

CSCE 3530 - 002 - Introduction to Computer Networks

Course meeting

Term: Fall 2026

Day/time: MW 12:15pm - 1:35pm

Location: NTDP E 266

Modality: In-person (remote participation not allowed)

Course description

Computer networks can seem enormously complex -- after all, the Internet is arguably the largest engineered system ever built by humans! This course offers a first look at what computer networks are, how they are designed and operated, and how they are likely to evolve in the future.

Key objectives and outcomes

- Understand a conceptual view of computers in communications
- Understand communication protocols in the Internet
- Be able to do basic network programming
- Understand different network architectures
- Recognize the role of application protocols
- Understand different routing and forwarding protocols

Teaching staff

Instructor: Prof. Supreeth Shastri	TA: TBA
Student hours: MW 1:35pm - 2:35pm	TA hours: TBA
Office: NTDP F 246	Office: TBA
Email: supreeth.Shastri@unt.edu	Email: TBA

Textbook and resources

[Required textbook] ***Computer Networking: a Top Down Approach (8th Edition)*** from James Kurose and Keith Ross. If you have an older/newer edition of the text, you may be able to get by, but you would have to make sure numbered problems and figures are matched properly.

Lecture slides will be posted on canvas. All the assigned readings including research papers, articles, and Internet RFCs will be linked there as well. All the software required for programming projects are free and open source.

Assessment

We will evaluate your learning using four equally weighted mechanisms (i.e., each of the following will contribute 25% of the final grade)

- 25 In-class spot quizzes
- 5 Assignments/projects
- 1 Midterm exam
- 1 Final exam

Scores will be posted on Canvas in about a week after submission/exam. Once grades are posted on Canvas, you will have one week to seek any clarification.

Finally, we will use the following letter grading system for this class: A (90, 100), B (80, 89), C (70, 79), D (60, 69), F (0, 59). Your cumulative scores are rounded up to the nearest whole integer. For example, 79.1 will be rounded to 80, resulting in a letter grade of B. To be fair to everyone, there will be no curving of grades nor any extra credit opportunities.

Course schedule

This course runs from 8/17/2026 through 12/11/2026. You will find the complete (albeit, preliminary) schedule in canvas. The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule based on student needs, emerging topics, or other academic factors. We will give at least a week's notice before implementing any change.

Ground rules and policies

Academic integrity: We take this really seriously. All students are expected to adhere to the departmental code of academic honesty. We encourage collaborations: it helps you learn faster and makes the process fun; however, everything you turn in must be your own. If your submission is obviously similar to someone else's (or copied from the web), then all parties will receive a zero on the respective work. Any repeated offense will receive an F for the course. Serious offenses will be reported to the department chair and the Dean's office, which may result in further disciplinary action.

Attendance: We expect students to attend classes regularly and contribute to the learning environment. Attendance is also important because every spot quiz is based on the content/discussions that happen in a given lecture. If you anticipate not being able to attend lectures regularly, a fully-remote section of 3530 maybe a more suitable option.

Submissions and late policy: All submissions are due at midnight on the specified date. We will not accept any late submissions. However, we will allow incomplete submissions and will evaluate them for a partial score.

Communication etiquette: You are welcome to communicate with your teaching staff during the lecture, in student hours, or over email (only UNT email please). We strive to respond to your emails within 24 hours (though it may take slightly longer during holidays or research deadlines).

Generative AI tools: Use of generative AI tools is not prohibited. However, you must acknowledge its use in your work and you must ensure that you are not violating any of the generative AI policies of UNT and the CSE department.

ODA accommodation: 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 faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. For additional information, refer to the ODA website.