

SABANCI UNIVERSITY
CS 306 - Database Systems
Fall 2020-2021

Instructors

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Course Description

The objective of this course is to introduce students to database systems. The students will learn to model a database from an idea into a working application. The students will be able to program their databases with SQL and learn how such systems work in the background to maintain data integrity.

Through the lectures, quizzes, take-home exams, projects, and interactive recitations students will learn how to design, maintain and communicate with databases. Evaluation of the solutions in terms of correctness and efficiency will also be covered.

Lecture Zoom Links

Wednesday 14:40-15:30

Thursday 11:40-13:30

<https://sabanciuniv.zoom.us/j/99671700382?pwd=WUsrcIA5akpCOW5tMjZXMTk3OE54QT09>

Recitation:

Friday: 15:40-16:30

Zoom TBA

ALS Top Hat: 822364

Course Weblinks

Website:

<http://myweb.sabanciuniv.edu/barisaltop/cs306/cs306-fall-2020-2021/>

Sucourse+: <https://sucourse.sabanciuniv.edu/plus/course/view.php?id=1669>

Drive:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NKJtoHZ1km8Nc9BgswuYM8VtuglBxiiB?usp=sharing>

TextBook

Database Management Systems, 3rd Edition, Ramakrishnan & Gehrke

We may not stick to the textbook all the time, you are responsible for all material covered in class.

Tentative Grading

Project	20%
ALS	15%
Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	35%

Please note that weighted average is not the only criterion in letter grading!

- ❖ All exams and ALSs will be online.
 - All exams will be proctored online via Zoom or Google Meet.
 - All ALSs will be held during lecture hours.
 - Midterm exam date and time will be announced during the semester.
 - You will be asked several questions through SUCourse+.
 - We will have an online final exam during the regular finals period. Student resources will decide and announce the exact date and time for the exam.
 - You will be asked several questions through SUCourse+.
- ❖ For each online examination (quiz, midterm, final)
 - You will be solving/implementing the questions on SUCourse+.
 - We will manually grade all your answers (code, text) on SUCourse+.
 - Don't worry about timing. You will have enough time to solve each question. However, note that "enough time" does not mean "unlimited time".
 - Other details will be announced prior to each examination.
- ❖ After any examination (midterm, final, etc.) some students will be called for an oral exam.

- Some students will be selected randomly.
 - Some students will be selected based on any irregularities in their performance and/or the level of work they submit (i.e. using objects or paradigms we have not showed during lectures)
 - All oral exams will be done over Zoom or Google Meet.
 - Each oral exam will be recorded.
 - The students must at all times keep their camera on.
 - The students will share their entire screens (not specific tabs or windows) and do their work on the IDE (VS, Xcode, etc.) that they have done their original work on.
 - The performance of the student during these oral exams will affect their grades of the examination they have been called upon.
 - Ex: If you are called for an oral exam for Midterm, your performance will affect your Midterm grade.
 - If a student fails to show up at an oral exam, or does not obey the rules of camera and/or screen sharing he/she will automatically get 0 (zero) points from that grading item.
- ❖ At the end of the semester almost all students will have been called to at least one oral exam. Some may be called to multiple oral exams.
 - ❖ At the end of the semester, course grades will be calculated using a predefined point distribution.
 - We constructed a letter grade - point interval mapping based on the previous semesters, in a student-friendly manner (like a very soft catalog grading scheme).
 - Your grade will not depend on any other students' grade.
 - We have no intention of releasing the letter grade boundaries.
 - ❖ There will be at least 4-6 steps on the project during the semester. All of the assigned steps will be graded and monitored by a TA that is assigned to your project. Your TA may ask for an oral exam for any step and it will be taken into consideration in the overall grade. Each step will have a different weight in overall grading.
 - ❖ There will be many ALS's during the semester. All ALS's will be through Top Hat. Each Top Hat question will be considered as a single ALS. The worst 1/3 of them will be discarded, and the rest of them will have equal

weight on grading. In other words, if there are 3N different ALS questions, best 2N grades will be taken into consideration.

