

# Intelligent Agents - Course Outline

## COMP 423: 2011 Trimester 1

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This document sets out the workload and assessment requirements for COMP 423. It also provides contact information for staff involved in the course. If the contents of this document are altered during the course, you will be advised of the change by an announcement in lectures and/or on the course web site. A printed copy of this document is held in the School Office.

The course will examine a variety of case studies of intelligent agents, including (but not limited to) intelligent agents for extracting information from the web, agents for clustering web pages and for improving Web search. The course will consider the kinds of tasks that an intelligent agent could be useful for and also the underlying designs, techniques, and algorithms for implementing such agents.

### Objectives

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The goals of the course are to give you:

- An understanding of the basic problems and basic principles in a variety of related research areas such as information retrieval, information extraction, clustering and classification and natural language processing. (BE [3\(a\)](#), [3\(c\)](#), [3\(d\)](#), [3\(e\)](#)); (BSc COMP [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#))
- An understanding of some of the technology and algorithms that are used to construct intelligent agents for improving Web search. (BE [3\(a\)](#), [3\(f\)](#)); (BSc COMP [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#))
- Greater skill at reading, understanding, and giving presentations on papers from the research literature. (BE [2\(b\)](#)); (BSc COMP [2](#), [4](#))
- Practical experience of building intelligent systems. (BE [3\(a\)](#)); (BSc COMP [1](#))

The programming assignments are particularly relevant to the fourth objective, and the summaries and presentation to the third objective. The exam will address all the objectives, but particularly the first two.

### Lectures

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A [schedule](#) of lecture topics, readings, and assignment due dates will be available online.

Lectures for COMP 423 are: Mon, Fri, 4:10-5:00, Alan MacDiarmid 106.

### Textbook

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There is no textbook for COMP 423, but we will be assigning papers to read throughout the course. You will also need to find additional material on the web and in the library.

### Usercodes

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All students taking any courses in the school that require computer access must register on the computer system. Instructions are posted at the entrance to the laboratories.

### Workload

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In order to maintain satisfactory progress in COMP 423, you should plan to spend an average of at least 10 hours per week on this paper. A plausible and approximate breakdown for these hours would be:

- Lectures and tutorials: 2
- Readings: 4
- Assignments: 4

### School of Engineering and Computer Science

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The School office is located on level three of the Cotton Building ([Cotton 358](#)).

The notice board for COMP 423 is located on the second floor of the Cotton Building.

### Staff

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The course organiser and the lecturer for COMP 423 is [Xiaoying Sharon Gao](#). Her contact details are:

- Xiaoying Sharon Gao
- [Cotton 442](#)
- +64 4 463 5978
- [xiaoying.gao@ecs.vuw.ac.nz](mailto:xiaoying.gao@ecs.vuw.ac.nz)

## Announcements and Communication

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The main means of communication outside of lecture will be the COMP 423 web area at [http://ecs.victoria.ac.nz/Courses/COMP423\\_2011T1/](http://ecs.victoria.ac.nz/Courses/COMP423_2011T1/). There you will find, among other things, this document, the [lecture schedule](#) and [assignment handouts](#), and the [COMP 423 Forum](#). The forum is a web-based bulletin board system. Questions and comments can be posted to the forum, and staff will read these posts and frequently respond to them.

Important announcements for the course will be made at lectures and will either be posted on the COMP423 web site or emailed to you. We will assume that all students attend all lectures and read email and the announcements electronically at least once a week.

## Assessment

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The assessment of the course will be based on several [assignments](#), writing brief summaries of assigned papers, giving presentations and a final exam. All these are designed for our learning objective outlined above and the marking is based on how well the students achieve these objectives. The assignments will consist of:

- A project for building an intelligent system to improve Web search.  
The project will be explained in lectures and it consists of three parts: writing a research proposal (word limit: 2000, due in week 6, worth 5%), giving a demonstration of the built system (due after the mid-trimester break, worth 5%) and writing a report (word limit: 5000, due in week 10, worth 15%).
- Write a paper review (word limit: 500, 5%). The papers will be distributed in lectures and due one week later.

Assignments should be handed in on time, unless you have made prior arrangements with the lecturer. Late assignments may be penalized at up to 10% per day and 0 marks may be assigned after 7 days late.

Students are expected to write brief summaries of all assigned papers (worth 5%) and each student gives at least one presentation on one paper (worth 5%).

The exam will be held in the examination period.

Your grade for COMP 423 will be determined based on the following assessment weightings:

Item	Weight
Paper summaries	5%
Presentation	5%
Paper review	5%
Project proposal	5%
Project demonstration	5%
Project report	15%
Final examination	60%

## Exams

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The [timetable for final examinations](#) will be available from the University web site and will be posted on a notice board outside the faculty office. The final examination will be three hours long. No computers, electronic calculators or similar device will be allowed in the final examination. Paper non-English to English dictionaries will be permitted. The study and examination period for trimester T1 is 10 - 29 June.

## Plagiarism

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### Working Together and Plagiarism

We encourage you to discuss the principles of the course and assignments with other students, to help and seek help with programming details, problems involving the lab machines. However, any work you hand in must be your own work.

The [School policy on Plagiarism](#) (claiming other people's work as your own) is available from the course home page. Please read it. We will penalise anyone we find plagiarising, whether from students currently doing the course, or from other sources. Students who knowingly allow other students to copy their work may also be penalised. If you have had help from someone else (other than a tutor), it is always safe to state the help that you got. For example, if you had help from someone else in writing a component of your code, it is not plagiarism as long as you state (eg, as a comment in the code) who helped you in writing the method.

## Mandatory Requirements

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The mandatory requirements for COMP 423 are to hand in satisfactory case study summaries for at least 80% of the assigned papers, make a reasonable attempt at the assignments, and achieve at least a D grade in the final examination.

## Passing COMP 423

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To pass COMP 423, a student must satisfy mandatory requirements and gain at least a **C** grade overall.

## Withdrawal

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The last date for withdrawal from COMP 423 with entitlement to a refund of tuition fees is Fri 11 March 2011. The last date for withdrawal without being regarded as having failed the course is Fri 13 May 2011 -- though later withdrawals may be approved by the Dean in special circumstances.

## Rules & Policies

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Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study>.

Find out about academic progress and restricted enrolment at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress>.

The University's statutes and policies are available at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>, except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar> (See Section C).

Further information about the University's academic processes can be found on the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic>

All students are expected to be familiar with the following regulations and policies, which are available from the school web site:

[Grievances](#)

[Student and Staff Conduct](#)

[Meeting the Needs of Students with Disabilities](#)

[Student Support](#)

[Academic Integrity and Plagiarism](#)

[Dates and Deadlines including Withdrawal dates](#)

[School Laboratory Hours and Rules](#)

[Printing Allocations](#)

[Expectations of Students in ECS courses](#)

The School of Engineering and Computer Science strives to anticipate all problems associated with its courses, laboratories and equipment. We hope you will find that your courses meet your expectations of a quality learning experience.

If you think we have overlooked something or would like to make a suggestion feel free to talk to your course organiser or lecturer.

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