

CSCI 441 - Computer Graphics

Fall 2025 Syllabus

<https://cs-courses.mines.edu/csci441/index.html>

Instructor:

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Lectures: Mondays & Wednesdays 1:00 PM – 1:50 PM Berthoud Hall 243

Labs: Fridays 1:00 PM – 1:50 PM Marquez Hall 026

Recommended Textbooks:

- 1) OpenGL Programming Guide, 9th ed., John Kessenich, Graham Sellers, Dave Shreiner, 2017.
- 2) OpenGL 4 Shading Language Cookbook, 3rd ed., David Wolff, 2018.
- 3) OpenGL Quick Reference API Version 4.6, Khronos Group, 2017.
- 4) Other resources will be posted on the website.

Grading:

The final course grade will be computed from the following course percentage breakdown:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • 30% Homework Assignments | • 10% Exam I |
| • 15% Labs | • 10% Exam II |
| • 10% Midterm Project | • 10% Participation & Hero Level |
| • 15% Final Project | |

Final grades will be determined using a *straight scale*. The straight scale assigns letter grades as follows:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| • [90, 100] -- A | [60, 70] -- D |
| • [80, 90] -- B | [0, 60] -- F |
| • [70, 80] -- C | |

Exams:

- Make-up exams will be allowed only in accordance with University policy. Make-up exams resulting from illness require notification (email is fine) the day of the exam and a doctor's note with excused absence.

Assignments:

- There will be **individual** programming assignments throughout the semester. Due dates will be specified and are firm. Individual programming assignments **must** represent individual student work.
- Your goal should be to make it easy for us to see how great you did. If we make a couple of good faith attempts but fail to get your program running, we will try once to contact you to help us. If we still cannot get your work to compile, it will receive a zero grade.

Projects:

- There will be two course projects, to be completed in teams of three. In addition to the programming project, each team will give a brief presentation showcasing their project.
- Achievement Unlocked! You are doing a rather thorough reading of the syllabus. Email the professor with the subject line "I See All" to earn the Eye of Sauron achievement.

Late Policy & Discrepancies:

- There will be a 3% deduction for each calendar day an item is submitted late with a maximum deduction of 50%.
- If you have any questions regarding how any item is graded and you think you deserve more points than you received, you must see the grader within **one week** of the day the item was returned. No claims, justifiable or not, will be considered after this deadline. If you and the grader cannot reach a consensus, then contact the instructor.

Participation:

- A portion of the student's grade will be comprised of in-class and online participation. After the first week of class, students are expected to participate by making regular forum posts, either asking a question or responding to an existing topic. From time to time, there may be specific discussion topics.

Achievement System

- By completing assignments and labs, you will earn XP for your hero. Each assignment will have several achievements you can earn by adding various features to your program. Some of these achievements will be hinted at for you to discover, others will be explained as extra credit, and a last set will be hidden for you find on your own. Earning an achievement will also award your hero with XP.
- *What if I miss an achievement on an assignment?* If after submitting an assignment you find out you did not earn an achievement, then you will be permitted to go back and attempt to earn the achievement. Each student will be allowed **ONE RESUBMISSION** of the assignment at any point in the semester. This resubmission **will not be regraded**, i.e. your grade for the assignment will not be recomputed or altered. However, if you satisfy the requirements for an achievement then you will earn the achievement and the associated XP.
- At the end of the semester, the instructor will award up to 500 bonus XP for exemplary attendance, participation in class, etc. If you participate regularly and come to class, this could be enough to get you up a level and over the hump to the next letter grade.
- XP required to level up:

Level	XP		Level	XP
1	250		11	4500
2	500		12	5000
3	750		13	5500
4	1000		14	6000
5	1250		15	6500
6	1500	Your hero can reach Level 15, which will earn you 15 participation points. Participation counts for 10% of your overall grade, this is your opportunity for extra credit.		
7	2000			
8	2500			
9	3000			
10	4000			

Collaboration Policy for Programming Assignments & Projects

We follow the Colorado School of Mines Student Honor Code and Policy on Academic Integrity. Work submitted for grading should not be derived from work of others. The programming assignments are an integral part of the Computer Science learning experience. These projects will be fun, challenging, illuminating, time consuming, frustrating, and rewarding. Your sense of pride upon finishing is well deserved and your efforts earn your powerful skills and deep understanding. Don't cheat yourself out of this opportunity!