- ❖ There won't be any make-up for ALS's and project steps in any case, including medical health reports and official university activities.
- ❖ If your exams' *weighted* average is below 30, you will fail the course even if your total grade is equal or above the overall passing grade.
 - Surely, having exam's weighted average greater than or equal to 30 does not mean that you will pass the course.
- ❖ If your overall grade is lower than 45, you will fail the course.
- ❖ If you miss all of the ALSs, do not participate in the project, midterm and final exam as well; then you will get an NA grade.
- ❖ If you miss the midterm or final exam and if you do not take the make-up exam for that missing exam; then you will directly get an F grade.

Make-up Policy

No make-up is allowed for the ALS's and/or project steps. Students automatically get 0 (zero) from the respective ALS/project step grade if any of them is missed.

Make-up is only allowed for the midterm and final examination to those with an official report from the University Health Center and to those with an official permission notice from the university for participating in a university event on the date of the exam in question. Students must submit their reports/notices to one of the instructors before the exam in question. The ones having other excuses should contact the instructors within the day of the exam to be missed and then the instructors will decide whether these students are allowed to take the make-up exam. Any excuses to be brought to the attention of the instructors after the exam will not be considered. **No exceptions to these rules!**

Dates and details of the make-up examinations will be announced later.

Make-up examinations will be written and oral. Also, please note that the make-up exams are expected to be **much harder** than the regular exams, due to fairness reasons.

Exam/Submission Review Policy

Students are allowed to object to their midterm and final examination, as well as their project step grades. You can only object to your grades within 7 days after

the respective grade is announced. Grade bargaining will absolutely not be tolerated.

Plagiarism Policy (Academic Integrity)

Plagiarism means presenting someone else's work as yours. This is a very serious, ethical problem, especially for all online examinations.

During this term all of your submissions (project, ALS's, midterm and final) will be checked against plagiarism.

This part is prepared in order to explain the actions that yield to plagiarism, and the sanctions against it. Most of the actions and sanctions mentioned in this part will also be valid for all CS courses as well; but there might be small differences for the rules among these courses.

(http://people.sabanciuniv.edu/levi/cs204/policy_plagiarism.html)

A plagiarized work may or may not be a verbatim copy of another project, ALS, take-home exam/quiz/question/midterm/final. Verbatim copies are of course plagiarized ones. However, if any project, ALS, take-home exam/quiz/question/midterm/final is derived from another one by partially changing some parts, this action is also plagiarism. A common fallacy is that the graders cannot catch a program that is developed by partially changing another program. Believe it or not, such programs are caught very easily by using some special software.

From the above paragraph, it should be clear that "similar" submissions (take-home exam, quiz, midterm, final) might be treated as plagiarized ones. It is in your hands to avoid ending up with "similar" submissions. Some precautions are as follows:

- Do not share your work during any examination, wholly or partially.
- Do not discuss the crucial details of your submissions with others.
- Keep any electronic/paper storage that includes your work in a secure place.
- Do not allow other people access your computer through sharing facilities and programs. Some cheaters use network scanners to search for computers with open shares and steal your data (happened in the past).
- Do not help or accept help that yields similar codes.
- Do not share your password.
- Do not enter your password in public computers (in the past, we have seen cases where the passwords and then the take-home exam are stolen).
- Do not make or take any project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final together.

- Do not have a friend or someone else make or take your project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final.

