

CSCE 3550.002, 003, 004 Foundations of Cybersecurity

Course Syllabus

Instructor Information

Name: Dr. Ali Zarafshani (he/him)

Office Location: E245L (by appointment only), Discovery Park

Office Hours:

Enrolled	Days & Times	Class Dates	Grade Roster Status	Date
Weekly Meeting with TA	Weekly Meeting with TA	Mo 11:00AM - 12:00PM	E245L	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
Office Hrs	Office Hours: Weekly meetings with students are recommended by appointment	MoWe 10:00 - 11:00AM	E245L	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
CSCE 3550-003	FOUNDATI CYBERSECURITY (Credit)	MoWe 3:25PM - 4:45PM	NTDP F175	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
CSCE 3550-004	FOUNDATI CYBERSECURITY (Credit)	MoWe 1:50PM - 3:10PM	NTDP B157	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
CSCE 3550-002	FOUNDATI CYBERSECURITY (Credit)	TuTh 10:40AM - 12:00PM	NTDP E266	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
CSCE 3550-207	FOUNDATI CYBERSECURITY (Recitation)	Fr 10:45AM - 11:35AM	NTDP F218	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
CSCE 3550-208	FOUNDATI CYBERSECURITY (Recitation)	Th 9:40AM - 10:30AM	NTDP B142	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026

CSCE 3550-209	FOUNDATI CYBERSECURITY (Recitation)	Fr 3:05PM - 3:55PM	NTDP F223	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
CSCE 3550-210	FOUNDATI CYBERSECURITY (Recitation)	Mo 2:00PM - 2:50PM	NTDP F223	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
CSCE 3550-211	FOUNDATI CYBERSECURITY (Recitation)	Fr 9:40AM - 10:30AM	NTDP F270	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
CSCE 3550-212	FOUNDATI CYBERSECURITY (Recitation)	Mo 10:45AM - 11:35AM	NTDP F236	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
CSCE 4907-001	SECURITY CAPSTONE I (Credit)	TuTh 12:15PM - 1:35PM	NTDP K120	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026
CSCE 5585-001	NETWORK SECURITY (Credit)	Fr 3:30PM - 6:20PM	NTDP B157	Aug 17, 2026 - 11 Dec 2026

Faculty Email: Ali.Zarafshani@UNT.edu

Physical Office Location: E245L (by appointment only)

The preferred contact method is directly through UNT email - you must allow 2-3 business days for us to research what is happening and reply to you. If you cannot contact me or a TA within 24-48 hours, email me directly at Ali.Zarafshani@UNT.edu

If you email a TA or me through Microsoft Outlook, make sure you are using the correct email address through the UNT email system.

TAs: posted on Canvas

DO NOT SEND ASSIGNMENTS TO MICROSOFT Outlook EMAIL ADDRESSES; these must be turned into CANVAS. These must be turned into the appropriate turn-in locations. You are responsible for what you turn into the assignment folder. If you doubt you turned in the correct paper/project/assignment, it is your responsibility to check it. We can only grade what you turn in on Canvas. We are not responsible for chasing you down to let you know you turned in something different from what is expected. If you doubt the assignment before you turn it in, we are happy to discuss it.

ALL HOMEWORK MUST BE TURNED INTO THE CANVAS.

ENSURE YOUR IA/TA COUNTS YOUR ATTENDANCE FOR RECITATION and/or CLASS.

Only attendance grades carry over from Recitation to Lecture classes.

Course Description, Structure, and Objectives

This course covers cybersecurity terminology, principles, and technologies, and introduces students to security issues related to hardware, software, cryptography, and policy to make better, safer decisions. Topics include cyber threats and vulnerabilities, information security frameworks and policies, cryptography, penetration testing, and defense in depth. Many of the techniques will be demonstrated and practiced using a modern programming language. The goal is to develop a foundation for further study in cybersecurity. This course takes place in person, and all assignments will be submitted through Canvas.

Course Outcomes

Course outcomes are measurable achievements to be accomplished by the completion of a course. These outcomes are evaluated as part of our ABET accreditation process:

1. Describe basic security terminology and concepts as well as analyze security threats, vulnerabilities, and attacks.
2. Describe the role of computers and networks in a security context.
3. Develop basic organizational security policies.
4. Demonstrate basic principles and concepts of cryptography and general cryptanalysis.
5. Demonstrate various types of penetration testing to measure the security posture.
6. Discuss the legal and ethical issues involved with securing computer systems, networks, and information.
7. Apply security design principles using a modern programming language to solve various cybersecurity problems.