The Honor Code is a powerful community statement that asserts our shared values of integrity. This is a community we are committed to be a part of – please join us! Below are some additional guidelines that apply to CS courses. However, in every course, the instructor has the final say about expectations of academic honesty.

There are various ways to use a resource for assigned work and we distinguish them in two ways:

- **What kind of source is it?** Is it a general resource that you are drawing on to do the assigned work, or is it a solution to the assigned work? Does the resource trivialize the assigned task?
- **How is the source used?** Do you consult the source, or do you copy from it more or less verbatim?

For the full CS Departmental Collaboration Policy, visit:

<http://cs-courses.mines.edu/csci261/resources/docs/CollaborationPolicy.pdf>

Academic Code of Honor

- All students are expected to follow the University's Academic Code of Honor.
- A student or assigned team working on a program may discuss high-level ideas with other students or teams. However, at time of submission all work submitted **must be his/her/their own work**.
- Use of the Internet as a reference is allowed but directly copying code or other information is **cheating**. It is cheating to copy, allow another person to copy, all or part of an exam or a project, or to fake program output. It is also a violation of the Code of Honor to observe and then fail to report academic dishonesty. *You* are responsible for the security of your own work.
- We will provide, as part of the course, functional code examples for most of the topics covered. While you are encouraged to examine these examples, your submissions must represent a good-faith effort to complete the assignment. Merely copying and pasting code from the examples will result in a failing grade. Furthermore, relying too heavily on the given examples will fail to prepare you for the much more open-ended final project.
- Developing a program is a creative exercise; just like in art, no two programs will look exactly the same (unless the "canvas" has been copied). To ensure copying does not exist, homework assignments are checked via an automated system that generates similarity metrics between your work and that of all other students and previous student work in this class. When a high-level of similarity is detected, the course coordinator is notified and investigates the similarity. If plagiarism is evident, the course coordinator begins the process of submitting an Academic Misconduct.

Disclaimer

This syllabus is intended to give the student guidance in what may be covered during the semester and will be followed as closely as possible. However, the professor reserves the right to modify, supplement and make changes as the course needs arise. Any changes will be communicated in an appropriate and timely fashion.

Mines Policies and Resources

Diversity and Inclusion: At Colorado School of Mines, we understand that a diverse and inclusive learning environment inspires creativity and innovation, which are essential to the engineering process. We also know that in order to address current and emerging national and global challenges, it is important to learn with and from people who have different backgrounds, thoughts, and experiences. Our students represent every state in the nation and more than 90 countries around the world, and we continue to make progress in the areas of diversity and inclusion by providing [Diversity and Inclusion programs and services](#) to support these efforts.

Disability Support Services: The Colorado School of Mines is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs, including students with disabilities. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this course, please feel welcome to discuss your concerns with me. Students with disabilities may also wish to contact Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss options to removing barriers in this course, including how to register and request official accommodations. Please visit their [website](#) for contact and additional information. If you have already been approved for accommodations through DSS, please meet with me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course.

Accessibility within Canvas: Read the [Accessibility Statement](#) from Canvas to see how the learning management system at the Colorado School of Mines is committed to providing a system that is usable by everyone. The Canvas platform was built using the most modern HTML and CSS technologies, and is committed to W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative and Section 508 guidelines.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Title IX: All learning opportunities at Mines, including this course, require a safe environment for everyone to be productive and able to share and learn without fear of discrimination or harassment. Mines' core values of respect, diversity, compassion, and collaboration will be honored in this course, and the standards in this class are the same as those expected in any professional work environment. (More information can be [found here](#).) Discrimination or harassment of any type will not be tolerated. As a participant in this course, we expect you to respect your instructor and your classmates. As your instructor, it is my responsibility to foster a learning environment that supports diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities. To help accomplish this: (1) Course rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will honor your request to address you by a preferred name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