When a plagiarism case is detected, sanctions are applied to all parties regardless of the actual source of the submission (project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm, final). These sanctions are as follows:

- For the first time, all plagiarized project step or ALS owners receive **-100 (minus hundred)**.
 - Each student will have an opportunity to explain his/her situation.
- Second time a plagiarized project step or ALS is detected, the student fails the course automatically.
- If any plagiarized work is submitted for **the midterm or final exam, you will fail the course automatically.**

Below you can find a preliminary classification of plagiarizers according to our experience:

- Hard-workers and lazy friends: This is the most common method. In this case, the hard-worker student makes the project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final and gives it to his/her lazy friend(s). **But do not forget both of them are punished.** You have to be able to say "NO", if one of your friends asks for your work. Moreover, please do not get fooled with arguments such as "*I will just have a look at it in order to see the main idea. Then I will do it by myself*". Even if your friend really tries to do so, (s)he may not succeed to make a legitimate submission work and may submit a plagiarized submission work derived from yours (this happened several times in the past). Moreover, your friend may share your hardwork with some other people and these other people may derive plagiarized submission work out of yours. Please do not forget that your friend who takes your work has nothing to lose. When (s)he is punished, (s)he would just accept it, but you, as the actual person who spent time and effort, will also be punished. This is really a very bad experience (just imagine it and you will see that it is really a very bad feeling). That is why **PLEASE DO NOT SHARE ANY OF YOUR WORK DURING ANY EXAMINATION.**
- Collaborators: More than one people make the same project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final with minor or major modifications. The common excuse for this category is "*we made the take-home exam together*". In CS306, project steps are to be done together (equal work), however ALS exams are to be done personally. ALS's are not group exams to be shared over Whatsapp or similar platforms. Another excuse is "*I applied the university motto: creating and developing together*". Our motto is a valid argument if and only if you can write all of the creators and developers' names on the final product (the ALS exam in our case) and you

can share all the benefits of that product. This is only possible for the project in CS306, besides that you cannot create and develop your ALS, midterm or final exams together.

- Deceived cheaters: This category includes people who pay other people to make their own project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final. But the one who takes money makes the same project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final for more than one person. So there are people that do not know each other but submit the same work. Moreover, when we catch a student who pays or gets paid for such a project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final trade, both parties are directly reported for an immediate disciplinary investigation. In this respect, we are in collaboration with freelancer sites, at which programmers are looking for jobs. We are immediately informed when our project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final appeared at these sites. These activities are both against the law and against university disciplinary regulations. All people involved in these activities (both the ones looking for freelancers and/or programmers to have a project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final done and the ones who contact these traders) will both be directly reported to the disciplinary committee and to the prosecutor's office.
- Forgetters: The ones who forget their project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final in public places. "*I forgot it someplace and X took it*" is not a valid argument. You are responsible for keeping your project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final in a secure place. From the discussion above, it should be clear that even if you are not aware that your program files are taken by some other people, you still are responsible and subject to sanctions. Otherwise, the argument of "*I do not know how my files are taken*" is put forward by everybody and we cannot overcome the problem of plagiarism. Moreover, we, as the CS306 instructional team, do not have the right of investigating the actual source and the distribution mechanism of the project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final in order to reach a guilty/not-guilty verdict. This is a legal problem. Therefore, in case of a situation where your project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final files are taken without your consent, you have the right to report these other people to the dean's office for a disciplinary investigation. After this investigation, if you are proven to be innocent and the other people get some disciplinary penalties, then your grade will be given back. However, without your formal written complaint to the dean's office and a disciplinary investigation, no grades can change.
- Open computer sharers: Some people willingly/unwillingly open some part of their computers' disk or cloud accounts to the shared environment probably for multimedia exchange. However, if you are not careful and experienced enough, you may end up with a situation where your project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final files are also in open share. This way, some other people may steal your project, ALS, take-home exam,

quiz, midterm or final files. Such incidents happened in the past. Thus, please do not open your computers' or clouds' share. Our policy is the same as the previous bullet in case your project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final is stolen in this way.

- Password sharers: Passwords are personal information. Even if you share it with your best friend, your private data is no longer secure. Moreover, passwords entered in public computers can be stolen. Thus, please enter your password only on your own computer. Our policy is the same as above, if your password, and then your project, ALS, take-home exam, quiz, midterm or final is stolen in this way.

