

CSCI 3294 (Seminar: UNIX Power Tools), Fall 2016

Homework 8

Credit: 10 points.

1 Reading

(None really, but you should have read or at least skimmed all assigned reading.)

2 Honor Code Statement

Please include with each part of the assignment the Honor Code pledge or just the word “pledged”, plus one or more of the following about collaboration and help (as many as apply).¹ Text *in italics* is explanatory or something for you to fill in. For written assignments, it should go right after your name and the assignment number; for programming assignments, it should go in comments at the start of your program.

- This assignment is entirely my own work.
- This assignment is entirely my own work, except for portions I got from the assignment itself (*some programming assignments include “starter code”*) or sample programs for the course (*from which you can borrow freely — that’s what they’re for*).
- I worked with *names of other students* on this assignment.
- I got help with this assignment from *source of help — ACM tutoring, another student in the course, the instructor, etc.*
- I got significant help from *outside source — a book other than the textbook (give title and author), a Web site (give its URL), etc.. (“Significant” here means more than just a little assistance with tools — you don’t need to tell me that you looked up an error message on the Web, but if you found an algorithm or a code sketch, tell me about that.)*
- I provided significant help to *names of students* on this assignment. (*“Significant” here means more than just a little assistance with tools — you don’t need to tell me about helping other students decipher compiler error messages, but beyond that, do tell me.*)

3 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 one of my mailboxes (outside my office or in the ASO).

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

First some compare/contrast/philosophize questions:

¹Credit where credit is due: I based the wording of this list on a posting to a SIGCSE mailing list. SIGCSE is the ACM’s Special Interest Group on CS Education.

- 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 2016. 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?
- Did you find the readings interesting and/or useful? Would you have preferred to have a textbook?
- 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?