

OPTI 280: Computer Programming Workshop Syllabus

Instructor

Professor Stanley Pau, College of Optical Sciences, Meinel Optical Sciences, Room 427

Email: spau@optics.arizona.edu

Office Hours: to be announced

Schedule

Lecture, Thursday 11:00am to 12:15pm

Location, Meinel Optical Sciences, Room 410

Teaching Assistant

Ryan Ruan, Email: truan@arizona.edu

Office Hours: TBA

Grader

TBA

Course Objectives

To teach students the basic concepts of computer programming and how scientific or engineering problems can be translated into working computer programs. Students will also be taught some elementary concepts of statistical analysis.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, each student should:

- be able to use MATLAB to perform complex scientific calculations, such as Fourier transform, integration, differential equation, matrix
- become familiar with rudimentary programming techniques
- be proficient with data handling and analysis, using a computer
- be able to apply numerical analysis to solve problems

Course Description

MATLAB is used as the vehicle for the computer programming assignments in numerical and symbolic computing. Basic concepts of computer programming and control structures will be discussed and practiced by writing and debugging computer programs that do numerical calculations and symbolic mathematics, that create graphics and figures, and that manipulate vectors and matrices.

The concepts will be illustrated with a variety of programming assignments involving examples from optics and other areas of science and engineering. Numerical techniques, including numerical differentiation and integration, solution of differential equations, data import and export, error analysis, and curve fitting, will be illustrated in the assignments.

Grading

no midterm or final

Spring 2026

homework	70%
in-class quizzes	30%

Each assignment is worth 100 points, is due a week after it is assigned and is to be submitted to D2L. Assignments that are handed in late will be penalized 15 points per week.

Grading scale: 90% and up of possible points = A, 80% = B, 70% = C, 60% = D, <60% = E.

Textbooks and Software

A version of MATLAB is available for downloading at <https://softwarelicense.arizona.edu>.

Class Notes – *Opti 280 MatLab Tutorial*, electronic copy is available on D2L

Essential MATLAB for Engineers and Scientists, 8th Edition, Brian H. Hahn and Daniel T. Valentine, Academic Press, 2022.

(Download link:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/book/9780323995481/essential-matlab-for-engineers-and-scientists>)

Supplements and additional materials are available at class website, which will be updated periodically during the semester: <https://d2l.arizona.edu> (use your NetID to login).

Course Outline

- Program statements, variables, operators, functions, and input/output
- Program structure, computer program debugging
- Vector variables, creating plots and graphs
- Relational operators, **if...end** structures, and **for** loops
- **Switch** structures and **while** loops
- Elementary statistical analysis and histograms
- Error propagation and statistical correlation
- Data import and export, and curve fitting
- Computer-aided symbolic algebra, integration, and differentiation
- Numerical differentiation, round-off errors and numerical precision
- Numerical integration
- Numerical solution of differential equations
- Numerical Fourier transform
- Graphics and images

Course policies

It is *very important* to attend all lecture recitation sessions, as what is discussed provides the necessary background for the weekly assignment. If you must be absent, it is your responsibility to obtain and review the information you missed. Periodic quizzes will be given to help you gauge your progress in learning the material. You should expect to have about 6 quizzes this semester. There is no make-up for quiz. If you missed the quiz, you get a zero.

Additional Information

Academic Integrity

According to the Arizona Code of Academic Integrity

(<https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/student-rights-responsibilities/academic-integrity>), “Integrity is expected of every student in all academic work. The guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student’s submitted work must be the student’s own.” Unless otherwise noted by the instructor, work for all assignments in this course must be conducted independently by each student. CO-AUTHORED WORK OF ANY KIND IS UNACCEPTABLE. Misappropriation of exams before or after they are given will be considered academics misconduct.

Misconduct of any kind will be prosecuted and may result in any or all of the following:

- * Reduction of grade
- * Failing grade
- * Referral to the Dean of Students for consideration of additional penalty, i.e. notation on a student’s transcript re. academic integrity violation, etc.

Students with Special Needs

It is the University’s goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. You are also welcome to contact Disability Resources (520-621-3268) to establish reasonable accommodations.

Threatening Behavior Policy

The University prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the University community. Detail policy can be found in <http://policy.arizona.edu/education-and-student-affairs/threatening-behavior-students>.

