwise)
- Grading weights for different course components
- Link to the final faculty approved outline: [cspages.ualgary.ca/~tam/2025/217F/CPSC\\_217\\_official\\_outline.pdf](https://cspages.ualgary.ca/~tam/2025/217F/CPSC_217_official_outline.pdf)

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## Misconduct Details (Course Coordinator)

- All the work you submit must be your own (and content created by a generative AI tool is not your own) [JT: i.e. submitting someone else's work may be treated as misconduct]
- Any justification you give when asking for an exam deferral must be true. [JT: lying may be regarded as misconduct]

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## **What Counts As Cheating (Course Coordinator)**

- Work on graded assignments (exercises and projects) individually
- Do not share code outside of the designated discussion forums on D2L (in particular, do not post code on the Discord)
- Do not use someone else's account to look at the D2L discussions prior to submitting your own work
- You can ask a generative AI tool for practice problems or to explain an error message, but do not ask it to write (or fix) code for you that you are submitting for a grade

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## **Penalties For Misconduct (Course Coordinator)**

- Penalties for academic misconduct can range from a zero on the assignment all the way up to suspension or expulsion
- Often, a first academic misconduct violation results in a zero on the assignment and a second offense results in an F in the course
- Egregious violations can result in more severe penalties

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## **The Programming Language For Assignments/Exercises**

- All evaluation components must be completed by writing a program using Python version 3.x (not version 2.x).
  - Aim for 3.12 or newer
  - During the first tutorial lab instructor will show you the lab environment and possibly assist you in this setup.
- Installing python on your own device isn't mandatory
- The tool for writing your assignments using the python language is PyCharm
  - Analogy (language vs. writing tool)
    - o The language used in this class is python, the language used for most of your university reports will be English.
    - o You may use a tool use as MS-Word to compose your reports while the tool supported in this class is PyCharm).
    - o You can use other tools (e.g. IDLE which comes from the group who developed python) but the Teaching Assistants will only use and directly support PyCharm.

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## **Why Bother Learning How To Write A Computer Program ('Programming')**

- Generative A.I. (Artificial Intelligence) can produce original content including a computer program.
  - Demonstration to illustrate.
- Yes programming will be 'on the exam' (closed book so you can't just 'AI' your answers) but there are other reasons.
  - Another demonstration to illustrate.

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## How To Succeed In This Course: A Summary

1. Practice things yourself.
  - Write and trace ('read' and determine how it executes) as much code as possible.
2. Make sure that you keep up with the material
  - Don't 'fall behind' more than 1 or 2 weeks at most.
  - Keeping up means you not only study the material but try to apply (writing/tracing your own code).
3. Start working on things early
  - Student: how hard could this possibly be?
  - Reality:
    - Harder than you think when you actually have to try it yourself.
    - With programming sometimes you may truly know the material but something small and stupid is a major problem e.g. James Tam in CPSC 457  
`if(systemJobs>=value) { ... }` vs `if(systemJob<=value) { ... }`

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## To Do For Next Week (Course Coordinator)

- **No tutorials this week**, but before next week...
- Apply for an IT account if you don't have one yet  
<https://itregport.ucalgary.ca/>
- (If you have an [@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ucalgary.ca) email, then you already have an IT account)
- If you want to work on your own laptop, install **Python 3.12** and **PyCharm** (other IDEs are fine, but course personnel will only support PyCharm); your TA can help you with this on the first day of tutorial if you have trouble

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