School of Computing and Information Systems

Unit Outline

KXG161 Games Programming and Problem Solving

Semester 1, 2009
Sandy Bay Campus, Hobart

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Other people may take some of the tutorials in this unit. These people are all experienced in the subject area and will be briefed by the unit coordinator.

UNIT OVERVIEW

Introduction

Students learn to use a high level language such as Java to write programs which solve problems defined by a program specification. They master fundamental concepts relating to imperative, object-based programming and are introduced to concepts relating to graphical user interfaces and event driven programs. Students are required to demonstrate syntactic, logical and strategic knowledge of the programming constructs introduced in the unit. They are expected to use systematic processes to plan, document, debug and test their programs. Programming exercises are introduced in the context of small problems.

Warning on Over-confidence: Some students who have done a considerable amount of home or school computing may think that they are already expert computer programmers. This is extremely unlikely, as most self-taught or uncorrected programmers have picked up bad habits which are inappropriate in professional programming, and may have major gaps in their understanding of concepts. Please bear in mind that practising computing at a professional level is very different from practising it as a hobby. Experience has shown that very few students who have studied computing at school are so good that they can treat programming units lightly.

Students who do find the learning activities in this unit insufficiently challenging are strongly encouraged to investigate the activities in the "challenge" section of the unit website. (Follow the "resources" link.)

Prerequisites
None

**Unit Weight**

12.5% of one academic year

**Teaching Pattern**

Lectures: 3 hr/wk
Tutorials: 1 hr/wk

**Unit Content**

- **Introduction:**
  - unit introduction
  - programming terms & tools
  - computing tools & terms
  - solving problems with computers

- **Data Storage:**
  - primitive types
  - objects

- **Objects of prewritten classes:**
  - object methods
  - class methods

- **Flow of control:**
  - branches
  - planning and implementing branches
  - multiway branching
  - loops
  - implementing loop algorithms
  - nesting flow of control

- **Extending existing classes:**
  - writing methods
  - testing methods
  - method parameters and return values
  - drawing a GUI

- **Creating new classes:**
  - planning
  - implementation

- **Documenting programs:**
  - purpose of documentation
  - internal and external documentation

- **Structured data - arrays:**
  - declaring & filling arrays
  - using arrays
  - arrays - sorting algorithms
  - arrays searching algorithms

- **Graphical User Interfaces (GUI):**
  - adding components to a GUI
  - making a GUI respond to events

- **Types of errors in programs:**
  - run time errors - exceptions
  - handling exceptions

- **Recursion:**
  - concepts
  - implementation

- **Revision:**
  - OO Concepts summarised
  - practical skills
  - exam techniques

For more information see the section titled ‘Content’ on the unit website.

**Prior Knowledge and/or Skills**

This unit does not have any formal prerequisites. However, students need to navigate the web site for the unit and use a keyboard to write their programs. Students who do not have the basic skills required to "surf" the web or to
use a computer keyboard (at about the level required to use a simple word processor) will need to spend extra time early in the semester learning these (simple) skills.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Write, compile, and run Java programs that contain statements of the types introduced in the unit (see unit content).
   *This demonstrates syntactic knowledge of programming constructs.*
2. Understand the effect of Java statements of the types introduced in the unit (see unit content).
   *This demonstrates conceptual knowledge of programming constructs.*
3. Analyse a problem specification and plan and produce a program which is a solution to the problem and uses Java statements of the types introduced in the unit (see unit content).
   *This demonstrates strategic knowledge of programming constructs.*
4. Use standard techniques to document work. This will include:
   - Appropriate documentation of the programs written during the semester.
   - Formal recording of aspects of activities throughout the process of software development.
   - Production of a record book which documents the activities undertaken in this unit during the semester and is a suitable aide memoire for use in the formal examination.

**Generic graduate attributes**

The university has defined a set of generic graduate attributes expected in its graduates. [http://www.utas.edu.au/policy/subject.html#graduates](http://www.utas.edu.au/policy/subject.html#graduates) Your course is designed to enable you to develop generic skills that are valued in, and expected of, graduates. These are skills that you will need to develop over time. Hence you are encouraged to look for opportunities, as you study each unit, to reflect on and improve these skills.

In this unit these skills are specifically targeted:

**Knowledge:** Students will have the opportunity to begin the acquisition of the knowledge and understanding of computer programming which is a fundamental requirement for all professionals in information technology.