Nondiscrimination and Anti-harrassment Policy

The University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free of discrimination. The policy is described in <http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/nondiscrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy>.

Academic advising

If you have questions about your academic progress this semester, please reach out to your academic advisor (<https://advising.arizona.edu/advisors/major>). Contact the Advising Resource Center (<https://advising.arizona.edu/>) for all general advising questions and referral assistance. Call 520-626-8667 or email to advising@arizona.edu

Life challenges

If you are experiencing unexpected barriers to your success in your courses, please note the Dean of Students Office is a central support resource for all students and may be helpful. The Dean of Students Office can be reached at (520) 621-2057 or DOS-deanofstudents@email.arizona.edu.

Physical and mental-health challenges: If you are facing physical or mental health challenges this semester, please note that Campus Health provides quality medical and mental health care. For medical appointments, call (520) 621-9202. For After Hours care, call (520) 570-7898. For the Counseling & Psych Services (CAPS) 24/7 hotline, call (520) 621-3334.

In Addition:

- If you feel sick, or may have been in contact with someone who is infectious, stay home, avoid contact with others and do not travel, except for seeking medical care.
- Notify your instructor(s) if you will be missing a course meeting or an assignment deadline.
- Non-attendance for any reason does not guarantee an automatic extension of due date or rescheduling of examinations/assessments. Please communicate and coordinate any request directly with your instructor.
- If you must miss the equivalent of more than one week of class, you should contact the Dean of Students Office (DOS-deanofstudents@email.arizona.edu) to share documentation about the challenges you are facing.
- Voluntary, free, and convenient COVID-19 testing is available for students on Main Campus.
- COVID-19 vaccine is available for all students at Campus Health.
- Visit the UArizona COVID-19 page for regular updates.

Subject to Change Statement

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policy, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

References

- [1] Class notes were originally prepared by Prof. R. L. Shoemaker.
- [2] M. E. Herniter, Programming in MATLAB, Wadsworth Group, 2001.
- [3] A. Gilat, MATLAB, An Introduction with Applications, 2nd Edition, John Wiley & Sons 2005.
- [4] S. J. Chapman, Essentials of MATLAB Programming, Nelson, 2006.
- [5] W. H. Press, B. P. Flannery, S. A. Teukolsky, W. T. Vetterling, Numerical Recipe in C, The Art of Scientific Computing, Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- [6] B. H. Hahn and D. T. Valentine, Essential MATLAB for Engineers and Scientists, 8th edition, Academic Press, 2022

Computer Programming Workshop

OPTI 280, Spring 2026

Week 1: 15 Jan. 2026

Lecture 1: MATLAB, variables, functions, fprintf, Assignment 1

Week 2: 22 Jan. 2026

Lecture 2: Vectors, Plots & Graphs, Debug, Assignment 2

Week 3: 29 Jan. 2026

Lecture 3: Program control flow, IF END, FOR loops, Matrix, Assignment 3, Quiz 1

Week 4: 5 Feb. 2026

Lecture 4: Program development, SWITCH, WHILE, Assignment 4

Week 5: 12 Feb. 2026

Lecture 5: Matrix and Vectors, Assignment 5

Week 6: 19 Feb. 2026

Lecture 6: File I/O, Basic statistics, Assignment 6, Quiz 2

Week 7: 26 Feb. 2026

Lecture 7: More statistics, Probability distributions, Sorting, Assignment 7

Week 8: 5 Mar. 2026

Lecture 8: Propagation of errors, Curve fitting, Assignment 8, Quiz 3

Week 9: 12 Mar. 2026

Spring recess – no class Mar. 7 to 15, 2026

Week 10: 19 Mar. 2026

Lecture 9: Symbolic math, Roots of linear & nonlinear equations, Assignment 9, Quiz 4

Week 11: 26 Mar. 2026

Lecture 10: MATLAB functions, Numerical differentiation & integration, Assignment 10

Week 12: 2 April 2026

Lecture 11: Solutions of differential equations, Assignment 11, Quiz 5

Week 13: 9 April 2026

Lecture 12: Fourier transform I, Assignment 12

Week 14: 16 April 2026

Lecture 13: Fourier transform II, Assignment 13, Quiz 6

Spring 2026

Week 15: 23 April 2026

Lecture 14: Graphics and Images, Assignment 14 (Extra Credit), Course Evaluation

Week 16: 30 April 2026

No class. All late and extra credit homework assignments are due today.