

SER334: Operating Systems and System Programming Syllabus

To the reader: please be aware that this course may be substantially more difficult than previous ones you have taken. Previous students have reported that it is a “humbling” experience.

Catalog Description

Fundamentals of operating systems: run-time environments, process management, scheduling, synchronization techniques, memory management, and file management. Introduces programming concepts and tools for developing operating system modules, system utilities, and low-level applications in POSIX environments.

General Information:

Instructor	Pranut Jain, pjain26@asu.edu
Office Hours	Check Canvas for updated hours.
Class Meeting Time	Online
Schedule Line Number	14264
Class Website	Canvas , GitHub , YouTube
Communication	Slack: https://asu-2251-ser334-14264.slack.com/
Final Exam Date	March 3rd (Tentative)

Course Coordinator	racuna1@asu.edu , (480) 727-1580 (email preferred)
Office Hours	Ground: Peralta Hall 230Q, online: https://zoom.us/my/acuna
	The base course shell was developed by Ruben Acuña, faculty lecturer. All questions regarding course material and grading must be directed to the instructor for your section of the course.

Enrollment Requirements:

Prerequisites:

- SER222: Design & Analysis: Data Structures & Algorithms (corequisite; C or better if completed)
- CSE230: Computer Organization / Assembly Language Programming (with C or better)
- CSE240: Introduction to Programming Languages (with C or better)

It is your responsibility to know the background material defined by the outcomes of these courses. If you did not take these courses recently (as defined by the SE major map), or you did not do well when you took them, you will need to spend time to review the material.

Course Objectives:

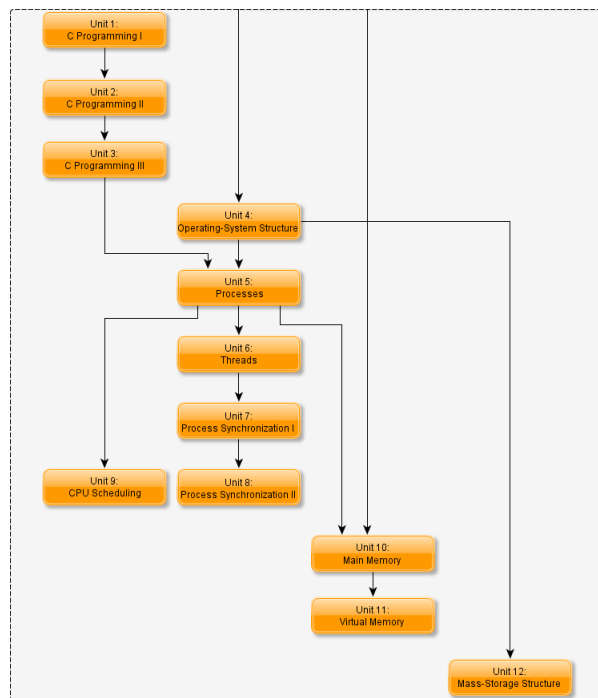
The outcomes of this course are the following:

	Course Outcome	Program Outcome
CO-1	Construct programs such as operating system modules, system utilities, and low-level applications which use POSIX libraries such as threading and file management.	PO-SER1
CO-2	Describe and distinguish operating system concepts in run-time environments, process management, scheduling, synchronization techniques, memory management, and file management.	PO1
CO-3	Describe and simulate algorithms and mechanisms in operating systems including processor schedulers, synchronization tools, memory allocation, and disk scheduling.	PO1
CO-4	Analyze operating system design problems, design a solution, and articulate justification for their solution.	PO1

Course Structure:

The material in this course is separated into modules. Most modules correspond to one chapter from the textbook. Each week typically covers two or three modules. Each module is comprised of instruction (videos, sample problems), followed by an exercise (to cement the concepts), and a homework assignment (to really practice). Most assignments are programming. **You are expected to engage with course using the following flow: Instruction → Exercise → Homework.**

Time to complete a module varies, but it is typically nine hours to complete instruction, exercise, and homework. Modules without a programming assignment will take considerably less time because programming is intensive. You are encouraged to do load balancing between the modules that require lots of time, and those that require less.



