

CSC-207 Syllabus, Spring 2026 - Noyce, CS dept, Grinnell College

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[ELBICA research lab](#) (Enhancing Lives with Bio-inspired Computational Approaches)

[Cognitive Robustness Research Studio](#), and [AI Aura](#) co-founder

Welcome to the third course in Grinnell's 3-course introductory sequence! Here, you will learn and apply object-oriented design. Although we will use Java as our main programming language, the skills and concepts you gain in this course apply to other languages and contexts as well.

This is a lab course and follows the usual format applied in our department's intro to programming courses: about a 20-minute lecture and discussion followed by hands-on learning through lab activities with a peer. **Attendance is required for every class period.** (Kindly see the "Course Instructions" and "Accommodations" for more details.)

1 Learning Goals

1. Expand your computational thinking skills and author multi-file programs in Java to meet requirements' specifications and interact with the world.
2. Work independently and collaboratively to build solutions for the problems and deliverables presented in class.
 - Perform well in both settings: collaboratively in pair/group-based assignments and individually.
 - Practice the ability to employ active listening and team communication skills in the collaborative software development process.
3. Trace, document, and evaluate your own cognitive derivation and effort when completing programming tasks.
4. Apply object-oriented design principles using Java: Abstraction, Encapsulation, Inheritance and Composition, and Polymorphism — *ad hoc*, parametric (a.k.a. generics), and subtyping.
5. Use and build core abstract data types to design solutions to programming tasks: Arrays, Lists, Maps and Sets, Stacks and Queues, Hash Tables, Heaps, and Trees.
6. Use and implement core algorithms to design solutions to programming tasks: Sorting, Searching, Iteration, and Traversal.
7. Analyze run-time complexity of algorithms.
8. Create effective unit tests of Java programs using tools such as JUnit.
9. Use Java's Exception libraries to detect and handle run-time errors.
10. Deepen good practices in code documentation and create documentation for Java programs using Javadoc.

11. Use version control software programs, such as Git, to maintain multiple versions of software under development.
12. Reflect on career opportunities and assess your own career readiness.

2. Course Info

- Course page: https://elliott-fernanda.cs.grinnell.edu/home/207_java/
- Course materials will be added to Canvas, and assignments will be on Gradescope.

Books:

- **Required:**

Core Java, Volume I, 14th Edition, Cay S. Horstmann.

- **Optional (we will use some of the books below for selected labs):**

1. Core Java, Volume II, 14th Edition.
2. [Introduction to algorithms](#). Cormen, Thomas H.; Leiserson, Charles Eric.; Rivest, Ronald L.; Stein, Clifford.
3. [The Algorithm Design Manual](#), By Skiena, Steven S.
4. Additional books and references will be recommended as you learn new tools.

3. Grade Setup

- 10% Attendance. (In addition to being required to successfully finish this course, attendance feeds into your grade.)
- 30% Individual deliverables.
- 30% Labs and other team-based deliverables.
- 20% Midterm Exam.
- 10% Final Deliverable.

4. Course Instructions

1. **Schedule.** Please find the daily schedule on the [course page](#) and check it daily for updates.
2. **Professional and Scientific Conduct.** We appreciate a friendly, supportive, and professional environment. Please read the [Professional and Scientific Conduct](#) document.
3. **Coding Policy.** You are expected to follow our course's and deliverables' policies. To accommodate a range of activities, GenAI policies will vary *per* deliverable. Therefore, read each deliverable's policies carefully.
 - A note on using Grammar Checker tools such as Grammarly to answer reflection/ textual questions: It is fine to use those as long as you DO NOT make use of generative AI features.

4. **Student GenAI use.** The GenAI policy is deliverable-specific. Therefore, carefully read each assignment's policies.

- **Important:** students are responsible for reading course-related materials and emails themselves and are expected to compose their own messages without GenAI assistance.



5. **Instructor GenAI use.** Learning to evaluate GenAI use also requires opportunities to observe how others navigate it. Therefore, your instructor will disclose when and how GenAI tools contributed to course materials and activities. These disclosures will provide examples for examining cognitive derivation, cognitive effort, and human responsibility.
6. **Deliverables.** Kindly check Gradescope for due dates, extensions, and upload your deliverables on Gradescope.
7. **Feedback.** I encourage you to review all feedback provided on Gradescope; it is a critical resource to help you reflect on ways to improve.
8. **Group work.** Submit a single report *per* group.
9. **Programming journal.** Programming journal. You will document your learning progress in a paper-based notebook. Use your journal to record insights from readings and lectures and to trace your thinking as you design, implement, test, and revise algorithms. Your journal will also provide evidence that you may use in an optional Cognitive Work Reflection. (Hint: Your journal will likely be helpful during the midterm exam.)
10. **Cognitive Work and Derivation Reflection.** For some deliverables, you will have the option to submit a Cognitive Work and Derivation Reflection.
- A Cognitive Work and Derivation Reflection documents the time, difficulty, persistence, help-seeking, and other forms of cognitive effort involved in completing a programming assignment. It also helps you trace how you generated, developed, revised, and came to understand the submitted work.
 - A Cognitive Work and Derivation Reflection should draw on evidence from your programming journal, code versions, testing, conversations with course mentors, tutors, peers, and your instructor, and other records of your work.

