

# Information for CS U231 Fall 2008 Freshman Honors Seminars 1 & 2

## 1. The instructor

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## 2. The basic plan

The idea of this seminar course is to learn to build graphical user interfaces and to create some interesting demonstration projects in Java. The tools to do this will be:

- The Java language
- The Eclipse integrated development environment (IDE)
- The Java Power Tools (JPT) for building graphical user interfaces
- The Java Power Framework (JPF) within the JPT for experiments and tests
- Other tools in the standard Java libraries

*It is not assumed that you know Java and it is not intended that this will be a systematic introduction to Java. You will have a systematic study of program design in Java in the course CS U213. The goal here is to learn by example and then to imitate and extend. In years past, this approach has proved quite effective. As we go along, I will of course explain the things that we do and use but if the examples do not make it 100% clear why an aspect of Java is necessary then perhaps for this course that aspect isn't necessary.*

What I want is for students to *do experiments and build demos*. These experiments and demos can be *very, very, very simple* at first. As you catch on, your programs can become more sophisticated. You may work alone or may work in small teams of two. *The fundamental rule is that if anyone makes a contribution to the code that you submit then that person must be given credit in the comments at the top of the file and also at the place in the code where the contribution was made.* In other words, if you tell me there was collaboration in the comments, then it is OK, but if you don't tell me, then I will be quite upset.

As the course proceeds, I would like to have people volunteer to present a demo for 5 or 10 minutes during class. When students are not presenting demos, then I will do demos and explain the Java and the JPT being used.

I will be available in my office for *much more* than my official posted hours and *I really want you to come in with questions, requests for tutorials, ideas, plans, and wish lists*. Send e-mail to make appointments or drop in. That will really make your experience better.

## 3. Web sites for Java Power Tools and the Course

Honors Freshman Seminar      <http://www.ccs.neu.edu/jpt/fhs/>

JPT Main      <http://www.ccs.neu.edu/jpt/>

## 4. Books???

I do not like most elementary Java textbooks since I find them tedious rather than lively, interesting, and experimental. However, I have many textbooks from publishers and you are welcome to borrow one if you wish. *The point in this class is to learn from examples, experiments, conversations, collaborations, and ultimately demos.*

One recent book I have glanced at is: Cay Horstmann, *Big Java*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Wiley, 2008. Whether or not you will like it and will find it useful, I do not know, but it is comprehensive, that is, *big*. However, a book is not essential.