Course Materials:

Readings: The required text is: A. Silberschatz, P. B. Galvin, G. Gagne, *Operating System Concepts*, 9th edition or 10th edition, Wiley. If you're interested in other books on operating systems, the instructor can make recommendations. A used copy of the text is acceptable.

Other:

Communication: This class uses a communication tool called Slack to manage course communications. Please make Slack the first place you look for new information regarding the course. It is expected you will check Slack at least once every day, as will the instructional staff each evening. Do not expect that we will be on Slack at other times, though we may occasionally pop-in to provide help and see how you are doing. Staff will be accessible synchronously on Slack as stated on the Contact Information page in Canvas. For email and Slack messages, please allow 24 to 48 business hours for a response.

- **Canvas Note: do not use the comment feature on any submission (e.g., short answer or programming). We do not use it because Canvas does not have a way to track what has been answered.** Use Slack or email if you have questions.
- **Do not share any answers (even if partial) to graded assignments on Slack until after the due date.** For example, do not post a code snippet of your homework that you have questions on. If we see this, we will delete your post and contact you personally. Instead, you should 1) Post your question without code (e.g., "I get a null pointer exception when displaying the list, any ideas?"), or 2) Reach out to the instructional staff who can privately provide input on your work.

Academic Calendar: Please review ASU's Academic Calendar (<https://students.asu.edu/academic-calendar>) for important Registrar dates such as: adding/ dropping/ withdrawing from courses, etc.

Late Homework Policy: All homework is due at 11:59:00pm (Arizona Time). ***Late submissions are not accepted, except as defined under Late Pass below.*** Students choosing to submit on the final day of the deadline are responsible for any personal technical issues (including but not limited to: computer, internet, Canvas) that occur. Students are encouraged to submit homework several days in advance of any deadline. It is also highly suggested that students double check that they have submitted the correct files - students will receive a grade based on what they submitted. Extensions are permitted only when there is a significant, and documented, event (e.g., illness or personal emergency) that prevents the student from completing the assignment. A notice must be submitted to the instructor before the due date or as soon as circumstances allow.

Late Pass: A late pass grants an extension of upto 24 hours to a module's homework. You have TWO (2) late passes that you may use during the semester. To use a late pass, add a comment to your submission on Canvas that you are using a late pass for this homework. Due to logistics, the late pass may NOT be applied to homework for Module 11 and 12. Late pass also cannot be used for ADJ submissions. Multiple late passes may not be applied to the same assignment.

Supplemental Instruction: This course was selected to participate in ASU's Supplemental Instruction (SI) program. SI sessions are group study opportunities, scheduled 2-3 times per week. These sessions are facilitated by your SI Leader, who is attending class and preparing SI sessions based on the course content. Students should attend SI sessions to ask questions about course content, work collaboratively with other students, and to develop learning/study strategies. Students who participate in SI sessions typically earn higher final course grades and exam grades than students who do not participate in SI. SI attendance is voluntary, and it is not a substitute for class attendance. For information about the days, times, and Zoom links for SI sessions, refer to the SI website: <https://tutoring.asu.edu/content/supplemental-instruction-si-schedule>.