Prerequisites and Co-requisites

Prerequisite(s): None.

Co-requisite(s): CSCE 2110

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website](#). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An online or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission, including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no online or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

- (1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
- (2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See [UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002>).

Electronic Devices Policy

The use of electronic devices during class is limited to course-related activities only. Headphones, AirPods, mobile phones (including texting or messaging), social media, YouTube, and other non-course-related applications are not permitted during class time. Devices used in violation of this policy may result in the student being asked to put the device away or leave the classroom.

Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g., software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class, and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.
- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.

Download the UNT System Permission, Waiver, and Release Form

Transmission and Recording of Student Images in Electronically Delivered Courses

1. No permission is needed from a student for his or her image or voice to be transmitted live via video conference or streaming media, but all students should be informed when courses are to be conducted using either method of delivery.

2. In the event an instructor records student presentations, he or she must obtain permission from the student using a signed release to use the recording for future classes in accordance with the Use of Student-Created Work guidelines above.
3. Instructors who video-record their class lectures with the intention of re-using some or all of the recordings for future class offerings must notify students in the course syllabus if students' images may appear on video. Instructors are also advised to provide accommodation for students who do not wish to appear in class recordings.
4. Students may not record meetings without prior written consent, as this may compromise the rights of others in the class.

Required/Recommended Materials

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at [Learn Anywhere \(https://online.unt.edu/learn\)](https://online.unt.edu/learn).

Required materials are the minimum used to be successful in this course, while recommended materials are not completely required but are highly beneficial for successful completion of this course.

Required:

1. Elementary Information Security (3rd Edition) by Richard E. Smith (Jones and Bartlett, 2023)

ISBN 978-1284153040

Citation: Smith, R. E. (2024). Elementary Information Security (3rd Ed). Jones and Bartlett.

[https://www.jblearning.com/catalog/productdetails/9781284153040?ss360SearchTerm=Elementary%20Information%20Security%20\(3rd%20Edition\)](https://www.jblearning.com/catalog/productdetails/9781284153040?ss360SearchTerm=Elementary%20Information%20Security%20(3rd%20Edition))

2. US Army Red Team Handbook:

Available here.

<https://home.army.mil/wood/application/files/6115/8222/0759/RedTeamHB.pdf>

Citation: University of Foreign Military and Cultural Studies TRADOC G-2 Intelligence Support Activity. (2022). The red team handbook: The army's guide to making better decisions (ver. 9). Retrieved (date) from

<https://home.army.mil/wood/application/files/6115/8222/0759/RedTeamHB.pdf>

Notes: Provided in class by the instructor.

Recommended (free/online):

1. *Publication Manual (OFFICIAL) of the American Psychological Association, 7th Edition* by American Psychological Association (Author)

ISBN-10: 1433832178 or ISBN-13: 978-1433832178

Citation: American Psychological Association. (2025). *Publication Manual (OFFICIAL) of the American Psychological Association (7th Edition)*. American Psychological Association.

Notes: This will need to be purchased (or used as a reference).

2. *Introduction to Computer Security*, Matt Bishop, Pearson 2005, ISBN 0-321-24744-2

How to Succeed in this Course

Netiquette

Netiquette, or online etiquette, refers to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors online. Here are some general guidelines:

- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in email or any other communication.
- Remember that all college-level communication should have correct spelling and grammar (this includes discussion boards).
- Avoid slang terms such as “totes magotes” and abbreviations such as “u” instead of “you.”
- Humor and sarcasm are highly encouraged. People who take the world seriously are in for a rough journey.
- Don’t lead your emails off with your Social Security and bank account numbers, password manager master password, home address, credit score, and dental record jpegs. 3 of those will suffice.

See these [Netiquette Guidelines](#) (Links to an external site). For more information.

Communication Expectations

Please send all communication via email first and foremost. If this fails, then send from your official student UNT email (your studentname@my.unt.edu email address) to (Ali.Zarafshani@UNT.edu).

Just like you, I receive a virtual ton of spam to my email address, and if it has [EXT] in the subject line, there's a ~95% chance I'm just deleting it. Additionally, I cannot discuss any student issues through external email due to FERPA; i.e., I cannot confirm that I *know* it's *you* I'm conversing with - therefore, all emails from you must come from your official student email address.

I have a 48- to 72-hour policy to reply to all emails, except on weekends and holidays, as do my TAs/IAs. All grades will be posted promptly after grading has been completed.

