

# Syllabus

## CMSC 115: Python Programming (Fall 2026)

This PDF is a snapshot from the last time the site was built. The version of record is the web syllabus at <https://cu-cs-courses.site/cmssc-115-f2026/syllabus.html>, which can change during the term.

### 1 Course info

- **Instructor:** [Julia Belyakova](#)
- **Class:**
  - 01** – TuTh 2–3:15 PM, Sutliff 106
  - 02** – MWF 12–12:50 PM, Sutliff 106
  - 03** – MWF 1–1:50 PM, Sutliff 106
- **Student hours:** M 9 AM and 3 PM, W 2 PM, Th 10:30 AM, F 2 PM  
Both office walk-ins (Ben Franklin 236) and [Zoom log-ins](#) are welcome; if you want a guaranteed time slot, please schedule an appointment via [CU Succeed](#).

### 2 Course Description

This course provides an introduction to computer science through hands-on programming, algorithmic problem solving, and the mathematical foundations of computation.

### 3 Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Read and write small programs in Python.
2. Analyze the time and space complexity of simple algorithms.
3. Apply core data structures (lists, dictionaries, trees) to problems.
4. Decompose problems into functions and modules.

### 4 Prerequisites

High school algebra. No prior programming experience required.

## 5 Textbook

*Composing Programs*, John DeNero — free online.

## 6 Grading

| Component        | Weight |
|------------------|--------|
| Assignments (10) | 40%    |
| Midterm exam     | 20%    |
| Final project    | 25%    |
| Participation    | 15%    |

## 7 Policies

### 7.1 Late Work

Each student has 5 late days for the term. After that, late submissions lose 20% per day.

### 7.2 Collaboration

Discussion of concepts is encouraged. All submitted work must be your own. Cite any sources you use.

### 7.3 Academic Integrity

Standard university policies apply. See the [student handbook](#).

## 8 University Policies

### 8.1 Student Code of Conduct

Commonwealth University's Student Code of Conduct prohibits the violation of any University policy as well as local, state, or federal laws. Expressly included in this expectation are any federal, state, regional, or local emergency orders or declarations, mandatory policies, or mandatory health advisory requirements, including those made by the University President. Violations of the Student Code of Conduct will be reported to office of [Office of Student Conduct](#).

## 8.2 Students Requesting Academic and/or Access Accommodations

Commonwealth University is committed to providing equitable access to educational experiences, campus facilities, digital learning environments, and university-sponsored programs and activities. [Disability Services](#) partners with students, faculty, and staff to ensure equal access in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and other applicable federal and state laws.

Students who have, or believe they may have, a disability that requires academic or access to accommodations should contact Disability Services at their home campus as early as possible, preferably within the first two weeks of the semester or immediately following a diagnosis. Early communication helps ensure accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

- Bloomsburg: Warren Student Services Room 043, or call 570-389-4491 [UDSbloomsburg@commonwealthu.edu](mailto:UDSbloomsburg@commonwealthu.edu)
- Lock Haven: 205 Ulmer Hall, or call 570-484-2454 [UDSlockhaven@commonwealthu.edu](mailto:UDSlockhaven@commonwealthu.edu)
- Mansfield: 147 South Hall, or call 570-662-4150 [UDSmansfield@commonwealthu.edu](mailto:UDSmansfield@commonwealthu.edu)

Once a student is determined eligible for accommodations, Disability Services will prepare an accommodation letter outlining approved academic and/or accessibility accommodations. Students are responsible for sharing their accommodation letter with each instructor and should renew their accommodations through Disability Services at the beginning of each semester.

As Commonwealth University continues to enhance the accessibility of its digital learning environment, students who experience barriers related to course materials, instructional technologies, or other digital resources are encouraged to contact both their instructor and Disability Services as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations or accessible alternatives can be provided.

## 8.3 Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Commonwealth University recognizes its responsibility to foster a living, learning, and working environment that values the contributions of all members of our campus community. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging strengthen our university and are essential to our institutional success. We strive to cultivate a climate in which all members of the Commonwealth University community can embrace these values and thrive in the classroom, in the workplace, and in their professional and personal lives beyond the University.

We demonstrate our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging across our campus communities by:

- Supporting and promoting the intellectual and personal growth of students both inside and outside the classroom.
- Providing workshops, training opportunities, and programs that broaden understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
- Ensuring that our learning, living, and working environments are welcoming, accessible, and responsive to the needs of all individuals.

You can explore more at: [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging at Commonwealth University](#)

## 8.4 Attendance Policy

Regular and punctual attendance is an important component of student success and is expected in all course delivery modalities, including in-person, online, and hybrid courses. Students are responsible for attending class, participating in course activities, and communicating promptly with their instructor if circumstances prevent attendance.

Students who miss class due to a university-excused absence or other legitimate circumstances, such as illness, serious mitigating circumstances, official military service, official University representation, religious observances, approved disability accommodations, or civic and legal obligations, should notify the instructor as soon as possible. When appropriate documentation is provided, students will be afforded a reasonable opportunity to make up graded coursework without penalty in accordance with the University's Attendance Policy and the instructor's course policies.

Students should also consult the [University's Attendance Policy, 1-23](#) and work with their instructor to address any attendance concerns in a timely manner.