**Problem-solving skills:** Students learn and practise the fundamental skills needed when attempting to write a computer program that correctly solves a problem that has been set.

**Social Responsibility:** Students come to understand that assessment tasks that require individual work, must be completed without copying from other students (or other sources).

**UNIT ASSESSMENT**

**Assessment Pattern**

Internal (40%), Exam (60%)

**Assessment Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prac Tests</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>At specified times during semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3 PM, Thursday 16 April, 2009 (week 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3 PM, Thursday 21 May, 2009 (week 12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>University Examination Period</td>
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**Assessment Items**

**Item 1**

**Title:** Prac Tests  
**Type:** In-Semester - test  
**Task Length:** not applicable  
**Weighting:** 6%  
**Links to Learning Outcomes:** 1, 2, 3, & 4  
**Due:** At specified times during semester  
**Description:**

There will be the 3 of these to be assessed during tutorial sessions in designated weeks (see unit schedule for more information). Each prac test will consist of:

- Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ): These will be completed in the tutorial session (a tutor will need to enter a password before the MCQ part of the test can be done).
- A small practical programming task. The program should be written before the tutorial. To mark the program a tutor will run the program, check the form of the code, and ask some questions about the program and the student's record book.

**Item 2**

**Title:** Assignment 1  
**Type:** In-Semester - individual assignment  
**Task Length:** not applicable  
**Weighting:** 14%
**Links to Learning Outcomes:** 1, 2, 3, & 4  
**Due:** 3 PM, Thursday 16 April, 2009 (week 7)  
**Description:**

This will require students to:

- write a small Java program with a single class, all the code will be in the `main()` method.
- provide some specified items of documentation for the program and the process they followed in producing the program

Students can expect to have 2 - 3 weeks to complete this assignment.

**Item 3**  
**Title:** Assignment 2  
**Type:** In-Semester - individual assignment  
**Task Length:** not applicable  
**Weighting:** 20%  
**Links to Learning Outcomes:** 1, 2, 3, & 4  
**Due:** 3 PM, Thursday 21 May, 2009 (week 12)  
**Description:**

This will require students to:

- Write code that will form part of a Java program which consists of several interacting classes.  
  The code that student write will be expected to:
  - perform correctly when integrated with prewritten code provided as part of the program specification.
  - consist of several methods
  - show good programming style
  - conform with the programming standards and naming conventions expected in this unit
- Provide some specified items of documentation for the program and the process they followed in producing the program

Students can expect to have approximately 6 weeks to complete this assignment.

**Item 4**  
**Title:** Final Exam  
**Type:** Formal Examination  
**Task Length:** 3 hours  
**Weighting:** 60%  
**Links to Learning Outcomes:** 1, 2, & 3  
**Due:** University Examination Period  
**Description:**

This will consist of 2 sections.

- Section A - Carries 1/6 of the marks and consists of multiple choice questions.
- Section B - Carries 5/6 of the marks. Students will be required to answer 5 "long" questions.  
  Each question will require the student to demonstrate their ability to complete some part of a programming and or problem solving exercise.

**NOTE:** The only materials that students will be permitted to take into the formal examination will be the Record book which they have produced during the course of the semester.

See the ‘Assessment’ section in unit website for more detailed information about assessment items.

**How your Final Grade will be determined**

Overall assessment will be based on the student's performance throughout the semester as well as in a formal examination. In order to achieve a pass (or better) result, a student must obtain:

1. at least 45% of the total mark for in-semester assessment items  
2. at least 45% of the mark for the formal examination  
3. at least 50% of the overall mark

In order to comply with the benchmarks set by the Faculty of Science, Engineering & Technology for distribution of grades in units, the results that students obtain may be scaled (either upwards or downwards).

**UNIT RESOURCES**

**Unit Web Site**

This unit is Web Dependent: content. This means that you will need to use the Web for this unit. The unit website contains unit information and resources.

The unit website is accessed from http://www.utas.edu.au/coursesonline/. You will need to use your university email
pop account username and password to log on to the MyLO system. Once authenticated by the system your personalised MyLO Learning Online area will be displayed. It contains links to the websites that you have permission to access - including the website for this unit.

If you are not able to access the unit website, please contact the University IT help desk:
- Entrance Level, Morris Miller Library, Sandy Bay Campus;
- Entrance Level, Launceston Campus Library, Newnham Campus.

