

Course FAQ, Continued

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

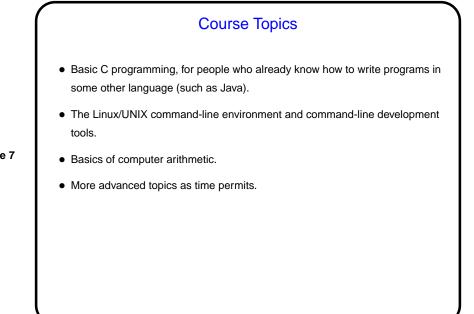
Easiest option may be department's Linux lab machines. There are others. You should have physical access (via your TigerCard) to four rooms containing such machines any time the building is open. You should have remote access to any that are booted into Linux.

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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.

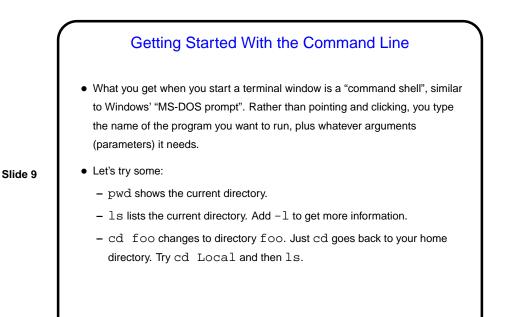
What Is This Course About?

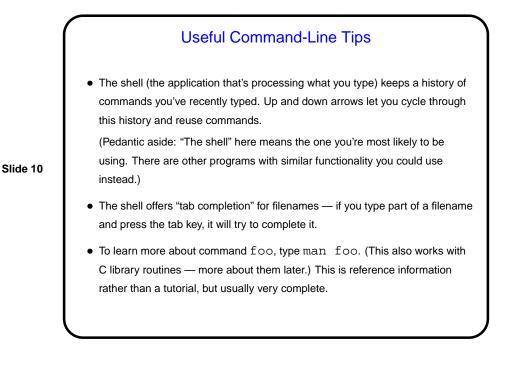
- Back story: The primary goal of our traditional first course is to introduce students to programming and algorithmic problem-solving. Another goal of the course, however, is to expose students to certain low-level concepts that contribute to a well-rounded education in computer science. Students who come into the major via other routes may not get this exposure, and they are apt to struggle in later courses.
- CSCI 1120 is a new course intended to cover only the parts of CSCI 1320 that might not be covered by alternative introductory courses.



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Getting Started with Linux
(A UNIX person's response to claims that UNIX isn't user friendly: "Sure it is. It's just choosy about its friends.")
When you log in, you should get a graphical desktop, which should be navigable with what you know from using other graphical environments (though some details are different).
In Linux, we talk about files and directories; the idea is the same as Windows' files and folders, though again some details are different.
The graphical system should give you a way to get a terminal window. Once you have that ...





Text Editors

 "Programming" usually means writing "source code". (More later about how this relates to what the machine can actually execute.) How do you get source code? The simplest way is to create it with a *text editor* — a program for writing and editing plain text.

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• Many, many text editors, and people have favorites. Notepad is an example from the Windows world.

I use and will teach in this class vi: It's found on every UNIX/Linux system I know of, and is very powerful, though it takes a little getting used to. (vi on our Linux machines is actually vim, a more capable "clone" of the original vi.) Other popular Linux text editors include emacs, pico, and various graphical editors that come with "desktop environments" such as GNOME and KDE.

vi Basics

• vi has two *modes* — insert mode (where what you type goes into the file) and command mode (where you can type commands to copy, move, delete, save, etc.).

- You start an editing session by typing, e.g., vi example.txt. It starts in command mode. Enter insert mode by typing i. Exit by pressing ESC. Move around with the arrow keys. Delete a single character with x. (Try entering some text.)
- Save and exit by typing :wq.
- *Highly recommended:* vimtutor brings up an interactive tutorial.