Please come to me/us with any issues that arise; send to my TA first. If they cannot resolve it, then come to me - that does not mean I cannot be the first step in an emergency.

If you forgot to turn in your homework, this does not constitute an emergency. Simply email us and attach your work so that we know you missed it - if you are within 15 minutes or so of the assignment closing, we will normally be forgiving (unless it keeps happening). Once we acknowledge this to you, we will allow you to properly submit a matching document into Canvas. If we find the documents are not the same, we will deduct as needed; if they are, you have a little grace.

Sending an email is free, and if I can't resolve it, we can move the issue up the chain.

In your emails, please include:

Subject The course (e.g., CSCE3550) that you are emailing about and a few words (aka, *the Subject*)

Body Please include your email with your name and UNT ID number.

This helps me not only help you, but if there are multiple issues with the course (i.e., a module is broken, for instance), I can quickly collate the issues.

ODA

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to the faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member before implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty

members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](http://www.unt.edu/oda) website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Supporting Your Success and Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together.

Every student in this class should have the right to learn and engage in an environment of respect and courtesy from others. We will discuss our classroom's habits of engagement, and I also encourage you to review UNT's student code of conduct so that we can all start with the same baseline civility understanding ([Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct)) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>)

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustrations that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT, we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

[UNT Help Desk \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Call: [940-565-2324](tel:940-565-2324)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Walk-in: Sage Hall, Room 330

Walk-in Hours: Monday–Friday: 8 am - 5 pm

Telephone Availability:

- Monday–Thursday: 8 am – 9 pm
- Friday: 8 am- 5 pm
- Saturday: 11 am- 3 pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](#)

Laptop Checkouts

The following library service desks provide laptop checkouts during [hours of operation](#). MacBooks are only available at Willis Library.

- **Willis Library:** [The Spark](#), First Floor
- **Sycamore Library:** [Sycamore Service Desk](#)
- **Discovery Park:** [Library Service Desk](#), Room B112

Student Support Services

- [Registrar](#)
- [Financial Aid \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [Student Legal Services \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [Career Center \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [Multicultural Center \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [Counseling and Testing Services \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [Student Affairs Care Team \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [Student Health and Wellness Center \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [Pride Alliance \(Links to an external site\).](#)

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [Academic Success Center \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [UNT Libraries \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [Writing Lab \(Links to an external site\).](#)
- [MathLab](#)

Assessing Your Work

Percentages of final grades are approximate and subject to change.

Final Project (1)	18 %
Final Exam	15 %
MidTerm Exam	10 %
Weekly Lab Assignments (10) <i>Lowest 1 dropped</i>	15 %
Weekly Discussion Questions (16) <i>Lowest 1 dropped</i>	15 %

Weekly Homework/Quizzes (15) <i>Lowest 1 dropped</i>	10 %
Recitation Participation & Effort	10 %
Lecture Attendance & Participation	7 %
Total:	100 %
Bonus:	
Project Bonus	2%
Bonus for Assignments	2%
Bonus	2%

Grading scale	
Final Grade	Letter
89.5 - 100	A
79.5 - 89.49	B
69.5 – 79.49	C
59.5 – 69.49	D
< 59.49	F
Grades are rounded to the nearest whole integer.	

There is “extra” credit, and it will be sprinkled throughout the semester - this is why I do not grant "extra" points at the end of the semester. You can expect grades to be returned within a reasonable time (within 4 - 5 days after the assignment CLOSES). If

you turn in before the assignment closes, expect us not to look at it for grading until it closes for EVERYONE.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses the Eagle Alert system to quickly notify students of emergency situations, campus closings, and other urgent information. Students should ensure their contact information is up to date in my.unt.edu to receive these alerts. More information is available here: <https://riskmanagement.unt.edu/emergency/preparedness/emergency-notifications.html> Risk Management Services

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold UNT's Academic Integrity standards. The full University policy is available here: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>

1. Final Project or Approved DoDD 8140.01 (formerly DoD 8570.01) IAT Level 1 or 2 Certification (18%+2% bonus)

A final project is required and must be submitted during finals week via Canvas.

This project builds on the Certified in Cyber training and will be further developed throughout the semester. You are required to create an organizational security plan, consisting of 10 independent security policies. All submissions must be uploaded to Canvas and will be checked for plagiarism and AI usage through Turnitin.