Telephone: 6226 1818 and 1300 304 903.
The 1300 number is a local call from within Tas, with the exception of mobiles.
Email: servicedesk@utas.edu.au

**Prescribed Text**


Previous editions of this book can still be used in 2007, but there have been changes over time.

**Readings**

Printed copies of the powerpoint slides and the programs discussed in lectures will be available from the on-campus UniPrint shop-front in Hobart and Launceston.

A charge is made for these notes to recover the costs of printing. The same material will be available on the unit website.

**NOTE**: These notes are intended as a resource to assist learning in lectures. They WILL NOT work as a substitute for attendance at lectures.

Students are not required (and are unlikely to need) to use any resources other than those provided in the text book and the unit materials. If students wish to read more about program development using the Java programming language, there are many standard texts and freely available web sites with relevant information. Students using such resources should be aware that there are many approaches to introducing learners to programming in Java, it is possible that reading a book or web site that takes a different approach from the one used in this unit may increase rather than decrease confusion.

**Software**

The software that you will need to access the unit website and to study this unit, including general purpose software such as word processors, is provided on the computers in the School’s computing labs. If you intend to use software on other computers please check that the versions are compatible.

The programming language for this unit is Java 2 (the version used is JDK 1.6.0).

Students who want to work at home will need (at a minimum) this version of Java, a simple text editor, and the files for the packages of Java classes provided especially for this unit. A CD is available from the Help Desk (Hobart and Launceston) which contains Java 1.6.0 and the Java packages required, along with information about how these can be installed on most types of home computer. You may copy this CD in our labs (by providing your own blank). Additionally, a limited number of copies is available for overnight loan (from the Help Desk).

**NOTE:**

- Students are not required to have their own computer. There is 24 hour access to suitable computers on campus.
- The School of Computing and Information Systems is not able to provide any technical support for students working on their home computers.
- All work that is submitted for assessment must be on (and work correctly on) the platform provided by the School.

**GENERAL RESOURCES**

**School Website**

School of Computing and Information Systems - Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Technology.


**Faculty Website**

Information and Resources for Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology students are available on the faculty website at: [http://www.utas.edu.au/scieng](http://www.utas.edu.au/scieng)

**University Website**

Information and Resources for ‘Current Students’ are available on the university website at: [http://www.utas.edu.au/students/](http://www.utas.edu.au/students/)

**School Help Desk**
Contact the School Help Desk if you have any queries or problems with accessing, using, or printing from the computers in the School of Computing and Information Systems labs.

In Hobart the Help Desk is located on level 3 in the Centenary building, and is open from 10:00am-12:00pm, and 2:00pm-4:00pm Monday-Friday. The phone number is 6226 2929.

In Launceston the Help Desk is located near the entrance to the computing labs and is open from 10:00am-12:00pm, and 2:00pm-4:00pm Monday-Friday. The phone number is 6324 3447.

Both help desks will accept queries over the phone outside the standard opening hours.

The computer labs at the Cradle Coast Campus are maintained by ITR - please contact the University Help Desk for assistance with these computers.

**Computing Facilities**

The School has PC labs (running Windows XP), Mac labs (running Mac OS X 10.5), and special purpose Networking labs at the Newnham and Sandy Bay campuses. All students are provided with logins for Windows, Macintosh and Unix environments. If you have not used these facilities before please contact the School Help Desk to collect your account details. If you would like to access these facilities after hours please contact the School Help Desk.

In Hobart, there are 3 PC labs, 2 Mac Labs, and 1 Networks lab in the Centenary building, and 3 PC labs in the CIS building. In Launceston, there are 2 PC labs, 1 Mac Lab, 1 Networks lab, and one multipurpose lab in Building V.

**Use of Facilities**

Use of computing facilities provided by the School is subject to the School's Ethics Guidelines, details of which are posted at [http://www.cis.utas.edu.au/cisview/ethics.jsp](http://www.cis.utas.edu.au/cisview/ethics.jsp). Copies of the guidelines are also available in all School labs. The School's facilities may only be used for study-related purposes, and may not be used for personal gain. Anti-social behaviour in labs such as game playing, viewing pornography, loud discussion, audio without the use of head-phones, etc is strictly prohibited in all labs at all times. Eating, drinking, and smoking is not permitted in the labs. Before being granted access to the School’s facilities, you will be required to sign a declaration that you have read and understand these guidelines, and that you will abide by them. Disciplinary action may be taken against students who violate the guidelines.