(2) If something is said or done in this course (by anyone, including myself) that made you or others feel uncomfortable, or if your performance in the course is being impacted by your experiences outside of the course, please report it to me (if you are comfortable doing so), to the [Wellness Center/Counseling](#), and to [Speak Up](#) (an anonymous option). In this course, we will cultivate a community that supports survivors, prevents interpersonal violence, and promotes a harassment free environment. Title IX and Colorado State law protects individuals from discrimination based on sex and gender in educational programs and activities. Mines takes this obligation seriously and is committed to providing a campus community free from gender and sex-based discrimination. Discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, is prohibited and will not be tolerated within the Mines campus community. If these issues have affected you or someone you know, you can access the appropriate resources here: <http://www.mines.edu/title-ix/>. You can also contact the Mines Title IX Coordinator, Camille Torres, at 303.384.2124 or titleix@mines.edu for more information. It's on us, all of the Mines community, to engineer a culture of respect.

CARE @ Mines: If you feel overwhelmed, anxious, depressed, distressed, mentally or physically unhealthy, or concerned about your wellbeing overall, there are resources both on- and off-campus available to you. If you need assistance, please ask for help from a trusted faculty or staff member, fellow student, or any of the resources below. As a community of care, we can help one another get through difficult times. If you need help, reach out. If you are concerned for another student, offer assistance and/or ask for help on their behalf. Students seeking resources for themselves or others should visit [care.mines.edu](#). Additional suggestions for referrals for support, depending on comfort level and needs include: (1) [CARE at Mines](#): for various resources and options, or to submit an online "CARE report" about someone you're concerned about, or email care@mines.edu. (2) [CASA](#) for academic advising, tutoring, academic support, and academic workshops. (3) [Counseling Center](#) (303-273-3377) to make an appointment or for online resources for students on the website. Located in the Wellness Center 2nd floor. Located at 1770 Elm St. (photo below). (4) [Health Center](#) (303-273-3381) for an appointment, located in the Wellness Center 1st floor. (5) [Colorado Crisis Services](#) - For crisis support 24 hrs/7 days, either by phone, text, or in person, Colorado Crisis Services is a great confidential resource, available to anyone. Also call 1-844-493-8255, or text "TALK" to 38255. Walk-in location addresses are posted on the website. (6) Food and/or Housing - Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify your professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable your professor to provide resources that may be available. All of these options are available for free for students. The Counseling Center, Health Center, and Colorado Crisis Services are confidential resources. The Counseling Center will also make referrals to off-campus counselors, if preferred. In an emergency, you should call 911, and they will dispatch a Mines or Golden PD officer to assist.

Absence Policy: The [Student Absences](#) webpage outlines CSM's policy regarding student absences. It contains information and documents to obtain excused absences. All absences that are not documented as excused absences are considered unexcused absences. Faculty members may deny a student the opportunity to make up some or all of the work missed due to unexcused absence(s). However, the faculty members do have the discretion to grant a student permission to make up any missed academic work for an unexcused absence. The faculty member may consider the student's class performance, as well as their attendance, in the decision. In the case of an absence, the student is responsible for determining what work was missed and for putting forth a good faith effort to review the material on their own.

Policy on Academic Integrity/Misconduct: The Colorado School of Mines affirms the principle that all individuals associated with the Mines academic community have a responsibility for establishing, maintaining and fostering an understanding and appreciation for academic integrity. In broad terms, this implies protecting the environment of mutual trust within which scholarly exchange occurs, supporting the ability of the faculty to fairly and effectively evaluate every student's academic achievements, and giving credence to the university's educational mission, its scholarly objectives and the substance of the degrees it awards. The protection of academic integrity requires there to be clear and consistent standards, as well as confrontation and sanctions when individuals violate those standards. The Colorado School of Mines desires an environment free of any and all forms of academic misconduct and expects students to act with integrity at all times. Academic misconduct is the intentional act of fraud, in which an individual seeks to claim credit for the work and efforts of another without authorization, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic exercise. Student Academic Misconduct arises when a student violates the principle of academic integrity. Such behavior erodes mutual trust, distorts the fair evaluation of academic achievements, violates the ethical code of behavior upon which education and scholarship rest, and undermines the credibility of the university. Because of the serious institutional and individual ramifications, student misconduct arising from violations of academic integrity is not tolerated at Mines. If a student is found to have engaged in such misconduct sanctions such as change of a grade, loss of institutional privileges, or academic suspension or dismissal may be imposed. The complete policy can be found in the [Mines' Policy Library](#).