Project Requirements

1. Each policy must include the following components:
 - Purpose and scope
 - Policy statement (the actual rule)
 - Applicability (who the policy applies to)
 - Enforcement (how compliance will be verified and to whom violations will be reported)
 - Authority (who has the authority to enforce/sign the policy)

Formatting Guidelines

1. Each page should be single-spaced, with less than 25% of any page empty. If it is a two-page policy, the first page **MUST** be filled with single-spaced content (that

makes sense for the policy stated). No inappropriate spaces or gaps - these translate to a policy failure for that policy.

2. Policies will be approximately 2 pages apiece (policies less than 1.75 pages long will not be considered to have met the minimum for the policy). Adjusting line spacing or not using the correct APA page formatting (1 inch all around) will cause a deduction of points in the assigned category.
3. Single-spaced - APA formatting, with no more than a 2nd-level indentation/header.
You must include a separate APA-formatted cover page and a properly formatted citations page. You must include a minimum of 5 APA-formatted references (in-text and on the reference page).
4. You can use AI to start your project but not finish it. No more than 25% AI is allowed for the successful completion of your project. More than 25% AI usage is an automatic 50 (for the Paper), More than 50% AI usage is an automatic "0" for the paper.
5. These are to be created as actual security policies; they are independent of one another but intertwine and overlap to create an organizational security plan.

Summary of formatting

- Single-spaced, 1-inch margins in APA format (no more than second-level headings)
- Each policy must be approximately 2 pages (minimum of 1.75 pages)
- No inappropriate spacing, blank areas, or filler content
- Include a separate APA-formatted cover page and a references page
- Minimum of 5 APA-formatted references (in-text and listed on the reference page)
- AI use is limited to 20%.
 - 20% AI use = automatic grade of 50
 - 50% AI use = automatic grade of 0

These policies should be written as stand-alone documents but should interconnect to form a complete organizational security plan.

Required Policies (minimum of 10):

The minimum 10 policies required are:

1. Risk Categorization Policy

2. Data Classification Policy
3. Third Party Risk Management and Vendor Access Policy
4. Access Control for Devices and Data Protection Policy
5. Data Collection, Retention, and Disposal Policy
6. Network Infrastructure Devices Access Policy
7. Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy
8. Client Privacy Policy
9. Employee Acceptable Use Policy
10. Wi-Fi (Wireless Access Usage) Policy

OR

Certification Substitution Option

You may substitute the final project by passing one approved DoD 8570.01 (IAT Level 1 or 2) certification during the semester. To use this option:

- You must notify me before taking the exam
- You must submit the official vendor grade report before the start of the final exam week

(I must receive notice that you intend to take the exam before taking the exam, and I must receive the (Vendor) grade report before the end of reading week or before the start of the final exam week.)

- The DoD 8570.01 certifications that are acceptable as substitutions are (only 1 is required). There are no "Free" solutions in the list below.

Acceptable certifications:

EC Council

- CCT (Offers a reduced cost option)
- CND (Offers a reduced cost option)
- CEH (Offers a reduced cost option)

ISC2

- CISSP (Associate) (May offer a reduced cost option)
- SSCP (May offer a reduced cost option)
- CGRC (Formerly CAP) (May offer a reduced cost option)

CompTIA

- Network+ CE
- Security+ CE

Note: If a student chooses to pursue a professional cybersecurity certificate as an alternative to the Final Project (Option #2), they must obtain my approval before starting and begin preparation. Additionally, we will hold weekly or bi-weekly meetings to discuss progress and provide any additional content or guidance necessary to support the successful completion of the certificate.

2. 8. Midterm and Final Examinations

The course will include two computer-based examinations: a **Midterm Exam** during **Week 8-9** and a **Final Exam** during **Week 16**.

Midterm Exam: The Midterm Exam will assess the material covered in the course through the latest lecture at the time of the examination. Based on the current course schedule, the Midterm Exam is expected to cover approximately **Chapters 1–8**. The exam may include questions based on material presented through lectures, laboratory activities, assignments, and in-class or assigned practice activities.

Final Exam: The Final Exam will be comprehensive and will cover material from throughout the semester. Approximately **30% of the Final Exam** will assess material covered before the Midterm Exam, while approximately **70%** will focus on material covered from the Midterm Exam through the end of the semester. The course is expected to cover approximately **14–15 chapters** during the semester.

Both examinations will be administered **on a computer with a lockdown browser** and may include **multiple-choice questions and conceptual/application-based questions** designed to assess students' understanding of the cybersecurity concepts and skills covered in the course. Examination questions may be based on material presented in lectures, laboratory exercises, assignments, and practice activities.