**Learning Strategies**

If you need assistance in preparing for study please refer to your tutor or lecturer. For additional information refer to the Learning Development website: [http://www.utas.edu.au/learndev/](http://www.utas.edu.au/learndev/)

If you will be using MyLO for the first time and would like some information on how to use MyLO refer to the following website: [http://www.utas.edu.au/coursesonline/mylo-support.htm](http://www.utas.edu.au/coursesonline/mylo-support.htm)

Some of the units you will study use videoconferencing to deliver lectures and tutorials. To enable you to get the best out of a videoconference please refer to the following guide: [http://www.its.utas.edu.au/videoconf/vcstudentguide.pdf](http://www.its.utas.edu.au/videoconf/vcstudentguide.pdf)

**Help resolving concerns about this unit**

In the first instance you should contact your lecturer. If the matter is not resolved then you should contact the Head of School. If the matter is still unresolved and you would like to know who to contact or the procedures for resolving your concern refer to the following website: [http://acserv.admin.utas.edu.au/complaints_info.html](http://acserv.admin.utas.edu.au/complaints_info.html)

The Hobart based Tasmanian University Union (TUU) or the Launceston/Burnie based Student Association (SA) may also be able to assist.

The School reserves the right to alter the details contained in this Unit Outline. Students will be advised of changes to the outline via their University email account and it remains the responsibility of the student to check their email for such changes.

**Occupational Health and Safety**

The university is committed to providing a safe and secure teaching and learning environment. For more information see [http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/hr/ohs/pol_proc/](http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/hr/ohs/pol_proc/)

**University Services and Support**

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you are advised to raise these with your lecturer in the first instance.

The University has staff available to assist you, such as the:

- Learning Development Advisor
- Student Counselor
- Careers Advisor
- Disability Officer

For more information and contact details see the Services and Support section on the University 'Current Students' web page: [http://www.utas.edu.au/students/](http://www.utas.edu.au/students/)
Approach to Learning

The University is committed to high standards of professional conduct in all activities, and holds its commitment and responsibilities to its students as being of paramount importance. Likewise, it holds expectations about the responsibilities students have as they pursue their studies within the special environment the University offers.

The University’s Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning states:

Students are expected to participate actively and positively in the teaching/learning environment. They must attend classes when and as required, strive to maintain steady progress within the subject or unit framework, comply with workload expectations, and submit required work on time.

You are expected to spend about 130 hrs studying in this unit - this includes attendance at scheduled teaching sessions. (For a 13 week semester this is, on average, 10 hr/wk.) This is the amount of study time that the 'typical' student will need to reach the level of competence and understanding required to fulfil the unit objectives. You are expected to:

- attend all scheduled teaching sessions, unless otherwise notified by the unit coordinator
- prepare for, and actively participate in all scheduled teaching sessions
- complete the assigned learning tasks
- review what has been learnt
- complete assessment items and submit them on time
- access and be familiar with the information and resources available on the unit website
- seek help from teaching staff if you have any questions or difficulties in studying this unit

You are encouraged to read the university's Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning. Part A describes the 'Responsibility of the University to Students' and part B describes the 'Responsibilities of Students to the University'.


It is expected that students will familiarise themselves with access and use of the MyLO system operated by the University for the electronic delivery of course materials, and for various forms of communication.

It is expected that students will consult email sent to their University email address at least twice a week for notices relating to the administration of the unit, and for notification of the results of assignments.

It is expected that students will read the background material specified in the course curriculum, will actively attend and participate in tutorials, and be prepared to discuss relevant issues arising with tutors, lecturers and fellow students.

Student Expectations of the Unit

Students enrolled in this Unit may reasonably expect the following:

1. To be able to contact a lecturer or tutor by electronic mail, to raise issues arising in the unit, either relating to content or student performance within the unit.
2. Subject to availability, to be able to discuss such issues in person with the lecturer or tutor.
3. That assignments will be marked and the marks will normally be returned within 3 weeks of due dates.
4. That all relevant notices regarding the administration of the unit, including any necessary changes, will be communicated to all students enrolled in the unit via email.

These expectations are in addition to those specified in relevant University regulations.

Plagiarism

Unless specifically stated in the specification of the assessment item provided on the unit website, it is required that:

- work submitted by a student is the work of that student alone OR
- where the assessment item is to be completed by a group of students, the work submitted by the group of students is the work of that group of students alone.

