

FALL 2026



Think Lab: Week 4

How to CS

Think Team

Agenda

- CS Spotlight: Chris Rossbach
- How to study CS effectively
- Academic Integrity and Computer Science

CS Spotlight:

Chris Rossbach
Systems



Attitudes Toward Studying

- Some of you learned to study in high school
- Others may not have needed to study in high school.
 - A quick review of the topics was typically sufficient.
- You will find that in college, this may not be the case.

When to study?

Things to consider

- When are you most awake?
- When are you most open to taking in new information?
- Is after class the best time? (it depends)

When to study?

Before class

- Make sure to do the assigned readings or videos before class.
- Recall information you have learned as you walk to class, so that you are more prepared for the new information

When to study?

After class

- Spend a few minutes after class or at the end of the day to recap the things you learned that day.

The Stopwatch Method

Like Pomodoro, but takes into account fluctuations in attention span.

One of Dr. Parikh's and Dr. Norman's favorite methods to get things done.

Study tip #4 - The Stopwatch Method

[illegible]

THIS THING RIGHT HERE



Where to study?

Try things, observe, and debug



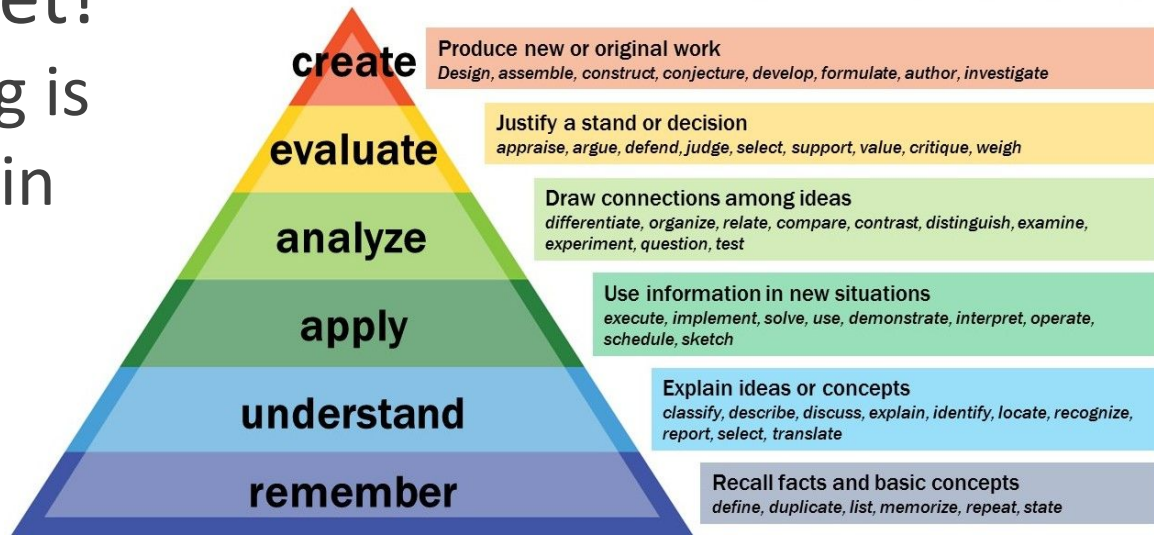
Kevin Vu

How to study? Common Myths

All I need is Quizlet!

- Remembering is the first step in learning

Bloom's Taxonomy



How to study? Common Myths

I studied so much. I spent x hours on my assignment.

- Studying is not the same as finishing an assignment.
- Homework is an assessment of your learning process—it is not meant to be the process itself!

How to study?

- Quality over Quantity
- Pre-class review
 - Prime your brains with the topic that is scheduled for the day.
- Post-class review
 - Map out what you've learned.
- Build connections
 - Connect what you've learned with topics you've seen earlier in the semester, other classes.

How to study? Study Groups

Helps to talk out loud

- Must know before you can verbalize.
- Must be able to verbalize before you can write.
- Do not want to do all three steps for the first time on the exam!

When you get stuck

- Office hours (we're going to practice this!)
 - Ask questions to better understand how to get to the solution
 - If you don't understand the question, say so.
 - Do not ask for the answer
- Sanger Learning Center
 - [Make an appointment](#) to meet [one-on-one with a tutor](#) for an hour-long session for CS 312 or CS 314.
 - Visit [drop-in tutoring](#) for mathematics, physics, and chemistry courses.
 - Attend [free classes](#) for calculus refreshers and exam reviews.
 - [Log into PEARL](#) (Personalized Academic Resource Locator) with your EID to see your current class schedule and a list of all the academic support services available.
 - Reserve a [small group study space](#).

