

# CMPSCI 687 Reinforcement Learning

Fall 2017 Class Syllabus

Professor Philip Thomas

**Class:** Class will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30–3:45pm in room 142 of the computer science building. Lectures will be given primarily on the whiteboard, and so no slides will be posted online.

**Website:** The class website is: [http://psthomas.com/courses/CMPSCI\\_687\\_Fall2017.html](http://psthomas.com/courses/CMPSCI_687_Fall2017.html). All homework assignments and due dates can be found there.

**Office Hours:** Prof. Thomas' office hours will be Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4pm-5pm in his office (room 262 of the computer science building) and he can be reached at [psthomas@cs.umass.edu](mailto:psthomas@cs.umass.edu).

**Teaching Assistant and Office Hours:** Nicholas (Nick) Jacek is the teaching assistant for this course. He will hold office hours Wednesdays from 1pm-2pm in room 207 of the computer science building, and can be reached at [njacek@cs.umass.edu](mailto:njacek@cs.umass.edu).

**Grading:** Your grade will consist of four components:

1. **Homework Assignments** (60%): There will be *roughly* seven homework assignments. Each problem in an assignment will specify its point value, and not all homework assignments have the same point value (i.e., some homework assignments may be smaller and worth less than others). All assignments will have total point values of at most 100 (thus, the last assignment will not have a point value so high that previous assignments are irrelevant).
2. **Pop Quizzes** (10%): There will be pop-quizzes given in class without prior announcement. They will typically take about 10 minutes to complete.
3. **Midterm Exam** (15%): There will be an in-class midterm exam (date to be announced later).
4. **Final Project** (15%): There will be a final project due on the last day of class.

A cumulative grade in [90%, 100%] will be an A- or A, [80% – 90%) will be a B-, B, or B+, and [70% – 79.9%) will be a C-, C, or C+. Course grades may be curved only in students' favor (that is, these thresholds may be lowered, but a grade of 90% will not be lower than an A-).

**Late Policy:** Late homework assignments will not be accepted. Your lowest homework score will be dropped.<sup>1</sup> If, for example, you are sick during the time when the final homework assignment is underway, the score on the final homework assignment can be dropped. Additional late-exceptions will only be given in the case of two or more documented emergencies requiring exceptions from two or more assignments.

**Disability Services:** If a student has a disability and requires accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. You will need to register with Disability Services (161 Whitmore Administration building; phone (413) 545-0892). Information on services and materials for registering are also available on their website: [www.umass.edu/disability](http://www.umass.edu/disability).

**Cheating:** Cheating will not be tolerated. Each assignment includes instructions about what forms of collaboration are allowed. Copying answers from online sources or from solutions to assignments from previous years is always considered cheating. All instances of cheating will be reported to the university's Academic Honesty Board.

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<sup>1</sup>Since homework assignments are of different sizes and relative values, the assignment will be dropped that causes your grade to be the highest.