## 8.5 Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of teaching, learning, and scholarship at Commonwealth University. It reflects a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage in all academic endeavors. Students are expected to complete their work ethically, acknowledge the ideas and contributions of others appropriately, and demonstrate integrity in all coursework.

Academic dishonesty includes any act of fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or unauthorized assistance intended to gain academic credit or influence the grading process in ways that are inconsistent with university policy or course expectations. Examples include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized collaboration, fabrication or falsification of information, unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty.

The University is committed to fostering a community where integrity guides teaching, learning, and scholarship. Faculty are encouraged to communicate clear expectations regarding academic integrity, citation practices, collaboration, and the appropriate use of AI technologies. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with and adhering to the [University's Academic Integrity Policy, Policy 1-02](#).

## 8.6 Grade Appeal Policy

Commonwealth University is committed to ensuring that final course grades are assigned fairly and consistently. Students may appeal a final course grade if they believe any of the following has occurred: (1) a significant and unwarranted deviation from the published grading criteria or course syllabus, (2) arbitrary grading, or (3) grading that is inconsistent with University policy. Appeals may not be based solely on disagreement with the instructor's academic standards, workload, grading scale, or dissatisfaction with the earned grade.

Students are encouraged to first discuss their concerns with the instructor of record. If the issue cannot be resolved informally, students should next consult the department chair and then the dean (or designee) before initiating a formal appeal. A grade appeal should be initiated within 10 class days of the beginning of the next regular semester following the assignment of the final grade. Complete procedures, deadlines, and information about the formal appeal process are available [Grade Appeal Policy, 1-19](#).

## 8.7 Undergraduate Final Examination and Evaluative Assessment Policy

The final examination or evaluative assessment is an important component of this course and provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the course learning outcomes. Depending on the instructor's course design, the final assessment may consist of a traditional examination or another culminating assessment, such as a project, presentation, portfolio, paper, performance, or other evaluative activity. Details regarding the final assessment will be provided by the instructor.

Final examinations and evaluative assessments are administered during the University's official final examination period. Students enrolled in face-to-face, hybrid, synchronous online, or asynchronous online courses are expected to complete the final assessment according to the schedule and instructions provided by the instructor. Students should avoid making travel or other commitments that conflict with the University's final examination period, as alternative arrangements are granted only under limited circumstances in accordance with [Policy Number 1-15](#).

Students should consult the Commonwealth University Undergraduate Final Examination and Evaluative Assessment Policy and the official final examination schedule for additional information.

## 8.8 Copyright and Fair Use

Commonwealth University is committed to respecting intellectual property rights and complying with United States copyright law. Students are expected to use copyrighted materials ethically and legally in their coursework, including text, images, videos, music, software, websites, and other digital resources. Copyright protection applies to original works regardless of whether copyright notice is displayed.

Students should also be familiar with the principles of fair use, which permit limited use of copyrighted materials for purposes such as teaching, scholarship, research, criticism, and commentary under certain circumstances. Understanding when and how copyrighted materials may be used is an important part of academic and professional responsibility.

For additional information, please consult the University's Copyrighted Materials guidance provided by Information Technology and the Copyright and Fair Use guide developed by the University Libraries.

- [Copyrighted Materials \(Information Technology\)](#)
- [Copyright and Fair Use \(University Libraries\)](#)

## 8.9 Student Consumer Rights and Responsibilities

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) was enacted in 2008 and reauthorized the amended Higher Education Act of 1965. HEOA requires postsecondary educational institutions to distribute or make publicly available a broad range of information collectively known as Student Consumer Information. Topics covered under HEOA include student financial aid, campus health and safety, student outcomes, and general institutional information.

Commonwealth University Consumer Information website: [Consumer Information](#)

## 8.10 Title IX and Protection of Minors Legislation: Reporting Obligations

Commonwealth University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students.

### 8.10.1 Sexual Discrimination or Misconduct and Title IX Requirements

In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, all University officials, volunteers and employees (including student employees) are obligated to report incidents of sexual misconduct of which they become aware to the Title IX Coordinator/designee, unless: 1) they serve in a role that makes such reports privileged or are recognized as providing a confidential resource; or 2) they are a faculty member and learn of the report from a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project. These reporting exceptions do not apply to report of sexual misconduct involving an individual who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred. When a report involved suspected abuse of a child (an individual under the age of 18 at the time of the incident(s) as reported), all University employees, officials and volunteers are required to notify the University police and the Child Line run by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

Reports regarding Title IX and sexual misconduct should be directed to Title IX Coordinator [titleixcoord@commonwealthu.edu](mailto:titleixcoord@commonwealthu.edu) or by completing an online form on the Title IX webpage.

Additional information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual assault and/or harassment can be found here: [Commonwealth University Title IX Office](#)

### 8.10.2 Protection of Minors Requirements

Faculty members **are obliged** to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred. Mandated reporters must immediately make an oral report of suspected child abuse to the Department of Human Services (DHS) by calling 800-932-0313. Immediately following the report to DHS, the mandated reporter must notify Officer in Charge at Bloomsburg by calling 570-389-2211 or 570-389-4168, as designated in the University's protection of minor's policy. **No exceptions** apply to this reporting obligation. Detailed information is available at:

Commonwealth University Protection of Minors: [PRP 2410 Background Screening, Protection of Minors, Volunteerism](#)

All student-facing policies can be found at [University Policies](#) and [Student Handbook](#).