While students are encouraged to discuss the assignments in this unit and to engage in active learning from each other, it is important that they are also aware of the University’s policy on plagiarism. Plagiarism is taking and using someone else’s thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, downloading an essay wholly or in part from the internet, copying another student’s work or using an author’s words or ideas without citing the source.

*Plagiarism is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else’s thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work.*
If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at [http://www.academicintegrity.utas.edu.au](http://www.academicintegrity.utas.edu.au).

The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see [http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/](http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/).

The University and any persons authorised by the University may submit your assessable works to a plagiarism checking service, to obtain a report on possible instances of plagiarism. Assessable works may also be included in a reference database. It is a condition of this arrangement that the original author's permission is required before a work within the database can be viewed.

It is important that you understand this statement on plagiarism. Should you require clarification please see your unit coordinator or lecturer. Useful resources on academic integrity, including what it is and how to maintain it, are also available at: [http://www.academicintegrity.utas.edu.au](http://www.academicintegrity.utas.edu.au)

**Referencing**

The preferred text referencing systems for the School is the Harvard system (also referred to as the author-date system). In your written work you will need to support your ideas by referring to scholarly literature, works of art and/or inventions. For information on presentation of assignments, including referencing styles: [http://utas.libguides.com/referencing](http://utas.libguides.com/referencing)

It is important that you understand how to correctly refer to the work of others and maintain academic integrity. Failure to appropriately acknowledge the ideas of others constitutes academic dishonesty (plagiarism), a matter considered by the University of Tasmania as a serious offence. The university document on plagiarism contains information about referencing the work or ideas of others (see [http://www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism/](http://www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism/)).

**Submissions**

The details of the submission method (paper, electronic or other) for each assignment will be supplied in a separate assignment specification sheet. All in-semester assignment submissions (including electronic submissions) are to include an Assignment Cover Sheet which includes a statement confirming that the submission is your own work. The Assignment Cover Sheet is available from the School Help Desk in Launceston and Hobart, and on the School's web site: [http://www.cis.utas.edu.au/cisview/resources.jsp](http://www.cis.utas.edu.au/cisview/resources.jsp).

Students must take responsibility for the correct submission of their assignments. Students are expected to adhere to the following procedure for submission:

- Submitted files MUST be checked by the student to ensure that correct submission of the file has been undertaken.
- Students are expected to notify the Lecturer WITHIN TWO HOURS of submission if their files have not been submitted correctly.
- Students must take responsibility for safely backing up of their own files during the academic year to ensure that no files are permanently lost.

**Extensions**


**Review of Assessment and Appeals**

1. It is expected that students will adhere to the following policy for review of any piece of continuous assessment.
   a. Within 5 days of the release of the assessment result, the student should request an appointment with the Lecturer. The student should be prepared to discuss specifically which section of the marking criteria they are disputing and why they consider the mark is inappropriate.
   b. Following this discussion, students may request a formal remark of the original submission (in accordance with Rule of Academic Assessment 111, clause 22.1). This remark will be undertaken, where practicable, by an alternative assessor.

**Complaints Procedure**

It is expected that students will adhere to the following policy for making any complaint or grievance directly related to a Unit:

- In the first instance, students are to approach the Lecturer or Unit Coordinator concerned and arrange a time
to speak with them about their concern.

b. If an issue remains unresolved, the student should approach the Head of School and arrange a time to speak with them about their concern.

If the School’s internal policy of complaints is unable to resolve an issue, students should consult Ordinance 8 Student Complaints for further direction, see http://acserv.admin.utas.edu.au/complaints_info.html

**Formal Examination**

The formal examination is conducted by the University Registrar. The 'Current Students' section on the university website contains information about the conduct of, and timetable for, formal examinations.

**Final Grade**

Passing grades will be awarded based on the AVCC guidelines:

- PP at least 50% of the overall mark but less than 60%
- CR at least 60% of the overall mark but less than 70%
- DN at least 70% of the overall mark but less than 80%
- HD at least 80% of the overall mark

In order to comply with the benchmarks set by the Faculty of Science, Engineering & Technology for distribution of grades in units, both the in-semester and examination marks that students obtain may be adjusted either upwards or downwards. See http://fcms.its.utas.edu.au/scieng/scieng/policies.asp for details of the Faculty Assessment Guidelines.