The **Midterm Exam is worth 10%** of the final course grade, and the **Final Exam is worth 15%** of the final course grade.

3. *Weekly Lab Assignments Policy (15%):*

Labs are an important part of learning concepts when you are entering a new field. They are **also open from day 1 of the semester - and will close on the Saturday of the week they are assigned. Because of this, LABS WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED LATE - without prior coordination (before the original due date). Labs account for 15% of the course's overall grade.**

4. *Participation through Weekly Discussion Questions (15% of Grade):*

- **Weekly Discussion Questions account for 15% of the course's overall grade. These will not be opened after they close (the week the questions are due).**
- **All responses (initial and peer) require proper in-text and end-of-text citations.**

There are three components for these weekly assignments: the Initial response is due Thursday, **and** two peer responses are due by Saturday at 23:59 (assignment closes). They will only show the Thursday "due" date, but all close on Saturday at 23:59.

Attendance will be taken each day in class; additionally, in-class participation will count up to 10% of the course's overall grade.

Initial Discussion Question responses (Due every Thursday of the week at 23:59): These will not be opened after the discussion questions close (the week the questions are closed). To ease requirements during this class, all discussion questions will be open from the first day of the semester but will close on Saturday at 23:59 the week we finish the module. Check the syllabus for further explanation or expectations regarding module closure. A single discussion question (lowest grade) will be dropped at the end of the semester. All responses require references and in-text citations.

All discussion questions for weekly class discussion question credit will require that you will provide an initial answer to **ALL** weekly discussion questions by Thursday evening of the assigned week (no later than 23:59). This initial response should equate to 250 words, and have a significant contribution to the weekly topic and should include 1-3 (in-text) cited sources with a reference section properly formatted in APA 7.0. You will only receive a notice for the Thursday due date, but it has three components: the Initial response due Thursday and two peer responses due by Saturday at 23:59. **This initial response counts for 50 of the 100 points for the discussion question prompt.**

Part 2 (Due by Saturday of the week at 23:59)

You must complete 2 significant peer responses per week by Saturday evening at Midnight to receive full credit for the weekly discussion questions (again by 23:59). These peer

responses should equal another 250 words. Peer responses should also have 1-3 (in-text) cited sources with a reference section properly formatted in APA 7.0. **These peer responses each count for 25 points of the 100 points for the discussion question prompt.** Discussion questions are not an excuse to attack an individual for their beliefs. If you do not understand a person's position, ask questions, gain perspective, and then provide an educated response. Disagreement does not mean that an individual is wrong, just that they have a different perspective. Different perspectives provide us with the ability to be objective in our thoughts and provide better service to our clients.

In-text and proper Citation (in APA 7.0 format) counts for 10% of your peer and initial response; incorrect use of, exclusion of, or improper formatting can count up to 10% of your weekly Discussion Question response. **Please use the official APA style guide** to assist in creating citations. Use of a non-APA style guide will not be a reason to relook (or regrade) your posts; many websites are someone's interpretation of the official style.

If you are experiencing any [symptoms of COVID](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider before coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Team at COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure.

5. *Weekly Homework/Quizzes Policy (10%):*

Weekly homework is presented in a multiple-choice "quiz" type format. This is to help you prepare for the mid-term and final exams - **and will close on the Saturday of the week they are assigned. Because of this, WEEKLY HOMEWORK WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED LATE without prior coordination (before the original due date).** Weekly Homework accounts for 15% of the course's overall grade.

6. *Recitation Participation and Effort Policy (10%):*

Recitations are a necessary part of this course - they provide you with an opportunity to ask questions concerning labs, lectures, or life in general (in relation to the course).

Attendance will be taken each week in recitation class; additionally, attendance in class recitation will count for 10% of the course's overall grade. Your assigned IA/TA will provide a listing at the end of the semester, which will be updated and counted as part of your final grade.

7. *Roll Call Attendance Policy (5%):*

Because this course requires collaboration, active participation is essential to your learning. The project-based activities depend on your engagement in both discussions and group work. I understand that tardiness and absences may occasionally occur; if you are running late to class, please email me and/or the TA to explain the situation. If you must miss class, please notify me in advance whenever possible.