- The reflection is evaluated based on both the cognitive effort invested and evidence that you can account for the derivation of the submitted work, including how your process aligns with deliverable-specific policies.
11. **Attendance.** If you need to miss a class, you **are still responsible** for the material covered on that day, and I expect you to email me in advance so that I can check on you and provide assistance in every way possible. Please note that attendance, in addition to impacting your grade, is required to succeed in this course. Finally, **arriving 10 or more minutes late counts as an absence.**
 12. **Community.** In addition to the regular course interactions, I would love to see and chat with you in my lab for our [AI Coffee Chat](#) (Optional).
 13. **Writing, Reading, and Speaking Center.** The center supports students working on papers, projects, and presentations, as well as applications for internships, fellowships, and graduate school. Schedule an appointment here: <http://mywco.com/grinnell>.
 14. **Library Research Help.** Gina Schlesselman-Tarango is our science librarian. Please don't hesitate to reach out to her if you need help finding, accessing, or managing sources for research projects. You can stop by her office in the Kistle Library, email [schlesselman]. You can also access resources and tips for this and other classes in relevant library guides, which can be found at <https://grinnell.libguides.com/>

4.1 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **Can I fail this class by lack of attendance, even if I have high grades?** Yes.
2. **How can I know if I am about to fail the course by lack of attendance?** Your instructor will submit academic alerts so that you can be connected to resources. Fail by attendance may occur *starting from the third academic alert* specifically triggered by lack of attendance.
3. **What should I do if I receive an academic alert?** You are strongly encouraged to talk to your instructor, seek support from academic advising, and keep your academic advisor in the loop.
4. **Do you submit academic honesty reports?** Yes, if I have a concern, I will submit an academic honesty report.

5. Policy – Course Culture and Interactions

- **Team Spirit.** Collaborate, respect, be friendly, and learn from your peers. Disagreements may happen, and those play an essential role in your self-development: see those as an opportunity for developing your soft skills. *Also, remember that your peers are a powerful professional network!*
- **Ideas.** Acknowledge and welcome other people's ideas, contributions, and thoughts.

- **Active Listening.** Practice multiple ways of listening to others and be mindful of their voices and perspectives.
- **Integrity.** We appreciate privacy, honorable conduct, and team spirit. Kindly read and follow Grinnell College's Academic Honesty Policy and the [CS Academic Integrity Policy](#).
- **Coding and Professional Conduct.** You are expected to follow the course's coding policy (see the course page) and [professional conduct policy](#).

6. Life Events

Circumstances may change. If you experience anything that impacts your learning and/or promptness to submit the deliverables, **let me know, and let me help you**. The most important message here is communication!

6.1 Accessibility and Inclusion

- I am here to help you advance and be successful in your academic journey! We all learn and get inspired differently, and accommodations help us to achieve our goals.
- If any aspect of the course prevents you from learning or excludes you, please let me know as soon as possible! I am happy to chat and looking forward to finding, together with you, strategies that fulfill both: your needs and the course requirements.
- Grinnell College has a robust and supportive network of people and services ready to support you; for example: [the Accessibility and Disability Services; Writing, Reading, & Speaking Center; Academic Advising; Student Affairs, including International Student Affairs \(OISA\); the Center for Religion, Spirituality and Social Justice \(CRSSJ\); or Student Health and Wellness](#); finally, confidential support is available through [the Office of the Ombuds](#).
- Grinnell College makes reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities partner with Accessibility and Disability Resources (ADR) to make academic accommodation letters available to faculty via the accommodation portal. If you have not already worked with the Office of Disability Resources and believe you may require academic accommodations for this course, Disability Resources staff can be reached via e-mail at access@grinnell.edu, by making an appointment via the accommodation portal, or by stopping by Steiner Hall.

6.2 Academic Support

If you have other needs not addressed above, please let me know soon so that we can work together for the best possible learning environment. In some cases, I will recommend consulting with the Academic Success Center team: <http://www.grinnell.edu/about/offices-services/academic-advising>. They are an excellent

resource for developing strategies for academic success and can connect you with other campus resources.

If I notice that you are encountering difficulty and I have reached out to you without a response, or if you have missed multiple class sessions or repeatedly fail to meet our class objectives, **I will submit an academic alert** via Academic Advising's SAL portal. This notifies you of my concern, along with the Academic Advising team and your advisor(s), so that they can reach out to you with additional offers of support.

6.3 Religious Observances

I encourage students who plan to observe holy days/times that coincide with class meetings or assignment due dates to consult with me in the first three weeks of classes so that we may reach a mutual understanding of how you can meet the terms of your religious observance and also the requirements for this course.

6.4 Title IX and Pregnancy Related Conditions

Grinnell College is committed to providing learning, living, and working environments free from discrimination and harassment. For this reason, it is important to report if you or someone you know is experiencing any form of sexual harassment. Your professor is responsible to pass reports made to them to the Title IX Coordinator. If you want to make a report to a confidential resource, your professor can direct you to those spaces.

If you are a pregnant student, have pregnancy-related conditions, or are a parenting student who wishes to request reasonable related supportive measures from the College under Title IX, please email the Title IX Coordinator at titleix@grinnell.edu. The Title IX Coordinator will work with Disability Resources and your professors to provide reasonable supportive measures in support of your education while pregnant or as a parent.

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I would like to thank the Cognitive Robustness 2026 team for providing the [Cognitive Derivation stamps](#), which will be used in this course. “Stamps: Clarifying GenAI Use in Pedagogy and Communication.” OSF. July 15. Silva, Jenifer, Edgar Romero, Mansi Singh, Paul Reif, and Fernanda Elliott. 2026. doi:10.17605/OSF.IO/2CYWR.

In selected parts of this document, I used GenAI tools in these ways:

Criticism, Minor editing, and writing alt text. [Visit this page](#) to learn more about the Cognitive Derivation stamps.