Grading:

Performance will be assessed by homework, exercises, and three exams. Their (tentative) weights are:

	Exercise	HW: Program	ADJ	Exam	
Unit 0: Introduction	15				
Unit 1: C Programming I	14	28			
Unit 2: C Programming II	14	30			
Unit 3: C Programming III	14	41			
Unit 4: Operating-System Structures	14				
Exam 1				150	
Unit 5: Processes	14	36	80		
Unit 6: Threads	14	54			
Unit 7: Process Synchronization I	14	40			
Unit 8: Process Synchronization II	14				
Exam 2					150
Unit 9: CPU Scheduling	14	36			
Unit 10: Main Memory	14				
Unit 11: Virtual Memory	14	36			
Unit 12: Mass-Storage Structure	14				
Exam 3				150	
Subtotal:	169+14	301	80	450	
Total: 1000 + 14 (EC)					

The final letter grade will be determined according to the points obtained as follows:

E	D	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
0-599	600-699	700-769	770-799	800-829	830-869	870-899	900-929	930-969	970-1000

Homework Drops: No homework will be dropped.

Extra Credit: The course includes an extra exercise (14 points) as part of the standard course schedule. Any points earned will be directly added to your score. These extra points serve either as a way to increase your overall course grade, or they enable skipping an exercise.

Exercise Policies: Exercises should be completed as you finish the instruction in the course. They have a relatively low weight and are graded more leniently so they can be used to develop your skills without worrying as much about your final grade. Treat them as an opportunity to try applying concepts before doing heavily weighted homework, and receive quick feedback in terms of a solution. Assuming you paid attention during the videos, exercises will not take more than 75 minutes to complete. **No exercise questions require a compiler or doing online research** - in fact, doing either of those things may hinder your learning experiences. You should figure out things on your own, or by asking us questions to steer you in the right direction. Exercises are graded with higher level of granularity than homework. For each question:

- 0% points for did not attempt or extremely low effort (e.g., clearly didn't pay attention in lecture, irrelevant answers, copy/paste text from any source (with attribution), etc.)
- 50% points if answer is good try but not correct or complete
- 100% point if answer is correct or very nearly correct.

For each exercise, click the "Submit Quiz" button when you have completed all the questions. **Only one submission is allowed**, no second attempts for any reason. **Solutions will be released after the exercise is graded.**

Programming Homework Policies: Read the PDF file on the Homework page on Canvas for specifics on what your programming submissions should look like. In addition:

- Double check your submissions to ensure they contain source files (e.g., .c) and that every file requested is attached. Your submission file(s) will be put in a folder with the base files attached to the assignment - there is no need to resubmit them.
- Do not use the "submission comment" feature when submitting source file. If you have any remarks about the homework, send the instructor an email or put them in your source code.
- You are allowed unlimited submissions, **only the newest submission will be graded**. If you try to view the homework after submitting it from the Homework page rather than My Grades, you may cause a new submission to be made. This will override your proper submission! **No late submissions are accepted.**

Standard programming deductions (see HW standards PDF on Canvas):

- If your program fails to compile out-of-the-box, we will deduct 20% from the graded total.
- If you do not follow the file submission standards (e.g., the submission contains project files, lacks a proper header), we will deduct 10% off of the graded total.

Grade Appeals:

Students may appeal a scored assessment within three days of grades being released. Appeals are in email form only and must point to specific evidence of why the grade should be revised. The instructor reserves the right to assign a lower score on appeal. For additional information on ASU's grade appeal policy, see <https://catalog.asu.edu/appeal>

Absence Polices:

Students unable to take exams, or complete assignments due to a medical condition must present a doctor's signed excuse and notify the instructor as soon as the condition affects the student's work.

Accommodations will be made for religious observances provided that students *notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester concerning those dates*. Students who expect to miss class due to officially university-sanctioned activities should *inform the instructor early in the semester*. Alternative arrangements will generally be made for any examinations and other graded in-class work affected by such absences. The conditions under which assigned work and/or tests can be made up, include: a) Excused absences related to religious observances/practices that are in accord with <https://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-04.html>, "Accommodation for Religious Practices". b) Excused absences related to university sanctioned events/activities that are in accord with <https://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-02.html>, "Missed Classes Due to University-Sanctioned Activities". c) Excused absences related to missed class due to military line-of-duty activities that are in accord with <https://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-11.html>, "Missed Class Due to Military Line-of-Duty Activities," and SSM 201-18, "Accommodating Active Duty Military".