Academic Integrity

Discussion began in class last week.

What do you remember?

Let's Practice!

Scenarios to Consider

- Discussing homeworks or programming assignments
- Copying code from the public domain with or without citations
- Providing material for someone else to imitate
- Whiteboarding a design with someone else in the course
- Using a solution from a previous semester
- Discussing possible interpretation of questions
- Uploading material to CourseHero (or anywhere) for future student access
- Discussing technical details
- Writing technical details
- Participating in a discussion group where one person writes the solution

Additional Scenarios to Consider

- Asking an LLM course content questions
- Asking an LLM to generate content for an assignment that does not allow it
- Asking an LLM to dummify specifications for a project
- Debugging your code using the advice of an LLM
- Uploading course material to an LLM

Syllabus Policy: No AI Use

CS314

To be clear, this is a foundational course. Generative and agentic AI are utterly and completely disallowed on all aspects of programming assignments (solutions, testing, experiments, write-ups, debugging, etc.), quizzes, and exams. This is a foundational course in programming and per CS department policy AI use on any course element with points attached (programming assignments, quizzes, exams) is strictly forbidden.

Chatbots are outstanding tools for learning. We encourage you to use ChatGPT or generative AIs as part of understanding concepts and materials in the course (for example when studying class content or studying for exams), but not to do the work for you. For example, you can ask an LLM to explain what an instance variable is, why `ArrayList.add` is amortized constant time, or why the worst case order of quicksort is $O(N^2)$. You may use generative AIs to help understand why your program may have failed tests after the submission deadline has past.

Syllabus Policy: No AI Use

CS312

A note on AI tools: Turning to AI the moment something gets difficult is not just against course policy, it actively undermines your learning. The struggle you're trying to skip is the point of the assignment. Every time you offload that struggle to an AI tool, you're trading away the problem-solving, debugging, and persistence skills these assignments are designed to build, and you'll feel that gap later, on exams, in future courses that assume you have these skills, and at the job that expects you to know computer science. If you're stuck, utilize office hours or the discussion board, not an AI tool.

1. No AI tools on graded coding work. Using AI tools to produce, debug, fix, or substantially assist with your homework code is prohibited and considered cheating. This includes asking an AI to write code for you; generate a solution you then copy, use, or modify; debug your code; or explain how to solve the specific problem you've been assigned. The work you submit must represent only your own understanding and effort.

Why Disallow AI?

- Build foundational knowledge
- The messiness is the point
- Time efficient code generation isn't the goal (yet)
- Don't be afraid to talk to your TAs and professors

Also Disallowed in Interviews

- Job interviews often hand you a problem with no AI in the room
- Must design a solution from a given problem
- Have to trace your logic and debug your own mistakes live

Syllabus Policy: Yes, Use AI CS378 (Agentic SWE)

AI Usage This course is about using AI tools effectively. You are expected and encouraged to use AI coding assistants for all assignments. The goal is to learn to direct and evaluate AI-generated code, not to avoid using it.

AI Tool Access The course requires both Codex and Claude Code, and every student gets both through university-provided accounts (ChatGPT Edu and UT's Claude access): sign in at chatgpt.com and claude.ai with your UT EID address, yourEID@eid.utexas.edu. There is no personal subscription cost. We will update Canvas if university or vendor access changes before or during the semester.

Why Require AI?

- AI fluency isn't optional
- You need to develop that skill
- It is a force multiplier
 - Increase the multiplier once you have the force

Syllabus Policy: Sometimes AI

Generative AI use shall be permitted on a partial basis for academic work in this course, provided that students 1) use AI responsibly, 2) practice critical discernment and conduct meaningful human review of any output generated by AI, and 3) properly disclose use according to the disclosure policies in this syllabus. You will be informed by your instructor/s in writing as to the aspects of the assignments for which AI may be utilized and how it may be utilized. You are also welcome to seek prior approval to use of generative AI on any assignment. Using generative AI tools without authorization or failing to disclose generative AI use according to the disclosure policy in this course, even when AI use is permitted, may constitute academic misconduct under UT Austin's Institutional Rules and may be referred to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students for resolution.

Remember, it matters what you do
when no one is looking.

Remember your assignments for
this week!