Welcome to . . .

CSc 460: Database Design

Spring 2026

Course Information Overview

Announcements

(Expect a slide or two of announcements at the start of each class.)

- Handout:
  - Syllabus Summary – a fraction of the full version!
  - Program #1 – Part A due next Thursday!
- Important detail: The title of the class is “Database Design,” not “Introduction to SQL”
  - We do cover SQL basics, but that’s only a couple of weeks of the semester
  - If you enrolled to become an SQL expert, this isn’t the class for you

Catalog Info

Class:	CSc 460, Database Design
Credits:	3
Meets:	2:00 – 3:15 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays
Room:	Architecture, Room 103
Prereqs:	Successful completion of both CSc 335 and CSc 345
Desc:	"Functions of a database system. Data modeling and logical database design. Query languages and query optimization. Efficient data storage and access. Database access through stand-alone and web applications."
Final:	Monday, May 11, 2025, 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Instructor and TAs

Instructor:	Lester I. McCann, Ph.D., Professor of Practice*
Grad TAs:	Jianwei (James) Shen
	Muhammad Bilal

* This is the 21st time I've taught CSc 460

Information Resources

Looking for class information and materials?

- Class Brightspace (D2L) Site (textbook, web page links):
  - `https://d2l.arizona.edu/d2l/home/1714248`
- Class Web Page (guided & completed slides, handouts):
  - `cs.arizona.edu/classes/cs460/spring26`
- Piazza (Q&A):
  - `piazza.com/class/mjulw8xpwst2hn/`

We'll have office hours (OHs) for in–person help, and Piazza for asynchronous Q&A.

Noteworthy Dates

Exams:

- Midterm Exam #1: Thursday, February 26
- Midterm Exam #2: Thursday, April 16
- Final Exam: Monday, May 11, 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

No Class Meetings On:

- The week of March 9th (Spring Break)

  (Yeah, that's it for days off for TR classes!)

Grades and Grading (1 / 5)

Grade Breakdown:

4 Homeworks =	16%	(total; 4% each)
4 Programs =	24%	(total; 6% each)
2 Midterm Exams =	40%	(total; 20% each)
Final Exam =	20%	(comprehensive!)
TOTAL =	100%	

We do not grade on attendance or class participation, but you'll still want to attend regularly

See the full version of the syllabus for all of the details!

Grades and Grading (2 / 5)

Homeworks

- Due at the start of class **one week** after being assigned
  - You may use at most one 'late day' per homework
  - You start with five 'late days,' shared with programs
- Question types vary depending on the homework
  - #1 and #4 are short–answer and problem–solving
  - #2 and #3 are query–writing
- How you submit answers also varies by homework
  - #1 and #4 as PDFs via Gradescope
  - #2 and #3 as query files via `turnin` on lectura
- Graded by the TAs within 1–2 weeks
- Regrade requests accepted for one week thereafter

Grades and Grading (3 / 5)

Programs

- Due at the start of class **two weeks** after being assigned
  - There is no limit as to how many of your remaining late days may be used on a single program
- Program difficulty is intentionally 'front–loaded'
  - #1 and #2 (binary file and index construction) are challenging for most students (#1 has a checkpoint)
  - #3 is on embedding SQL in a Java program
  - #4 is the DB design and implementation team project
- All programs will be submitted via `turnin` on lectura
- Graded by the TAs within two weeks
- Regrade requests accepted for one week thereafter

Grades and Grading (4 / 5)

Midterm Exams

- Will cover the material since the last midterm
- Question types are mostly short–answer & problem–solving
- Electronics may not be used on exams
- **I do not give make–up exams!**

  (*Why not? Because I'll replace your lowest midterm's score with a copy of your final exam's score if 66.7% of you do your class evaluations!*)
- Graded by the TAs and me within two class meetings
- Regrade requests accepted for one week via email to me

See the full version of the syllabus for the details!

Grades and Grading (5 / 5)

Final Exam

- Is comprehensive (covers all topics of the semester)
  - Will have an emphasis on post–second–midterm material
- Consists of short–answer & problem–solving questions
- I review finals of students near the next–higher letter grade
  - Thus, regrade requests should not be needed
- I may replace your lowest midterm with your final exam score
  - Allows you to miss a midterm, or have an off–day

See the full version of the syllabus for the details!

"Why Should I Read the Full Version of the Syllabus?"

Because:

- There are many more details within it, such as:
  - A detailed topic outline, links to free online textbooks, when to expect replies to questions, applying for disability accommodations, etc.
- It has links to Department, University, and ABoR policies that you should know about, including:
  - Attendance, codes of conduct, FERPA, incompletes, etc.
- Ignorance of the syllabus will not excuse you from its content
- And, importantly, it covers . . .

Academic Dishonesty (a.k.a., Cheating)

Four words cover it: **Do Your Own Work!**

- All assignments except Program #4 are **individual** assignments, meant to help you learn the class material and to prepare for exams (which are also individual activities!)
  - If you can't do assignments, how will you handle exams?
- If we catch you cheating, the *minimum* sanction is a zero on the assignment and completion of an expensive academic integrity workshop.
- Stuck? The TAs and I are here to help you get unstuck!
  - We have office hours and Piazza
- Not sure that an action is acceptable? Ask us first!

Schedule for Weeks 1 – 3

- This week (Week 1):
  - Today: Basic Info, Start Topic 1, Assign Program #1
- Next week (Week 2):
  - Tuesday: Finish Topic 1, Start Topic 2, Program #1(a) due
  - Thursday: Continue Topic 2, Program #1(a) due
- Next next week (Week 3):
  - Tuesday: Finish Topic 2, Start Topic 3
  - Thursday: Continue Topic 3, Program #1(b) due, Assign Program #2