Per [SSM 201-02](#), an instructor may drop a face to face student for nonattendance during the first week of the semester. For an online course, a drop may be initiated for students who do not log into the course shell during the first week.

Classroom Behavior:

Students are expected to participate in the educational process and not be a disruptive element with regard to the learning of others. Safety, self-discipline and respect for others are necessary elements in the educational processes employed in this course. All students should be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct, which can be found at <http://www.asu.edu/studentlife/judicial/> as well as [ASU's Netiquette Policy](#).

Academic Integrity:

Students in this class must adhere to ASU's academic integrity policy, which can be found at <https://provost.asu.edu/academic-integrity/policy>. Students are responsible for reviewing this policy and understanding each of the areas in which academic dishonesty can occur. In addition, all engineering students are expected to adhere to the ASU Academic Integrity [Honor Code](#). All academic integrity violations will be reported to the Fulton Schools of Engineering Academic Integrity Office (AIO). The AIO maintains record of all violations and has access to academic integrity violations committed in all other ASU college/schools.

Specific academic integrity rules for this class are: The Student Academic Integrity Policy of Arizona State University requires each student to act with honesty and integrity and to respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments. There are a number of actions that constitute a violation of the policy. These actions in this course include, but are not limited to:

- 1) practicing any form of academic deceit;
- 2) referring to materials or sources or employing devices (e.g., audio recorders, crib sheets, calculators, solution manuals, or commercial research services) not specifically authorized by the instructor for use during tests, quizzes, homework, and class activities;
- 3) acting as a substitute for another person in any academic evaluation or using a substitute in any academic evaluation;
- 4) possessing, buying, selling, or otherwise obtaining or using, without appropriate authorization, a copy of any materials intended to be used for academic evaluation in advance of its administration;
- 5) depending on the aid of others to the extent that the work is not representative of the student's abilities, knowing or having good reason to believe that this aid is not authorized by the instructor;
- 6) providing inappropriate aid to another person, knowing or having good reason to believe the aid is not authorized by the instructor;
- 7) submitting the ideas or work of another person or persons without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources (i.e., engaging in plagiarism);
- 8) permitting one's own ideas or work to be submitted by another person without the instructor's authorization; or attempting to influence or change any academic evaluation or record for reasons having no relevance to class achievement.
- 9) turning in work/code done by someone else or another pair/group
- 10) copying work/code done by someone else or another pair/group
- 11) writing code together with someone else or with another pair/group (unless expressly allowed by the instructor)

A common question in programming courses is the use of code that is "googled" or found on popular sites such as StackOverflow. Items 5 and 7 pertain to this situation. Most programmers use reference examples, found in print or online. This is fine as a practice but is not acceptable in situations where you are using code to proxy your understanding of the coding concepts applied in that assessment (i.e. lab or in-class activity). First, if you are uncertain if it is allowable or not, verify directly with the instructor before submitting the assignment. Second, if it is allowable, you are still required to a) adhere to all originating author's constraints on the use and licensing of the code, and b) provide proper attribution

(full URL to the code snippet or bibliographic reference to a print item). Failure to do so constitutes a violation of this Academic Integrity Policy.

Students may be allowed to work in small teams on lab and in-class assessments. You are to work with your partners and only your partners as directed by the instructor; receiving assistance from anyone else other than your partners, the graders, teaching assistants, approved tutors or the instructor is considered a violation of this Academic Integrity Policy. Further, on any paired/group assessments you remain individually responsible for the entire solution - you must understand it fully, and there will be no differentiated grades awarded between the individuals in the pair/group. From an ethics standpoint, you have a professional responsibility to your partner to give your best effort on each programming assignment. Failure to do so will be considered an ethics violation.

