

CSCI 3194 (Seminar (UNIX Power Tools)), Fall 2014

Homework 6

Credit: 10 points.

1 Reading

(There is no assigned reading for this homework.)

2 Problems

Answer the following questions. You may write out your answers by hand or using a word processor or other program, but please submit hard copy, either in class or in my mailbox in the department office.

1. (10 points) Write at least a page of prose about this course, answering the following questions.

First some compare/contrast/philosophize questions:

- Suppose a friend with no computer experience outside the Windows/GUI environment asks you why anyone would still want to use a command-line environment in the year 2014. What would you tell him/her? (You don't have to pretend to be a CLI convert if you're not; just try to come up with reasons why anyone would be.)

- The “traditional UNIX” environment emphasizes small single-purpose programs and standardized mechanisms for connecting them (pipes, I/O redirection, text files).

Most current mainstream software in contrast seems to focus on large “all-in-one” programs that do many things and often-proprietary binary file formats. (Proponents of graphical environments, however, sometimes point out that they also provide mechanisms for connecting different applications — copy/paste using a system clipboard, for example.)

What advantages and disadvantages do you think each approach has? Consider user-friendliness from the perspective of both novice and expert users, program reliability, and anything else that seems interesting or relevant.

And then some “taking a poll” questions:

- What did you find most interesting or valuable about this course? Do you feel that your horizons were broadened a bit? Did you learn anything that you think will become part of the “bag of tricks” you use fairly often? Was there anything that you thought we could just as well have skipped?
- Were the homeworks helpful in cementing your understanding of what we discussed in class?
- Is there anything else you want to say about the course?