By this policy, we are not aiming to stop any kind of correspondence and cooperation among the classmates. Of course, the students will talk about their take-home exam and discuss some solutions. However, the students should know where to stop these discussions. In that respect, there is a thin line between plagiarism and cooperation. And unfortunately it is not possible to quantify this line. So when you start cooperation, you are taking a risk of being treated as a plagiarizer. Please keep this in mind and do not get into the forbidden area.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that (s)he completely understands any material that (s)he submits and that (s)he is actively engaged in the production of the solution. The instructors and TAs of this course reserve the right to ask the students to explain the reasoning behind their work without the presence of any collaborators. Students should know that the **written submitted work is not the only material that will be graded**. The instructors or TAs might **request a viva** (oral exam), and **grade it instead of the written submitted work**.

Additionally, cases of plagiarism will be directly referred to the Dean's Office for disciplinary action. This course does not tolerate any breach of academic integrity (more info on <https://www.sabanciuniv.edu/en/academic-integrity-statement>).

Special Note from the Instructors:

Please do not think that this policy has been written under the classical instructor's thought of "No students can fool us". We can assure you that when a student cheats or submits plagiarized work, we do not feel anything personally. We are just trying to behave fairly in a crowded course. When a student plagiarizes, (s)he may obtain some points that (s)he does not deserve. We are trying to protect honest students. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Additional Notes

Students are responsible for every announcement made in lecture/[SUCourse+](#) or sent via email. Students are expected to check their [Sabanci University mail inboxes](#) regularly as important announcements will be sent to them via email. Not attending the class/online lecture, not following SUCourse, not checking emails regularly is not an excuse, in case they miss something.

Course Components

Lectures: Lectures are the main building blocks of this course. The content delivered in the lectures will be tested in quizzes, take-home exams, midterm and final examinations. Attendance is not mandatory; however, students are recommended and encouraged to attend the lectures for their own good. Some of the quizzes will be held during the lectures. **OFFLINE LECTURE MATERIALS WILL BE SHARED WITH THE STUDENTS THROUGH SUCOURSE AND COURSE GOOGLE DRIVE FOLDER, BEFORE THE REGULAR LECTURE HOURS. SHARING ONLINE LECTURE MATERIALS ARE SUBJECT TO VARIOUS REGULATIONS, HENCE THE DECISION WILL BE MADE LATER ON.**

Recitation Sessions: Recitation sessions are student-centered learning hours conducted by TAs of this course. Attendance is not mandatory; however, students are recommended and encouraged to attend the recitations for their own good. Some of the quizzes will be held during the recitations. There will be a total of twelve regular and two exam preparation recitation sessions. Every recitation session will consist of three hours. Each one of the exam preparation recitation sessions will be held before the related examination. In those recitation sections, TAs will solve sample questions to help students get ready for the examinations. Students are expected to bring their laptops to all the recitations. Recitations are quite important to practice the topics. Attendance to recitations is also not mandatory, but we strongly recommend students to participate in the recitations for understanding and/or practicing topics in a better way. **OFFLINE RECITATION MATERIALS WILL BE SHARED WITH THE STUDENTS THROUGH COURSE GOOGLE DRIVE FOLDER, BEFORE THE REGULAR RECITATION HOURS.**

ALS (Active Learning Session): These are small and short questions asked through Top Hat during the lectures (live). Each will take 60 seconds to answer and can vary between multiple-choice questions to short answer questions. Students who turn up late to the class, i.e. after any number of the ALS questions have been shared, can not take the ALS again. No exceptions will be made to this rule.

Midterm and Final Examinations: There will be only one midterm and one final examination in this course. Students will be graded based on their comprehension of the content and their ability to transfer their knowledge gathered from the lectures, recitations, and take-home exams into practice. The

examination dates will be announced later. If any plagiarized work is submitted for the midterm or final exam, you will fail the course automatically.

Project: You will have a project during the entire semester. Each project will consist of 3-5 students. Your project will be broken into 4-6 steps during the semester. Each step will have a different weight in the overall grade of your project. All of the steps are designed to bring the students the ability to apply their knowledge into practice. Our experiences show that some students have turned their projects into real start-ups after the course.