The penalty for an Academic Integrity Violation (cheating) on an in-class assessment or lab will be a reduction of a course letter grade for the first offense, and failure of the course for a second offense. The penalty for an Academic Integrity Violation (cheating) on an exam is immediate failure of the course. The penalty for an ethics violation will be a zero for the in-class assessment or lab. All violations will be referred to the Dean's Office of the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering.

Students should not release (to GitHub, friends, etc.) any of their completed assignments, in order to ensure that they do not cause an AIP violation during a future semester. If a student in a later class submits your work, you and they will be held accountable.

Unless explicitly allowed by your instructor, the use of generative AI tools to complete any portion of a course assignment or exam will be considered academic dishonesty and a violation of the ASU Academic Integrity Policy. Students confirmed to be engaging in non-allowable use of generative AI will be sanctioned according to the academic integrity policy and FSE sanctioning guidelines.

Copyright:

You must refrain from uploading to any course shell, discussion board, or website used by the course instructor or other course forum, material that is not the student's original work, unless the student first complies with all applicable copyright laws; faculty members reserve the right to delete materials on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement.

All course content and materials, including lectures (Zoom recorded lectures included), are copyrighted materials and students may not share outside the class, upload to online websites not approved by the instructor, sell, or distribute course content or notes taken during the conduct of the course (see [ACD 304-065-308 F.14](#) for more information).

You may not post any course material (including but not limited to slides, exercises, and assignments), even excerpts, to an external site without the instructor's written permission. If this occurs, you may be penalized for Academic Dishonesty or IP infringement.

Policy against threatening behavior, per the Student Services Manual, SSM 104-02:

Students, faculty, staff, and other individuals do not have an unqualified right of access to university grounds, property, or services (see [SSM 104-02](#)). Interfering with the peaceful conduct of university-related business or activities or remaining on campus grounds after a request to leave may be considered a crime. All incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student (whether on- or off-campus) must be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students.

Warning of Offensive Class Materials

Some content in this course may be deemed offensive by some students. If you find any material objectionable you may consult with the instructor or your Program Chair to identify appropriate accommodations.

Disability Accommodations:

Suitable accommodations will be made for students having disabilities. Students needing accommodations must register with the ASU Student Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Services office and provide documentation of that registration to the instructor. Students should communicate the need for an accommodation in sufficient time for it to be properly arranged. See [ACD 304-08](#) Classroom and Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.

Harassment and Sexual Discrimination:

Arizona State University is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for the entire university community, including all students, faculty members, staff employees, and guests. ASU expressly prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation by employees, students, contractors, or agents of the university based on any protected status: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetic information.

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling> is available if you wish to discuss any concerns confidentially and privately. ASU online students may access 360 Life Services, <https://goto.asuonline.asu.edu/success/online-resources.html>.

Change Notice:

Any information in this syllabus may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice.

Schedule

In this course, we will be covering approximately ten chapters from Silberschatz (skipping a few sections here and there). **Keep in mind that this is not a fixed schedule and topics/assignments may change. The schedule is tentative.** Also note that we will not be meeting every day of the semester.

This course is released using weekly pages. At the beginning of the course, the first week will be made available. Additional content will be released in segments of a week to give you around 7 days to work on the material before its due date. Material will not be released early as it is being continuously updated before release. Be sure to review the course schedule after each week is released to ensure you are aware of all due dates.

1 Online Course Notices

Course material will be delivered electronically over Canvas. Course materials and expectations are aligned with those used in face to face classes but have been adapted for online.

1.1 Communicating With the Instructor

ASU email is the official means of communication. Students are expected to read and act upon email in a timely fashion. Students bear the responsibility of missed messages and should check their ASU-assigned email regularly. Students wishing to communicate with the instructor should read the following guidelines:

- **Email**

Use email to direct questions of a personal or grade nature to the instructor or assigned TA. **Note that the majority of faculty and staff communication will occur during Arizona business hours.** If you are in another timezone, or working on the weekend, communication may take longer due to availability differences.