Students who are present at the start of class will receive **100%** for that day's attendance. Students who miss roll call but attend class will receive **80%**, and absent students will receive **0%**. **Attendance will be taken each week during class, and in-class participation will count toward 5% of your overall course grade.**

Course Evaluation (SPOT) and Bonus Policy

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is UNT's official course evaluation system. It provides students with the opportunity to confidentially offer constructive feedback to instructors and departments to improve the quality of their learning experience.

If the **overall class participation rate in SPOT reaches 95% or higher**, an **additional 10 bonus points** will be awarded **equally to all students** in the class. This bonus is based **solely on participation rate**, not on the content or nature of individual responses.

Assignment Policies

Canvas File & Work Submission Policy

All assignments are posted on Canvas and should be submitted to Canvas. Assignments cannot be accepted through email. Students are responsible for submitting the correct assignment to the applicable assignment submission in Canvas. Assignments may require multiple file uploads. Do not archive/compress/zip these into one file: Attach them individually. The only acceptable file type for upload can be previewed automatically by DocViewer in Canvas (<https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/What-types-of-files-can-be-previewed-in-Canvas/ta-p/607>).

Late Work Policy

No late submissions will be accepted **for any reason** without prior approval from **Dr. Zarafshani** (requests to the IA/TA will not be considered). Please begin working on assignments and quizzes well in advance and ensure you have a reliable internet connection to prevent any delays or technical issues. This is why assignments are made available early. **Please note:** Discussion Questions **will not** be reopened once they close on their scheduled due date.

AI (Artificial Intelligence) with Academic Integrity Policy

Students are expected **not** to use AI tools (such as ChatGPT, GitHub Copilot, Cody, Ghostwriter, etc.) in this course. While I understand some of you may choose to use them anyway, please be aware of the following:

- **Do not rely on AI-generated output as authoritative.** If it produces a fact, number, or solution, assume it is incorrect unless you already know the answer or have verified it with a reliable source. *You* are responsible for any errors, inaccuracies, or omissions.
- **Low-effort prompts produce low-quality results.** Simply asking AI for a solution will rarely result in meaningful or correct answers.
- **Using AI can negatively impact your learning and critical thinking.** If you choose to use it, understand that I (and the TAs) will be able to understand that, and it will be your responsibility.
- **AI is just a tool**—no different from any other tool (and in many cases, less reliable than a common tool like a hammer). Your mind is the most important tool you possess; sharpen it first before relying on anything else.

Please be thoughtful before using AI. These tools often produce incorrect, biased, or misleading information. **You will be held fully accountable for any content submitted, regardless of whether an AI tool was used.**

Use of AI for the assignments: Based on the Student Academic Integrity Policy (UNT Policy 6.003) and the AI, Plagiarism, and Academic Integrity at UNT Policy (<https://guides.library.unt.edu/plagiarism/at-unt>), any form of “unauthorized assistance” constitutes cheating. If the use of AI is not explicitly requested/authorized in a question, the violation is “**cheating**”. Therefore, the use of AI in assignments is NOT welcomed unless it is asked in question. Such cheating can result in the failure of the class (F) as follows:

- The assignments will be evaluated using AI detection tools, e.g., Turnitin.
- You can use AI to start learning but not finish it. No more than 25% AI is allowed for successful completion of your assignment. More than 25% AI usage is an automatic 50 (for the Paper). More than 50% AI usage is an automatic "0" for the paper.
- (If a submission exceeds the soft threshold (i.e., 25% similarity), a deduction of two times the similarity will be applied (e.g., if you have a similarity of 25%, $2 \times 25\% = 50\%$ deduction for that assignment will occur).
- If a submission exceeds the hard threshold (i.e., 50% similarity), the assignment will be graded as 0 (zero).

- For the second time exceeding the hard threshold, the student will automatically get an F (fail) from the class and may be reported to the university.

Screenshot Submission Policy

Some assignments will have you submit screenshots to show that you completed the work.

There are three components to a good screenshot:

1. Do not take a photo with your phone.
 - Take a native screenshot with your operating system (<https://www.take-a-screenshot.org/>).
2. This screenshot should show identifying information.
 - No need to overthink this. The easiest way is just open Notepad.exe (Windows) or Stickies (macOS) and enter your EUID, then take a screenshot of the assignment.
Or you can open your university webmail and have your profile open in the screenshot.
3. Only screenshot what you need for the assignment.
 - If you have a 48" wide monitor, and the assignment only takes up 10% of your screen, please crop down the screenshot to only what is needed and no more.

Course Schedule/Assignments: 16 Week calendar showing the start date of 17 Aug 2026, and 11 Dec 2026 (Final Exam Week).