NEW COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSE FOR NON-MAJORS:
COSC 1306 Computer Literacy for Science Majors

Fall 2011: MW 5:30-7:00 pm in PGH 376
Full Course Designator: COSC 1306-01(24233)

Course Objectives
COSC 1306 will attempt to define computer literacy for the twenty-first century. Rather than
learning how to format papers, use spreadsheets and prepare presentations, we will focus on the
principles of computer science and learn to develop efficient algorithms for a wide variety of
problems.

The course will survey the basic hardware and software components of a computer
system and introduce the students to algorithmic thinking. The programming assignments will be
in a modern scripting language, such as Python or Ruby, in order to relieve the beginner from the
drudgery of conventional programming languages. Those wishing to continue with another
programming language will find the transition easy because these languages are much less apart
than natural languages.

Targeted Audience
The course should be of interest to all science and engineering majors who want get a broad
introduction to computing. This is something they would not get by taking a conventional
introduction to computer science that focuses on learning a programming language such as C,
C++ or Java.

All other students with good quantitative reasoning skills are equally welcome. The
course might be of interest to those who are not sure whether they want to pursue a computer
science major and want to learn more before deciding. While the course will not count towards a
computer science major, concepts learned in the course will greatly help for COSC 1410 and
1320. In case of doubt please contact the instructor, preferably by email.

Requirements
Course official prerequisite is credit for or concurrent enrollment in MATH 1431 (Calculus I).
Students lacking this prerequisite should be at least familiar with fundamental pre-calculus
concepts. We reserve the right to tighten these requirements for future offerings of the course.

Grades will be based on two midterms (20 percent of total grade each), one final (20 percent) and
four assignments (40 percent total).

For more information
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Office Hours: M to F 6:00-6:30 pm until August 8
             MW 7:00-7:45 pm starting August 22
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