Slide 1

Administrivia

- One purpose of the syllabus is to spell out policies (next slides).
- Most other information will be on the Web, either on my home page (here, office hours) or the course Web page (here).

  A request: If you spot something wrong with course material on the Web, please let me know!

Slide 2

Course FAQ

- "What will my grade be based on?" (See syllabus.)
- "When are the exams?" (See syllabus.)
- "What happens if I can't turn in work on time, or I miss a class?" (See syllabus.)
- "What's your policy on collaboration?" (See syllabus.)

Slide 3

Course FAQ, Continued

- "When is the next homework due?" (See "Lecture topics and assignments" page.)
- "When are your office hours?" (See my home page.)

  Note that part of my job is to answer your questions outside class, so if you need help, please ask! in person or by e-mail or phone. Some office hours will be "open lab" (times TBA). At those times I'll be in one of the classrooms/labs ready to answer questions.

Slide 4

Course FAQ, Continued

- "Do I need to buy a book?" (See syllabus.)

  Short answer: No, but you might want to.

Slide 5

Course FAQ, Continued

- "What computer(s) can I use to do homework?"

  Easiest option may be department's Linux lab machines. There are others.

  You should have physical access (via your TigerCard) to four rooms containing such machines any time the building is open. You should have remote access to any that are booted into Linux.

  Returning students should already have accounts set up. (If you've forgotten your password, go to the ITS help desk and ask for it to be reset.) To change your password, open a terminal window and type `yppasswd`.

Slide 6

What I Hope You Will Get From This Class

- More things in your "bag of tricks" — shell features, shell scripts, makefiles, a text editor, etc., etc.,

  (Most of what we talk about will be applicable to all UNIX systems, not just Linux.)

- Practice in reading man pages and otherwise learning more.
- Exposure to a different operating system / user interface paradigm.

Slide 7

A Bit of Truth in Packaging (?)

- The focus of required work will be on old-style text-mode tools (as opposed to graphical stuff), and on user-mode work (as opposed to installation / administration).
- If that's what really excites you, though — I'm open to project ideas concerning topics we don't cover (much) in class.

Slide 8

Shameless Evangelism/Ranting

- "UNIX is obsolete — history goes back to 1969!"

  You can fix a lot of bugs in 40 years, and the odds are better that what you learn will still be useful years from now.
- "It's not user-friendly!"

  Sure it is; it's just choosy about its friends. Designed by programmers for programmers — "expert-friendly" as opposed to "novice-friendly." Particularly good if you want to automate something.
- "Everyone knows GUIs are better!"

  For some things and some people, maybe so. But which is more expressive, pointing and gesturing or speech?
- (You don't have to agree with me; listen and decide for yourself!)

Slide 9

The UNIX Philosophy

- As stated by one of its developers (Doug McIlroy):

  "Write programs that do one thing and do it well. Write programs to work together. Write programs to handle text streams, because that is a universal interface."

- There's more, but the emphasis is on (1) providing a set of lightweight tools that can be put together to do interesting things, and (2) providing choices to users (sometimes almost too many!)

Slide 10

Minute Essay

- What are your goals for this course? Are there specific topics you're interested in?
- Do you have access to a Linux or UNIX system other than the department's lab machines? (Yes, Mac OS X counts.)
- Have you bought / will you buy a copy of one of the recommended books? ("No" is okay — I just want to know.)