Background

Logic has been called “the calculus of computer science”. The argument is that logic plays a fundamental role in computer science, similar to that played by calculus in the physical sciences and traditional engineering disciplines. Indeed, logic plays an important role in areas of Computer Science as disparate as artificial intelligence (automated reasoning), architecture (logic gates), software engineering (specification and verification), programming languages (semantics, logic programming), databases (relational algebra and SQL), algorithms (complexity and expressiveness), and theory of computation (general notions of computability).

COMP 409/509 provides the student with a thorough introduction to mathematical logic, covering in depth the topics of syntax, semantics, decision procedures, formal systems, and definability for both propositional and first-order logic. The goal is to prepare the students for using logic as a formal tool in computer science.

Basic Information

Instructor: Moshe Y. Vardi
Duncan Hall 3057 (ext. 5977), vardi@cs.rice.edu
Office Hours: by request

TA: Vu Phan
vhp1@rice.edu
Office Hours: by request

(the book is optional; lecture notes will be posted on the course website).

Prerequisites: COMP 182, COMP 280, or instructor’s permission

Recommended Reading

M. Gardner: Logic Machines and Diagrams, 1982
M. Davis: The Universal Computer: The Road from Leibniz to Turing, 2011.

Grading

There will be two take-home, open-book exams: a mid-term exam and a final exam, as well as periodical problem sets, and a programming project. Each exam accounts for 35% of the final
grade, the problem sets account for 20% of the final grade, and the programming project accounts for 10% of the final grade (project required for COMP 509 only). Exams and assignments are graded on a curve.

Class attendance is not required but is strongly encouraged. Classroom participation will be used to determine boundary cases for grading. All problem sets will be assigned to pairs of students; you will learn more that way. Effort counts more than success on the problem sets. Without, however, doing the problem sets diligently, you have little chance of doing well on the tests. Problem sets and final project must be typeset in LaTeX.

**Honor Code**

Students are expected to adhere to Rice’s Honor Code. Joint work is allowed when explicitly required. Using the course website is encouraged, but searching for solutions on the Internet is not allowed. Using solution sets from previous years is not allowed.

**Time**

Class starts at 9:25am *sharp!* Late arrivals are strongly discouraged.

**Device Policy**

A no-device rule during lecture will be strictly enforced. All mobile devices must be on “silent” mode and stashed away during class.

**Special Accommodations**

Any student with a disability requiring accommodations in this class is encouraged to contact me. Alternatively, students could contact the Coordinator for Disabled Student Services in the RMC Cloisters.