Questions regarding course material are more suitable for Slack, since students can receive input from the instructor as well as discuss it with peers. We highly encourage discussions on Slack since publicly available answers benefit everyone in the course.

- **Office Hours**

Office hours for this course are available online via *Zoom*. During office hours you can speak with the instructor to discuss the materials being presented in class or other related interests you have.

1.2 Communicating With Classmates

This course uses a discussion tool called Slack for general questions about the course. Prior to posting a question, please check the syllabus, announcements, and existing posts. If you do not find an answer, post your question. Both instructors and TAs will check the class channel regularly. On these platforms, you are encouraged to respond to the questions of your classmates. However, these platforms are not appropriate for you to post solutions (or partial solutions) to course assignments.

1.3 Timezones

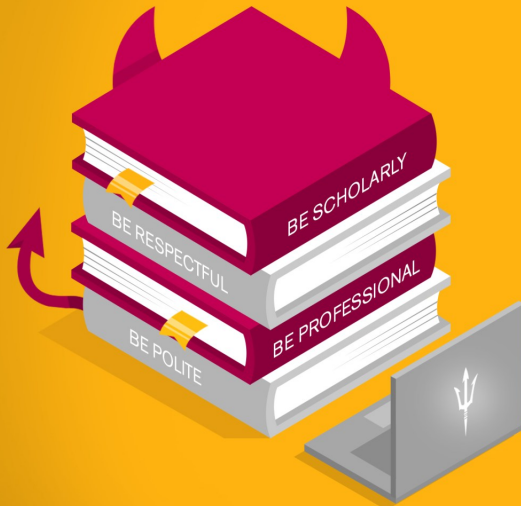
All published due dates (for assignments, exams, office hours, etc.) are Arizona Mountain Standard time. Be aware that that Arizona does not observe daylight savings time. It is your responsibility during the course to track how your local time relates to Arizona.

1.4 Netiquette

During all communication, across platforms, students are expected to follow netiquette policy. The netiquette policy for the course is ASU's [netiquette policy](#), also shown in the infographic below.

NETIQUETTE

FOR ONLINE STUDENTS



ASU online
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY



BE SCHOLARLY

Do: Use proper language, grammar, and spelling. Be explanatory. Justify your opinions. Credit the ideas of others; cite and link to scholarly resources.

Avoid: Misinforming others when you may not know the answer. If you are guessing about something, clearly state that you do not have all of the information.



BE RESPECTFUL

Do: Respect privacy. Respect diversity and opinions that differ from your own. Communicate tactfully, and base disagreements on scholarly ideas or research evidence.

Avoid: Sharing another person's professional or personal information.



BE PROFESSIONAL

Do: Represent yourself well at all times. Be truthful, accurate, and run a final spell check. Write in a legible, black font, and limit the use of emoticons.

Avoid: Using profanity or participating in hostile interactions (flaming).



BE POLITE

Do: Address others by name or appropriate title, and be mindful of your tone. Be polite as you would in a face-to-face situation.

Avoid: Using sarcasm, being rude, or writing in all capital letters (shouting). Written words can be easily misinterpreted, as they lack facial expression, body language, and tone of voice.

1.5 Computer Requirements

This course requires a computer with reliable Internet access and the following:

- A web browser capable of streaming video (Chrome is required for Honorlock)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (free)
- Microphone (for office hours) and speakers
- Honorlock (or other proctor software as directed by the instructor)
- Virtualization Software (e.g., VirtualBox)

Students using proctoring software are required to have access to a private environment satisfying exam rules. It is suggested that students avoid using Macs due to potential issues with virtualization software.

1.6 Student Success

This is an online course. To be successful:

- carefully read all instructions provided
- read announcements and Slack daily
- read and respond to course email messages as needed
- complete assignments by the due dates specified
- communicate regularly with your instructor and peers
- create a study and/or assignment schedule to stay on track